Frederica de Laguna stumbled upon Eyak, i.e. (re-)
“discovered” Eyak, in 1930. However, she was by no means the first to stumble upon Eyak. That honor goes to William Anderson in 1778, the first person ever to write down an Eyak word. In fact then from 1778 to 1885 there are over 20 written sources of various kinds, documenting or defining or mapping the Eyak language. Of these sources, six are mere individual or a few words, identified as Eyak or not, but six more are formal vocabularies of Eyak as such, ranging in length from 80 to 1128 words, during the Russian period. Of these formal vocabularies, one was published in English, and two more, including the 1128 words, were published in German. Moreover, there are at least nine sources explicitly recognizing Eyak as a separate language. Two of those are fundamental maps, 1796 and 1863, the latter published in color, no less! The other sources, no fewer than eight, are discussions of Eyak as such and its genetic relations. Six of these were published – mostly in German. Eyak was thus very well recognized and documented by the standards of the time, when Franz Boas arrived – from Germany – upon the American scene. Nevertheless, when in 1930 Frederica de Laguna, Boas’s student, came to Cordova, Alaska, to outfit for Chugach Eskimo archeology, it was mere chance that she then first learned about Eyak. This is a history full of ironies. Krauss
hopes to do justice to them for the reader appreciative of humanistics and the history of science. Given that even science is still done by human beings, in chronicling the remarkable parade of characters here involved with Eyak, inevitably certain human traits that affect this history are too lively to conceal. Krauss gives up, and unapologetically hopes that the result may be entertaining and instructive. For the Eyak contribution to this history we have not a single person’s name, unfortunately, until all that changed with Freddie in 1930. Stylistic note: in his old age Krauss calls all females by their first name, and males, including himself, by their last.

The first part of this paper, the longest and most detailed, deals chronologically with the rich pre-1930 history of Eyak language work, completely unknown to Freddie, harping on that. The second deals with the period of her Eyak work, and the last is a summary of that after her.

**THE PRE-RUSSIAN PERIOD, 1778-1791**

The Russians’ first direct contact with Alaska Natives was Gvozdev at the Diomedes and King Island in 1732; Bering’s first landfall, Kayak Island, 1741, without direct contact, was just offshore from Eyak territory. However, the Russians apparently did not approach Eyak territory again for another 40 years, until the 1780s, and did not establish installations near it until the 1790s. In the meanwhile, 1778-1791, at least four foreign expeditions made significant contact at the extreme ends of Eyak territory, two English at the Prince William
Sound end (Anderson and Walker-Strange), and one English (Colnett) and one Spanish (Malaspina) at the Yakutat end. This was enough to write down Native Alaskan words including some Eyak, or to notice Eyak as being different (Colnett). The Eyak words at Prince William Sound, 1778 and 1786, were an admixture in formal Chugach vocabularies, not recognized as Eyak, and that at Yakutat was an Eyak ethnonym in addition to a formal Tlingit vocabulary. Here we shall deal only with those sources, not with those several more which may have had direct or indirect contact but show no evidence with Eyak language data or recognition of Eyak as a separate language from Chugach and/or Tlingit.

**Anderson 1778**

William Anderson (1750-1778) was James Cook’s surgeon and naturalist on the *Resolution* in Alaska. This young Scot, not yet thirty and dying, was most certainly one of the very great lights on that momentous expedition. Modest, agreeable, diligent, Anderson was a most loved and esteemed member of that illustrious crew. His ethnographic and linguistic skills were outstanding, as were his medical and naturalistic. By the time the expedition reached Prince William Sound, mid-May 1778, Anderson knew he was near death from the tuberculosis that had consumed him for a year. His journals end two weeks after the expedition left Prince William Sound, and he died at sea, August 3. The last of Anderson’s three journal books from that expedition is lost, most unfortunately, and all we have left of it is what was taken from it by editor Douglas for Volume II of the published
This includes, pp. 375-376, a “Vocabulary of Prince William’s Land,” a list of 25 entries. Of these, the last 8 are numerals, not from Prince William Sound, however, but from Cook Inlet Tanaina Athabaskan – presumably unbeknownst to the editor. This short vocabulary thus has the first words ever written of Alaskan Athabaskan (as well as of Alutiiq and probably Eyak). The expedition reached Cook Inlet about one week before Anderson ceased to write, so this must be his very last work. Of the remaining 16 words on the list, 10 are identifiable uniquely as Chugach Yupik, 2 could be either Yupik or Eyak, and 3 are not identifiable as Yupik but could well be Eyak. The best example might be “Akashou, What’s the name of that?”, possibly Eyak ’a: k’e: ’shəw “he/she/it maybe?” or ’anh k’e: ’shəw “he/she maybe?”, meaning roughly “Do you mean him/her?”, hardly a poor response, given no common language. The year 1778 is rather early for Eyak to be in evidence in Prince William Sound, as the Eyak takeover of even the Copper River delta from the Chugach may not have begun until the early 19th century. If the words were not from Eyaks directly, it could be that the Chugach were using some Eyak words they knew, in order to communicate better with the English, especially since they must have known that the ships had come from the Eyak direction.

The only ms. source or version for this vocabulary is Admiralty ms. 55/113, f. 60, a clerk’s copy, comparative Eskimo-Aleut vocabulary, which for “Sandwich [Prince William] Sound” includes only the Tanaina numerals plus “Aa” for “Yes, or Aye” (which could be Yupik or Eyak) and Akashou, here with a macron over the second a and an accent
mark after it, glossed “What call you that?”. It is thus an independent source from that published, and for some reason very partial. Of course it raises still further question as to what was in the lost Anderson journal, of which perhaps only this hodgepodge remains. It is thus quite unclear just how accidental the potential Eyak entries were.

**Walker and Strange 1786**

Eight years after Anderson with Cook, two more enterprising Scots, now from the British military in India, sailed to Prince William Sound, where they also took down a Prince William Sound vocabulary. The expedition, private though loosely associated with the British East India Company, was organized and led by James Strange (1753-1840) under the military command of Alexander Walker (1764-1831) in the *Experiment* and *Captain Cook*. Inspired by Cook’s *Voyage* (1784), their expedition, though basically commercial, also had scientific goals, and had also put in at Nootka, where they too collected a much larger Nootka vocabulary, before sailing to Prince William Sound. They were in the sound from August 29 to September 16, 1786. Both men kept journals, but neither was published until the 20th century. Strange’s appeared in 1928 (then again in 1929, reset, in Madras; Strange 1928 and 1929; the vocabulary in on pp. 54-57). Walker’s was not published until 1982 (nicely, with informative apparatus and background; Walker 1982, vocabulary on pp. 156-160). Unlike the unfortunate case of Anderson, we also have at least five manuscripts including the vocabulary, though still not the original. For Strange
we have three ms. copies: Tamil Naidu Archives, Madras, number not given (from which the 1928-1929 publication presumably comes); British Library, India Office, Home Misc. 800, ff. 158r?-160r?; both are “true copy from the original” signed by Strange; and Archive of British Columbia, F8 St8, pp. 15-19. For Walker we have mss. 13776-13781 at the Scottish National Library, of which at least two include the vocabulary, 13778, ff. 90v-92v, and 13780, ff. 113r-114v. Walker himself states the original is lost. The 1982 publication is from the more fully prepared 13780, but the vocabulary is from 13778, presumably being closer to the original.

It seems quite clear that the author of both the Nootka and Prince William Sound vocabularies was Walker, and not Strange. Strange was the businessman and entrepreneur, who evidently could see, however, the importance or desirability of including vocabularies in his report. The young Walker, on the other hand, savored contact with the Native Americans, took real interest in ethnology, and during his career in India became a prominent authority on Indian languages and culture.

Most of the entries in the Prince William Sound vocabulary are of course clearly identifiable as Chugach, but there are eight which are much more probably Eyak, and not or hardly identifiable as Chugach. These entries are scattered in Strange (S), but – very significantly – six of them are clustered consecutively toward the end in Walker (W). An example of the non-clustered in W are W Konee, S Hoonee (S 1929, but S ms. Koonee) “to rain”, modern Eyak *k’uleh, from older Eyak *k’uneh “rain”; the closest possible Chugach
would be qaniq “snow”. An example of the clustered entries is W Esh-est-esh, “No. you. do you hear.”, cf. S Esht-est-esh “Ho! you! do you hear? calling to one.” This cannot be read as Chugach at all, but as Eyak ‘i:sh(d[uh]), ‘i:sh, where ‘i:sh is ‘i:-sh “you (singular) (interrogative),” i.e. “You?”, cf. modern Eyak ‘i:shuh “Hello”, literally “Is it you (sg.)?”; and the ‘i:sh(d[uh]) is roughly “I wonder if it’s you (sg.), could it be you (sg.)?”, probably truncated. They both also have Kai and Agalshou (S ms; but S 1928, 1929 Agalchou), for “What is that?,” probably in an attempt to reelicit Anderson’s Akashou “What call you that?,” as they certainly had a copy of Cook 1784. The results were k’e:’[-t] and ‘əg-, ‘əlshəw (where -g- is a spirant gamma about to become a -w), thus, roughly, “How?/Wha-?” and “[You mean] tha-, this?,” again with truncations, giving a pretty vivid picture of these attempts at communication. Without going further into linguistic detail, suffice it to say that possibly Anderson 1778 and even more possibly Walker-Strange 1786 had even an Eyak subsection in their lost ms. original Prince William Sound vocabularies, though there is no evidence they knew they were getting more than one language there. However, if this were all we had, the forms are too few, and the correspondence between the forms and meanings too vague, for us so far to know, without the subsequent record, that there ever was an Eyak language – perhaps only that there was some strange admixture in Prince William Sound Yupik at the time. Also of course the spellings are far too deficient for us to discern phonetically whether the Eyak words were spoken by Eyaks or by the Chugach.
Colnett 1788

The last British source, of a new kind, is James Colnett (1755?-1806) in the *Prince of Wales*, who had been in Prince William Sound for a month, sailed thence to Yakutat, and stayed there a week, June 3-9, 1788. His journal from that voyage was only recently published (Colnett 2004). De Laguna (1972:128-132) quotes from the manuscript, about Yakutat (here quoted from Colnett 2004): “At this place appears to commence a different Nation from those residg to the North… & I believe belong to different tribes, as there was a Variation also in their Language, several counting numbers not with the same name & when ask’d where resided pointed different ways.” Colnett thus observes that there is more than one language at Yakutat. Moreover, he seems to imply, perhaps, that neither is the same as that he heard in Prince William Sound, of which he had even written a short vocabulary. Freddie adds: “Unfortunately no [Yakutat] vocabularies are given.” If there had been even a few numerals, we not only would have our first evidence that the other end of Eyak territory was Yakutat, but we already would also have had our first written direct proof that Eyak was different from both Tlingit and Chugach – though that might hardly have changed our history without being published.

Malaspina 1791

We do not know for certain that there were Eyaks near Prince William Sound before
Russian penetration there, except insofar as we can tell from Anderson and Walker-Strange. At the other end of known Eyak territory, however, we have plentiful evidence that Yakutat Bay was still (partly) Eyak. Just before Russian penetration of Yakutat, we still have one more “pre-Russian” contact and source for Eyak language there too, with the major Spanish expedition of the *Descubierta* and *Atrevida* led by Alessandro Malaspina. Malaspina (1734-1809) was a very able Sicilian, in Spanish service. His expedition, the most ambitious the Spanish ever sent to Alaska, was clearly meant to be the Spanish answer to Cook and his scientific accomplishments. Malaspina was in Yakutat Bay for ten days, June 27 to July 6, 1791. After his return to Spain he was working on the expedition results, 1794-1795, but ran badly afoul of Spanish politics, was imprisoned 1895-1803, his papers were seized, and the results of his expedition were long mostly suppressed.

Finally in 1885 a report appeared including a Yakutat vocabulary, “Vocabulario del idioma [Puerto] Mulgrave,” in *Viaje Político-científico alrededor del Mundo ... desde 1789 a 1794* (Malaspina 1885, pp. 349-351). This turns out to be a nearly pure – except for one item – Tlingit wordlist, of 126 entries, in Spanish alphabetical order, plus 26 numerals. Of the 126 words, over 100 can be clearly identified as Tlingit, and almost none of the rest look instead like Eyak. One might wonder at this absence of Eyak admixture, given the still prominent presence of Eyak at Yakutat in 1791. However, the explanation is all too clear, from the introduction to the vocabulary. The 1885 version of that is as follows: “En la formación del corto Diccionario que aquí se agrega, no nos hemos tampoco apartado del
método lento y reflexivo, que nos habíamos propuesto: muchos Oficiales han formado por sí un Diccionario separado, y confrontados éstos no se ha admitido voz alguna, la cual no tuviese la sanción general ó no descubriese de dónde dimanaba una ú otra contradicción.”

[In compiling the short vocabulary added here, we still did not depart from the slow and thoughtful method we have intended; several officers compiled a separate vocabulary by themselves, and comparing those, not a single word was included which did not meet general approval or where the source of any remaining discrepancy could not be discovered.] – This standardization surely was no trivial task in itself, insofar as the officers were truly working at all separately, rather than looking very intently over each other’s shoulder, as the chance that any two would independently come up with the same words and even the same spelling of them had to be infinitesimal indeed, given no common language and the vast differences between Spanish and Tlingit or Eyak sound systems. They were in any case mightily striving that their collective result should be correct, authentic, official, standardized, pure Yakutat Tlingit language, cleansed of deviant impurities that they took such pains to reject. The probability that many or most of the rejected words were Eyak is of course very high – perhaps even whole lists of the greatest interest were thus lost.

It therefore became a high priority to search archives, to find any “pre-purified” Malaspina Yakutat wordlists. Krauss’s search, mainly 1978, 1991-1993, revealed no fewer than nine ms. versions of that Yakutat vocabulary (Spanish Naval Archives, Museo Naval,
Madrid: mss. 95 ff.118v-121v and 348-349v; 289 ff. 32-35v and 72-72v; 425 ff. 155v-157v; 633 ff. 82-83v; British Library, Bauzá Collection, ADD. 17.631, pp. 30-31, 32-33, and 34-35, copied at Bancroft Library, M-M 525, Microfilm 131). Sadly, these are all only the same “purified” vocabulary, with but minor variations, relevant only to the early documentation of Tlingit, not of Eyak. (Other much shorter vocabularies from that expedition, at Yakutat have also been found, so far from Suria and Bauzá, at other repositories, but both these too are Tlingit only.)

The Malaspina expedition is not quite a total loss for Eyak, however. The captain of the Atrevida, Antonio de Tova Arredondo, reports that on approaching Yakutat again on July 25, from the West, they met and traded with a canoer headed toward Yakutat: “his language differed somewhat from that of the natives of Port Mulgrave” (Ortiz 1943, p. 161). Wallace Olson (p. c. 2/12//2002) reports a Bauzá ms. account of the same contact, more detailed about his language, as follows: “Era un joven de buena statura, y de fisionomia muy semejante a los de Mulgrave: el idioma parecía no ser el mismo; pues no contestaba a varias palabras que se le dijeron en aquel; parecía habil, y manifestó muchas complascencias en los regales que se hicieron.” [“He was a young man of good stature, and his outward appearance was very similar to those of Mulgrave; his language did not appear to be the same, since he did not respond to the various words which were spoken to him in that (language); he seemed clever and showed a much pleasure in the gifts that were given to him.”] Though we may never find record of any words written down from him, the
accounts do indeed suggest his language may have been Eyak. It is of course unlikely that he knew no Tlingit, but, insofar as the Spanish were presumably reading off their Yakutat vocabulary we know, one can easily imagine their pronunciation from their woefully deficient transcription was so poor that the words could have been unrecognizable even to a Tlingit, let alone to an Eyak. For these and other accounts of that encounter, which vary on the man’s language from “the same as” or “similar to” that of Port Mulgrave, to “different,” see Olson 2002:371 (Malaspina, “same”), 418-419 (Viana, “differed somewhat”), 430-431 (Bauzá above), 446 (Bustamente y Guerra, “similar”), 459-460 (Tova Arredondo above).

No standardization here!

However, we do indeed have one Eyak word nevertheless from the Malaspina expedition, found frequently, routinely, throughout the Malaspina Yakutat journals, namely the ethnonym for the people themselves, *Tejunenses, Tejuneses, Tujuneses*, or *Tejunes*. With the Spanish endings removed, that clearly has to be the Eyak *dəx̱unh*. There the *d-* corresponds exactly to Spanish *T-* (Eyak indistinct short shwa) gets written, unsurprisingly, with an *e-* or *u-* (Eyak voiceless back velar fricative) is very close to Spanish *j-* and *unh* (nasalized *u*, followed by *h*-like aspiration) is fairly close to Spanish *un*. In short, *Tejun* or *Tujun* is the very most likely result of any attempt to write *dəx̱unh* in Spanish. That Eyak word means “person, people” (as opposed to animals), or “Eyak(s)” (as opposed to other peoples). -- The word *dəx̱unh* is itself unanalyzable in Eyak; it is probably a diffusion from Yupik *taru* (where *r*- is the voiced back velar fricative), meaning “person,” usually shamanistically; that is relatable moreover to Eskimo
forms which have an -n-, tanru-, tarnu-, hence probably the nasalization in Eyak; perhaps also thus relatable even to Aleut tayaru-. This word is also the only Eyak word – perhaps better, the only word of Eyak origin – in the entire “purified” Malaspina Yakutat Tlingit vocabulary. There it is listed, under N-, as “Nombre de la Nación ó Tribú,” and is spelled in the manuscripts Tejunne or Tejune, usually with an accent, acute or grave, on the final -e. The variation between the second -n- and -u- is certainly from inversion of a letter, we cannot tell which, the segment -ne or -ue not being recognizable either as either Eyak or Tlingit; it must derive from the Spanish versions of the ethnonym shown above, especially the -ne. The interpretation “[Chief] Juné’s people” (cited in de Laguna 1972:144) may well be inspired by Spanish de(!). It cannot be justified by any Te-like prefix in Eyak or Tlingit. It remains a mystery, though, how or why this one single basic Eyak word was given as the very definitive name of the people that the Spanish worked so unfortunately hard to get a “pure” Yakutat Tlingit vocabulary from!

THE RUSSIAN PERIOD

Malaspina 1791 is the end of the pre-Russian period of our history. By 1792 a Russian post was established at Nuchek in Prince William Sound, which lasted peacefully into the American period. Soon after Nuchek, at the other end of Eyak territory, at Yakutat in 1795, the Russians also asserted their presence, much more ambitiously, as a veritable colony. The history of that was short, ten years, but nasty, and for the Eyaks especially fateful.
After 1791 information on Eyak and Eyak language is all of Russian origin, until well after the sale of Alaska. Moreover, all the rest of that documentation of Eyak seems to be from the Yakutat end, until about 1820, at which point Eyak was disappearing there.

**Purtov and Kulikalov 1794**

The year before the colonization of Yakutat itself, Egor Purtov and Demid Kulikalov (?-1806) – neither perhaps a very savory character – were leading a sea-otter hunting fleet of 500 baidarkas from Kodiak toward Yakutat, stopped at Yakataga, and made a personal visit, May 31 to June 5, to the nearby (Kaliakh River) village, then still all or mostly Eyak. There are published references to their stay and the fact that they made a census there (Tikhmenev 1863:82, 1979:162-63, de Laguna 1972:161-163, and Grinev 1993:75-76), and at Yakutat, but the ms. source including the censuses themselves, not published, is at the Tentral’nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv drevnikh aktov, Fond 1605, Opis’ 1, Delo 352, ff. 12-17v. The Kaliakh census (a “Kopija”) lists the names and ages of heads of families, their wives, of their sons and daughters, and in some cases status as hostage or prisoner (slave). The Kaliakh list includes 83 such names, including 11 from “Yakutat Bay” (where “circumstances did not permit a full census”). The Yakutat (Akhoi River Village) census itself lists 112. Personal names are very difficult to interpret to begin with, having no meaning shown, if any, being often of foreign origin (here especially Tlingit), and for this period being of course also very deficiently transcribed. Still, a few names from Kaliakh
can be interpreted as Eyak with some confidence, e.g. El’kunt is ‘əłku:n’t, (where -ɬ- is the voiceless lateral fricative) “grab it!” (a 25-year old man), Shia is shiyah “bad/cute” (a six-year-old girl), and Kiin-ksh is k’i:nk’sh “dry salmonberries” (a 20-year-old wife). Many of the rest also look like they could well be Eyak names, but a good number look more like Tlingit or Chugach. Some Yakutat Bay and Akhoi River names look like they could be Eyak too, but far fewer in proportion, not surprisingly, than at Kaliakh. – In this connection, it should be noted that of the Eyak names remembered even from Cordova in the 20th century, a fair proportion were opaque, or were of Tlingit or Chugach origin. – Thus our first Russian source of Eyak, the Purtov-Kulikalov 1794 Kaliakh census, from or near the Yakutat end, is clearly recognizable as primarily Eyak, our first such source. But it is in the most problematical realm, of personal names, so that little Eyak linguistic information can be gathered from it so far, even from a list now of 72 or more entries.

Shelikhov 1796

We now come to a new and altogether different kind of contribution to the history of the study of Eyak, Shelikhov’s 1796 map, the first (ethno-)linguistic map of Alaska we know of. Entrepreneur Grigori I. Shelikhov or Shelekhov (1748-1795) was basically a founder of the Russian-American Company, though he spent only two years himself in Alaska, establishing the headquarters on Kodiak, 1784-1786. The year after his death in 1795, somehow this map attributed to him appeared. We know at least two basic
versions of this map, one with eight small detail insets or cartouches along the bottom and a long legend set off by a scrollwork border, and a second without the cartouches and the same legend set off by a tree and vegetation figure. It is entitled “Karta morskaia severo-vostochnoi Azii, i severo-zapadnoi chasti Amerikи… [Maritime map of northeast Asia and the northwest part of America…].” This map is memorable for Alaska especially in two ways. It includes on Seward Peninsula and Norton Sound (and beyond) over 50 of the 80 Inupiaq place-names gathered by Kobelev from an elder on Diomede in 1779 and first published in 1783. Most originally, however, it includes ethnolinguistic borders along the Pacific coast, dividing that clearly into five sectors labeled vertically as follows: KO-NIAGI across Central Yupik, Alaska Peninsula, and Kodiak, respectively (= Yupik), then KE-NAI-TSY along the west side of Cook Inlet (= Tanaina), then CHU-GA-CHI over Prince William Sound, then UGA-LAX-MIU-TY right where it belongs, between Prince William Sound and Yakutat (= Eyak!), and then KO-LIU-ZHI beyond (= Tlingit). The scrollwork version lacks the Kenaitsy label itself, and has Eyak as UGALAX-MIUTY. Aleut is not labeled on either. It seems that Shelikhov was very naturally interested in producing for officialdom a map recognizing the distinct Native peoples of his colony, perhaps especially the newer part – Aleut being a given, so not labeled. Shelikhov evidently assembled the map from information gathered especially during 1783-1788, including information from Nagaiev and Zaikov in 1783 and Izmailov and Bocharov in 1788 (for details see especially de Laguna 1972:112-138). Their reports must have made it clear to Shelikhov that
Ugalakhmiut was a distinct group of some kind, though it is not so clear to what extent the distinction was based on language itself.

The name Ugal(i)akhmiut (with many variants) clearly comes from Chugach Ungalarmiut “those who live to the East.” It means just that in the Chugach area, and could therefore refer to people of any language, including fellow Chugach who live e.g. on Kayak Island, or of course Eyak. – The real Chugach name, at least in the 20th century, for the Eyaks specifically was Qiggwanat, literally “those to be raided, raidables” (p. c. Jeff Leer), a name that never got into the literature. – Ugal(i)akhmiut- with Russian plural -y often (redundantly!) added, became the standard “official” Russian name for Eyaks, along with also the Russified equivalent thereof, Ugalentsy. Chugach Ungalarmiut is accented on the second and third syllables, so allows for much variation in the transcriptions of the first, which often appears as A-, or as nothing. -- The A- variants sometimes lead to confusion with Aglarmiut (Alegmiut = Aglioamiut) of Bristol Bay, not related. With the initial syllable completely gone, the lip-rounding from the –ng- preceded by U- remains, with resulting “Wala-“. (See especially Birket-Smith and de Laguna 1938.328-340 in this connection.)

Shelikhov’s map shows conclusively that the Russians by 1796 had defined Eyak (language or not) quite clearly. His map itself though was never published until the 20th century. The scrollwork variant was first published in Efimov (1964, map no 184), but the tree variant was published before that, in Andreev (1948:378-379); also the Alaskan part
was published as endpaper in Shelikhov and Pierce (1981). From the literature it appears, somewhat unclearly, that there are four versions of this map in Russian archives: 1. that in Efimov 1964, with scrollwork and cartouches, in Moscow Tsentral’nyi (Gosudarstvennyi) Voenno-Istoricheskii Arkhiv, fond VUA, delo 23461; 2. that in Andreev 1948, with tree, no cartouches, in same archive, no number given, but then Andreev 1948:379 mentions another copy there “without cartouches;” 3 in St. Petersburg, Tsentral’nyi Kartograficheskii Proizvodstva Voengo-Morskogo Flota, fond Starinnykh Atlasov, Portfel’ 4, No. 1301, with scrollwork and cartouches; and 4. St. Petersburg Public Library, Manuscript Division, Map No. 1406, copy by Kozhavin. Krauss has seen only the last, not in color, but it is possible that any of the first three are in color.

After Shelikhov all Russian maps that show Native groups clearly include Eyak as distinct. The first such may be from 1802, engraved, with the same group names and lines clearly shown (see e.g. Postnikov 2000:197-200, 409; it was used by A. von Humboldt, 1811:347-349). In 1821 Berkh published a map of Alaska (and Canada), including those names, without the lines (see Efimov 1964, Map No. 190). After that there is a virtual profusion of such maps, even of all North America, in French, German and English, from 1822 at least to 1875. This includes an American one of 1867, very clearly showing “OOGALAKMUTE” along the Copper River – Yakutat stretch. Probably the first American version and particularly important was Albert Gallatin’s color map of North America published in 1836 with his ground-breaking classification of Indian languages,
certainly a hallmark in the history of American linguistics. Meanwhile, the Russian-American Company issued in annual reports 1844-1859 versions of a map of Alaska with those names, obviously still derived ultimately from Shelikhov 1796, e.g. in omitting Aleut. See also Verman in Tikhmenev (1863), listed separately below.

**Tarkhanov 1796-1797**

Our next known source after Purtov-Kulikalov of actual Eyak language data happens to come from the very same spot as theirs, Kaliakh, two years later. Geologist Dmitrii Tarkhanov, who had helped build the fort at Yakutat, started from the new colony October 7, 1796, for a journey on foot along the coast to and up the Copper River, with Native companions, including Eyak speakers, through Eyak territory. His journal lay long forgotten at the St. Petersburg Public Library (Manuscript Division, Sbornik Q.IV.311) until attention was drawn to it by Grinev (1987, 1997). It has not yet been published. Krauss examined it in 1988 and 1990, when he obtained a photocopy, with the help of Nikolai Vakhtin. The part of its 67 pages that concerns us most here is for Tarkhanov’s lengthy stay at Kaliakh, November 27, 1796, to February 4, 1797, including an exploration of the Kaliakh River January 3-18. On pp. 28-30 of the journal Tarkhanov gives the names and description of five tributaries to the Kaliakh, four of which are easily enough identifiable as Eyak, especially because they are not proper names of specific tributaries, but in fact generic Eyak terms: 1. *Chakh* is *ch’a:x* “muddy/silty water”, 2. *Kats* is *q’ōts’*
“slough”, 3. Lakh is əq “ashore, up from shore”, and 4. Ikalaki must be ‘a:ŋ-gələ-kih “small river,” where -kala- is the expected class-mark -gələ- for anything liquid, -kih is “small”, and I- is a mistake for A-, for ‘a:ŋ- (with long nasalized a) “river”, given that Cyrillic i/I and a/A are very easy to confuse in copying, much like English cursive a and u are, depending on how much the top is closed. Number 5. Kastye is not clearly identifiable. In addition, Tarkhanov adds one noun, sak for sa:k “eulachon, candlefish,” which is the same in Eyak and Tlingit, and writes several times in various spellings the name of the Kaliakh itself, ɫɬəɣəɬ (where G and xɬ are back velars), literally “the lowermost of a vertical series.” These seven forms from Tarkhanov are the last addition we have to the Eyak documentation of the 18th century – not too spectacular a contribution for the man who must have heard incomparably more Eyak than any other European of the time.

Davydov 1802-1806

Personable Gavriil Ivanovich Davydov (1784-1809) was an intrepid young naval officer and keen observer of Native life. He made two trips to Alaska in rapid succession, the first to Kodiak where he wintered November 1802 to June 1804, then traveled back to St. Petersburg. On his second trip, more adventurous, along with Rezanov (see below), by summer1805 he was back in Kodiak for a month (July 21 – August 20), then Sitka (August 25 – October 15), then Kodiak again and back to Sitka (for November 7 to February 26, 1806). He accompanied Rezanov from Sitka on his famous trip to California,
and was back in Sitka June 9 – July 27. This shows that Davydov evidently never came near Yakutat or Eyak country on either trip. We have his journal for the first trip, but not for the second. Volume I of his publication (Davydov 1812, 1977) contains his journal for the first trip, and Volume II is all (very valuable) ethnography of Kodiak. To that, two vocabularies are most mysteriously appended, without any information on date or place. The first vocabulary is Yakutat Tlingit, the second is Tanaina Athabaskan, and there is no Kodiak! It appears certain that Davydov did this work with displaced speakers of these two languages at Kodiak or Sitka or both, as there could have been such speakers at either place. Rezanov definitely did his six vocabularies (see below), including these two languages, in Sitka, and Davydov too could have done his there on that second voyage, but he could have done them at Kodiak just as well, where he had more time, leisure and perhaps inclination, than on the second. Perhaps favoring that possibility is the fact that his Tlingit vocabulary is clearly from Yakutat, entitled “Slovar’ nariechii narodov, nazyvaemykh Kolozhami, obitaiushchikh mezhdu zalivom Chugachoi i Yakutatom [Vocabulary of the dialects of the peoples, called Kolozh (Tlingit), living between Chugach Bay and Yakutat].” Such a title appears to offer great promise of a bilingual Eyak-Tlingit vocabulary. Alas though, the vocabulary is bicolumnar, the first labeled Ruskiia, the second Kaliuzhskia, not accordingly with the promising title (including even different spelling for the ethnonym, Kolozh- and Kaliuzh-), and every single entry of this substantial 317-word list is Tlingit. Finally, though, to the seventh-to-last entry, for “dog,” Tlingit transcription
*Ketl’*, is added in parentheses, *po Iakut. xauva* [in the Yakut(at language) *xauva*], i.e., that the specifically Yakutat [Eyak] word for “dog” is *xəwa:. This exceptional entry is made either because this Yakutat speaker was more or less monolingual or dominant in Tlingit, but added the Eyak in this case because it was one of the few Eyak words he knew, so couldn’t resist adding, or that with this exception the bilingual intention promised by the title somehow got sadly changed. Krauss has not found reference to Davydov’s manuscript papers. In any case, this 1812 publication gives us the first-ever printed Yakutat Eyak word we have. It is, though – very significantly – by no means the last.

**Rezanov 1805**

To set the stage for the magnificent contribution to our history made by Nikolai Petrovich Rezanov (1764-1807) we need now to provide some broader perspective on the five “official” Alaska languages as shown on Shelikhov’s 1796 map. The Russians took Alaska’s Native languages very seriously, not only as objects of scientific study, but also recognized them quite naturally as a positive or at least practical asset to their colony. They were not something to be suppressed, but to be used, even cultivated. It is therefore not really so surprising that the Russians considered them important to define more or less officially, even. They knew Chugach and Kodiak were very similar; they may even have known that Kodiak and Chugach were more similar to each other than Kodiak was to the Central Yupik of the *KO-* part of the name on Shelikhov’s map. Yet they still chose to
divide what they knew of Yupik in this way, for some reason, probably geographical.-- A comparable case in today’s Europe would be Norwegian and Swedish, which are really one language for practical speaking purposes (though different in spelling, and of course politically!), and if there are really two languages there, it is more because there are two main types of Norwegian. -- For Alaska, partly with the early help of the British, Spanish, and even French (for Tlingit), by the time Rezanov came to Alaska in 1805 there were already ten substantial wordlists for Aleut, another ten for Alutiiq (five for Chugach 1778-1791, then five more for Kodiak), and eight for Tlingit, so that for all three (or “four”) of these languages there were explicitly hundreds of words written down. For Eyak, though, there was nearly nothing, only a few mostly accidental scraps or crumbs that it takes our linguistic retrospect to identify. Perhaps with the one exceptional Davydov word; anything more than that had in fact been tossed, by Malaspina and maybe Davydov too.

Between adventures before in Japan, and after in California, enter imperialist Rezanov, on an inspection tour of his (deceased) father-in-law Shelikhov’s colony. Kammerherr (Chamberlain, Plenipotentiary) to the Emperor himself, Rezanov was obviously competent and ambitious. After the Aleuts and Kodiak (see Davydov above), Rezanov spent an increasingly uncomfortable six months in Sitka August 25, 1805, to February 25, 1806, when he left, understandably, for his California venture. It is clear that during his stay in Sitka he wrote his magnificent dictionary. The title here reads “Slovar’ unalaskinskago, kad’iakskago, kinaiuskago, koliuzhskago, ugaliakhmutskago i chugatskago iazykov, po
Rossiiskomu Alfavitu sobrannyi dvora EGO IMPERATORSKAGO VELICHESTVA dieistvitel’nym, Kamergerom, Sanktpeterburgskikh IMPERATORSKOI Akademii Nauk i vol’nago Ekonomicheskago obshchestva chlenom i kavalerom, Nikolaem Rezanovym, vo vremia puteshestviia ego po Aleutskoi griadie i Severo-Zapadnomu beregu Ameriki 1805go goda. – A fair copy ends instead after his name v pol’zu v novoi Chasti sveta obitaiushchikh – 1805 Godu. Na Severo-Zapadnom beregu Ameriki, v porte Novo-Arkhangel’skom. [Dictionary of the Unalaska (Aleut), Kodiak, Kenai (Tanaina), Koliuzh (Tlingit), Ugaliakhmut (Eyak) and Chugats languages, collected in the Russian alphabet by the true Chamberlain of the court of His Imperial Majesty, cavalier and member of the Saint-Petersburg Imperial Academy of Sciences and Free Economic Society, Nikolai Rezanov, at the time of his voyage along the Aleutian archipelago and Northwest coast of America of 1805. – [fair copy] for the use of the inhabitants of the new world. In 1805. On the Northwest coast of America, at Port New Archangel (Sitka)].”

In his letter of transmittal of this work to the officers and stockholders of the Company, dated November 6, 1805, first published in Tikhmenev 1863:215-216, Rezanov expresses his disgust that the priests (who had been sent to Kodiak since 1794) were neither learning the languages for their prayers and sermons, nor making a dictionary of them as they were supposed or even commissioned to do. He therefore took the burdensome task on himself, in hopes that it would be used in the American schools and by Company personnel, perhaps also in Russia for science.
In sheer size alone this is an amazing work, containing six parallel vocabularies averaging ca. 1,150 entries, ca. 7,000 items in all. Moreover, this was apparently done not during the six months Rezanov spent in Sitka, but entirely during the first two. The date of the letter of transmittal is October 6, 1805, but the date at the end of his introduction in the fair copy sent is October 29, and it must have taken some of that time for the scribe to make that copy. However, if Rezanov had 50 days for the work, that would average 23 entries per day, times six for each column, ca. 140 words per day. If done very efficiently, five hours a day would have allowed over two minutes per word. It is certainly clear that Rezanov spent a good part of those first two months on his dictionary!

The appearance of the “rough” original or closest-to-original is quite puzzling. It is neat enough throughout, fully legible, but on close examination, there is a progression from very neat on the first pages to somewhat less neat towards the last, the parallel columns across the page quite uniformly following that progression. Thus the pages must have been written in that order, all six columns across, rather than each language separately down each column, no column being neater than another. Thus either Rezanov worked with all six different language speakers together, lined up, working across the page for each entry, a spectacle that one should perhaps not put past Rezanov! Otherwise the original is not that, but a copy from earlier notes, working down the list with each speaker alone – which would seem a more reasonable procedure – and the results then copied, in Rezanov’s own hand, it appears, into parallel columns across the page. Some doubt is cast on this latter
explanation by two matters. One is the extra time the copying from the original fieldnotes into the parallel columns would take, but another is that in each column there are corrections, on each page, revisions which Rezanov could have made only with the speaker present. Does this mean that Rezanov had time to check the whole recopied combined version over with the speakers to make corrections on it? Moreover, the fact that the fair copy dated October 29, 1805, has in it the corrected forms (and not the crossed-out ones) shows that the corrections had also been made before October 29, not at leisure after that.

The Eyak column will provide a good example for the phonological quality of Rezanov’s transcriptions. These are woefully inadequate, yet rather good for their time on the part even of what might be called linguists of those days in dealing with Native American languages. For example, the Eskimo-Aleut languages distinguish (only!) two k-like sounds, k, as opposed to uvular or back-velar q, which the writers of course failed to distinguish. However, Eyak distinguishes in fact not just two but six k-like sounds (likewise Tlingit and Tanaina), in a perfectly structured system of front and back, plain or aspirated or glottalized (thus 2 x 3 = 6) k’s. In Eyak these are written here g k k’, G q q’. These are of course written by Rezanov still all alike as k, lamentably. Eyak also has front and back versions of the kh-like sound in Russian and German (Tlingit has four), written only x. Likewise all the other stop-consonants are of three kinds, e.g. d t t’, dz ts ts’, written only Russian t, ts, etc. Eyak further has vowel length, extremely frequent voiceless barred-l’s, h’s, and glottal stops, which never get distinguished or shown, simply because the
Russian sound system lacks them and therefore its writing system has of course no means to handle them. Its nasalized vowels are written very erratically. All this of course makes Rezanov’s Eyak (and Tlingit and Tanaina) very hard to interpret even where the translations are reasonably accurate – Eskimo-Aleut somewhat less hard.

Nevertheless, Rezanov’s transcriptions, within these very serious limitations, are still rather good for their time. At least for the Eyak he comes about as close as he can, within those limits. Here are a very few examples. The very first two entries are Russian babka “old lady, grandmother,” Eyak kaaken, for qa:-k’inh “our (paternal) grandmother,” next Russian babka povival’naia “midwife,” Eyak xukukhteiash, for xu: qu’xdeyahsh, which in fact means “I [not someone else] am going to have a baby,” relatable perhaps to the Russian, but not so closely as the preceding. There are many just as problematic as “midwife,” some worse. Another type of pitfall is the speaker’s hearing of the Russian, e.g. for Russian liud “people” the Eyak is tyts, for t’iets’ “ice,” which in Russian is liod, the vowel misheard. Still, taking Shchekotno “it tickles,” as perhaps a nice example of an item not easy for a non-Eyak ear to hear clearly, Rezanov’s Eyak khuil’khakhchi is not a bad effort for xuyeəx əx ch’inh, which means “he is tickling my hand.” Rezanov’s form not only gives a vivid picture of exactly how the work was being done with gestures, but his precise spelling also may even represent a perfectly plausible nice archaism, for “generic” tickling – unless Rezanov has failed here to hear yet another consonant, between the -ch’- and the -inh, either -xə- for “around, here and there,” or -g- for “repeatedly, in the same
spot,” a distinction which seems to be required in the more recent stages of Eyak.

While Rezanov’s vocabulary is perhaps not very rich e.g. in local flora-fauna, or items and concepts special to Native culture, it is rich in Russian items such as muskets, musket-balls, canons, anvils, pieces of 18th-century clothing, or vodka (kakh’al’tseiat’-kaia, for qa:xə’ ɬts’iya’ts’ giyah, approximately “water at the ultimate stage of decomposition on us, utterly decomposed/rotted water.”) It is of course hard to tell in some cases whether the responses are ad hoc spontaneous descriptions, or established usages. Though there is often more than one form of a verb, there are no conjugations, and though often there are phrases, e.g. the “vodka” case, from which a little syntax could be deduced or recognized, there are no running texts of any kind. From Rezanov alone we could have little idea of Eyak grammar, but we would certainly have in a sense a very significant part of the Eyak lexicon, more than enough for a good philologist to determine not only the distinctness of Eyak from any other language, but also its genetic position as not itself Athabaskan, but a separate branch coordinate with Athabaskan, and perhaps distantly related to Tlingit.

Rezanov appends to the rougher copy a draft introduction to the work, addressed to the officers and stockholders of the company. Then (Krauss’s translation): “Aside from the usual labor of composing any dictionary, I also had to explain to those uneducated peoples the meaning of each word, adapt to their concepts, listen carefully to the pronunciations, and finally to check several times. Many things unknown to them before the coming of the Russians they have adopted generally from our language, others they have deformed by
endings [not Eyak, but Eskimo-Aleut], but the Kolyuzh or Kolosh have a language fuller than the others and their own names for all European things, which their trade with the English and the Americans has permitted them to see.” Rezanov thus emphasizes the care he took, and takes special interest in the practical need for developing new terminology, even revealing also, in a nice way, some of his frustration that the Tlingits quite decisively were much more receptive to Anglo-American culture than to Russian. He then goes on to give a brief statement about each language. (He recognizes that Chugach and Kodiak are very similar.) About the *Ugaliakhmut* he writes that they “constitute a small nation living near Yakutat or Bering Bay. Their language is entirely different from others, though they have borrowed some words from the Koliuzh contiguous with them,” a statement not implying anything about genetic relationships. He firmly places the Eyak he got at the Yakutat (=Bering Bay) end. He closes with the hope that the originality of the work will merit the attention of the learned, but even more that it will be of practical educational benefit to the colony and its clergy, to the honor of the Russian Company.

Rezanov’s placement of Eyak at Yakutat or nearby (possibly then Kaliakh) virtually proves that the speaker at Sitka was not from the Copper River end, else the placement would presumably have at least to include reflection of that. It therewith also proves abundantly to us that Eyak dialect variation, at least that surviving to 1805, was minuscule indeed. What differences there are between Rezanov’s 1805 Yakutat and 20th-century Cordova can almost all be attributed to the passage of time as well as or rather than
geographical difference in dialect. In fact some of those phonological differences are also attested in early transcriptions from the Cordova area a few decades later. One lexical item comes to notice, however: *Briukho* “belly, paunch” *kagott* for *qa:wət’* as a possessed anatomical noun, ancient cognate to Athabaskan *-wet’* with the same meaning. However, no Cordova speakers could remember it that way, knowing the stem only as unpossessed *wet’* meaning only “vomit,” thus perhaps a (rare) example of a difference that could not be explained by time.

The autumn of 1805 was fateful for the history of Eyak language work. Rezanov’s dictionary put Eyak documentation at the same level as the other “official” Alaska languages, whether or not its small population justified the work also for practical or enlightenment purposes. Rezanov’s dictionary of course far surpassed all the previous lexical work in any of those languages, and was not in turn itself to be surpassed, except by Veniaminov for Aleut and Tlingit only, until well into the 20th century.

That same autumn of 1805 was also fateful for the history of Eyak. About the very same time in August as Rezanov was arriving in Sitka, the Natives of Yakutat destroyed the Russian fort and colony there, pillaged it, and massacred the colonists. The Yakutat Eyaks clearly played a prominent role in the event. Not long after, probably while Rezanov was still at Sitka, maybe still doing the language work – the news did not reach Sitka until February 1806, by which time that work was long done – the Yakutat and perhaps other Tlingits, believing that the Eyaks had gained the better part of the booty, proceeded in turn
to massacre the Eyaks there (see de Laguna 1972:173-176, Grinev 1988, 1989). -- In any case, the Eyak language was not to survive much longer at Yakutat itself. We still have two more vocabularies from Yakutat a few years later (see below), but by 1820 our Eyak documentation comes from the Cordova end only.

Rezanov died in Krasnoiarsk in March 1807 on his way back from California and Alaska. His rough dictionary manuscript very fortunately survived, and is now at the St. Petersburg Public Library, Manuscript division, Fond 7 (Adelunga), Opis’ 1, Delo 139, 67 six-column-wide pages or spreads. In that same file is the fair copy probably sent October 6, 1805 from Sitka to St. Petersburg, and another fair copy. -- Some explanation of the fact that this stunning work was never published as such is called for in this history.

For all his strengths Rezanov was certainly also, as noted, an effete and devious man, not to mention arrogant and imperious, so has had his share of detractors. A contemporary instance is the superlative Russian-Alaskan scholar Lydia Black (1989:100-101), who does not believe Rezanov personally could have done the work, in spite of the rough manuscript and introduction in his handwriting, and other evidence, but rather that he must have gotten someone like Monk Gideon, priest and educator at Kodiak, whom Rezanov could not persuade to visit Sitka, and whose handwriting is unmistakably different, to do the work and then appropriate it to himself. Far more consequential, outliving Rezanov, was the enmity, abhorrence, and even cruelty he inspired in his shipmates and officers on the ill-fated Japan adventure on the way to Alaska. These included for example the captain,
Kruzenshtern. After the voyage, this able, affable and increasingly influential officer published an important account of the voyage, discreet about Rezanov, and also a compilation of vocabularies, which minimizes or hardly includes Rezanov’s work (Kruzenshtern, or Krusenstern 1813, in German). Kruzenshtern was an admirer of Davydov, the compendium is in part a tribute to and lament for his friend, not for the despised Rezanov. So it is hardly a surprise that the Alaskan vocabularies are based on Davydov’s, and include from Rezanov only the equivalents thereto, namely 171 Tlingit items and 218 Tanaina. Rezanov’s dictionary was (and is still) in the Adelung collection (now Fond Adelunga at the St. Petersburg Public Library; see Mithridates 1816 below). Kruzenshtern does include, 1813:x, comment by Adelung on Rezanov’s dictionary, calling it “an extremely valuable collection of about 1200 words in the six so far known major languages of the inhabitants of New-Russia, viz. Unalaska, Kenai, Chugaz, Ugalächmut, and Koliusch… still unpublished…” Nothing of the Eyak is included, presumably because Davydov did not include such. With Rezanov dead, and practical or educational Native language policy in the colony at a low ebb (until the arrival of Veniaminov in 1823), Rezanov’s dictionary was virtually forgotten or ignored. True, it is hard to say whether the published book could have been realistically useful or practical, especially for the three Indian languages for which the spelling itself is so woefully deficient. In any case, of the six vocabularies, only two were ever published as such, but in German by German academics, the Eyak (see Radloff 1857, below) and the Tanaina (by Radloff and Schiefner
In 1874.

In 1954 Knut Bergsland, distinguished scholar of Aleut in Norway, managed to get a microfilm copy of the rough version. About 99% of Rezanov’s Aleut forms can be accounted for in Bergsland’s 1994 Aleut dictionary. The Alutiiq dictionary soon to be published by Jeff Leer in Fairbanks can account for something approaching Bergsland’s success now for the Kodiak and Chugach, Leer’s ongoing work with Tlingit may approach the level with Alutiiq, Krauss can interpret or at least partly interpret up to 97% of the Eyak, and James Kari is currently working on the Tanaina, approaching 90%. A complete publication of the whole work, with the appropriate interpretations, explanation, and apparatus, long envisioned by the Alaska Native Language Center remains too much of a luxury for the Center to allow itself under present conditions.

Anonymous 1810

We can only date this vocabulary to within the range late 1808 to late 1811. Because we know it preceded Baranov 1812 below, the cover letter for which is dated February 20, 1812, the latest date for this would probably have to be late 1811. The list includes Bodega Miwok of California. We know that the earliest major contact with Bodega Miwok was Kuskov December 15, 1808 to August 2, 1809. He was back in Bodega Bay November 1811, but not long, as he soon established Fort Ross slightly north of Bodega, in Kashaya Pomo territory. That makes 1809 the likeliest year by far for Bodega Miwok. The Eyak list
itself would therefore have to be done between late 1809 and late 1811, so we arbitrarily pick 1810. -- Ivan Aleksandrovich Kuskov (1765-1823, a long-time and important Company official, was the leader of the California expeditions, and may be the author of the Bodega and one or more of the Alaskan vocabularies in the compendium, but the handwriting, uniform throughout, is in a hand different from Kuskov’s, and not signed by Kuskov (or dated), so it is safest to leave the authorship anonymous – the only instance of that in this history.

This never-published manuscript is at the St. Petersburg Public Library, Fond 7 (Adelunga), Opis’ 1, Delo 146 , where it was unexpectedly discovered by Krauss in 1990. The title page reads “Slovar’ obitaiushchikh narodov v vedenii Ameriko-rossiiskikh Kompaniiskikh Zaniatii Sostoiaishchikh [(approximately:) Dictionary of the resident peoples under the authority of Russian-American Company business].” It is on 34 pages, with Russian plus three languages on the left and three more on the right, very much in the same format as Rezanov 1805, in parallel columns and about half as long, with 481 numbered Russian entries plus 161 unnumbered (= 642), in an order not alphabetical but vaguely topical. The columns are not as uniformly or equally well filled in for the different languages, unlike Rezanov, or with the same ink or quill, but down through the pages it is quite uniform and neat and with relatively few corrections, spottily, so is unproblematically a copy of earlier manuscripts. Though similar in format to Rezanov, it is not derivative thereof, but primary data throughout. The first column is the Bodega Miwok, the next Fox
Island Aleut, then Kodiak Alutiiq, then Sitka Tlingit, then “Slova zhitelei Beringova zaliva [Words of the residents of Bering Bay],” i.e. Yakutat Eyak, then Kenai Tanaina. Here again the “official” languages, now including Californian Bodega Miwok, and not the (redundant?) Chugach. The Bodega Miwok has \(470 + 28 = 498\) items, the fullest for the numbered part, in the first column, showing the rest were probably done after that, Aleut has 560 and Kodiak 555, i.e. much more past the numbered part, Tlingit ca. 450, Tanaina 318, and Eyak only 285. Presumably, the work was started in California, then the rest was done in Sitka, first with Aleut and Kodiak, then Eyak and Tanaina last. In some ways it complements Rezanov, e.g. is richer in fauna-flora, ca. 140 such items.

Most interestingly, not only the label but also the content of the Eyak column clearly shows it is from Yakutat. One sign of that is that it too has “belly” as kavvat (cf. Rezanov kagott) for qa:wət’, the one item that is specifically Yakutat and not Cordova Eyak. More interestingly, it shows that Yakutat Eyak, at least for this speaker – and by then there may not have been many such left – was in a far more advanced state of assimilation to Tlingit than that of 1805 in Rezanov, perhaps only five years earlier. This is especially evident in that fact that of the 285 words in that list, at least 41 are new Tlingit loanwords. These are not only new items or concepts, which, if present in Rezanov 1805 are Eyak neologisms, now replaced by Tlingit (e.g. for brass, rigging, mast, cannon, pistol, gunpowder, bullet-lead, cloth, tobacco, smoking-pipe, cloth blanket, mirror, scissors, paper), but even for traditional Native items, for which we naturally have good Eyak words (e.g. trout, octopus,
clam species, flea, crane, loon, owl species, two berry species, hemlock, shield-fern, bracket fungus, mountain-goat or sheep fat, whale blubber, birch-fungus punk, seine, dipnet, deer or caribou fat, arrow, quiver, comb, earthquake). This is an obvious sign that Eyak was rapidly giving way to Tlingit at Yakutat in 1810

Baranov 1812

The preceding was still not the end of Yakutat Eyak documentation – quite. At the same time Krauss unexpectedly found the Anonymous multiple vocabulary, he also found at the St. Petersburg Public Library, Manuscript Division, Fond 7 (Adelunga), Delo 143, a document closely related to Delo 146, but later and shorter, with the library title “Sitkhinskii lazyk, materialy sobrannye A..A. Baranovym 1812  [Sitka language, collected by A. A. Baranov, 1812],” and on the document a title and transmittal page in German, to the effect “Language of Sitka, Ben[jamin] Cramer has the Honor to deliver the word[lists] ordered for State Councillor von Adelung from Sitka Island. The contributions have not yet been delivered from Kodiak, but as soon as they arrive(?), i.e. not before October or November, B. C. will have the Honor of presenting them to Herr Councillor. February 20, 1812.” It is six leaves long, and for three languages, the last half for Alutiiq, the first for Tlingit and Eyak combined. The first two pages are a printed form, first for the Lord’s Prayer, the second with 70 numbered Russian words, plus 16 numerals, with space to fill in the target-
language equivalent. The Lord’s Prayer is filled out for the Tlingit but not for the Eyak. The wordlist is filled out with both Tlingit and Eyak squeezed in the space, in the same handwriting, different from that for Alutiiq. The numerals are on an attached tab, evidently because some of them are too long to fit on the form. The close relationship of this work and that of Anonymous 1810 is obvious, in that for Eyak 38 of the 70 numbered words and 6 of the 16 numerals are identical to those in the 1810, identically spelled, but 32 are different in having a variant spelling for the same word, and 6 have an altogether different or partly different word. The words that show the great increase in Tlingit loans in 1810 are not the types that come into play in this much shorter basic vocabulary.

We do know that there is a Tlingit Lord’s Prayer attributed to Baranov in *Mithridates* 1816 (see below), the handwriting could be Baranov’s, and the collection title attributes the document to him, so the label here accepts that attribution. This work, like that of 1810, now involves resident Company officialdom. Especially interesting in this connection also is the reference to Adelung in the cover page, and the printed questionnaire form itself, certainly connected with the 1816 publication, and the beginning of published academic literature explicitly including Eyak words, and showing Eyak as a separate language (see *Mithridates* 1816 below).

*Mithridates* 1816

This source is named for the title of the publication rather than the authors, because it is
not clear which of the authors is/are responsible for the inclusion and treatment of Eyak, from Rezanov, the first publication of any of that. The authors are leading men of the time, Johann Christoph von Adelung (1732-1806), and Johann Severin Vater (1771-1826); also involved are J. C.’s nephew Friedrich von Adelung (1768-1843), and both brothers Wilhelm (1767-1835) and Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859). King Mithridates VI (132 -66 BC) of Pontus was famed, among other things, for speaking twenty-some languages, and this was not the first or last time a book meant to be a kind of encyclopedia of all the world’s known languages was named after him. This one though is by far the largest, some 3000 pages, published in German in Berlin, 1806-1817, in four volumes. Volume III is itself issued in two volumes, three parts, Parts 1 and 2 in the first volume, 1813, and Part 3, that for North American languages, is in the second volume of Volume III, published 1816.

This whole compendium was truly a great and famous work for its time. The elder Adelung died already in 1806, and Vater finished writing Volumes II-IV, with input from the Humboldts. Some of the older Alaskan material had been collected by the elder Adelung, but more, including presumably the Rezanov, must have been collected by his nephew Friedrich, who also spent his later years at St. Petersburg, and must have had good access to manuscripts on the languages of Russia’s dominions. Hence also the name of the collection in which it is found, Fond Adelunga, at the St. Petersburg Public Library.

*Mithridates* III.3:218-229 has a goodly section on Tlingit, comparing vocabularies,
including Rezanov and then, pp. 228-238, a section on Eyak and Tanaina, quoting Rezanov’s short statement about the separate identity of Eyak – now in print, in German – on p. 229, “dass seine Sprache eine, von den übrigen durchaus verschiedene sey [that their language is one altogether different from others].” On pp. 230-238, 30 words of *Ugaljachmutzi nach Resanoff*, all now of course written in German transliteration of Rezanov’s Russian are then compared with Tanaina, followed by grammatical comments exemplified by 25 more Eyak words, then a comparison of 14 Tanaina, Tlingit, and Eyak pronouns, then of 21 Tlingit and Eyak nouns, then comments on Eskimo-Tanaina contact, including two more Eyak forms, 117 or 10% of Rezanov’s Eyak list in all. Of course the transcriptions are inadequate to begin with, and the grammatical and comparative work is primitive indeed. Nevertheless, we have a crucial statement and some evidence of the status of Eyak now in print in German in 1816, in a very well known prestigious work. The Swiss-American Gallatin, friend of Alexander von Humboldt as well as of Thomas Jefferson, in his classification of American languages (1836), begun in 1823, of course uses *Mithridates*, and the Rezanov Tanaina and Tlingit, but not his Eyak, so only mentions it (Gallatin 1836:14). He also has it on his map (see Shelikhov 1796 above), but has no comment on its separateness. See Radloff 1857 below for the next and greatly amplified stage of this public information in German.

Khromchenko 1823
We now come to the period when new Eyak data come from Russians at the Copper River end of Eyak territory, as the Yakutat end is disappearing or gone. The first such wordlist was the third unexpectedly found in 1990 by Krauss in the Adelung collection, St. Petersburg Library, Manuscript Division, Fond 7 (Adelunga), Opis’ 1, Delo 145. The ms. is the work of Vassilii Stepanovich Khromchenko, or Khramchenko (?-1849). He was in Alaska as a naval officer in the Russian-American Company 1820-1825, and took down five Eskimo vocabularies in 1821-1822. Since partial parallel copies of these are included in this work, the earliest date for the rest here is probably 1823, and latest 1825. The ms. is undated, but is clearly a copy of Khromchenko’s work in a disciplined scribal hand, not Khromchenko’s. We have copies of Khromchenko’s Eskimo mss. from the Perm’ library, but not the rest. This ms. is in two sections, the Eskimo and Indian, in parallel columns, of Russian plus four languages: Tynsnakoan (Ahtna), Ugalents, Sitka-Khan, and Innon (Indians of Rumiantsev Bay, i.e. Bodega Miwok). The attribution is “Sobran Leitenantom Khramchenko, byvshim 5 liet v Kolonii Rossiioko-Amerikanskoi Kompanii [Collected by Lieutenant Khramchenko, having been five years in the colony of the Russian-American Company].

The Ahtna and Eyak columns are intimately related, in fact jumbled together in such a way as to suggest that they are from one and the same speaker, whose stronger native language is Eyak and second weaker is Ahtna. The parallel columns have 102 Russian words, 71 of which are filled out for the Ahtna and 91 for Eyak. Careful check shows
however, that with Eyak duplicated for Ahtna (29 cases), and switches, sorted out there are 96 Eyak items and only about 42 Ahtna. The speaker(s) knew the 12 numerals asked for in Eyak but not the Ahtna. There are no Tlingit loans. Obviously the Eyak is Copper River dialect, even though the title page implies they live “near Bering [Yakutat] Bay.” This first Copper River Eyak list is adequate to confirm that that dialect shows no surprising features different from what we expect for the time and place.

**Wrangell 1839**

Ferdinand Petrovich von Wrangell (bibliographically spelled Wrangel; 1796-1870), of Baltic nobility, distinguished naval officer who had already traveled extensively also in the Arctic, served as governor of Alaska in 1830-1835. As man of letters and science, he wrote invaluable reports on Alaska and its peoples, translated into German, edited and published by his friend von Baer in 1839. This date is taken for this entry, but almost certainly the language work was done in 1830-1835. No manuscript of the language work has so far been located. We have a statement about Eyak from Wrangell himself, that they are a small tribe of 38 families, living in a bay east of Kayak Island in winter, and in summer at the east of Copper River delta. They are similar and related to the Tlingits; their language is different, but genetically related. In the immediately following statement on the Ahtna, Wrangell includes a comparative table of 11 words to show genetic relationship between Ahtna, Eyak, and Tlingit. Two of these are in fact perfectly valid cognates for Ahtna and
Eyak: “sky” Ja-at and Ja-a (ya:-t and ya:-[q ‘-t]), and “blood” Tell and Tedlch (del and dəł), the first such ever shown for Athabaskan-Eyak (Wrangell 1839:96-99). The book also includes a fold-out table, facing page 258, entitled “Vergleichende Wörter-Sammlung aus 8 Sprachen der Bewohner von Nordwest-Amerika, von dem Contre-Admiral von Wrangel [Comparative table of 8 languages of the inhabitants of Northwest America, by Vice-Admiral von Wrangel],” in parallel columns, Aleut, Kodiak Alutiiq, Chugach Alutiiq, Eyak, Tanaina, Ahtna, Copper River Kolchan [Tanacross!], and Sitka Tlingit, altogether 97 items, with 81 filled out for Eyak. The statement and Ahtna-Eyak-Tlingit comparison part was also published in the original Russian in 1839 – and in 1853 also in French – but the big table was published only in the Baer 1839 book, though in the original Russian transcription, for all the languages. That was the first Eyak vocabulary ever printed. Wrangell’s Eyak vocabulary was also included in Radloff 1857 (see below). Editor von Baer discusses Gallatin 1836 and map extensively, including (1839:283-289) genetic relations with Gallatin’s newly defined [Northern] Athabaskan and Tlingit-Eyak-Ahtna-Tanaina-Ingaliak-Kolchane [Tanacross], albeit vaguely.

Veniaminov 1840

Ioann (Ivan) Evseevich Veniaminov (1797-1871), later (St.) Innokentii, had spent ten years in the Aleutians, when in 1834 Wrangell called him to Sitka, where he remained to 1838. It was probably during that period that Veniaminov formed his ideas about Alaska’s
languages generally. He was no doubt the most remarkable European – in good company – who ever set foot in the colony. Language was by no means the least of his many interests and accomplishments, so his statements on that certainly were not liable to escape notice. He came to St. Petersburg 1839 to oversee publication of a number of his works, written in Alaska. Two publications with overview of Alaskan languages, including Eyak of course, were printed in 1840, and one more in 1846. In 1840a, three volumes of “notes” on the Aleutians etc., Volume III:v, the Ugalentsy live near Mt. St. Elias (Yakutat), no more than 150 persons, as of 1834. In 1840a:139 Alaska has 6 languages: Unalaska, Kad’iak, Kenai, Yakutat, Sitkha, and Kaigan, i.e. Aleut, Yupik, Athabaskan, Eyak, Tlingit, and Haida, a sophisticated breakdown. “Yakutat speakers are no more than 300 souls, and they too [like Aleut] have two dialects.” We have no evidence that Veniaminov was ever near Eyak territory, and his knowledge of it is a bit vague. It does not appear that Veniaminov had seen Wrangell 1839 or other such literature, but reflects rather his own Alaskan knowledge and contacts. Here, clearly enough, he is referring to Eyak in two names, Yakutat and Ugalents, as two dialects of one language, each of 150 souls. He is aware that Yakutat had two languages, Tlingit and “Yakutat” Eyak, but his information there is badly out of date in that the Eyak language at Yakutat was no longer spoken by 150 souls, half the population there, but rather by 1840 was very possibly quite extinct. These statements are exactly repeated in Veniaminov 1846. In Veniaminov 1840a:143, the above outdated interpretation is clearly confirmed: “The Yakutat language is spoken by [some of] the inhabitants of
Yakutat and further to the West, and it is divided into two dialects, Yakutat and Ugalents, the number of speakers of both dialects is not more than 300 souls.” In 1840b:44-45 Veniaminov points out that of the six Alaskan languages, Yakutat is the smallest, specifying 150 speakers each for the Yakutat and Ugalents (dialects). These sources were then published in German in 1842 and 1849, in French in 1853, and republished in Russian in 1857 and 1887. Veniaminov thus does not add to the linguistic data on Eyak, but adds significantly, in three languages, to the published literature on the separate identity of Eyak.

In 1841 Sir George Simpson was in Sitka, where he learns Tlingits live to “near Mount St. Elias; thence to Prince William Sound is another language;” (Simpson 1847:89), demonstrating that we have this information, common knowledge, printed also even in English, indirectly from Veniaminov or before.

Radloff 1857

Leopold Radloff (Lev Fedorovich Radlov; 1818-1865) was a Russian working in St. Petersburg and publishing there, but who wrote and published in German, hence the spelling of the name. He was a gimnaziiia Latin and Greek teacher, administrator, museum curator. In the last decade of his short life, he worked extensively on Tlingit, including a year, 1862-1863, with an elderly native speaker brought from Alaska for the purpose, published on Haida, Tanaina (from Rezanov), and published “Über die Sprache der Ugalachmut [On the language of the Ugalachmut]” (Radloff 1857). This is a 57-page
monograph, the first publication ever entirely about Eyak. The first 20 pages are Radloff’s introduction, and the rest is Rezanov’s Eyak, alphabetized by German, though (wisely) keeping the original Cyrillic Eyak transcription. The work is done rather carefully and accurately, except in that for some reason 60 of the original entries are dropped. It includes not only most of Rezanov, but also Wrangell’s material, which after all was the only explicitly Eyak material thitherto in print – not counting Davydoj’s “dog.” Thenceforth no one could say that primary Eyak data were lacking, as there were over 1,000 words of Eyak in print as of 1857, in German, the main European language of science.

The first 20 pages are Radloff’s introduction. The first four pages of that are his discussion of the position of Eyak, i.e. its genetic and diffusional relationships to other languages. He concludes clearly that Eyak is not genetically related to Eskimo, but it is to Kenai in the narrow sense (Tanaina), though indirectly, with Atna and Kolchane (Tanacross, from Wrangell) as intermediate, and somehow perhaps also to other Alaskan Athabaskan (Kenai in the broader sense) and (the rest of) Athabaskan itself. He also concludes that Eyak is genetically related to Tlingit, but also diffusationally, just as Wrangell had said. Radloff attempts to fine-tune these relationships, but cannot add significantly to previous understanding of the position of Eyak.

The remaining 16 pages of Radloff’s introduction are poor discussions of Eyak sounds and grammar. It does not appear that the man has any idea that the transcriptions he is dealing with are so woefully inadequate. This was perforce the case with any transcriptions
of these languages made by Europeans, the sound systems of which are so profoundly different from European ones, and have so many distinctions which escape European ears. The mid-nineteenth century was an exciting period for a thriving new linguistics, centering on Indo-European, and on the precise and regular system of sound-correspondences between its different branches and different languages. Linguistics was therewith developing into a precise science, and was discovering the relationship between languages, some over surprising distances, e.g. between English or Latin and Sanskrit. It was therefore quite natural, that the same should be aspired to with Native American languages. However, because these languages were not written by native speakers, but rather by Europeans who could not hear or transcribe accurately their complex sound systems so different from European, transcriptions then available were vastly inferior to the European ones, underdifferentiated, overdifferentiated, inconsistent, too vague and impressionistic for the kind of rigor achievable in Indo-European. Therefore progress in determining relationships between American languages lagged decades behind the achievements in Indo-European. Radloff’s attempts at extracting any Eyak grammar from the material he had of course had paltry results. Radloff did manage to recognize the noun-prefix for “my,” and even for “our/human” \( ka- \) (i.e. \( qa:- \)), but even the “I” subject of a verb (usually \(-x-\)) is beyond Radloff to identify. In the end, one has to say that Radloff’s main contribution to Eyak was to make Rezanov’s vocabulary available in print, in German, in the first publication, ever, on Eyak itself.
Buschmann 1855-1863

Radlof was not the only man of his time publishing in German on Eyak. Johann Karl Eduard Buschmann (1805-1880) was a Berlin librarian, friend of the von Humboldts, who worked with them in Mexico and on Aztec. At the same time, he made a “hobby” of Athabaskan, and his publications of the period 1854-1863 included five discussions of Eyak. Two of these are before Radlof 1857, and since he was in touch with Radlof, the three after 1857 show the difference.

The first (Buschmann 1855:233-235) cites Mithridates 1816, Gallatin 1836, Wrangell 1839, Veniaminov 1840, but cannot add to those. The second (Buschmann 1856:253, 260-319), repeats the previous statement, citing the same authors, and adds a major comparative table of 260 items as (insofar as) found in Athabaskan languages (narrower sense): Chepewyan, Tahkali (Carrier), Kutchin, Sussee, Dogrib, Tlatskanai, Umpqua, Navajo, T[J]icorilla; the “Kinai” (broader sense, i.e. Alaskan Athabaskan, minus Kutchin): Kinai, Atnah, Ugalenzen, Inkilik (Koyukon), Inkalit (Ingalik), Koltschanen (Tanacross); and Koloschen (Tlingit). Hence Eyak belongs somewhere in the “Kinai” branch of this three-branched family.

In his third (Buschmann 1859:683-689), Buschmann summarizes the history of Eyak language studies up to then, adds Radlof’s Rezanov, received April 22, 1858, but does not do much with it, critiques Mithridates, suggests comparisons between Athabaskan-Kinai-
Tlingit and Aztecan, compares Rezanov from *Mithridates* and from Radloff. Such unproductive enterprises as comparing Aztecan with Athabaskan-Eyak-Tlingit were attractive not only because Buschmann had been in Mexico and studied Aztec, but because phonological precision was so lacking that any languages that had, for example, frequent “t”s at the end of words, as did Eyak and Aztec, were fair game for comparison, and if proven to be genetically related, especially at so long a distance, would be exciting, and a feather in the linguist’s cap. In fact, W. W. Turner of the Smithsonian had just done just that in 1852, by showing Apache-Navajo related to Athabaskan far to the North.

In the fourth treatise (Buschmann 1860:513-515, 541-581), Buschmann has had time to appreciate Rezanov for what he adds to the available data, and even goes so far as to say that Eyak shows “erstaunlich Fremdeit [astounding foreignness]” to all Athabaskan languages, without going so far as to conclude that Eyak is a separate coordinate branch with the Athabaskan family. A “systematic” comparative table follows, including perhaps 600 Eyak items. Regular sound correspondences or gain in rigor are not reflected therein.

In his fifth and last discussion of Eyak (1863:232-235), using Rezanov from Radloff, Buschmann reasserts the specialness of Eyak and tries crudely to fine-tune more exactly its position by showing I (17 cases) where Eyak has a comparable word to that in Athabaskan generally, II (22 cases) where Eyak has a comparable word to one or more in Athabaskan, and III (27 cases) where Eyak has one or more words for an item that has nothing comparable to it/them in Athabaskan.
Beyond Buschmann, the Englishman Robert Gordon Latham (1812-1888), might be mentioned as an example of Europeans beyond Germany as derivative sources, who discussed the linguistic position of Eyak, often with data, in well-known publications in English – American as Gallatin, British as Latham.

**Furuhjelm 1862**

We now come to the sixth and last Russian Eyak vocabulary, transitional to the American. In fact it was requested by an American, and appeared only in American publications. Johan Hampus Furuhjelm (1821-1909) was the second-last governor of Russian America, 1859-64. George Gibbs (1815-1873) was an American lawyer, geologist, naturalist, ardent philologist, and Smithsonian officer, who had spent 1848-1860 in Oregon and Washington, collected Indian vocabularies there and worked with vocabularies at the Smithsonian. He had already corresponded with Furuhjelm’s predecessor Voevodskii since 1856, and with Furuhjelm since 1859, especially about Alaskan languages and vocabularies of them. Furuhjelm showed a lively interest himself in that subject. On June 30, 1861, Gibbs wrote Furuhjelm that he now needed especially “a vocabulary of the Iacoutat, one which you mention as differing from the Kolosh, but which I had confounded with it” (NAA ms. 371). Furuhjelm received that request March 30, 1862, and replied April 23, 1862, “I send you annexed vocabularies of Iacoutat and an Indian language. The last one [the latter] was spoken by an Indian tribe inhabiting 20-30
years ago the country round about Ross, California. The words have been written down after the dictation of two old Indian women, who, married to Russians, followed their husbands to Sitka, when Ross was evacuated [1841]” (NAA ms. 528). Krauss had earlier thought that Eyak vocabulary must have been done by Abbot Nikolai Militov during one of his summer visits of that period from Kenai to Copper River, but unless such a thing had been at hand in Sitka, given the dates of the letters, Furuhjelm’s obvious personal interest in the subject itself, and the story of the California vocabulary, it appears most likely after all that the Eyak vocabulary too was done in April 1862 at Sitka, indeed perhaps by Furuhjelm himself.

The vocabulary is on a 6-page Smithsonian “Comparative Vocabulary” form of the time, 180 (182) words, sent by Gibbs, with 161 words filled in (NAA ms. 527). Just as those letters from the Russian Governor are written in an elegant English language and hand, the Eyak vocabulary is written on the form in an elegant Latin alphabet transliteration of a Cyrillic original that has not come down to us, as seen e.g. in the first entry “man” Lilia for țila:', where the -ia- reflects the original Russian vowel. A nostalgic entry is “thou” Ishu, for 'i:shuh “is it you (sg.)?” (also “Hello,” cf. Walker and Strange 1786). Aside from the improbability that there were any Yakutat Eyak speakers still left at Yakutat in 1862, let alone at Sitka, there is further suggestion that the Eyak speaker was from Copper River in the entry for “town, village,” Tchiishk, which is clearly chi:shk meaning “gravel,” probably a reference to the site at the Cordova end of Eyak Lake, in fact, as in the place-name chi:shk
qi’k’u:keh ("where there is gravel").

On February 17, 1868, President Andrew Johnson called for information about what was still called “Russian America,” and on May 27 a suggestion was made to send an expedition including Gibbs for the ethnology. “As language remains one of the readiest, and perhaps the most certain mode of tracing affinity among the races of men, it is particularly desired to collect accurate vocabularies of a sufficient number of words in common use… The most important tribes remaining are those extending from Copper River along the coast to Cape Fairweather, especially those known as Ugalentses…” (Henry 1868:193), prose surely from Gibbs. Already having a “Yacoutat” vocabulary since 1862, Gibbs still considered Eyak a specially important language for further investigation.

Gibbs was in touch with William Healy Dall (1845-1927), a very major US specialist in Alaska. In his very major tome Alaska and its Resources (1870:550-551), Dall presents a short 37-word comparative table of Alaskan languages, presenting as one of the Tlingit dialects a column for Yakutat, and next to that, as one of the Athabaskan (“Tinneh”) languages or dialects, a column for “Ugalentsi.” The “Tinneh” one is from Wrangell 1837. The “Yakutat” one is said to be from Gibbs, but it is in fact, deplorably, a mixture of Tlingit and Eyak, with 25 items of the 36 filled in from a Taku Tlingit vocabulary gathered by William Fraser Tolmie in 1836 on a Smithsonian 60-word form of the time. For the items not on the Tolmie list, Dall fills in with 11 words from the Furuhjelm-Gibbs Eyak list. One can only guess what possessed him to do that. Unfortunately, between the 11 Eyak words
in that mixed “Tlingit” column and the Wrangell 1837 Eyak under “Tinneh” in the next, there are only two words even partly the same, here with Dall’s respelling of Wrangell, *Yakulkutzku* and *Yakutschk* for “small” (Eyak *ya:kuts’k*), and *Khutak* and *Hoo-oo* for “I” (Eyak *xu: [-dək]*) for “I (too).” This is surely not enough left for Dall to notice that his “Yakutat Tlingit” and “Ugalentsi Tinne” are – or were – the same language. On January 20, 1873, Gibbs writes Dall “I have your book on Alaska [1870], but had not read it carefully … As you do not expect to meet with the Kutchin and Tinne again, will you endeavor to enlist some of your friends out there in the making additional vocabularies of the tribes you have not heretofore reached, as also of the northern tribes of the Thlinkitt family. The vocabularies published in your work do not fill the Smithsonian blank and consequently are not entirely suitable for comparison with the others, though they establish the relationship...” (Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7073, Dall papers, Box 10, Folder 41; Dall had been to interior Alaska on a telegraph line expedition 1865-1867 and gotten several Athabaskan vocabularies himself.) Here Gibbs is obviously responding in a very diplomatic way to his friend (“My Dear Dall,”) about his dissatisfaction with Dall’s treatment of the vocabularies. In his last letter to Dall, February 26, 1873, by now quite ill, Gibbs writes “I should be very glad however to do up the North West Coast tribes of Indians proper, and any vocabularies of the northern tribes of the Thlinkits, such as the Chilkat, I should like.” This no doubt includes the Yakutat and Ugalents just beyond. Six weeks later Gibbs was dead.
Gibbs’s Eyak from Furuhjelm 1862 was first fully printed finally four years after Gibbs’s death (Dall 1877:122-133), as the first “Tlingit” dialect in a sort of comparative Tlingit vocabulary of five parallel columns, without question or comment that the Yakutat invariably sticks out like a sore thumb as different from the rest, e.g. item one, “Man” lilia - ka - kah - kah - kha, i.e. Eyak tila:’, Tlingit qa:. It would seem unlikely that Gibbs, after all the trouble he had taken, would have allowed Eyak to be dealt with so shoddily, but by then it was too late. The American confusion over Eyak and the loss of all information about the position of the language for 60 years, until 1930, was well under way. Dall is much to blame for that.

**Verman 1863**

Fedor Karlovich Verman (Wehrmann) was in Alaska 1854-1861 as a naval officer. Petr Aleksandrovich Tikhmenev (1820s-1888) worked in St. Petersburg as the Company historian 1857-1863, when he published a two-volume definitive history of its affairs (Tikhmenev 1861-1863). In that is published a most remarkable color map entitled *Karta tuzemnykh nariechii na Aleutskikh ostrovakh i severozapadnom beregu Ameriki, s karty, sostavlennoi sostoiaschcim na sluzhbie Rossiissko-Amerikanskoj Ko. Kapitan-leitenant. Vermanom 1863g.* [Map of native languages on the Aleutian Islands and northwest coast of America, from a map compiled by Russian-American Co. servant Captain-Lt. Verman, 1863]. (An original, not seen, is reported in the Archive of the Russian Geographical
It was clearly Verman, not Tikhmenev, who compiled the information, so this last Russian statement on the position of Eyak belongs to Verman. Aleut is blue, Eskimo is red-pink, Tlingit is brown, with a lighter brown for the Yakutat dialect thereof, and the fourth category, “separate languages,” in fact Athabaskan-Eyak, are Kolchan (far interior Athabaskan) in yellow, Ahtna in light green, Kenai (all around Cook Inlet) in purple, thus showing more than the modest title promises, with two varieties of interior Athabaskan. Eyak itself is in gray, right where it belonged in 1863 along the coast, not from Yakutat, but now from about Kaliakh to about the mouth of the Copper River, with division lines as well as color. This map is far from alone at the time in showing Ugalents as a separate entity, ever since Shelikhov 1796, but in view of the originality, language boundary lines, and color, of this map explicitly of Alaskan languages, it is here treated separately. It is not only the Russian-America Company’s final statement on languages, but it draws as dramatically clear a picture as can be of the position of the Eyak language.

**Summation of Russian Period**

Russian Maps from 1796 to 1863 invariably showed Ugalents as a separate group or language, with geographic accuracy, as one of the “official” or “major” languages of Alaska, even though they recognized Eyak also as the smallest such group by far. From the beginning all Russian statements recognize Eyak as not Eskimo and not Athabaskan or
Tlingit, but as related to Tlingit and Athabaskan, and this with increasing accuracy of detail, especially in later years in German publications. Maps and such statements were spilling over also into English. Of the six formal Russian vocabularies of Eyak, two appeared in German publications (Rezanov, ca. 1,100 words, and Wrangell, 97 words) and the last (Furu hjelm, 161 words) in American publications (1870, 1877), where it was sadly misrepresented.

This may also be the best place to mention that in the Russian Orthodox Church records there are many Eyak personal names, starting in the Kodiak records for 1843 and 1844 (14 Ugalents names). From 1846 to 1870 these come from the Kenai vital statistics records (about 300 instances, of about 180 different Ugalents names). There then seems to be a gap, and another group appears, from Nuchek, 1894-1907, both vital statistics and confessional records (total about 380 instances of about 150 different “Agalents” names from Eyak and Odiak, and a few from Katalla). This corpus of course spans the Russian and American periods, as the Orthodox Church by no means abandoned Alaska in 1867. Note that it covers only the western end of Eyak, basically Eyak only, very marginally Katalla, nothing towards Yakutat; but of course the western end had become most of what remained of Eyak. As mentioned in connection with Purtov and Kulikalov 1794, Eyak personal names in inadequate orthography are very difficult to identify, let alone interpret. However, copies of all this material are also included in the ANLC Archive for Eyak, with excerpting of the names by Krauss, and identification of perhaps a quarter of them. Their
ultimate historical value for Eyak is of course yet another matter. Finally, the *Index to Baptisms, Marriages, and Deaths in the Archive of the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church in Alaska* (1964-1973) includes Eyak personal names from Nuchek 1845-1893 under Kenai, and 1894-1907 under Nuchek, which may help fill in the gaps.

**THE AMERICAN PERIOD**

The very first American mentions of Eyak after the purchase were not wrong about the language, e.g. distinguished geodesist and astronomer George Davidson (1825-1911), writing November 30, 1867 (Davidson 1868:293): “The natives inhabiting the coast between Yakootat and Prince William Sound are called Oogalentz, and number about thirteen hundred [!] souls [which sounds like Veniaminov, and thirteen for three]. They have their own language…” By 1870, however, Dall was already confusing matters, ignoring or forgetting that the Eyaks had their own language, increasingly through 1885 giving the impression that they were some kind of Eskimo-Tlingit mixture. He was joined by several others, e.g. Petroff, Abercrombie, Emmons, Swanton – though not by Bancroft and Powell, who, like Gallatin, mention Eyak and quote sources, but do not make misleading speculations or conclusions. The first – and for 96 years the only American ethnolinguistic map of Alaska in color – was that dated 1875 and published with the 1880 Census Report by Petroff, showing Oogalakmute as a mixture of green-red for Eskimo-Thlinkit, now restricted to the Cordova area. For this confusion, much of which is painfully
chronicled by Frederica de Laguna, see Birket-Smith and de Laguna (1938:327-337). For further reading on that see Johannsen (1963), which indiscriminately lists derivative sources, including even opinion statistics, and above all the Hodge *Handbook* 1910:862-863, which for an eloquent epitome of the confusion. Rather than repeat or elaborate that map here, we shall confine ourselves to the two major exceptions, which are in fact holdovers from the previous “German” period.

**Jacobsen 1883**

Johan Adrian Jacobsen (1853-1947) was a Norwegian seaman and entrepreneur, who spent 1881-1883 traveling widely in Alaska and collecting artifacts for the Berlin Ethnology Museum. He spent July 28 – August 11, 1883 in Eyak country, at Eyak, Alaganik, and Cape Martin, buying artifacts and making observations. His artifact acquisitions lists contain some Native words for the artifacts, e.g. seven Eyak words from Eyak village, but those from Alaganik and especially Cape Martin are Tlingit instead. Thus Jacobsen is a minor source of Eyak language data. His journals, however, written in a sort of German heavily influenced by and mixed with Dano-Norwegian and English, are of significant interest for language also. For instance, of Eyak village he writes, inimitably, :

“in Iggjak Villag, zwischen das Kopfer River und Prinz Williams Sound am ein Lake beliend – sprechen ein eigne Sprache sollen von ein Inlands treib sein – sind jetzt mit Eskimo und auch Thlinket intermarried und die meisten verstehen die beide Sprachen [in
Eyak Village, between the Copper River and Prince William Sound, situated on a lake – speak a language of their own, must be from an inland tribe – are now intermarried with the Eskimo and also Tlingit, and most understand both languages (Eyak and Tlingit?)” This accords with his comment on Alaganik, where the people “sind verwandt mit die Indianer aus Iggiak – sprechen das Iggiak und Thlinket Sprache – scheint aber mehr zu der letztere Stam gehörend” [are related to the Indians from Iggiak, speak Iggiak (Eyak) and Tlingit – but seem to belong more to the latter tribe].” These statements imply that at Eyak they were already Eyak-Tlingit bilingual, likewise at Alaganik, but there Tlingit was already dominating, as the words in his artifact lists show. This is good evidence how far assimilation to Tlingit was progressing in 1883. However, six years later, after the establishment of the canneries in that last Eyak stronghold, in spite of the resulting disorder and its disastrous effect on the Eyaks, the assimilation to Tlingit was evidently arrested and even reversed. The last speakers of Eyak in the 20th century in Cordova did not speak Tlingit, only Eyak and English. Ironically, that tragic disorder thus might well have prolonged the survival of the Eyak language enough to have made a crucial difference for the last-minute academic salvage of Eyak culture and language.

In his journal for July 28, 1883, arriving at Eyak, Jacobsen writes, “These people must speak an entirely different language [from the Chugach]… Their language is the most incomprehensible gibberish [unbegaifbare Gibbel] I have ever heard.” Jacobsen was no academic, but a well traveled man, who had heard many languages, and who was making
only first-hand observations. His journals were edited and published first in German (Jacobsen 1884), then in Norwegian (1887), and finally in English, a good summary quote from which (1977:207) is “… these people are of another type, different from the Eskimo and the Tlingit, and their language also differed to such a degree that my interpreter could not understand a word of it. I also realized that I had never heard a language so unintelligible…” Jacobsen’s journals and lists remain at the Hamburg Ethnology Museum. Obviously, published or not, Jacobsen’s information on Eyak had no effect on the reverse progress of Eyak studies.

**Krause 1885**

Aurel Krause (1848-1908) and his brother Arthur (1851-1920), on an expedition for the Bremen Geographical Society, spent some five months in Tlingit country December 12, 1881 to May 14, 1882, especially in the Sitka and Chilkoot-Klukwan areas. The results were published by Aurel Krause in Jena, 1885, in what is widely considered an irreplaceable classic on Tlingit (Krause 1885). It takes serious account of the preceding academic literature, of course, including that on groups neighboring Tlingit. In that (1885: 323-325, here from the English translation, Krause 1956:218-219), Krause reviews the literature on Eyak, noting from Wrangell that “their language is supposed to differ from the Kolushan but to have the same roots,” and “Dall’s opinion that the Ugalenzen belong to the Innuit not only contradicts Wrangell and Veniaminov, but also disagrees with the linguistic
research of Radloff, whose results cannot be doubted. He claims that the Ugalenzen are actually an independent people, however related to the Tlingit. ‘Even though the Ugalachmut,’ says Radloff, ‘through their geographical location and the description of their customs by Wrangell, show themselves to be related to tribes which belong to three different linguistic groups, namely the Kadjaken and the Tschugatschen (Eskimos), the Anahs, and Athapascan people belonging to the Kinai, and finally the Kolushans, their languages shows little relationship to the first two. It can be stated with certainty that there is no relationship between the Eskimo dialect and Ugalachmut.’ [paragraph] However Radloff found among the one thousand one hundred recorded words of Ugalachmut from the vocabularies of Resanof about forty which bear phonetic and structural resemblance to Tlingit words.” This information published in German in 1885 should certainly have caught the notice of American scholars, most of whom were supposed to read German in those days.

Franz Boas was right then spending his last year in Germany, 1885-1886, redefining himself as an anthropologist. He was even spending time in Berlin helping Captain Adrian Jacobsen with his Alaska collection! It is even more ironic that Boas, who was soon to make his first field trip to the Northwest Coast, 1886, and to study Tlingit first in Victoria, 1888, evidently did not then notice, or perhaps ever notice, that clear statement of Krause 1885, or any of the literature leading to it. In spite of Boas’s extended career with Tlingit, including a remarkable grammar of it in 1916-1917, there is no record of Boas’s ever
taking note of Eyak. Did he doze through those pages? -- This fateful lapse is especially surprising, considering that Boas placed very high value on salvage fieldwork on languages nearing extinction, considering e.g. his own heroic work on Tsetsaut in 1894, and Chemakum in 1890. During the Jesup Expedition years, 1897-1902, one might especially have expected some such attention, but in fact Alaska was basically skipped, supposedly on the grounds that it had been relatively well covered e.g. by Nelson in Beringia and Krause in Southeast. So Eyak was ignored for 60 years.

**Harriman 1899**

The next episode in this ironic history is in an entirely different category, the “Harriman cylinder.” In summer of 1899 Edward Henry Harriman (1848-1909), powerful railroad magnate and financier, chartered a luxury ship, the *George W. Elder*, for a vacation and “scientific” cruise to Alaska. This crass tycoon invited along family members, including young Averill, plus a couple dozen of America’s scientific and artistic elite, e.g. the naturalist-conservationist writers John Burroughs, John Muir, George Bird Grinnell (closest to an ethnologist of the group), C. Hart Merriam, our major Alaska expert Dall – both Merriam and Dall were vocabulary-writers, but not on this trip – also Edward S. Curtis, vocabulary-writer only later. In short, although the luxury cruise produced a remarkable wealth of published scientific data, Alaska Native languages were evidently beneath the dignity of any of this crew, with the notable – but forgotten – exception of the
tycoon himself. Harriman had bought the most expensive and spectacular phonograph of the time, a Columbia Graphophone Grand, with a six-foot horn, and outsize five-inch diameter cylinders. Those did not play longer than the usual 2 ½ minute ones, but played louder. As the ship approached a landing Harriman would blare rousing music on his toy, to entertain and impress the assembled. What is less well known is that Harriman used the machine also to record Alaska Native song and speech.

At a meeting on cylinder restoration at Sapporo, Japan, in 1985, Anthony Seeger, then of the Indiana University Archive of Traditional Music, brought along a Harriman cylinder, especially to find if anyone could identify its language. Krauss is very proud to have guessed that it sounded like Tlingit played backward. Seeger reversed the cylinder on the mandrel (not tapered), and the cylinder indeed proved to be Tlingit, one of those made as described in Goetzmann and Sloan 1982:92, in the Governor’s Mansion at Sitka, June 17, 1899, at a formal reception by Governor Brady, one cylinder of song, and one of speech by two Tlingit men (followed by one by Brady). The two Tlingit speeches are routine fine specimens of proud Tlingit oratory. The sound quality is such that they were perfectly easy to transcribe (transcription by Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1990:156-181, 325-327). The ship stopped at Yakutat for some time. “North of Yakutat Bay no Indians were met with, all the natives seen from that point onward being Aleuts or Eskimo” (says our ethnographer Grinnell 1901:185). June 24-28, 1899, the ship was at Orca cannery near the present Cordova, for repairs.
In 2001 Krauss’s enquiry at the Indiana archive revealed that in the box in which the Tlingit speech was found was the typewritten label: “COLUMBIA GRAPHOPHONE RECORD. Made in Orca, Alaska, June 27, 1899 – Story by two Indians of a man drowned from Steamer Wildcat. Gift of Estate of Mrs. Mary E. Harriman, May 1934.” Also on a slip in the box is typewritten “Record No. 11. Made in the Dining Saloon of the George W. Elder at Orca Station, Alaska. In the Eyak language. This is a speech by two Eyak Indians who give a vivid description of a white man drowning from the Steamer ‘Wildcat’ at Orca, Alaska, about 4 month previous. The man, who was cleaning fish, fell overboard head first and during the interval in which they were putting a boat over for him he threw up his hands in despair and sunk. His body has not been recovered.” The typewriting in both is clearly later copy from what must have been Harriman’s own hand, at least the latter slip. There are expressions such as “4 month previous” and “and sunk,” possibly also “Dining Saloon,” which reflect more the language of the tycoon than of the elite. The use of the phrases “Eyak Indian” and especially “Eyak language” is, it must be realized, probably the first ever in the history of written English, 31 years ahead of its time. Harriman was just spontaneously using those phrases to label Indians he knew were from the village of Eyak, and their language.

Krauss made efforts to locate any more of the Harriman cylinders (e.g. the Indiana archive, Heye Museum, Smithsonian, National Museum of the American Indian, Arden House). There must have been ten cylinders before Eyak No 11, and an unknown number
after it – the cruise was less than half over at Orca – and those outsize cylinders would be quite noticeable in any collection. Krauss’s efforts have so far met with failure. The centennial of the expedition was well observed, with much publicity. There was even a reenactment. No attention whatever was given to the matter of cylinder recordings. Great-grandson David H. Mortimer, Harriman family historian, very kindly checked for Krauss on that (p. c. September 2005), even asking his aged mother, but no trace or memory of them has yet been found.

FREDERICA DE LAGUNA

Frederica de Laguna had been a PhD student under Boas at Columbia since 1927, went to Greenland summer 1929, and was finishing her dissertation that year on Eskimo and paleolithic art (published 1932-33). Her Greenland trip put her especially in touch with Danish ethnographers. In 1930 she was planning to go to Alaska as an archeological assistant to Kai Birket-Smith, originally to the Shumagins, but they changed their plans to go instead to Prince William Sound, the southeastern limit of Alaskan Eskimo territory. It is not clear that they knew anything at all about Eyak at that point. At most it would have been the confused garble in the 1910 Handbook. Boas himself was presumably no better informed on Eyak than that, either, in spite of all the preceding so pointedly chronicled here.
Freddie further notes (de Laguna 1996:68): “My own professor, Franz Boas, who had heartily approved my trip to Greenland, was less enthusiastic when I informed him of my plans for Alaska and warned me, on the basis of his own[?] experience, that I would have to move a lot of shelly midden material to find only a few specimens.” Obviously, the plan was strictly for Alaskan Eskimo archeology, and about even that Boas was unenthusiastic.

**Expedition of 1930**

At the last minute, ill health forced Birket-Smith to cancel, but Freddie went anyway, with her geology student brother Wallace, to a survey for Eskimo archeological sites in Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet. They arrived at Cordova June 27, 1930. “I learned from Mr. H. C. Cloes, the U. S. deputy marshal in Cordova, that there were members of four linguistic groups (or tribes) in Cordova: the Chugach of Prince William Sound, Atna Athabaskan from the Copper River, Tlingits from Southeastern Alaska, and the Eyak. ‘Those Eyaks are altogether a different breed of cat from the others,’ Mr. Cloes said, ‘Don’t let anybody tell you different.’”[paragraph] Did Mr. Cloes’s vehement statement refer to the ‘official’ opinion expressed in the *Handbook of North American Indians North of Mexico* (Anonymous 1910, vol. 2:862) that the Eyak were a small group of Chugach who had been so strongly influenced by the Tlingits as to be recognized as part of that nation? This information was based on information furnished by William H. Dall in the 1870s. [paragraph] My curiosity was aroused, although I did not fully understand the
implications of this emphatic statement. Few people outside this part of Alaska had ever heard of the Eyak, but Birket-Smith and the Russians, who zealously collected vocabularies from all the tribes that they encountered, were well aware that these natives formed a distinct group…” (de Laguna 2000:36-37). Since this disclosure was news to Freddie in 1930, and there had been no note of Eyak in their plans, it is doubtful that Birket-Smith should be cited as being as well informed as the Russians had been on Eyak, and even her mention of the Russian awareness in this connection is obviously from her much later (2000) retrospective point of view. It is a nice coincidence, however, that she likewise now blames Dall for much of the confusion, a point probably never discussed with her by Krauss.

The de Lagunas must immediately have followed Cloes up, meeting the key figure Galushia Nelson, who was to be their chief guide and interpreter – also in 1933 – to take them on a tour July 1-2 to Alaganik, then old Eyak Village, and Eyak Lake, for house sites. For this, Krauss has copy of twelve small notebook pages from 1930, and one page of Eyak vocabulary possibly from that summer. They left for Prince William Sound on July 5, and may have been back to Cordova for as much as a week before leaving for Cook Inlet August 20. They apparently tried to make a bit more contact with Eyak before August 20, e.g. finding Old Chief Joe “aloof.” They realized that the remaining Eyaks were few, and deserved further investigation. Not the least reason for this was understanding that Eyak culture and language was distinct from any other (Chugach, Tlingit Ahtna). In fact
Frederica thereupon came to the hypothesis that Eyak was an Athabaskan group from the interior which had come down the Copper River to its mouth. This hypothesis was evidently first published in the *Cordova Daily Times* of September 9, 1933, in a report she sent the local newspaper at the end of the major 1933 return expedition, and then in *The Archaeology of Cook Inlet* (1934b:156): “I reached the conclusion that the Eyak are an Athabaskan-speaking people who have pushed down the Copper River to its mouth… This hypothesis, formulated in 1930, has been supported by the results of our ethnological studies in 1933.” In other words, it was not until some time after the 1933 expedition that Freddie explicitly understands the real position of Eyak, that it was not what might be called “just another” Athabaskan language.

We have a letter from Freddie to Boas, September 19, 1930, at the end of her Cook Inlet survey. “… I am very anxious to do some linguistic work with you. I did not know how little I knew until I tried to write down the names of old places. I would like to devote a lot of time to taking dictation if there is to be any Indian around the University. I would like of course to make the work have a particular bearing on the various languages which I have encountered here: Prince William Sound Eskimo, ‘Eyak’, which sounds something like the little Tlingit which I hear[d] on the way up, and Cook Inlet Athabascan. The Museum will probably send me back here next summer and I was thinking of staying longer and trying to do so[m]e ethnological work among the Eyak or ‘Egiaq’ as they call themselves. There are only five women and seven men left, and they all live in Cordova.
The oldest man, Chief Joe, is said to know many stories, but so far I have not won his confidence. One of the other men [Galushia Nelson], who speaks English well, but his own language rather poorly, has promised to help me, so I have no doubt I could learn a lot from the old man.” We do not have Boas’s response, but from this it is clear Freddie had a strong interest in following up the Eyak, and doing a decent job with the language.

“Aloof” Old Chief Joe, oldest of the Eyaks, said to know many stories, died that next winter. We have the good fortune, however, that young Annie Nelson, Galushia’s wife, had learned a lot of his stories, some of which we have in English in Birket-Smith and de Laguna 1938. We moreover have several hours of those in the form she much later told them to Krauss in Eyak (see Krauss 1982).

**Expedition of 1933**

Whatever her intentions or priorities, the summers of 1931 and 1932 Freddie returned only to Cook Inlet for further archeology there, without Birket-Smith, who remained ill. In any case, her primary purpose was still Eskimo archeology, even in summer 1933, when she finally returned to Cordova. Birket-Smith had published a “plan for an archeological expedition to Alaska for the summer of 1933” in the Danish geographical journal for that year (Birket-Smith 1933), involving Freddie, with no mention whatever of Eyak. Birket-Smith had recovered, and the expedition now also included a graduate student from the University of Washington, Norman Reynolds, along with her brother Wallace, and her
mother Grace. The 1933 priorities remain clear at least from Birket-Smith’s reports: “Da vi den 27. April kam til Cordova, var det endnu halvt vinter, og det var alt for tidligt at tage fat paa udgravningerne. Vi benyttede da den første tid til sudiet of de saakaldte Eyak-indianere... Det 11.Mai flyttede vi ud... [When we came to Cordova April 27, it was still half winter, and much too soon to undertake excavations. So we used that first period to study the so-called Eyak Indians... May 11 we moved on...]” (Birket-Smith 1935a:191, 192), and “On April 27th we arrived in Cordova in Prince William Sound and immediately started an ethnological investigation of the few surviving Eyak Indians. As soon as the weather permitted, however, we left for the shell heap Palugvik...” (Birket-Smith 1953:1). Freddie dates that departure May 14 (1956:ix), but the Cordova Daily Times reports it on May 11. Thus their main session with Eyak lasted at most 15 days – and subtracted from that must be the time during that period spent on outfitting and arranging for Prince William Sound Eskimo archeology. According to the Times: “The party outfitted in Cordova after spending some time here in preliminary work. Five tents, camp stoves, several hundred pounds of food, cataloguing books and personal effects comprised the equipment for a month or more of work which Miss de Laguna and her companions expect to put in on Hawkins Island.” The lack of any mention of the Eyak work may reflect the expedition priorities or the Times’s perennial silence on Eyak, or both.

The amount of time with Eyak after that in summer 1933 is still less clear. Birket-Smith returned to Cordova first, August 6 and left August 14 (Cordova Daily Times, August 7
and 14). All we know is that his week included a jaunt up the railroad to Chitina and back. The rest of the party returned from Prince William Sound August 25 to Cordova; Frederica de Laguna and Norman Reynolds did some more Eyak ethnography there, and left September 9, but that period included a boat trip along the East shore of Prince William Sound “exploring several sites and collecting Eskimo and Eyak folk tales” (de Laguna 1956:x). Therefore, aside from the Eyak tales on the boat, the sum total time for Eyak was less than three weeks.

Throughout, their main informant and interpreter was Galushia Nelson (1889-1939). As a boy, he had been taken (abducted) to Chemawa boarding school in Oregon, from 1902 to 1912. For more on him see Birket-Smith 1935b:89-94, Birket-Smith and de Laguna 1938:8-10, and Krauss 1982:15-17. Given his personality and love of his people, he was an ideal interpreter in both senses of the word, but at the same time, because of his absence, age 12-22, his active command of the Eyak language was somewhat limited or faulty, according to later memory. Galushia’s wife Annie also played a crucial role (Krauss 1982). Others were Old Man Dude and Johnny Stevens.

Published and Archival Results

The published 1933 expedition results for Eyak were the following. First was Frederica de Laguna’s report to the Cordova Daily Times, printed the day of her departure, a good column and a half long, about a quarter of which is about Eyak: “…It has always[!] been
believed that they were originally an offshoot of the Chugach Eskimo, who became absorbed by the Tlingits… Their language is certainly neither Eskimo nor Tlingit. Though it is too soon for us to make a definite statement, we think that the Eyak are a branch of the great Athabaskan nation of the interior…” The next publication was Birket–Smith’s “preliminary report on the Danish-American expedition to Alaska,” in Danish (Birket-Smith 1935a), 50 pages, about five of which are about Eyak: “… there are now only 11-12 adults left in the tribe, and if anything was to be salvaged of their past, we had arrived at the very last minute…The language is a kind of Athabaskan.” Next Freddie published two pages about Eyak ceremonial paddles she had gotten for the University of Pennsylvania Museum (de Laguna 1934a:57-59). There she remarks, in connection with her Athabaskan hypothesis, that “they do speak Athabaskan, but theirs is a very divergent dialect.” – a key point to which we shall return. In 1935, Birket-Smith published his Guld og Grønne Skove [Gold and Green Forests] (Birket-Smith 1935b) for Danish popular consumption about the expedition. About one-tenth of the book gives an account of their findings on Eyak, and also some revelations about the situation and treatment of the Eyaks in 1933 Cordova, giving a much more intimate glimpse of that than the main joint publication. Krauss has translated that subsection, with the feeling that it deserves to be more widely known. The chapter ends with a crucial new understanding of the position of the Eyak language, to which we shall return below. This new understanding is likewise included in Freddie’s 13-page “Preliminary Sketch of the Eyak Indians…” (de Laguna 1937).
In all fairness, even though it is abundantly clear that Birket-Smith himself before the 1933 expedition showed not the least enthusiasm for the Eyak part of the expedition, one might wonder in the first place why he then came two weeks before weather was to allow the Chugach archeology. More important still is that he not only went along with the Eyak phase, and made a major contribution to the 1938 book, but also in his reports afterward, shows a real personal enthusiasm for what was accomplished. At the very least it must be acknowledged that Birket-Smith was a very “good sport” about the Eyak, and no impediment to it. Still, one might wonder what this history would have been if Birket-Smith instead of Freddie had gone to Cordova in 1930.

The archival results are very disappointing, in that most of the fieldnotes or papers of Birket-Smith, Norman Reynolds, and Frederica de Laguna herself, it seems, have been lost. From Birket-Smith all we have is two pages of 30 Eyak words and names copied by L. L Hammerich out of an original text of 20 pages, probably in the 1950s. It was sadly confirmed by the Ethnographic Museum in Copenhagen and by his son to Krauss that Birket-Smith had destroyed all his ethnographic notes in his old age. Krauss was also in touch with Norman Reynolds’s widow in 1985, and ascertained that his boxes from his ethnography days in Alaska contained only books and no papers. All that is left from him is a total of 24 pages in his hand among the six small notebooks from the de Laguna collection. In the mid 1960s Freddie had kindly sent Krauss Xerox copies of all the notebooks that contained Eyak linguistic material, even bits thereof. That collection consists
of 12 pages from the 1930 Alaganik trip, no language; six small notebooks from 1933, 122 pages in her hand, plus, interspersed, the 24 mentioned in Reynolds’s, and 5 larger notebooks, 83 pages, all in her hand. Though there must have been more, neither the materials in possession of Freddie’s executrix Marie-Françoise Guédon, nor the materials taken to the Smithsonian NAA by Robert Leopold, reportedly contain any Eyak notebooks whatever, not even the originals of those Xeroxed for Krauss. Apparently there had never been any field journals or diaries during the 1930 or 1933 expeditions by Freddie either, or those too have disappeared.

The major result of the Eyak part of the expedition is Birket-Smith and de Laguna’s joint work *The Eyak Indians of Copper River Delta, Alaska* 1938. Of its 591 pages, 80 are folktales, 36 are “Critical Analysis of Previous Writers on the Eyak,” 101 are a comparative “Analysis of Eyak Ethnology” (mostly by Birket-Smith), leaving exactly half the book, pp 17-242 for “Description of Eyak Ethnology.” Given the format of the pages, ca. 1,700 character-count, that might not be much more than 100 pages in an average format, or perhaps 40 pages in the format of this journal. It is also virtually the last work ever done on Eyak ethnography. --Not so for Eyak language, fortunately.

**Linguistic Results**

The 1938 book does include, however, aside from words and phrases throughout, an appendix on the language. That Appendix played a crucial role in this history. It contains
some phonetics on two pages, an Eyak vocabulary of not much more than 500 entries, nine pages of grammar and phrases, and seven pages on kin terms (from Annie Nelson). Not all but most of the remaining archival material in Freddie’s hand or in Reynolds’s is here, but there is more here than in the notebooks too. We also have a typescript version of that Appendix very much refined from the notebooks, preparatory to the printing, probably datable to 1934, prepared by Freddie, 41 pages. “All words were obtained from Galushia Nelson, except those [31 in number] marked ‘Dude,’ which were obtained from Old Man Dude.” The published texts are all in English, but even the phrases and titles of the texts in Eyak provide the very first samples of the language more than a word or two in length. (The notebooks include one short text in Reynolds’s hand, the very first written down in the language, later edited by Krauss in 1966.) The appendix also presents the very first attempts at Eyak verb paradigms, possessive prefixes, etc. The transcriptions are significantly better than those of the previous century. Freddie had had training from Boas, and Reynolds training from Boas’s student Melville Jacobs. Written in a phonetic script for the first time, as anthropologists were taught to do in those days, the 1933 transcriptions, using barred l’s, q’s, x’s, ’ for glottal stop and glottalization, c for sh, and the like, gave the impression of much greater accuracy and credibility than they truly deserve, however, as they may be wrongly heard as often as right. Noting the inconsistent or variable results in their “scientific” transcription, between speakers and between transcribers, led them to believe in far greater variability than the language truly had, even to the point of believing
they were dealing with more than one dialect. There were at least two things Krauss was never able to convince Freddie about. 1. That her own transcriptions were fully as good as Norman Reynolds’s (though Krauss had a clear basis for comparison from those pages of fieldnotes). 2. That a “phonemic” transcription could be of as much value as a phonetic one, and could even demand a greater degree of understanding and rigor. Possibly also 3., that attested dialectal variation within Eyak was minimal, even considering Yakutat, which she only became aware of later, after 1949, – it seems doubtful that she had by then also been aware of and misled by the Veniaminov statement, of a “Yakutat” and Ugalents dialect, discussed above.

We have an undated letter from Freddie to Boas evidently April or May, 1935: “Here are the Eyak notes and vocabulary [probably the typescript]. You may keep them all summer… We will publish the vocabulary as an appendix to this report [eventually 1938].” She continues with recommending Reynolds for a follow-up investigation. We also have a crucial letter from Sapir to Boas, April 26, 1935: “Enclosed is Miss de Laguna’s manuscript on Eyak. Please return it when you are through with it as I have promised to give her a statement about it. I think you will find it interesting. [paragraph] As far as I can make it out it is nearer to Tlingit than to Athabaskan though it has quite a number of words and forms that are reminiscent of Athabaskan. It may turn out to be either a very divergent Tlingit dialect which has been influenced by Athabaskan or else an independent division of a linguistic group that includes Tlingit, Athabaskan and itself. It would be an important
language to investigate in either case…” Sapir then wonders where money might come from, and prefers it should be for someone “who already knows something of Tlingit and Athabaskan.”

It is thus difficult to see whether Freddie had first addressed Boas or Sapir about Eyak. Birket-Smith’s *Guld og Grønne Skove* has a foreword dated April 1935, and on p. 102 concludes the Eyak section “This, one is tempted to say ‘microscopic’, tribe of eleven twelve persons speak their own language, which is so different from the neighboring tribes’ that it is altogether unintelligible to them. Never in all my days have I heard such a fireworks of four-five hissing, spluttering, lisping and exploding consonants piled tight together as in the Eyak language, and it was not therefore without difficulty that we managed to write down a vocabulary. But it paid off! After our return we showed it to two men whom one might well call the most expert on North American Native languages, Professors Boas and Sapir, and both decided unanimously that we are dealing not just with a new language, but an altogether new language branch, possibly distantly related to Athabaskan and Tlingit. It seems so interesting to them that now they want to send an American expedition to study the Eyak language itself, before it is too late. Our discovery really opens whole new perspectives for the ethnography of that region.” Birket-Smith’s report has been very swift, the same month as Sapir’s letter. Freddie’s appears in her 1937 “Preliminary Report,” much less dramatically. “The vocabulary which Norman Reynolds and I collected has been examined by Dr. Boas and Dr. Sapir. The latter reports that the
phonetic system is suggestive of Tlingit, and the language itself may be a new dialect [sic, i.e. branch] of the Na-Dene group, coordinate with Athabaskan on the one hand and Tlingit on the other.” Sapir may have gotten or given this impression because he was intimately expert in some Athabaskan, far less so with Tlingit, so that he was more deeply struck by its difference from the Athabaskan he knew than by its difference from Tlingit.

Finally, in the chronology of this revelation, one is left wondering about Freddie’s use of the phrase in her much earlier note about the paddles, published January 1934, that Eyaks “do speak Athabaskan, but theirs is a very divergent dialect,” which foreshadows the 1935 Sapir revelation, without explanation, considering that her hypothesis at that time was that Eyak was (part of?) Athabaskan. In fact, taken at face value, Freddie’s statement is more correct than Sapir’s. In any case, however ironically, American scholarship was finally catching back up with the Russian, at least at the Copper River end – not that anyone was seeing it that way, of course.

We have good student notes by both Stanley Newman and Mary Haas for Sapir’s course on Comparative Athabaskan at Yale, starting January 28, 1936. From these it is possible reconstruct Sapir’s lectures in some detail. The initial lecture, including of course mention or listing of the relevant languages, seems to include no mention of Eyak (or Tlingit) at all. By then, near the end of his life and energies, far from the loftier interests of the beginning of his career, e.g. Na-Dene, even that with Sino-Tibetan, Sapir was far more preoccupied with Comparative Athabaskan at most, more in fact Navajo itself. At the 1984
Sapir Centenary Conference in Ottawa, Krauss remembers Freddie’s surprise that he had nothing to say about Sapir and Eyak. By that time, Mary had explained to Krauss, it was hard to get Sapir to teach a course even in Comparative Athabaskan itself, let alone anything beyond that. “His heart wasn’t in it.” (See Krauss 1986, for more on Sapir in this respect.)

Ironically also, the *magnum opus* on Eyak, the joint 1938 book, came out with no mention whatever about any revelations on the genetic position of the Eyak language, from Sapir or anyone else. It also showed no awareness that Eyak was or had been spoken much east of Copper River or Comptroller Bay. That latter ignorance shows that they had still not acquired any real knowledge of what the Russians had published on the Eyak language, in spite of the historical section of the book. Possibly the printing chronology of the 1938 book was such that the 1935 Sapir revelation came too late, though not too late to be included in the 1937 “preliminary” report.

Nothing came of the proposed follow-up. Freddie continued to recommend Reynolds. Boas and Sapir were polite, but they kept stipulating that the work be done by someone trained in Athabaskan and the like. Mary Haas (Swadesh), then a student of Sapir’s at Yale, was nominated: ACLS Bulletin No. 25, July 1936:745 (courtesy Victor Golla): Boas’s “Progress Report” 1935, notes “One very urgent piece of new field work has turned up that ought to be tended to. It is an investigation of the Eyak, a tribe which seems to be intermediate between Tlingit and Athapascan, the knowledge of which would be of
the greatest importance for an understanding of the relation between these languages. If this can be done, we should entrust Mrs. Swadesh with the work. The amount needed for the field work is estimated at $1000 to $1500” (Boas 1936). But it was the Depression, and Mary Haas told Krauss furthermore that she was advised that “Cordova was no place for an unaccompanied lady to go.” Sincere attempts to have Reynolds go as her assistant came unfortunately to nothing.

Much then intervened, including Sapir’s death, Boas’s death, World War II. Though Freddie did not directly return to Eyak, she evidently soon found she could not get away from it. As soon as she began her work on Tlingit at Yakutat in 1949, she discovered that Eyak had been there too, before Tlingit. She therewith began to develop a far broader perspective on Eyak geography and prehistory. This comes to light in her three volume 1972 masterpiece on Yakutat, and is made very clear in her 1981 *Handbook* chapter on Eyak. Thus, finally, Russian knowledge is regained, though still without the full realization that the Russians had all this clearly out in black and white, even color.

Freddie’s thought was never static, always in motion. This certainly was no less true of her thought about Eyak. Before April 1930, what little she knew was at most (1) the American confused mistake about Eyak, some kind of mixture at Cordova, then (2) that Eyak was a separate Athabaskan language that had come downriver to Cordova, then (2 ½?) somehow that Eyak was a specially divergent Athabaskan language, then (3) from Sapir that Eyak was an intermediate branch of Na-Dene between Tlingit and Athabaskan;
then, in a new direction (4), that Eyak had been the language of the coast at least as far as Yakutat. A few months before her death, Krauss visited her for the last time, and she alluded to new ideas (5) that Eyak was once a far more widespread language still, of a once far more powerful people. During the very last weeks of her long life, she spoke extensively to Marie-Françoise Guédon of these ideas. It now remains for Marie-Françoise to pass Freddie’s last thoughts on Eyak on to us.

**Note on the Name Eyak**

It is altogether clear that the origin of the name *Eyak* is the local Chugach Eskimo name of the Eyak village site near the mouth of the Eyak River on Eyak Lake at Mile 6, in Chugach *Igya’aq*. In this the initial *I*- is pronounced as the *-i*- in *sing*, the *-g*- as a voiced fricative gamma, and the *-ya’aq* has not the vowel of *yak* as in the English pronunciation of the name, but rhymes more or less rather with *hawk*, except that the final consonant is of course the Eskimo-Aleut back velar *-q*, not mid-mouth English *-k*. Both syllables are accented, the first with a vowel of short duration, and the second is of quite long duration, because the *-a’a*- is in fact the result of the dropping of an old back velar voiced fricative Eskimo-Aleut *-r-* (as e.g. Parisian “*r*”) in an older form of the word still widely found as such in Yup’ik, *igyaraq*. The word *igyaraq* or *igya’aq* has the basic meaning “throat, gullet,” and also very commonly, “outlet of a lake into a river.” Not surprisingly, it is therefore also commonly found as a place-name elsewhere in Alaska, e.g., *Igiugik* in that
very position on Lake Iliamna, where the -u- represents the -u- of English dug and the second -g- represents the -r-.

The first non-Russian spellings of the name were written Ihiak (Petroff in 1880 [1884]), Iggiak (Jacobsen 1883 ms.), but by the time we have Americans, it was already Eyak (Abercrombie in 1884 [1900], Allen in 1885 [1887]). Harriman, as we have seen, wrote Eyak. Probably because it was never spelled *Eyawk, the local English became Eyak with the second syllable vowel as in yak, a “spelling pronunciation.” That has remained also the “standard” [!] academic pronunciation, though Krauss often heard it pronounced with the first syllable as in eye, as that “spelling pronunciation” evidently had some currency in “outside” academe. Krauss heard that e.g. from Harry Hoijer in the 1960’s, who may have gotten it from Sapir, for all we know.

Obviously, the original name Igya’aq was given to the village site because it was first occupied by Chugach. When that site was taken over by the Eyak Indians, possibly as early as some point in the 18th century, the Chugach name was retained by them, adapted as ’i:ya:q, somewhat predictably. The gamma is gone, into the lengthening of the first vowel, since the Eyak language has no gamma. The English spelling Eyak could perhaps come equally well from the Eyak ’i:ya:q or Chugach Igya’aq. Harriman’s “Eyak Indians” may only have been his spontaneous phrase and/or it might, by 1899, already reflect some established local English usage. Certainly, that latter was so by 1930, and by that time, Cordova was also the only place left where the Eyak language was spoken. It was therefore
entirely natural and logical that, through Frederica de Laguna, *Eyak* became the name for the people and language.

There is some irony in this history too, that the name was the Chugach name which became the definitive academic name for the Eyak Indian people who made their “last stand” at that site, to be (re-)“discovered” there by Freddie as such – at such a late point in their history, and at such an extreme point in their distribution.

Currently, the “Eyak (Village) Corporation” is over 90% Chugach, for two reasons. First is the near-disappearance of Eyak Indians, and second, the partial depopulation of the Chugach Prince William Sound villages, with urbanization of those people at Cordova. By now there is a new real question locally of who the “Eyaks” really are. “Eyak (Village) Corporation members” is factually definable, but “Eyaks” is now becoming ambiguous with an irony that is painful.

**EYAK LANGUAGE WORK AFTER DE LAGUNA**

Given the preceding history, clearly no modern linguistic fieldwork was done on Eyak until after Frederica de Laguna. Beginning in 1940, however, there have been four significant contributions. The first three were brief periods of a month or so of fieldwork, Harrington in 1940, Li in 1952, Austerlitz in 1961, all of whom produced documentation of much better quality and greater quantity than their predecessors. Harrington’s work with Eyak was done quite “independently,” i.e. in no collegial sense, so is motivated rather
exclusively by whatever moved Harrington (see below). Li’s and Austerlitz’s are part of the larger (pre-Chomskyan!) academic perspective. Krauss’s is in a different class altogether, being a long-term commitment, and the only such. This last phase of our history will be dealt with in less detail, in part because there is so much more of it, but also in part because it is anticlimactic, after Freddie.

**Harrington 1940**

John Peabody Harrington (1884-1961) worked for the Smithsonian. This man very probably was the last to write down more dying languages than any other in linguistic history. He certainly must be given credit for being early to recognize the enormity of the American language extinction tragedy, and for doing something about it. Not a nice man, he is reputed to have made a habit of instructing his language consultants never to work with other linguists after him, for instance He had a paranoid streak, and was quite secretive with his work. Anti-Semitic as well, he was predictably resentful of Boas and Sapir. At the same time, he evidently felt a need to publish on comparative issues, including Athabaskan and Tlingit, i.e. to make his mark, in his own way, in that arena also. Fortunately, his publications are a very minor part of his accomplishments, which must be recognized for what they truly are, namely an incomparable corpus of terminal or near-terminal documentation of American languages. Eyak became one of those. Harrington must certainly have heard of Eyak through Freddie, though no acknowledgement of that is
evident. He did his work on it in 1940 without her knowledge. Harrington had already spent 33 years recording Native languages of the American West, including extensive work in Athabaskan, by the time he came to Yakutat to work with George Johnson, and was already familiar with Tlingit since 1939, having worked with two speakers in Seattle.

George Johnson was born 1892 probably at Bering River Village and came to Katalla as a child. Eyak presumably was his first language, but Tlingit surely was a close second. We do not have the date of his moving to Yakutat, but Johnson told Krauss he had probably not spoken Eyak for 30 years (i.e. since 1910) before Harrington came to work with him. One can easily see from the Harrington material that Tlingit was Johnson’s dominant language in 1940, much steadier than his Eyak.

We have a good account of Harrington’s work with Johnson in Elaine L. Mills’s guide to the Harrington papers at the NAA (Mills 1981, Volume I:8-14). She notes that Harrington wanted to bring Johnson to Seattle, but ended up instead having to go to Yakutat to work with Johnson. He stayed there May 12 – June 14, 1940, working “eight hours a day” with Johnson – Johnson told Krauss “about six hours.” There is no question of Harrington’s interest in Tlingit. In fact he ended up writing a paper on comparative Athabaskan and Tlingit, his so-called “Phonematic daylight in Lhiinkit, Navajo of the North” (Harrington 1945) – in which Eyak does not figure. The article is a competent enough presentation of Tlingit phonemes. However, that had already been done remarkably well by Boas in 1917– ignored by Harrington. What few comparative remarks Harrington
makes in the article show he has no idea whatever of real comparative method, the rigorous process that had become so well established by then in linguistics to show genetic relationship e.g. through regular sound correspondences, as opposed to vague surface resemblances. It seems certain that Harrington’s reason, at least his original reason, for working with Johnson was that Johnson was bilingual with Eyak. (Perhaps, very secondarily, it might also have bee that Johnson represented the Yakutat dialect of Tlingit, but not that Johnson was known for being an exceptional font of Tlingit knowledge.)

Clearly, the material Harrington got from Johnson is predominantly Tlingit, the Tlingit normally given first, (“Y.” [Yakutat]), then the Eyak equivalent, if any (“C.” [Cordova]). The latter is often missing, or merely noted or dismissed as “= Y.”, while the former is perhaps never missing. One cannot tell, however, that Harrington was disappointed or frustrated that he was getting less Eyak, and less good Eyak, than Tlingit, or, from this material, just what the nature of Harrington’s interest in Eyak as such was. Here it seems to be after all just an accompaniment, where available, to the Tlingit. It is obviously dangerous to play guessing games on a psyche like Harrington’s, but apparently he lost interest in or gave up plans for using the Eyak comparatively. Hence Harrington never published on it. Harrington was of course a good sleuth for finding last speakers, but never seems to have considered going to Cordova, where he had to know there were of course several more speakers, or working with Annie Nelson (Harry), who had recently moved to Yakutat.

The only printed mention of Eyak we have from Harrington is in the Smithsonian
Annual Report for 1941 (1942:51-52): “Dr. Harrington then proceeded in May to the study of the Atchat, or Eyak, Tribe, which was found to have occupied the entire eastern half of the Gulf of Alaska, a stretch of coast 350 miles long, extending from Prince William Sound in the west to Lituya Bay in the east. This tribe has earlier been called Ugalenz and Eyak, but the real name of the tribe has never been known, Atchat, meaning ‘on this side’ or ‘opposite,’ referring to location on the Gulf of Alaska and opposite the islands. This language also proved to be closely related to the Navaho, and, as might be expected, more closely related to the languages of British Columbia and the Navaho than is the island language.” There is no Eyak ethnonym remotely resembling Atchat. Rather, that must be the Eyak demonstrative 'a:nch'aht “from here, hence,” or possibly, from Johnson’s Eyak, 'a:nch’a:t “this side.” Freddie might, in the end, have agreed that Eyaks once lived as far south as Lituya Bay, but not on the evidence Harrington could have had. Harrington is of course right that Eyak is related to Canadian Athabaskan and Navajo more closely than is Tlingit (“the island language”?), but this is hardly new.

Definitely, Harrington’s interest was overwhelmingly lexicon. He transcribed no texts, and got very little into the grammar. He did though take a very broad interest in the natural history, especially flora and fauna, and placenames. His notes are full of local lore of many kinds, including current salmon prices, but they could hardly be considered either disciplined linguistics or ethnography. Harrington did have an excellent ear, however, and from the first, he was transcribing both the Tlingit and the Eyak in his own idiosyncratic
but essentially adequate writing system. He was far from infallible, so made frequent mistakes, but his writing performance is good enough that the mistakes are at least definable. The Harrington transcriptions are thus in fact the first essentially adequate ones for Eyak ever. If they were the last we had, we could at least verify with them what we had hypothesized philologically from the earlier transcriptions we have of Eyak.

In terms of quantity, there may be some 1,500 Eyak items in the corpus, so in this respect too, Harrington surpasses all previous Eyak work. In terms of sheer paper bulk, it should be added, since Harrington had the habit of taking a new sheet of paper, often foolscap size, for each new word, the number of microfilm frames listed for the collection by Mills is for at least 3,547 sheets of paper, a good hundred sheets a day. One section, of 221 pages, is quite different, being a rough typescript draft, with the title “Southern Peripheral Athapaskawan in Alaska and Canada,” “By John P. Harrington and Robert W. Young.” Late in 1939, Harrington had traveled in Canada with Young, working on Sarcee, Carrier, Sekani, Beaver, Chipewyan, with a view towards comparative Athabaskan. The Tlingit and Eyak were certainly to be connected with that, but the 221 pages we have show no sign of that or of Robert W. Young. All that is present is the Yakutat fauna and flora information, including terminology from Tlingit and Eyak. By far the longest part is a disquisition on salmon, most of that with no Tlingit or Eyak at all, 89 pages, other fauna 89 pages, flora 41 pages. Throughout there are about 374 Tlingit and 238 Eyak terms. Harrington’s Eyak from George Johnson must moreover be used with care, as Johnson’s
Eyak was so rusty, and Harrington’s approach and judgment such, that the Eyak forms are too often contrived, or forced translations of the Tlingit.

Harrington was not any kind of “mainstream” linguist, needless to say, and his career was such that his work or data were hardly shared with his contemporaries. Freddie became aware of it only when she George Johnson told her about it in 1949. She never saw it until Krauss sent her copies, as it was being prepared in the 1960s for microfilming.

**Fang-Kuei Li 1952**

Fang-Kuei Li (Li Fang Kuei, Li Fanggui; 1902-1987) came first to the US in 1924. As a student of Sapir’s at Chicago, his 1927 MA thesis was a study of Sarcee verb stems from Sapir’s 1922 fieldnotes. (The Sarcee had made Sapir tone-happy, and Sapir was pleased to have a tone-sensitive bright young “Chinaman” working for him.) Summer 1928, while Sapir was working on Hupa in California (“no tones!”), Li worked nearby on Wailaki and Mattole (no tones either). His PhD dissertation (1930) was the Mattole. In 1929, looking especially for more Athabaskan tone, and of course counting on Li’s ear, Sapir sent Li north to Chipewyan and Hare. Li came back with data showing tone alright, but the reverse of what Sapir expected from what he had found in Sarcee (1922), Kutchin (1923) and Navajo (1926). Krauss believes that the result, between the already revered Sapir and the deferent discreet young “Chinaman” was the opposite of fruitful, but rather that the study of Athabaskan syllable nuclei became taboo, and, in any case(?), Li returned to China in 1929.
Li’s last Athabaskan paper, brilliant, was “Chipewyan Consonants” (not vowels!; Li 1930). That was the end of Li’s Athabaskan career. After that Li made an enormous lifetime contribution to the study and classification of Chinese and Tai languages. He returned to the US in 1949, at Seattle until his retirement in 1969, then Hawaii.

After Freddie’s first summer at Yakutat in 1949, her realization that Eyak had been there – and was still there in the sense that two Eyak speakers originally from Katalla (George Johnson) and Cordova (Anna Nelson Harry) lived there – in preparation for a much wider investigation there in 1952, she took the brilliant initiative to enlist Fang-Kuei Li from Seattle to work on Eyak language. She got a grant from Wenner-Gren to support Li for that, separately, but in connection of course with her larger project.

Li spent about six weeks in Yakutat and then Cordova, June-July 1952. In 1965 Li kindly allowed Krauss to make Xerox copies of all his Eyak notes. We have two notebooks from George Johnson, 41 and 22 pp., then one from Anna Nelson Harry, of 42 pp., and then one from Minnie and Scar Stevens in Cordova, 24 pp. The Johnson notebooks contain about 750 words and phrases, and six texts, the Anna one about 700 words and phrases, and one text, and the Stevens one about 480 words and phrases. The Li materials thus then constituted not only the most extensive Eyak lexicon, but also included seven texts, the first (not counting the few brief attempts by Reynolds in 1933) we have for Eyak. Throughout, especially with Anna, there are moreover the beginnings of verb conjugations, for at least a step beyond Harrington and Rezanov in the direction of exploring Eyak grammar.
transcription throughout is fairly good, at the level of Harrington, but using a system obviously from Sapir.

The Johnson texts are extremely halting or “stiff,” especially at first, but limber up somewhat. The notebook from Anna is the first work with her, not counting her 1933 kin terms and “background” contribution then, prompting her first husband. Li’s work with Minnie and Scar Stevens, mother and father of Sophie and Marie, the last two speakers of Eyak, is the only documentation we have directly from them.

In addition to the notebooks, we also have from Li his file-slips, of about 1,200 3 x 5” slip, Xeroxed, shingled, onto ca. 140 pages, and containing about 2,000 Eyak words and phrases. These are largely, but not entirely, copied from his notebooks, the contents thereof organized alphabetically by the stem of the word. This thus begins to be an organization of his data into an inventory, or dictionary of Eyak, and is something of a standard part of the results of good linguistic fieldwork in the best tradition.

Li’s only publication from this work is the four-page article (Li 1956) comparing the -l instrumental noun suffix in Athabaskan and Eyak. Li concentrated rigorously on the suffix, but treats us to a number of insightful comments: “a few words may be said about the relationship of Eyak to Athabaskan, as their relationship has not yet been clearly stated. In vocabulary, Eyak differs tremendously from Athabaskan in general… A fair number of words can be directly compared with the Athabaskan… Regular phonological correspondences can be obtained from such comparisons.” Li does not, however, take the
time to make them explicit. “Eyak is not a tonal language.” On the top of his first page of notes from Johnson Li has marked “1. check tones.” He then proceeds dutifully to write tone-marks throughout all his Eyak notes, in spite of this obvious conclusion he must soon have come to. He must have taken the trouble out of extreme caution for his debt to posterity, especially in view of Sapir’s enthusiasm for tone in this language family. “On the whole it seems to me that while Eyak is definitely related to Athabaskan, it cannot be considered as one of the Athabaskan languages. Perhaps Sapir’s Na-Dene group may be said to have definitely two members, Athabaskan and Eyak, what other members may eventually be included will remain to be worked out.” Here Li is distancing himself from Sapir in questioning whether even Tlingit is genetically related to Athabaskan-Eyak, let alone Haida. Further, any question whether it was Krauss or Li who finally made clear the position of Eyak with regard to Athabaskan should herewith be definitively answered – unless of course it was Freddie: Eyaks “do speak Athabaskan, but theirs is a very divergent dialect.”

This brief Eyak interlude was the only time Li came back to, or near, the Athabaskan phase of his distinguished linguistic career. Here too, we have Freddie to thank for getting Li to do it.

**Austerlitz 1961**

Robert Paul Austerlitz (1923-1994) came from multilingual childhood in Hungarian-
Romanian-Transylvania to New York in 1938. His training and career were at Columbia there, but his interest and experience was very broad in real languages, most especially Finno-Ugric-Uralic, and in Giliak (or Nivx) from Sakhalin, which he did in Japan in the 1950s. Eyak was to be documented by yet another distinguished linguist, this time on something of a “lark,” by Austerlitz, who, unlike Li, had no particular experience in any languages related to Eyak.

Krauss had come to the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, in fall of 1960, and promptly began efforts to establish work with Alaska Native languages. By spring of 1961, he had obtained funding for basic survey and documentary work from the National Science Foundation, with a generous grant of $38,000 (in 1961 dollars). Krauss circulated a poster, featuring a woodcut of an Eskimo fishing through the ice, to recruit fieldworkers for the program, expenses paid plus $60 a week (token) salary. In April 1961 Austerlitz responded, thinking of Aleut. By May Krauss and Austerlitz were corresponding about Athabaskan; in July Catherine McClelland, a major disciple and colleague of Freddie’s, who had worked with her in Yakutat, had strongly suggested Eyak to Austerlitz, and by the end of that month, he wrote Krauss he was “sold on Eyak.” Reviewing that correspondence, Krauss is reminded that he was merely happy to have Austerlitz, to do anything, and cannot take the credit for the decision that Austerlitz work on Eyak.

Krauss insisted that Austerlitz get immediately in touch with Li, who responded helpfully, and on his way to Alaska, Austerlitz spent August 17-20 in Seattle, conferring
with Li. August 20-22 Austerlitz was in Yakutat, August 22 – September 19 he spent in Cordova, then September 19-22 he was again in Yakutat, so really had about one month in all for Eyak. He managed to work briefly with Anna Nelson Harry in Yakutat at both ends of his trip, but most of his time was spent in Cordova, with Lena Saska Nacktan Marie Smith. Lena Saska Nacktan (1902-1971) had been married, for the last time, to a Chugach man, but divorced, enjoyed speaking Eyak, and in the last few years before 1961, had spent a lot of time talking and refreshing her Eyak with Minnie Stevens. Li had worked briefly with her and her husband Scar Stevens in 1952. Minnie was the last of the “old generation,” born perhaps before 1880, and certainly the last person who routinely spoke Eyak. So it is correct to say that the era of routine or traditional conversation in Eyak ended when she died, in March 1961, a few months before Austerlitz’s arrival. However, not only was Lena’s Eyak still “refreshed” with her, but “Grandma Stevens” had kept speaking Eyak with her daughters Sophie (1911-1992) and Marie (1918-), who therewith became the last two speakers of Eyak.

From Li’s work with George Johnson, Anna Nelson Harry, and the Stevenses, we have about 600 notebook pages, with perhaps 4,000 elicitations, including a fair amount of duplication. The largest part is vocabulary, and for this Li included special effort on systematic flora-fauna work, which is perhaps his most important contribution. Austerlitz also attempted to go into the grammar some, perhaps a bit more than Li, but with less background for it. He also got a small amount of text, but rather artificial, as mostly
translation from English. The quality of Austerlitz’s transcription is perhaps not quite so
good as Li’s, again because he had not had the previous experience with Athabaskan that Li
had had. Finally, we also have a six-page dittoed hand out from a linguistics class taught by
Austerlitz at Columbia, Oct. 10 1961, consisting of a phoneme inventory, basic verb
conjugations, three-line text, list of 48 animal names, mostly mammals, and statistical
analysis of biota terms (monosyllabic, polysyllabic, loans; 173 fauna, 68 flora).

Austerlitz recognized that Anna Nelson Harry had outstanding talents, and for a while
entertained hopes to return to Yakutat at Christmastime 1961, but other priorities
intervened, and Austerlitz could not continue with Eyak.

**Summary of Work Before Krauss**

Here we pause to take stock of the totality of the work on Eyak through Austerlitz. The
period 1778-1867 is quite remarkable both for the number of primary and secondary
sources. The primary include six formal vocabularies, one of which is 1,128 words long, and
the secondary, including important maps, statements, and studies of the data, are
adequate to show the geographical distribution of Eyak, its dialectal uniformity, its genetic
position, and, in woefully inadequate transcription, a very poor picture of perhaps 15% of
its vocabulary, and practically no grammar. Frederica De Laguna essentially begins the
recovery of that. Harrington, Li, and Austerlitz all finally transcribe better, but with many
mistakes, as none worked long enough to start learning the language or its system, to hear it
with consistent accuracy, to make much headway into Eyak grammar, or to get any quantity of text in it. There had been no steady progress, nothing building on previous work. Thus even the accumulated lexicon is heavily duplication, such that a skillful collation of the total, if any heroic philologist were to attempt that, might at best be found to represent somehow 25% percent of the vocabulary of the language. Only a small fraction of that could be considered clearly represented, given the variation or fuzziness from the frequency of mishearing. That problem, especially with verbs, which are highly inflected and derived, would be exacerbated by the opacity necessarily resulting from near total lack of grammatical analysis.

**Krauss 1961-**

Michael Krauss (1934-) has always gravitated toward the cause of minority and endangered languages. His training in linguistics, 1953-1958, perhaps most influenced by Martinet at Columbia and Paris, was at the very end of a “classical period,” when Indo-European and describing (documenting) American languages as Boas, Sapir, and Bloomfield had done, were still important, i.e. before all that was eclipsed by the Chomskyan redefinition of linguistics. Inspired by Edouard Bachellery at Paris, Krauss took to Celtic, and spent 1956-1957 with Gaelic on Inis Meáin, Ireland. Then Harvard, which had significant Gaelic expertise in its custodial staff, and also a Celtic department, did two good things: it rubberstamped Krauss’s dissertation, and prevented him from
straying down the street too much to MIT. Krauss then spent two postdoctoral years, 1958-1960 on Iceland and the Faeroe Islands. The marginal survival of Gaelic and the spectacular strength of both Icelandic and Faeroese had a profoundly formative effect on Krauss’s approach to language. The University of Alaska hired him from the Faeroes to come to Fairbanks, as a Visiting Professor on Carnegie Foundation money to establish new disciplines, in this case linguistics. The offer was irresistible to Krauss, given his experience and agenda. His “bread and butter,” however, he found was teaching French and heading a department newly organized as Linguistics and Foreign Languages. Alaska Native language work was to be supported by NSF grants, and NSF indeed came through.

During the 1960s, it was still too early to agitate with any success for Native language rights, bilingual education, or for any but subterranean work to alleviate the suppression of Alaska Native languages in school or society. At the same time, though, the need to document those languages before they – necessarily – disappeared was obvious and recognized.

Under those clear conditions, given both that Eyak was much closer to extinction than any other Alaskan language, and given its key genetic position between Athabaskan and Tlingit, Eyak was of the highest academic priority, by far. It was of course at the other end of the scale socially, except in the all-important symbolic sense that even the smallest of nations matters, or where do we draw the line?

Krauss had Austerlitz doing the Eyak work on the 1961 grant, and among others, two
very competent workers, Irene Reed and Martha Teeluk, with Yupik, Alaska’s largest and strongest language group, while he himself began his career with Athabaskan at Minto, near Fairbanks. He also visited the fieldworkers, including Austerlitz in Cordova, where he met Marie Smith and Lena Saska Nacktan, and made his first few Eyak transcriptions, especially to establish or confirm some basic sound correspondences between Eyak and Athabaskan. In 1962 Krauss continued his Athabaskan fieldwork, a statewide survey to begin to define Alaskan Athabaskan languages. By 1963, however, Krauss realized that the urgent Eyak work was not going to be done by Austerlitz or anyone else with the experience Krauss by then had with Athabaskan, so he determined to commit himself to Eyak – on a long-term basis.

Krauss’s primary Eyak data, fieldnotes so far span 1961-2006, 45 years. These need, however, to be classed into three periods: 1. intensive 1963-1965, 2. occasional or intermittent 1971, 1972, 1980, 1987, and 3. epilogue 1993-. We shall return to the chronology after an account of the Eyak speakers then still alive. Needless to say, Krauss investigated as thoroughly as possible to find all remaining speakers of Eyak, following all leads, not only in Cordova and Yakutat, of course, but also Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Seattle. In the 1960s there were still in fact six, as follows. 1. Anna Nelson Harry and 2. George Johnson at Yakutat; 3. Lena Saska Nacktan, 4. Marie Smith, 5. Sophie Borodkin, and 6. Mike Sewak at Cordova. All but the last two have been mentioned as having worked already with previous contributors. Sophie, again, was the older sister of Marie, and Mike
Sewak (pronounced “Sea-walk”) was from Bering River Village – Katalla (ca. 1880 – ca. 1967), by 1963 blind and mostly deaf, living in the Cordova hospital, speaking mostly Tlingit and English, with very partial recall of Eyak. Here Krauss has the pleasure to say that every one of these persons sympathetically understood the purpose of preserving as good as possible a record of the Eyak language, and worked obligingly to the very best of their ability with Krauss to that end. Looking back at that record, Krauss considers himself exceedingly fortunate in that regard, among others, to have been in the right place at the right time, to preserve as much has proved possible at such a late date, thanks of course to the good will of every single person who remembered any of the Eyak language. As a result, Krauss was able carry out his fieldwork with extreme efficiency and luck.

**Eyak speakers 1961-**

Here follows an account of the Eyak speakers still alive as of 1961, and of Krauss’s work with each.

1. Anna Nelson Harry then of Yakutat was the most fluent still, the only one who seemed truly most comfortable speaking Eyak. In fact, she took the most initiative to speak Eyak conversationally with Krauss, who remembers with great pleasure getting over the hump of beginning to converse and work in Eyak with her. She also had a highly creative personality, spoke with verve and “creativity” in Eyak. That included an ability to take something like poetic liberty with it, to etymologize imaginatively, or even answer
questions that way when Krauss pushed the edge, e.g. “hot cocoa” was glibly “eagle soup.”

See In Honor of Eyak: the Art of Anna Nelson Harry (1982) for more about her and her profound literary art. Because she was full of such vitality, and also because she had become rather deaf, would not accept a hearing aid, so that one had to shout, it was difficult to get her to sit still for long, or go over grammatical questions (“’idahshew ’el: [can you say this:] …?). At the same time, Krauss could ask her to tell a particular story, and perhaps the next day she would sit down and thoughtfully tell it, with a far away look, yet onto a tape recorder, being the only one who was comfortable with that. It is from her that we have perhaps 90% of the connected text preserved in Eyak. As noted above, she had worked with the 1933 group, Li, and Austerlitz. Krauss worked directly with her in 1963, 1965, 1971, and 1972. In 1972, as Krauss was walking out of her house for the last time, she muttered to herself – as if to him a lesson – “te’ya’xəsiyah,” which caused Krauss to wheel about. Te’ya’xəsiyah would mean “I ate a fish,” but this sounded odd, and lacked that final consonant, so could not be accounted for by the Eyak grammar Krauss thought by then he knew all of. He double-checked, Anna confirmed that, and it meant something like “I think I’ll (cook myself and) eat a fish,” as she took out a frying-pan. Lena in Cordova later explained that she had heard that, some old people used to talk that way, and cautiously came up with some further examples of that type of verb conjugation, confirming a whole “new” obsolescent Eyak conjugation, named now the “s-optative,” which is starting to turn up now also, marginally, in Athabaskan.
2. George Johnson of Yakutat, though quite rusty in Eyak, having spoken it regularly perhaps only until he was twenty (1912), was already a grizzled veteran of linguistic work with Harrington, Li, and Austerlitz. A highly practical and modern man, with a toy-breed dog in his lap, not one to be preoccupied looking backwards, it is remarkable that he was as obliging as he was, during fishing season, to sit with Krauss. Krauss does remember Johnson protesting that he “had taught Harrington all he knew.” Krauss should have asked Li and Austerlitz if he said the same thing to them. Krauss worked with Johnson only in 1963.

3. Lena Saska Nacktan was probably the most important of all the Eyak speakers for Krauss. Though still babysitting grandchildren, she seemed to have the most time and above all the most inexhaustible patience. It seems she had taken deliberate pains to keep up or refresh her Eyak, e.g. as noted above, with Minnie Stevens, sharing a certain kind of interest in or value for the language, even for its actual structure. There were many special rewards for working with her. For example, it was she who told Krauss, when he must have slacked off momentarily and asked a question that could be considered redundant: “\textit{dik’sh dətlə: ˈəw ˈu:ləˈylə\textipa{q}ə\textipa{q}əh} [shouldn’t you already be able to figure that one out by yourself by now]?” At the same time, after a whole day of conjugating verbs or the like: “When I was a kid learning this language, I certainly never thought some day I’d be sitting in a hotel room all day long going over this stuff.” But with her it was possible to go over long lists of questions Krauss had prepared during the intervening academic year, e.g.
checking derivational possibilities of verbs.

Lena could be perfectly objective or detached. “I died yesterday” would be no problem. There was one lapse, when Krauss was uncertain about vowel length in negative future forms, and “I won’t bring you water” came up, and she replied that one couldn’t say that in Eyak, as “we Eyaks would never refuse to bring someone water.” When Lena got peeved, which had to have been often, even that was productive, as she’d come up with relevant and colorful Eyak remarks such as “’a’t siłəqahyəq’i’t əs̱h k’ulə’kk’ələ’k’ə’kk’ələ’k’ə’kk’ələ’k’ə’kk’ələ’k’ə’kk’ələ’k’ə’kk’ələ’k’ə’kk’ələ’k’ə’kk’ələ’k’ə°wih [I sure feel like someone’s reaching all the way across the inside of my head],” i.e. with probing questions. She was meticulous about authenticity: “Now put that down with a question mark because I’m not sure it’s right,” and would glance at the paper to make sure the question mark was there. She was the perfect partner and counterbalance to Anna: “Yes, Anna might say that, but I wouldn’t.” With her Krauss went over all but the latest of Anna’s taped texts, with great care and objectivity, e.g. even helping to explain with truncated sentences or words what the momentary abandoned intention had been.

At first, sometimes Lena could not remember even a relatively basic word, such as “navel,” would feel bad about it: “I’ll think about it and it might come to me,” and the next day, “All night I couldn’t sleep and finally it came to me, k’uji’l’k.” Later on, with reference to some kind of white sheet fungus found in rotting trees, “When I was a little girl, I remember that stuff, and I didn’t know the name of it, maybe could use it for doll-clothes. There was this old man, used to sit on the pier. I was afraid of him, but I asked him
about it, and he told me ‘The old people used to call that ...’ -- It’ll come to me,” and next day, “All night I couldn’t sleep, but then I remember what he called it, ła: or ła:n,” something that might not have been heard for a century already in 1963.

At one point Krauss observed that there seemed to be no Eyak equivalent to the plentiful supply of auxiliary verbs in English indicating unexplained obligation, e.g. “I must/should/oughta/gotta/hafta/better go,” which Lena agreed Eyak seemed to lack. When Krauss pressed her on this, she answered, “well, I guess then you’d have to say what’ll happen if you don’t go.”

Toward the end of the intensive fieldwork period, Krauss was calculating that he had salvaged or resurrected a very large proportion of the Eyak vocabulary left in living memory. He had tried his best to not only to write down what was offered, e.g. randomly in texts, but also of course to get as much as possible through guided elicitation, of two types. First, semantically guided elicitation, by subject i.e. asking systematically for all body-parts, bird species, or sewing-stitches, at least as a stimulus, allowing for freer associations and tangents, but eventually back to the list. A second type is elicitation guided both semantically and phonologically. A first and most obvious subtype of that is checking previous Eyak data. By 1963 Krauss had all that noted above in this long history, including by 1964 also Li’s and Austerlitz’s. The earlier materials, poorly transcribed, that had not been accounted for could be reelicited by “can you think of anything that means something like X, that sounds anything like Y?,” i.e. by suggesting both a meaning and sounds
somehow resembling the word. This way, especially with Lena and her patience and her discipline, it was possible to resurrect 97% of Rezanov, and of course better than that with the more modern sources where unclear. A second subtype of such elicitation was from lists in cognate languages, i.e. Athabaskan, by going through a Chipewyan or Hupa or Navajo stem-list or dictionary, making the expected changes via the known sound-correspondences, and asking if Eyak had anything sounding like the result, meaning anything like shown in Athabaskan. Again, especially with Lena, since about one-third of Athabaskan stems have cognates in Eyak, often that was a relatively efficient way to find new Eyak vocabulary. – The point that Eyak is not Athabaskan, but coordinate with it, means that Alaskan Athabaskan is in principle no closer to Eyak than Navajo is. It is a pity that in the 1960s we had no full list or dictionary for Alaskan Athabaskan we could use, especially Ahtna, to test that.

Finally, one last method of elicitation had not been tried, a kind of desperate method, guided purely by sound, i.e. systematically going through all potential “words” the permissible order of permissible sounds in the language might allow: “do you have any word that sounds like X (meaning anything)?” for allowable sequences not yet attested as words or parts thereof. This of course involves many thousands of possibilities, as if systematically going through English, getting to g-d (god, good goad, guide, gad; goed? goud?, gid?, geed??, ged??...), in Eyak necessarily adding some very versatile affixes to help the many thousands of forms to test to sound like nouns or verbs. With Lena, whose
integrity was absolute, Krauss offered a (1965) $5 bonus for each new stem so discovered, and with a week of such tedious work, Lena came up with about 50 new Eyak stems, all of very low frequency. Only with Lena It is certainly fair to say that the largest part of the grammar and vocabulary, and verification, came from Lena.

4. Marie Smith Jones (née Stevens) was the youngest and is now, age 87, the last speaker of Eyak. First to work with her was Austerlitz – as Li was able to work with her mother and father. In some ways, in part because her English is the best of all Eyak speakers’, she was the best to work with for anyone beginning to study Eyak. By her own account, her Eyak is more limited to household conversation, which she kept up with her mother until her death in 1961. She considers what is conventionally referred to as “deep talk” beyond her. Since 1961 she has used or spoken Eyak mainly with Austerlitz and Krauss, as she did not speak that frequently with her sister Sophie. Since Sophie’s death in 1994 she has worn the mantle of “last speaker” with grace and dignity. Krauss worked with her in 1963 especially, also 1964 and 1965, then again in 1980, to do some belated checking of verb classes (by what conjugations can be used with them), which she helped greatly with. She continues to help to the best of her ability with remaining questions which occur to Krauss.

5. Sophie Borodkin (née Stevens) was largely bypassed by both Austerlitz and Krauss, in part because there were speakers easier to work with in Cordova in the 1960s. Austerlitz advised Krauss that because of her alcoholism it was hopeless to try to work with her.
However, much later, in 1987, Krauss found her to be in much better condition, and spent a very productive week working with her in Cordova. She had a certain amount of new vocabulary, and perhaps most important, she was able to use and explain some very important absolutely basic but infrequently used (or infrequently elicited!) forms of verbs. Finally working with Sophie, Krauss learned also, or rather confirmed for himself, that every speaker remaining of a language in a situation like that of Eyak is potentially the source of important new information and insight.

6. Mike Sewak’s name came up only after considerable insistent inquiry, when Lena was moved to say, “maybe Mike Sewak still knows some Eyak” Sewak too was glad to be approached, and tried his best, in spite of being not only completely blind, but fairly deaf as well. Like George Johnson, also the only other male Eyak speaker after the 1950s, Sewak was born in Bering River Village, but maybe a dozen years earlier than Johnson. That village gave way to the development of Katalla, and was already thoroughly bilingual Eyak-Tlingit, if not dominantly in Tlingit-speaking by 1900. After the disintegration of Katalla in 1912, there would certainly have been little occasion for Sewak (or Johnson) to speak Eyak. Sewak seemed able to speak words or phrases, but what Eyak he could speak had two traits that made his Eyak more different, closer to being a different dialect, than that of any other speaker, including George Johnson. His full vowel /e/ was more like Tlingit (or European) e than everyone else’s (which was more like the English a in bad), no doubt from Tlingit influence. Sewak was far rustier than Johnson. Most important is that Sewak
had two separate sounds, a $g$ and a $gw$ that were consistently distinguished in his speech, whereas in the speech of all other modern Eyak speakers, those two originally different sounds are no longer distinguished. It is not clear whether Sewak still distinguished them exactly as they had been in the old language, whether a given word had $g$ or $gw$, but, since Tlingit still clearly distinguishes them, under that influence Sewak kept or somehow reinstated that distinction in what he remembered of Eyak. In 1963, 1964 and 1965, Krauss visited Sewak, and managed to elicit perhaps 500 words from him, especially of course those with the consonant distinction in question. One of the last visits is hard to forget: Sewak answered some question with “$sila′t′ yit′a′ts$,” i.e. “my tongue is …,” which Krauss had to take to Lena to understand: “Oh yes, that’s an old word I haven’t heard in years. It means ‘stiff’.” In other words, in the very act of complaining to Krauss that he felt tongue-tied, Sewak salvaged another Eyak word (probably a good cognate with one in Athabaskan meaning “hard”)

**Chronology and Results of Krauss’s Eyak Work**

The first phase – intensive – of Krauss’s Eyak work began in 1963, when he determined to make that commitment himself, and ended in 1970. During that entire period, Krauss had full-time teaching and administrative responsibilities at the University of Alaska, now called the University of Alaska Fairbanks, for the full academic year, with only the summer for lengthy absences. His Eyak research, as had been his more general
projects of 1961-1962, was funded entirely by the National Science Foundation throughout. The period then can be subdivided into 1963-1965, during which he combined (phenomenally!) productive fieldwork during the summers, with work-up and preparation for the next field season during his spare time in the winters. A fairly clear record of that remains in Krauss’s field notebooks and annual reports and proposals to NSF. Reviewing the reports and proposals not only reassures Krauss that a decent record of that history remains, which it is not necessary to detail here, but it also reminds Krauss how lucky he was in those days to work as efficiently in the field with these Eyak speakers as he did, being reminded that his repeated claims of success were in fact true. The first summer, June 27 – July 9, and July 28 - August 19, 1963, was in Cordova and Yakutat, with Lena, Marie, Sewak, Anna, George Johnson; the second, June 6 – August 14, 1964, was in Cordova, with Lena, Marie, Sewak; and the third was in Cordova and Yakutat, with Lena, Marie, Sewak, and Anna.; for a grand total of barely half a year in direct contact with Eyak. The days averaged between five and nine hours of actual fieldwork time. This was only possible because of the good will of the speakers, on the one hand, most especially Lena’s patience, and because Krauss had spent all the available time during the intervening academic year months preparing the materials. This included putting every single word onto a secondary file of ledger sheets organized by stems, showing all the inflectional and derivational details of the verbs, classification of nouns, etc., constituting an actual concordance of the entire corpus, including all occurrences of each word in the texts, by
text number and sentence number, as well as in the notebooks. By the end of the third summer there were 12 notebooks, about 1600 pages, about 500 of those texts, and 1100 pages containing up to 25,000 elicitations. In addition to the texts, mostly from Anna, reviewed with Lena, that last summer was mostly long days with Lena going over very systematically prepared enquiries to fill out the noun-classes and derivational potential of the verbs for the lexicon. By that time over 1100 stems and basic elements of the language had been identified and clearly described, a score similar to that of the average well documented Athabaskan language, in spite of the limited resources of Eyak. The sum total of connected text was decent but not abundant, about the total length of the Book of Genesis. Nevertheless, by the end of eliciting that corpus, an average of a dozen pages would go by without new or unexplainable forms showing up, showing that getting more new text was not going to be a very productive way of getting better coverage of the language itself—though coverage of possible Eyak literature was of course another matter.

In view of all this, in summer 1966 Krauss decided to draw the line, not to return to fieldwork, but, having ledgered the third summer’s results (now a file of 4000 sheets), to begin composing the Eyak dictionary from that. In 1964-65 he had published (Krauss 1965) a sketch, 20 printed pages, of the grammar, which remains almost entirely correct as far as it goes. That remains to this day the only published grammar for Eyak, but Krauss then felt and still does strongly feel that the dictionary and texts, as prepared in that second part of the intensive period, 1966-1970, and the ledgers, do readily provide the information
necessary for someone, with a start from the 1965 sketch, to construct a rather full detailed grammar of Eyak, whether Krauss lives to do that himself or not.

In 1966, the priority was therefore to prepare a typescript of a dictionary and full corpus of Eyak texts for publication. In order to include completely all the forms in the texts in the dictionary, Krauss first typed all those texts, numbering 80 (including duplicate versions), on a typewriter with specially designed characters for the relatively technical alphabet he was then using. These include the one brief text in Reynolds’s hand from 1933, the eight from Li in 1952, the three from Austerlitz in 1961, and the rest dictated to Krauss by Lena (27), Marie (14), and Anna (1); and the largest part by far from Anna on tape (24 texts, itself about 6 ½ hours of speech). The total percentage of that text corpus is over 70% from Anna. The sequence is arranged by and divided into the categories of Raven Cycle (pp. 66-222), Animal tales (223-426), Land Otters (442-476), Mythical Beings (477-543), Cautionary Tales (544-579), Legends of People (580-674), Wars (675-700), Witches and Shamans (701-726), and Miscellaneous Ethnographical (727-912). The format is double–spaced, each sentence numbered; first the Eyak text, then the English, translated phrase by phrase, as marked by comma, or period, then fairly detailed footnotes, for each text. The main editorial device is parentheses, enclosing segments present on the tape that should be eliminated in the fully edited text, and square brackets, enclosing segments not on the tape that need to be supplied in a fully edited text. Thus reading in the parentheses and leaving out the brackets, one gets very exactly what is on the tape, while reading in the
brackets and leaving out the parentheses, one gets the fully edited text. This work was done May 20 – December 10, 1966.

The dictionary was organized and first handwritten from the ledgers, and typed, perhaps the first third, by Krauss, the rest by Irene Reed, during 1967-1969. The writing-out and typing was only 90-some percent complete, with mainly the verbs “singular goes,” “plural go,” classificatory plural object verb stems, and various other items listed in the foreword to the typescript, It fully includes all the then known earlier Russian work, i.e. Rezanov, Wrangell, Furuhjelm, and also the 1933 material, but not explicitly Harrington, Li or Austerlitz, which all of course had been checked. The work was typed double-spaced on ca. 3,300 pages as far as it went (with perhaps 200 pages to go), Eyak-to English, technically organized, by stem. It was also provided with an English-to-Eyak index, on ca. 10,000 file-slips. Krauss figured then and still believes that that dictionary (when finished) will include well over 90% of the lexicon left in living Eyak memory as of the 1960s, perhaps in the high 90’s – and of course as time goes by, sadly, it will have to reach 100%. An estimate of the number of lexemes or entries is perhaps about 7,000 in a fairly strict sense, not a bad score for a language in the relic-like state of Eyak. Coverage of subjects like kin-terms, for example, is quite thorough. For fauna (217 terms) and flora (123 terms), for another example, it is still rich, but the speakers were all too aware of incompleteness and uncertainties that would have been far fewer if the work had been done fifty years earlier. We must certainly consider ourselves very lucky that Eyak therewith became one of
the better-documented languages of North America, for what was left of it in the 20th century.

-- Krauss is sometimes tempted to compare that documentation with what we had of Hebrew, basically the Old Testament. For one thing, only the consonants were written, and the vowels had to be filled in. There was never any deliberate or systematic enquiry of vocabulary, e.g. biota names, or anatomy, while the language was still alive, but only whatever the Old Testament happened to mention (no explanation), thus no dictionary, and no grammar; only whatever happened to get mentioned. The Old Testament is an amazing enough document to have included by chance so much of the language, nevertheless, as to provide the basis – and inspiration! – for the modern revival of Hebrew, now spoken by millions. The point here is that in a real sense – technical, linguistic – Eyak is documented better than Hebrew was, leaving in principle the technical possibility for reviving Eyak too, insofar as Eyak also might ever have the social resources. --

During his sabbatical at MIT 1969-1970, Krauss had both the texts and dictionary materials Xeroxed, reduced basically four pages to one, double-sided, the texts thus down to 250 pages, and the dictionary to 666, with the slips for the English index to the dictionary ending that on page 760 (plus the German and Russian for Rezanov, ending page 782). That work was thus physically reduced to just over a ream of paper, printed in fifty copies, which could be bound in a single portable volume. Given that Krauss’s personal goal was and remains the documentation itself, preservation of the record, rather
than publication as such, especially where the real need in the academic community is for a small number of persons and the remaining Native community is also small, Krauss felt that that specialized need was fulfilled, more or less, by the very limited form of publication made in 1970. More complete publication had not only the missing ca. 200 dictionary pages to go of 1970, but subsequently soon also the further Eyak material collected during the second “intermittent” phase of Eyak fieldwork. Even more decisive though was the rise of other priorities in Alaska Native language work for Krauss, to postpone a final edition of the dictionary.

Already by the late 1960s the political scene was changing for Alaska Native languages. In 1967-1968 the Federal bilingual education bills had been passed and implemented. By this time at Fairbanks the subterranean movement to get Yupik into Alaskan schools had surfaced in the form of the course added to the University Yupik curriculum called “Yupik Language Workshop,” where “advanced composition” Yupik students were writing in a newly designed practical orthography drafts of schoolbooks to be used in schools for their younger siblings. There were still setbacks, but by 1970, while strident Krauss was 4000 miles away at MIT (becoming in those days still more militant), Irene Reed’s diplomacy succeeded in persuading Alaskan authorities to experiment with Yupik in Yupik public schools. By 1972 the result was Alaskan legislation mandating Native language use in schools and the establishment of the Alaska Native Language Center with Krauss as Director in Fairbanks. Priorities of the new opportunities and
obligations severely limited Krauss’s time for Eyak for the 29 years he headed the Center.

Nevertheless, during what we may define the second period, there were occasional spells of activity in the further documentation of Eyak. Already in 1967, Constance Naish, scholar of Tlingit, had recorded on tape from Anna at Yakutat what Krauss in 1971 transcribed as 14 pages of text. In 1971 Krauss was able to return to Yakutat, June 9-12, for more fieldwork with Anna, which included 50 more pages of text. Krauss was then able to check that with Lena in Cordova on June 13, his last session ever with her. The next year, June 14-18, 1972, Krauss had what turned out to be his last meeting with Anna in Yakutat, and recorded 82 more pages of text. For the final editing of that, without Lena, he was now on his own. In 1973, Jeff Leer and Karen MacPherson taped about 40 more minutes of text from Anna in Anchorage, another 13 texts, then transcribed by Krauss. All told, these supplementary texts from Anna add about another 20% to the corpus.

Also during the period 1964 to 1981 Krauss wrote about ten academic articles and monographs on Comparative Athabaskan-Eyak, in which Eyak figures prominently, of course. These can be found listed in Krauss’s recently published bibliography (Krauss 2006).

By 1980 it had become clear to Krauss that probably the most severe shortcoming of his Eyak work was that he had neglected to define clearly the different classes of verbs in Eyak according to basic criterion of which different conjugations are used with them in the present according to whether they are active, stative, progressive, etc. In summer of 1980,
May 27-29 in Anchorage and June 16-19 in Fairbanks, Krauss was able to go systematically through a large proportion of these with Marie, who rendered as major service in filling in this gap. This had been a fundamental shortcoming on Krauss’s part, and Marie’s fundamental grasp of Eyak was exactly what was needed to help with that.

In 1982, on the occasion of Anna’s death, Krauss published a volume of her stories in her memory, *In Honor of Eyak: the Art of Anna Nelson Harry*. That labor of love chose ten of Anna’s most outstanding texts, edited as carefully as possible from the tapes, first shown in double column, her Eyak on the left, phrase by phrase, with English translation of each in the column next to that, line by line, with footnotes and also looser English translation in ordinary paragraph form. Krauss included a historical introduction to the whole, and an introduction to each section, philosophical and literary, as the whole point is that the way Anna told those tales is indeed highly philosophical and high literary art. As she told them in her maturity, these stories are no longer have merely their traditional meaning, which would still be interesting enough to anyone who cared about Eyak; and they are not merely suffused with her own personality, which is of course what gives traditional oral literature its artistic quality. In fact – and this is a point not adequately presented by Krauss in 1982, in spite of the fact that he had been pondering Anna’s stories for years in efforts to understand them layer by layer – since Eyak society was long gone, and Anna was a survivor, who had taken refuge in Yakutat Tlingit society, she had a unique perspective on Yakutat, and on the world. The traditional Eyak forms and stories
were now merely her raw material, with which she was – tragically – free to express her own vision. There was no longer any traditional or Eyak society to hear those stories as they were expected to be told. There was Krauss, who could understand only the language, and only the ages to speak the meaning to. Anna’s art then transcends the original tradition altogether. At one level she is speaking to Yakutat and Tlingit, but at another she is speaking to the world, as only Anna can from her Eyak perspective, about such matters as the fate of nations, good and evil. The book is offered in deep humility to the memory of Anna and to Eyak. Krauss also remembers with great pleasure and cannot resist quoting Freddie’s remark to him, “that’s a good book.”

During the 1970s and 1980s, Krauss was of course preoccupied with the whole Alaska Native language situation, including, increasingly, the fundamental relationship with the same and related languages in the North, now especially Russia – a relationship which had been almost totally cut off by the Cold War. Finally, however, in 1989, Krauss was able to return to Cordova, June 20-24, to work with Marie’s sister Sophie, for the one and only time. That too was a pure delight, just getting to know Sophie and to hear Eyak from one more person. Moreover, as noted above, the Eyak Sophie remembered proved to include certain very fundamental verb usages which had not been elicited from anyone else, and which cast significant light on the basic system of Eyak verb classes.

In 1990, Krauss made a long visit to Leningrad, in part to visit Soviet archives there, which contain still the bulk of the Russian work done on Alaska languages. There he had
the pleasant surprise to find three “new” Eyak language manuscripts, Anonymous 1810, Baranov 1812, and Khromchenko1823, described above. These of course provided just that much more inspiration to write the present history. Virtually all the material in them could be fairly readily identified from the rest of our data, but they provide interesting continuity to our history between 1805 and 1839, with Eyak declining at Yakutat, and becoming prominent in the Cordova area instead.

We now come to a kind of Epilogue in the history of Eyak fieldwork. With the death of her sister Sophie in 1994, Marie Smith Jones became the last speaker of Eyak, Krauss has remained in touch with her, and has visited her 15-20 times in the period 1994-2006, and often spoken to her on the phone. The relationship has become of course increasingly social and personal, but there are Eyak work sessions too, with new information and understanding. Krauss recalls, with unending amusement, that one of his early proposals to NSF, ca. 1963, noted, with sincere concern, that there were very few speakers of Eyak left, “and the youngest of them is already quite elderly,” referring of course to Marie – who was then 45 years old and seemingly quite ancient to Krauss, then 29. Marie was moreover afflicted with a terrible hacking smoker’s cough, and did not seem long for this world. Forty-three years later Marie still has the hacking cough, but it is more often she worrying about Krauss’s health than the reverse. Krauss could feel some satisfaction should Eyak outlive him. He is in fact determined that in some important sense the Eyak should indeed outlive him, and Marie.
The Eyak Preservation Council, a fractious Eyak Indian splinter group of the Eyak Village Corporation, under the leadership of Dune Lankard of Cordova, grandson of Lena Saska Nacktan, with the help of Carole Hoover and others, has been militating to prevent the destruction of Eyak traditional lands, especially by logging. The Council has also moved to provide support for the preservation of Eyak history, culture, and language. It has particularly engaged the talents of Laura Bliss Spaan of Anchorage, to do videotaping where possible of Marie speaking Eyak with Krauss on a number of occasions. One such occasion in particular was in 1995, when a memorial potlatch of sorts was held in Cordova to mark the return or repatriation from the Smithsonian of an Eyak skeleton. Freddie was there, 65 years after her fateful visit of 1930, Dune Lankard’s message was made clear, and Freddie, Marie, and Krauss were somehow put together in a very touching film by Laura Bliss Spaan, entitled More than Words (1996, 60 minutes), featuring the situation of the Eyak language. Since then, Laura has filmed Marie and Krauss several times, and has also filmed a series of presentations by Krauss on Eyak sound system, writing system, how to use the dictionary, basic grammar, both for the record, and for the practical purposes for anyone wishing to learn Eyak or to use the extant materials.

The Eyak Preservation Council also supported the digital reproduction, patiently and devotedly done by Karl Bergman, of the Eyak section of the Alaska Native Center Archive. As this is the ultimate record and result of all the work that has been done on Eyak, it deserves description as the final section of the present history.
The Eyak archive fills an entire five-shelf bookcase, containing ca. 15 linear feet of written material. All the material previous to Krauss, i.e. Anderson 1778 to Austerlitz 1961 fills the top shelf. The contents of that are in fact well accounted for or described in some detail, to constitute most of this history. The shelf next to top includes Krauss’s field notebooks, 18 in number, and the original typed text and dictionary, to 1970, in eight heavy-duty spring binders for the dictionary, three for the texts. The third or middle shelf contains the reduced texts and dictionary, the 1982 In Honor of Eyak draft and derivative material, but also about 35 manuscript files, mostly not mentioned so far, studies by Krauss of various aspects of Eyak grammar, phonology, verbal affixes, done mostly 1963-1969, stem lists, studies in format for a final published dictionary, and supplementary texts from Anna. (Those materials, to 1980, are catalogued and described in Krauss and McGary 1980.) Some of that spills over to shelf four or second from the bottom, which, however, is occupied mostly by files of historical material. In this respect the Eyak section is exceptional for the Archive, in that Krauss has collected – though not catalogued – not only all linguistic material he could find for a given language, but here also historical, not necessarily containing anything about the language, partly because of his special interest in Eyak but also because such material is relatively limited. That part is in seven substantial files, 1783-1789, 1790-1799, 1800-1867, 1867-1879, 1880-1889, 1890-1899, 1900-. The bottom shelf is occupied mostly by the dictionary ledger-concordance files. There are also slip-file boxes, microfilm reels (especially Harrington, Austerlitz, as well as printouts
thereof), tape-recordings, video-recordings, some correspondence and photos.

Krauss does hope he may last long enough to publish more on Eyak, even edit a final version of the dictionary. More importantly, however, he feels that with the preservation of this archive, a full and worthy record of the Eyak language and intellectual heritage of the Eyak people will be preserved for future generations to study and cultivate. It is an interestingly unanswerable question, how much of this would exist today, were it not for Frederica de Laguna.
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