



**Nikolai Petrovich Kashevaroff,
Priest of Holy Resurrection Cathedral
(and the Kashevaroff Family)**

By Dawn Lea Black and

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The Kashevaroffs (Koshevarovs)¹ originally came to Alaska aboard the ship *Tri Sviatitelia* or *Three Saints*, which also carried the first Russian Orthodox Mission to Alaska, including the future Saint Herman. The book *Herman: A Wilderness Saint*, written by Sergei Korsun, who works for the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography in Saint Petersburg, Russia, lists the types of people, on page 20, who were aboard this ship. Two of them were mentioned as “stewards”. It is possible, according to both Lydia Black in “Russians in Alaska” and Richard Pierce in “Russian America: A Biographical Dictionary”, that these two people were the father, Artamon, and his son, Filipp Kashevarov who were serfs of I.L. Golikov back in Russia. However, according to Alexander V. Zorin, the head archivist and historian of the Kursk State Regional Archaeological Museum and also the author of a major published article on I.L. Golikov,² no record of a person named Artamon Kashevaroff was found in the census records of Kursk.

The aforementioned Golikov was the merchant Ivan Larionovich [Illarionovich] Golikov, who was the senior partner, with the most shares, in the fur company known as the Golikov-Shelikhov Company, although that was not a formal, contractual name. That company had several companies under its umbrella, and the actual company for which the Kashevaroffs worked was probably the Kodiak-based Northeastern Company, which was managed by Alexander Baranov. The reason why these Kashevarovs were sent to Kodiak was possibly because serfdom was being legally phased-out for merchants in Russia

¹ Richard A. Pierce, *Russian America: A Biographical Dictionary* (Kingston, Ontario and Fairbanks, Alaska: Limestone Press, 1990), s. v. “Kashevarov,

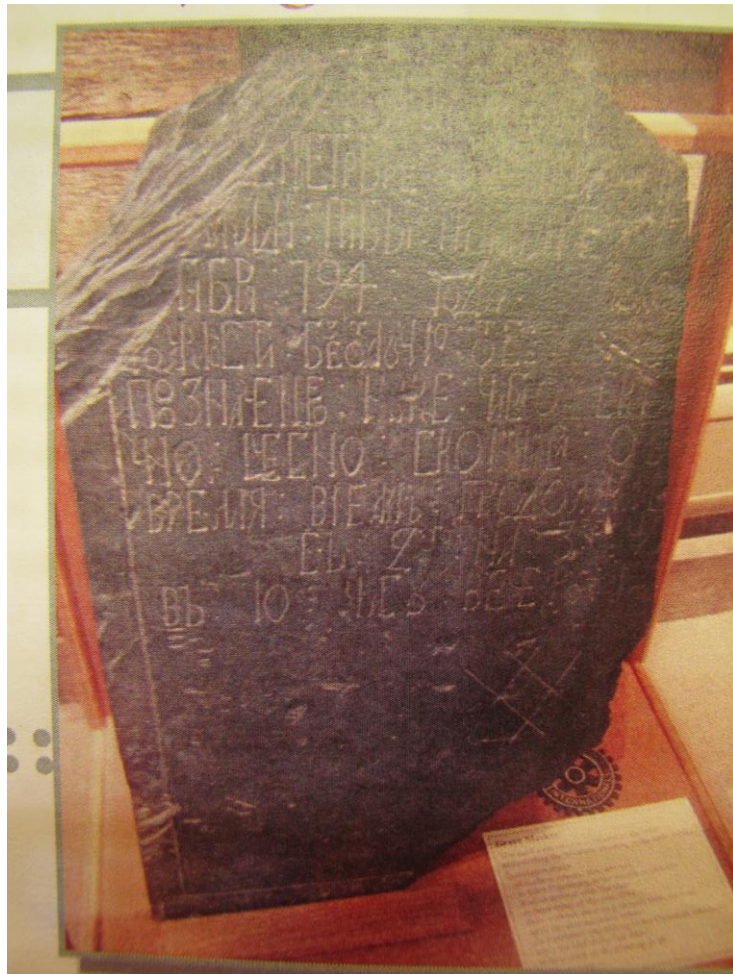
Filipp Artamonovich (1781-1843).” [Artamon is mentioned under Filipp’s heading]; see also: [Andrei]. A. V. Grinëv, *Kto est’ kto v istorii Russkoi*

Ameriki (Moscow, Russia: Academia, 2009), p.221; Lydia T. Black, *Russians in Alaska, 1732-1867*, p. 233.

² Американский Ежегодник [American Yearbook] published yearly by the Russian Academy of Sciences.

at that time, and the Golikovs could probably benefit longer from their labor if they were in far-off Alaska.

Artamon Kashevaroff might have lived into the early 1800s because there is a partially extant, hand-engraved slate gravestone³ with an inscription (in 18th century Russian) of the life of a Russian man. This easily could be about Artamon Kashevaroff because it is the life story of someone aboard the September 1794 ship. Most of the workers and settlers aboard that ship, who weren't with the Mission, were *en route* to Yakutat, where almost all of them were later killed by the local Tlingits.⁴ The person to whom this stone pertains (see photo below) is described as having been conscientious religiously and in the service of Golikov (not Golikov and Shelikhov), and later of the company.⁵



3 Currently on exhibit at the Baranov Museum in Kodiak, Alaska.

4 We know for sure that Filipp Kashevoff did return from Yakutat, based on both Company and church records.

5 For more details, see Dawn Black's article on the gravestone (to be published on SHS website).

Artamon Kashevaroff's son Filipp became a school teacher, a store clerk, a ship captain, a company worker, and an explorer. At some point in his career, in 1836, he was chosen by the future Saint Innocent of Alaska, Priest Ioann Popov to substitute for him by conducting "services on feast days and baptizing the natives", while Priest Popov himself was away in California⁶. Filipp had seven sons and three daughters with an Alaskan Creole woman, Aleksandra Petrovna. These children included a son named Petr (Peter) who became a priest in Kodiak and elsewhere. Peter is buried behind the Orthodox Church in Kodiak. He also married a local Creole woman, Mariia Arkhimandritov, and had at least nine children. His wife was the sister of Kodiak Manager, V. G. Pavlov, according to family interviews. Several of his six sons were priests. These included Nikolai and Andrei.

Nikolai Petrovich Kashevaroff was born on January 8, 1859.⁷ Nikolai and his brothers Andrei and Vasilii were educated at the Seminary in San Francisco and served in Kodiak as Psalm readers in their early days here⁸, and Nikolai later as a deacon before he was ordained a priest. Andrei was a choir director, musician, and teacher in Kodiak, as well as a priest in the Nushagak area. Vasilii was also a priest in Nushagak, where both Andrei and Vasilii built their own travel kayak.⁹

Overall, Nikolai served in Kodiak area as a clergyman from 1875-1928.¹⁰ It is obvious that he continued to help out in the church after 1928 because his trilingual letter (see below) is dated 1931. He has additional church records that

⁶ Richard A. Pierce, *Alaska History No. 33. Russian America: A Biographical Dictionary*, p. 218.

The Limestone Press, Kingston, Ontario and Fairbanks, Alaska, 1990.

⁷ Various sources (Kodiak family genealogies) provide different dates for the birth of Nikolai Kashevaroff. Even the metrical record kept in the Alaskan Diocesan Archive (St. Herman Seminary, Kodiak, Alaska) does not have a recorded day of his birth: instead, it has a later inscription of January 8 made in pencil (as opposed to the original brown ink). The archival record does, however, have a date for his baptism – January 16, 1859.

⁸ As confirmed by Kashevaroffs' clergy dossiers and archival records.

⁹ This kayak was previously exhibited in the Orthodox Museum at Saint Herman Seminary in Kodiak, Alaska.

¹⁰ Clergymen dossier from Alaskan Russian Church Archives confirms the fact (Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC).

date up to 1934. Many marriage records and similar documents are signed by Nikolai in his various church positions over the years.¹¹

In addition, Nikolai became quite involved with interactions concerning the former Baptist orphanage which was founded on Woody Island in the 1894.¹² His record in Kodiak is a solid one and includes many Orthodox church and legal documents¹³, available for interested individuals to read on microfilm from the “Alaskan Russian Church Archives”, located at Rasmuson Library at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. An *Inventory book of Alaskan Russian Church Archives* must be consulted in order to select which microfilms most interest you.

Nikolai died in Sitka on December 5, 1935.¹⁴ He was buried in Kodiak in the graveyard of the Holy Resurrection Church (see his gravestone below).



11 As seen in various church records located in the archive at Saint Herman Seminary, Kodiak, Alaska.

12 Alaskan Russian Church Archives.

13 Priest Nikolai Kashevaroff also wrote at least one travel journal logging in his visits to villages around Kodiak, Katmai, and Nuchek.

14 According to the genealogical record supplied by Lawrence Anderson’s family. Kodiak Parish Archive, however, does not have a record of deaths from that year.

The letter presented below was found in the folder “Language Materials, Miscelanneous”¹⁵ in 2013 in Alaskan Diocesan Archive at St. Herman Seminary. Of particular interest is the linguistic nature of it: written in three languages (Russian, Alutiiq, and English combined together), which confirms the fact of Nikolai Kashevaroff’s trilinguacy – a common characteristic for the so-called Russian Creoles of Kodiak Island¹⁶. Unfortunately, by 1960ies trilinguacy, specifically in writing became extinct.

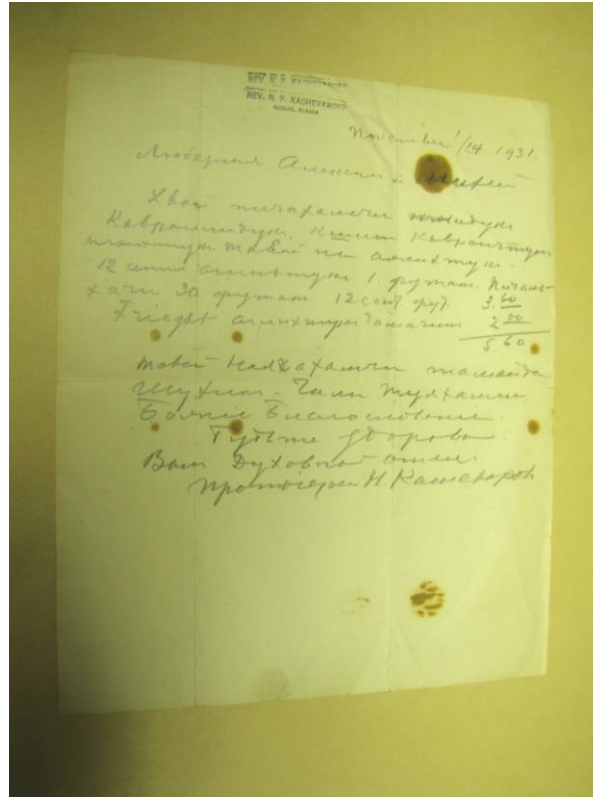
Russian, Alutiiq, English	English								
<p style="text-align: right;">November!/14 1931</p> <p>Любезныя Алексей и Михей</p> <p>Хвай пичахамчи тнидукъ</p> <p>Кавраимидукъ. Кшинъ Кавранчтут</p> <p>иганхтукъ. Тавай на ажихтукъ –</p> <p>12 сент агинхтук 1 футат. Пичанъ-</p> <p>хачи 30 футат 12 сент фут.</p> <p>Frieght (sic) агинхтукъ чамагит.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="397 1062 597 1310"> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">3.60</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">2.00</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">_____</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">5.60</td></tr> </table> <p>Тавай наяхамчи тамайда</p> <p>шухит. Чали туяхамчи</p> <p>Божіе Благословеніе.</p> <p>Тутьте (sic) здоровы.</p> <p>Ваш Духовный отец.</p> <p>Протоіерей Н.Кашеваров</p>	3.60	2.00	_____	5.60	<p style="text-align: right;">November!/14 1931</p> <p>My Dear Alexei and Mikhei</p> <p>The runner that you wanted</p> <p>is not available. Only runner with a print</p> <p>is available. And it is good –</p> <p>it costs 12 cent per foot. Would you</p> <p>like to get 30 feet for 12 cent a foot?</p> <p>The freight will cost you this:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1003 1062 1203 1310"> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">3.60</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">2.00</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">_____</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">5.60</td></tr> </table> <p>I am sending greetings</p> <p>to all your people. I also send you</p> <p>God’s Blessing.</p> <p>Take care of your health.</p> <p>Your spiritual father.</p> <p>Archpriest N. Kashevaroff</p>	3.60	2.00	_____	5.60
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¹⁵ The folder was put together by Doctor Lydia Black, the archivist of the Diocesan Archive in late 1990ies – early 2000s.

¹⁶ The trilingual archives of some of these Creoles, specifically Church Readers Xenofont Malutin and Illarion (Larry) Ellenak are preserved at the Alaskan Diocesan Archive.



Interestingly enough, the three languages have different functional purposes: Russian is reserved for letter salutations and closings, and church titles, Alutiiq is reserved for the message itself, and English for the measurements of the time period (carpet length and its price). On the contrary, Kashevaroff's major church records are written in Russian only, it being the *lingua franca* of the Russian Orthodox Mission in Alaska. Kashevaroff's personal correspondence, if found, might provide a deeper insight into his linguistic preferences.¹⁷ In any case, the whole "Kashevaroff case" is a perfect example of the social mobility present within the Russian colonial system – a serf arriving at Kodiak works as a teacher, captain, shipbuilder, and church reader, then marries into a Native family, petitions to be emancipated, raises many children and secures for them the best (both civil and clerical) education available at the time. Later, some of his grandchildren even become priests – the position of the highest respect among the locals. Thus, just in three generations this one family has acquired the cultural legacies of the three local cultures – Native, Russian, and American and the letter above is a clear confirmation of this fact.

¹⁷ Nikolai's brother, Andrei stated that he spoke Alutiiq to Native people, specifically in Nuchek, which further confirms the fact of Nikolai's