

# INTRODUCTION TO “TRIBAL DIVISIONS OF THE ESKIMO OF WESTERN ALASKA” BY FRANK H. WASKEY (1950)

Kenneth L. Pratt

Bureau of Indian Affairs, ANCSA Office, 3601 C Street, Suite 1100, Anchorage, AK 99503; kenneth.pratt@bia.gov

Several decades ago, while conducting research for a study concerning Eskimo social groups in the Yukon-Kuskokwim region of southwest Alaska (Pratt 1984), I came across a reference by Wendell Oswalt (1967) to an unpublished manuscript by Frank H. Waskey (Fig. 1). Unable to locate a copy of the manuscript through normal research channels, I contacted Oswalt (then professor of anthropology at the University of California at Los Angeles) and requested his assistance. He suggested where the manuscript could likely be found and then generously explained how it came to be written and provided background information about its author.

According to Oswalt (1983), who first learned of the manuscript while enrolled as a student at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) in the early 1950s, Waskey was a friend of Ivar Skarland—head of the UAF Department of Anthropology from 1946 until his death in January 1965. Aware of Waskey’s extensive knowledge of and experience with the Eskimo peoples of southwestern Alaska, Skarland encouraged him to write about the region’s Eskimo groups and their respective geographic boundaries. Waskey complied with the request and sent the manuscript to Skarland upon completion. Since it was maintained in the Department of Anthropology’s files for many years, Oswalt assumed it was probably still there—but also believed he had a copy of the manuscript in his personal library. The manuscript was not found at either the UAF Department of Anthropology or the Alaska and Polar Regions Collections and Archives (APR) at UAF, which had a file on Waskey. Fortunately, however, Oswalt

located his own copy of the manuscript and reproduced it for me; in turn, I provided a copy to the APR.

After reading it myself, I was convinced that Waskey’s 1950 manuscript represented a significant contribution to the issue of historical Eskimo group boundaries in southwest Alaska; it also contains some unique details about the region’s indigenous peoples. Its relative inaccessibility and potential value to future researchers is the basis for presenting the manuscript in its near-original form. Changes include the addition of maps to show the locations of selected places and groups mentioned. Bracketed information has also been inserted to (1) better identify places, groups, and landscape features mentioned; (2) clarify published sources alluded to by Waskey in the manuscript; and (3) provide spellings of certain Native words and names that correspond with accepted modern orthographies (e.g., Jacobson 2012). Corrected spellings of such words and names appear in brackets following their first mention in the text. Endnotes are intended to place the work in context and clarify, explain, or elaborate on some of the key information it contains. Waskey’s original capitalization is generally retained, except where indicated.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF FRANK H. WASKEY

Frank Hinman Waskey was born on 20 April 1875 in Lake City, Minnesota. Following a six-year stint (1892–1898) as a salesman in the Minneapolis area, Waskey journeyed to Alaska in 1898 and prospected in the vicinity of Hope, on



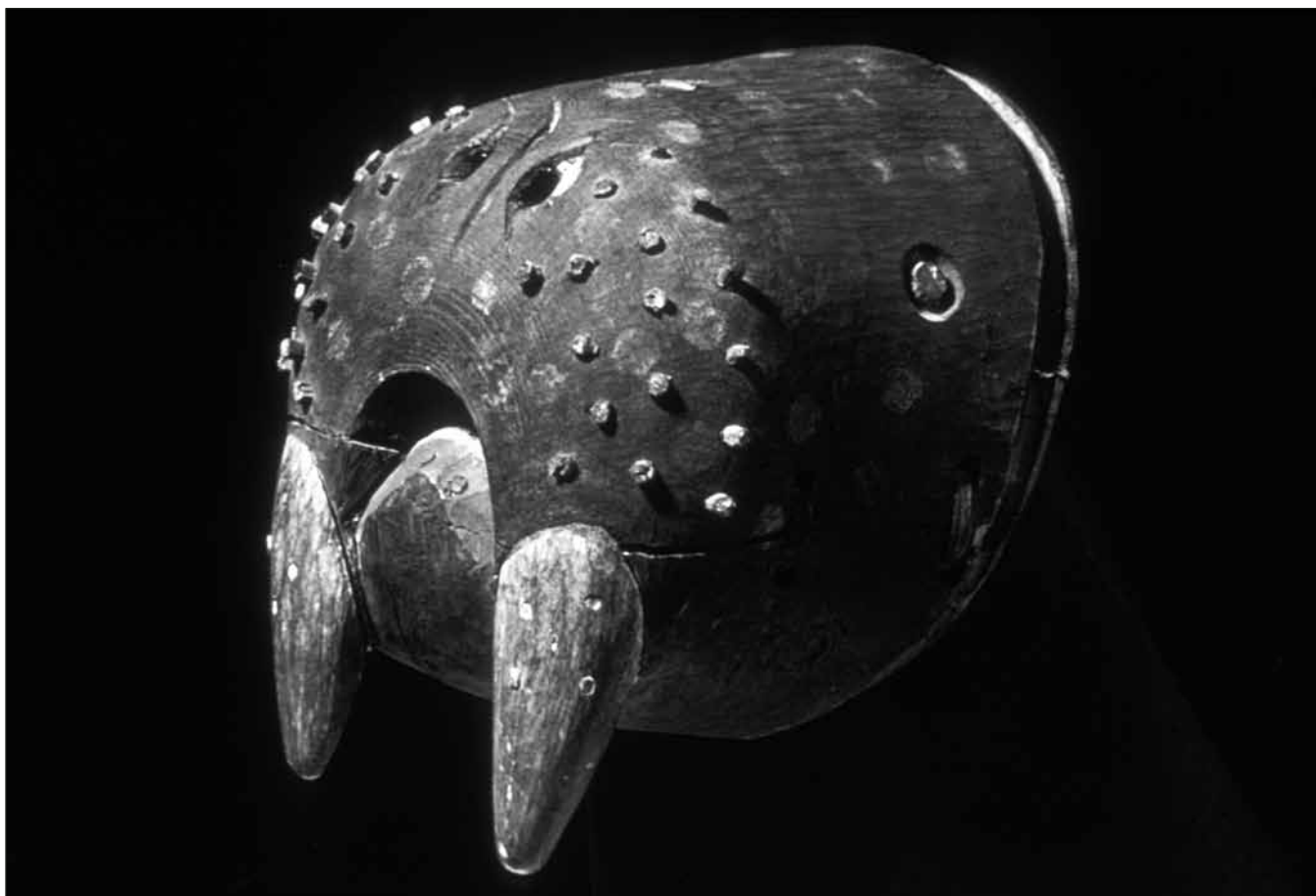
*Figure 1. Frank H. Waskey, ca. 1907 (Alaska State Library, Portrait File, ASL-Waskey-2).*

Turnagain Arm of Cook Inlet, until 1900. For the next thirty years he prospected and mined in numerous parts of Alaska including Nome, Iditarod, Marshall (Fortuna Ledge), Quinhagak, and the Kuskokwim River region. He was a successful, early participant in the Nome gold rush of 1899–1900 and became a prominent businessman in that community. Waskey's reputation as a man of "industry and native intelligence" (McCollom 1973:55) contributed to his selection as Alaska's first delegate to the U.S. Congress. He served as Alaska's delegate in Washington, D.C., from December 1906 through March 1907, after

which he returned to Alaska and resumed his mining and prospecting activities.

In 1930, Waskey became the proprietor of a trading post in the Bristol Bay community of Dillingham, a business he continued to operate until 1956 (Atwood and DeArmond 1977:103–104). During that period he traveled extensively in southwest Alaska and became a student of Alaska Native life, languages, and traditions. He was a fairly competent speaker of the Central Yup'ik Eskimo language, according to fluent speaker Wassilie Evan (Fienup-Riordan 1996:297; Oswalt 1983). Waskey





*Figure 2. Walrus mask collected by Waskey at the Yup'ik Eskimo village of Qissunaq in 1946. 19 cm high x 11.4 cm wide x 5.2 cm deep. Wood, root, natural paints (University of Alaska Museum of the North, Catalog No. UAM-0314-4351; photograph by Barry McWayne).*

gathered a broad range of information from Native villagers of the region. In 1946 he collected ten dance masks (Fig. 2) and five “humorous masks”—one of which was a caricature of himself (Fig. 3)—at the village of *Qissunaq* (Kashunuk); he later sold them to the University of Alaska Museum (Fienup-Riordan 1996:297–303). That Waskey was well-known to Native residents of the region is evidenced by the fact that he is discussed in Yup'ik oral history accounts recorded up to thirty years after his death. Examples include comments about Waskey's artifact purchasing activities (Fienup-Riordan 1996:297–298; Post 1984), his interest in mining and minerals (Smith 1988), and his work as a trader (Sundown 1984; cf. Andrews 1989:84–85). People of the region also identified him by at least two different Yup'ik names: Neqyacagaq (“little fishy one”) and Uaskiq (Fienup-Riordan 1996:297–298), the latter of which is a Yup'ik rendering of “Waskey.”

Local prospectors and airplane pilots were another source of information about the region who Waskey regu-

larly consulted. He was also an important source of local geographical names for surveyors of the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey (USC&GS) and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS); this may account for a major mountain in the Bristol Bay region being named in his honor (see Orth 1967:1030).

In addition to his manuscript on Eskimo group boundaries, Waskey's wide-ranging interests resulted in an article written for the scientific community regarding Alaska's geology and its economic potential (Waskey 1946). The “Frank H. Waskey Papers” are housed at APR in Fairbanks (Waskey 1919–1954); however, nearly all of the materials contained therein are photocopies. The items with the most potential research value are two handwritten “travel” diaries (91 and 115 pages in length, respectively) which, for example, describe aspects of the trading Waskey conducted with Native villagers. Unfortunately, the poor copy quality of the diaries makes much of Waskey's writing difficult to decipher. It is



*Figure 3. Caricature mask of Frank Waskey. Collected by Waskey at the Yup'ik Eskimo village of Qissunaq in 1946. 19 cm high x 12 cm wide x 6 cm deep. Wood, natural paints (University of Alaska Museum, Catalog No. UAM-0314-4356; photograph by Barry McWayne).*

unknown if his original diaries still exist and, if so, where they are located. The small APR collection also includes several versions of a manuscript on Eskimo place names, a number of Eskimo tales, an account of fossil sequoia finds in southwestern Alaska, descriptions of various rocks and minerals, and assorted correspondence.

After retiring from his Dillingham business in 1956, Waskey moved to Oakville, Washington, where he continued to trade in Alaska Native artifacts. He died on 26 January 1964 at the age of eighty-eight and was buried in Shelton, Washington.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank Wendell H. Oswalt for initially bringing the Waskey manuscript to my attention and Robert M. Drozda and Erica Hill for review comments that were helpful to my edit of the manuscript. I am also grateful to Sandra Johnston of the Alaska State Library and Angela Linn of the University of Alaska Museum of the North for assistance they provided with the photographs used in this paper.

## REFERENCES

- Andrews, Elizabeth F.  
1989 *The Akulmiut: Territorial Dimensions of a Yup'ik Eskimo Society*. Technical Paper 177, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Subsistence Division, Juneau.
- Atwood, Evangeline, and Robert N. DeArmond  
1977 *Who's Who in Alaska Politics: A Biographical Dictionary of Alaskan Political Personalities, 1884–1974*. Binford & Mort, Portland.
- Fienup-Riordan, Ann  
1996 *The Living Tradition of Yup'ik Masks/Agayuliyararput, Our Way of Making Prayer*. University of Washington Press, Seattle.
- Jacobson, Steven A.  
2012 *Yup'ik Eskimo Dictionary*, 2nd ed. Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks.
- McCollum, Pat  
1973 Alaska's First Delegates: Waskey and Cale. *The Alaska Journal* 3(1):50–55.
- Orth, Donald J.  
1967 *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*. U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 567. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC.
- Oswalt, Wendell H.  
1967 *Alaskan Eskimos*. Chandler Publishing Company, San Francisco.
- 1983 Letter to Ken Pratt dated 11 January. Author's personal files, Anchorage.
- Post, Peter  
1984 Oral history interview (Tape 84BAY049). Charles Haecker, interviewer; Pauline Walter, interpreter. 8 August; Tununak, Alaska. Bureau of Indian Affairs, ANCSA Office, Anchorage.
- Pratt, Kenneth L.  
1984 Yukon-Kuskokwim Eskimos, Western Alaska: Inconsistencies in Group Identification. M.A. thesis, Department of Anthropology, Western Washington University, Bellingham.
- Smith, Peter  
1988 Oral history interview (Tape 88NUN010). Robert Drozda, interviewer. 31 December; Anchorage. Bureau of Indian Affairs, ANCSA Office, Anchorage.
- Sundown, Teddy  
1984 Oral history interview (Tape 84VAK031). Jim Kurtz and Robert Waterworth, interviewers; Harley Sundown, interpreter. 25 June; Chevak, Alaska. Bureau of Indian Affairs, ANCSA Office, Anchorage.
- Waskey, Frank H.  
1919–1954 Frank H. Waskey Papers (USUAF336), Alaska and Polar Regions Collections & Archives, Elmer E. Rasmuson Library, University of Alaska Fairbanks.  
1946 Memories of Nelson Island, Alaska. *Rocks and Minerals* 21(6):350–353.

# TRIBAL DIVISIONS OF THE ESKIMO OF WESTERN ALASKA

Frank H. Waskey (1950)

Edited and Annotated by Kenneth L. Pratt

The Eskimo are not a tribal people in the sense that they have or had political organizations distinguishing their many entities.<sup>1</sup>

However, as Anderson and Eells in *Alaska Natives* have well said, tribal distinctions based upon linguistic differences were sufficiently marked to denote distinct tribes [Anderson and Eells 1935:29, 193].

To this may be added: these differences extended to the building of their dwellings, open boats, kayaks, sleds, fishing and hunting tools to meet [the] regional environment. Parkas, inner clothing, footwear, and personal adornment differed noticeably among the many divisions of the Yut, Yuit [Yup'ik] and Innuvit [Inupiat].

Among the Yut from St. Michael to the Kuskokwim, vocabularies differed less than speech intonations and voice inflections. The trenchant articulateness of the Akulamut [Akulmiut] was in marked contrast to the questioning sing-song habit of the coast dwellers from the Askinuk Mountains to Cape Avinof.

In certain villages on the lower Yukon, old and young alike seemed unable to form the Y sound before a broad vowel. Their neighbors who did not have this trait referred to these folk as "Pizzilaraet" [*pisalriit*]<sup>2</sup>—"Those who do the Z's."

Physical characteristics frequently changed decidedly as one entered a new area. Some of these differences are so marked that, once being familiar with, say, the Kashunuks [people of *Qissunaq*] or the people of Tununak, even in these days of air transportation of cannery employees far from their homes, one recognizes the section from

which they come, even if unable to distinguish them as individuals.

Speaking generally, the dwellers along the coast from Hooper Bay to Kuskokwim Bay are of less stature and rounder of feature than their neighbors farther inland.

Many observers have noted the fairness of skin of a considerable percentage of the dwellers north of the Askinuk Mountains and in the southerly part of the Yukon Delta. This lighter color extends to the pigmentation of the iris. The same trend towards fairness is not uncommon among the Togiak people.

In both of the localities cited there is little likelihood that the fairness is due to White blood. It is one of the phases of the Eskimo race and has been noted among the Innuvit.<sup>3</sup>

Mixed bloods of Nordic, Celtic, or "Old American" are often no fairer than these light Eskimo. But there is something about the offspring of mixed marriages that usually at once differentiates them from the folk who have inherited their fairness from Eskimo forebears. Persons of the White race sometimes show more or less pique upon learning of the Eskimo's modest appraisal of themselves as "Yukpiat" [*Yupiaq*]"—"The real men." So in those sections where there are many of these fair full bloods, the Yut have their own name for them, Yukapeeg—*agana—goelet*; roughly, those bright-eyed real ones. Mixed bloods are "avuk" [*avek*] (half).

In Chapter IV of *Alaska Natives* [Anderson and Eells 1935:28–31] is an outline of the several divisions of the Alaska Eskimo. The authors of this admirable treatise

have shown great care in the investigations made and conclusions reached concerning the sociological, educational, and economic conditions and problems of the Alaska Eskimo.

Obviously, in matters pertaining to the several “tribes” and their loci, they question only slightly the findings of prior observers. The pattern they followed was set by Dall [1877], elaborated by Petroff [1884], and then in turn slightly amended by Nelson [1899].

It is the purpose of this writing to call to attention some of the apparent errors which have been generally accepted concerning the Yut of Western Alaska. The writer speaks only as a lay observer, and asserts the ability to speak credibly only with reference to the Eskimo from Prince William Sound to Unalakleet (Figs. 1, 2, and 3). Definitely so as to the sections from Bristol Bay to the Yukon-Kuskokwim portage.<sup>4</sup>

One must, however, do as others have done and include some word concerning the Ugalakamut, those daring and adventuresome Eskimo who penetrated far into Indian territory along the storm swept and glacier rimmed coast east of Controller Bay.<sup>5</sup>

That this folk occupied and held for a time the shoreline of Controller Bay (including Kayak Island) and the

forbidden terrain eastward to Icy Bay seems well established [Birket-Smith and De Laguna 1938:343–345]. That they visited and traded still farther along the Pacific shore is evidenced by la Pérouse, who in 1786 found the remains of an Eskimo umiak [*umiak*] in Lituya Bay.<sup>6</sup> And the Indians there reported that seven other of these skin-covered boats had visited them.

It is probable that the Ugalakamut waged a continued struggle with the Eyak and other Indians for the rich fishing and hunting grounds of the Copper River Delta. No Ugalakamut, as such, exist today. Some were no doubt assimilated by their Indian neighbors to the east and west. And it is likely that some found sanctuary among their Eskimo kinsmen, the Chugachamut [Chugachmiut] of Prince William Sound (see Fig. 4 and Table 1).

Today the remnant Chugachamut refer to themselves as Aleut.<sup>7</sup> And their White neighbors usually so think of them. But Petroff was and is right in naming them and the similar tongued folk of Kodiak Island, Eskimo. So were the dwellers on the east side of Kenai Peninsula and part way along the westerly shore of that peninsula.

Anderson and Eells [1935:29] give Ugashik as the southerly boundary of the Eskimo on the west side of the Alaska Peninsula. It is known that they occupied the



Figure 1: Study area showing selected places mentioned in text.



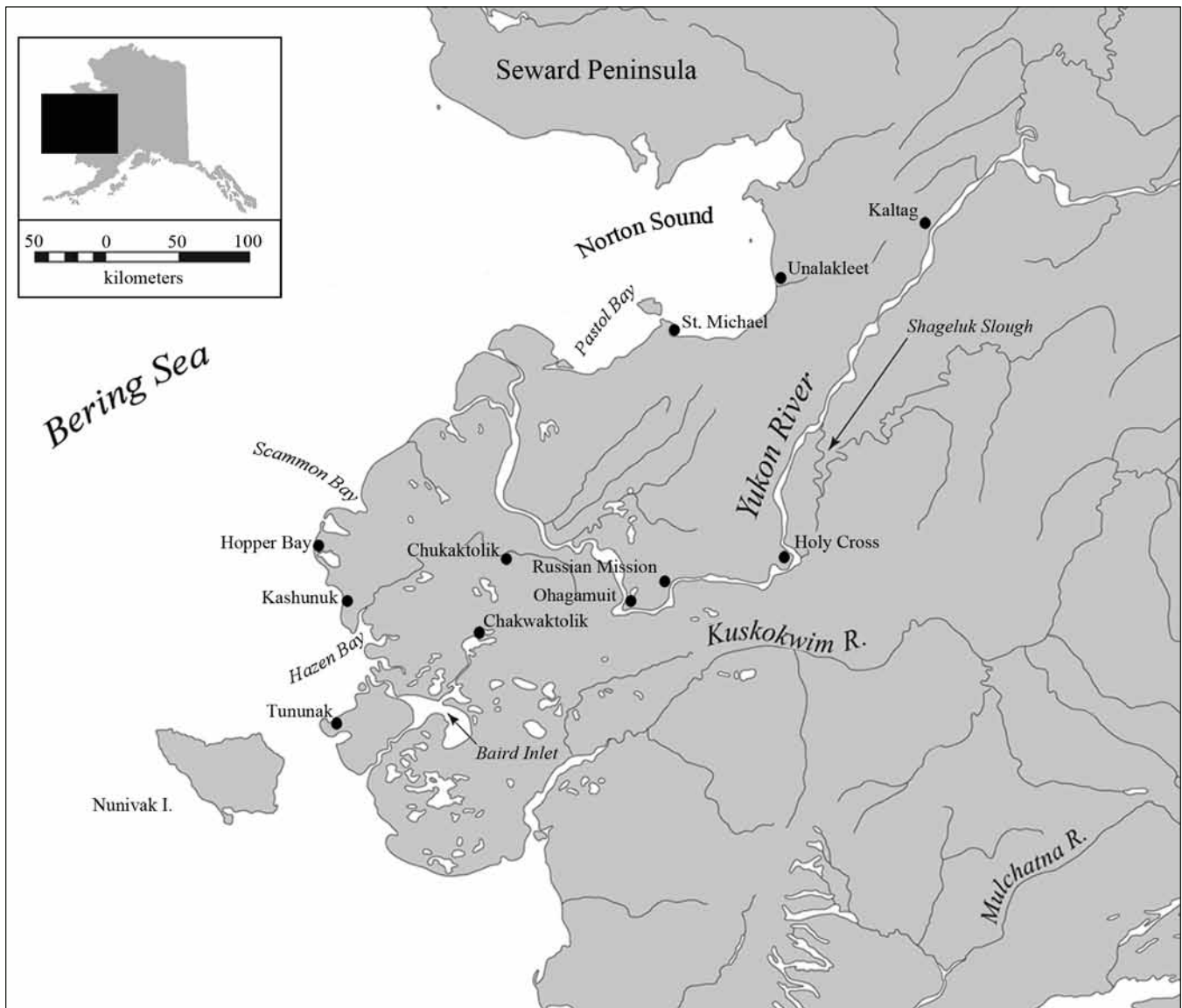


Figure 2: Norton Sound to Kuskokwim Bay showing selected places mentioned in text.

west side as far as Port Moller, and on the Pacific side to below Chignik.

These Oglemut [Aglurmiut],<sup>8</sup> or as they are known today, Oogwasheet, held the coast line to Point Etolin, all of the south shore of Lake Iliamna, had at least one village on Naknek Lake, and with the folk of Kanatak on the Pacific, fished the salmon spawning grounds at the head of Lake Becharof. The Yut of Lake Iliamna often hunted on Kamishak Bay their desired quarry, sea otter. Sometimes they were accompanied on these hunts by adventurous souls from as far west as Togiak.

Whether or not the Kaniatak [Koniag] or Krikiktuk-pugamut of Kodiak Island had regular settlements on the west side of Shelikof Strait is a matter of conjecture.

It is among the descendants of the Oglemut of both full and mixed blood that there is the most decided insistence that they are Aleuts. This feeling has been accentuated by the presence at Ugashik and below of a number of families of Northern Eskimo who migrated from Seward Peninsula before and subsequent to 1900.<sup>9</sup> White traders and teachers as well as the Natives insist that while these migrants are Eskimo that the local Natives are of Aleut descent.

Among many of the mixed bloods a decided stigma attaches to, and makes a fighting word of "Eskimo." A few questions and answers as to the equivalents in their native tongue of such words as sun, moon, land, air, water, man, woman, and the numerals will demonstrate



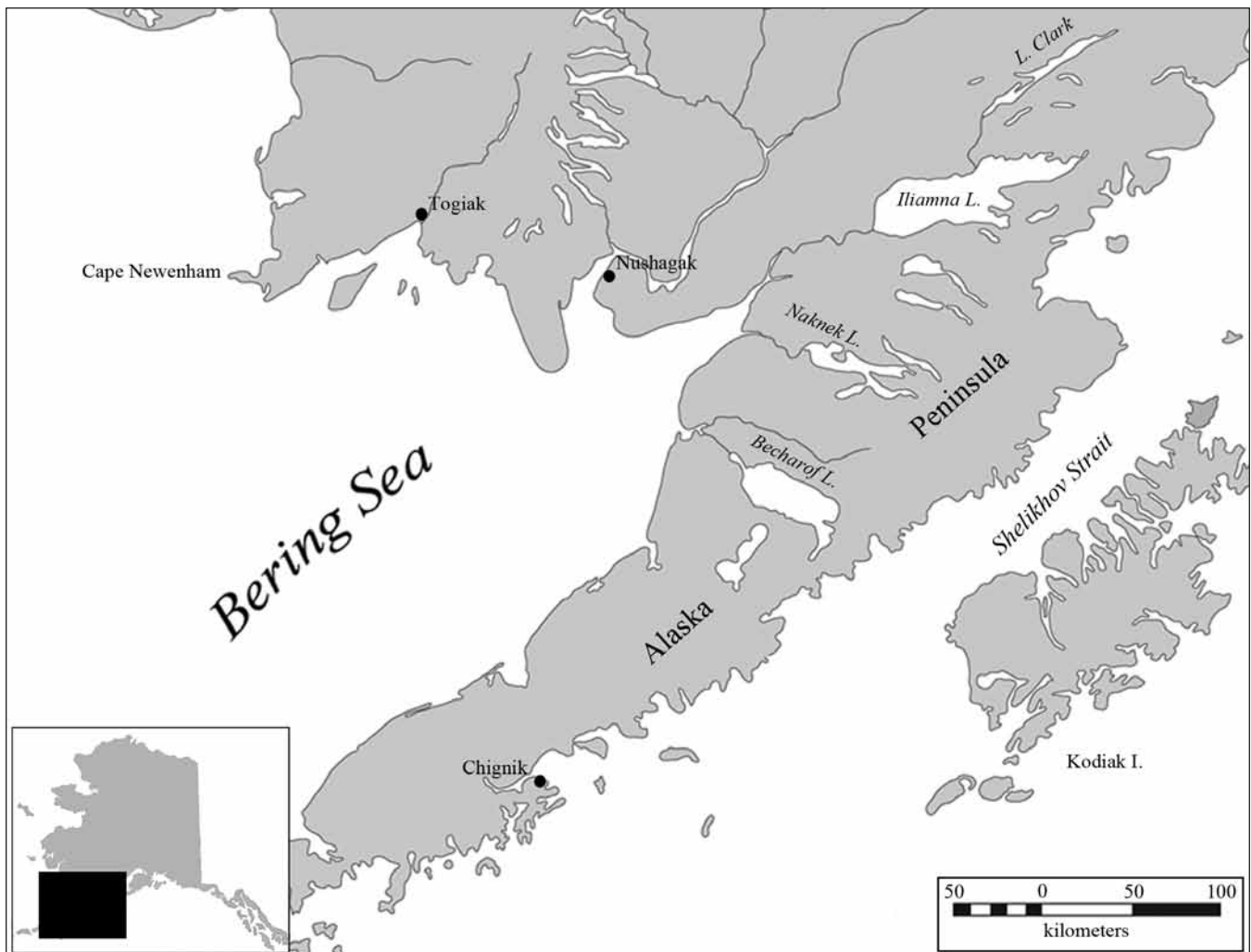


Figure 3: Bristol Bay and Alaska Peninsula showing selected places mentioned in text.

(but not convince the answerers) that they are of Eskimo descent.

An instance of how general this error is may be found under “G” in Plate II of *Alaska Natives* [Anderson and Eells 1935:13]. Among the boys and girls shown are children of both Northern and local Eskimo, but none of Aleut parents.

The use of the word Nushagak as applied to the village at the point where the Russians established Alexandrofski [Aleksandrovskii Redoubt], and also as the name of the largest river entering Bristol Bay is well established (by time and usage). The source of the word Nushagak is unknown. It is not an Eskimo name. The Eskimo name for the site of the former post of Alexandrofski is Tathlekok [*talliquq*] (Elbow).<sup>10</sup> Nushagak River is the Ilagyok [*Ilgayaq*] (Il-agy-ok): there is no Eskimo knowledge of Nushagak either as a place name or otherwise in their vocabulary. And there is nothing in the word’s etymology on which a rea-

son for its being applied as a place name might be suggested. Petroff [1884:135–136] records a second name for the “Nushagamut” [Nushagamut], “Kiatagamut.” Analysis of this word and its use elsewhere indicates clearly that it means simply “the upper people,” and as Petroff says these “were to be found on the Nushagak River and along the coast to Cape Newenham.”<sup>11</sup>

Rounding Cape Newenham one comes soon to the eastward extension of the Kuskokwagamut [Kusquvagmiut]. They were a widespread folk, remarkably one linguistically. They had year-round villages to the mouth of the Holitna and well up that stream. Their hunting grounds included the lower reaches of the easterly tributaries of the Kuskokwim to the Tatlaiksuk.<sup>12</sup> Occasionally in early spring by dog team they would go to the head of Big River [var. West Fork Kuskokwim River], construct boats covered with moose or caribou skin, and return to their homes downstream all the way.<sup>13</sup> Big River is a partial translation

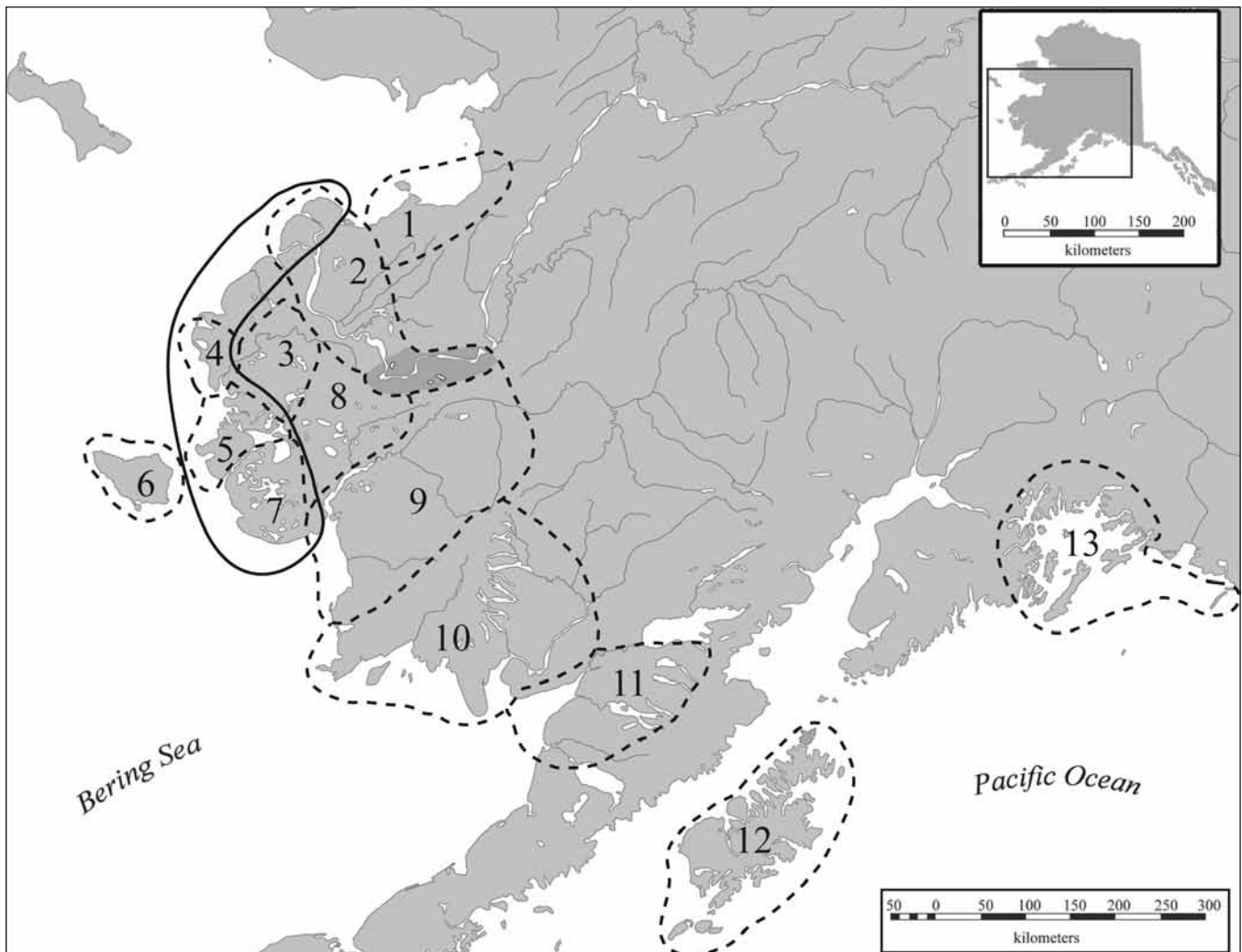


Figure 4: Approximate “tribal” group boundaries described by Waskey (keyed to Table 1).

of the Eskimo name Kweechpathluk [*Kuigpalleq*]. Stony and Swift Rivers are more complete translations of their Eskimo names.<sup>14</sup>

On the north side of the Kuskokwim from the “Portage” to Crooked Creek, the Yut had contact with the Indians of Shageluk Slough, whom they called (as did the Yukon Yut) “Yugwileingut”—different men.<sup>15</sup>

The Tenai (tinne [dene, *denaa*]) of the Upper Kuskokwim evidently established their village of Talaquana [*Dilah Vena*] on the Stony at an early date. From there they entered and built on both the Mulchatna River and Lake Clark.

The Kuskokwagamut called these Athapaskans “Inkillet,” and the Yukon Yut also applied this term to the Indians of Kaltag and above, whom they recognized as differing from the Yugwileingut.<sup>16</sup>

The Ilagyogamut of Nushagak River and the Oglemut of Iliamna both called their Indian neighbors “Kenaiyut.” This compound hybrid name involves an initial sound substitution, otherwise [it] is simply the Tenai (men) as the Indians called themselves qualifying the Yut (also men) that the Eskimo called themselves.<sup>17</sup>

Anderson and Eells [1935:29] somewhat question the name “Akulamut” as a “tribe.” That they were and are an important division of the Yut is unquestionable. In a broad sense the term Akulamut included all the Yut between the Kuskokwim watershed, one village whose lakes outlet to Baird Inlet, and the village of Chukaktolik [*Cugartalek*] on the head of the Kashunok River.<sup>18</sup> As late as the early 1900s many of these villagers did not come to either the Yukon or Kuskokwim to fish during the summer. Their home lakes and rivers contained an abundance of several

Table 1: Names of “tribal” groups reported by Waskey (keyed to Figure 4).

Map Number (See Fig. 4)	Waskey’s “Tribal” Group Name	Name as Spelled in Current Orthography	Comments
1	Unaleet	Unaliq	
2	Kwichpukamut	Kuigpagmiut	Includes the Ekogmut [Iqugmiut] subgroup <sup>1</sup>
3	Magemut	Maarmiut	
4	Askinukamut	Askinakmiut	
5	Kaluyuagamut	Qaluyaarmiut	
6	Nunivagamut	Nunivaarmiut	
7	Cheneyanukamut	Caninermiut	
8	Akulamut	Akulmiut	
9	Kuskowagamut	Kusquqvagmiut	
10	Nushagamut	Nushagagmiut	Includes Kiatagmut [Kiatagmiut] <sup>2</sup>
11	Oglemut	Aglurmiut	
12	Kaniatak	Koniag	
13	Chugachamut	Chugachmiut	
Not numbered; indicated by solid line	Snahgamut	Cenarmiut	Generic name for coastal residents

1 As described by Waskey, the area occupied by the Iqugmiut corresponds with the shaded portion of Kuigpagmiut territory shown on Fig. 4.

2 In Waskey’s account, “Nushagagmiut” and “Kiatagmiut” are treated as variant names for the same group of people.

varieties of whitefish, pike, and freshwater cod (burbot). And the swamps and small connecting streams swarmed with blackfish (*Dallia pectoralis*). The Akulamut still live in the villages cited from late August or September until spring breakup. That they are an outstanding distinct division of the Yut is evidenced not only by their physical characteristics but by their present-day well-built and well-kept dwellings and orderly communal life.

In practice the term Akulamut did not extend to the coast dwellers between the two great rivers. Collectively these were the Snahgamut [Cenarmiut]. Of their several divisions, one of the largest and the last to be influenced by white traders, missionaries, and schools was the Cheneyanukamut [Caninermiut] (people of the low-lying coast). Their territory was and is from Kuskokwim Bay [to] the Kolevinerak [Qalvinraaq], the southerly outlet of Baird Inlet. At least two of their larger villages have not yet had a secular school.

On both sides of the Nelson Island Mountains are the numerous Kaluyuagamut [Qaluyaarmiut] (people of the dip net). So well established is the name of these folk, and so well known their homogeneity and occupied territory, that far and wide the Nelson Island Mountains are known as “kaluyeeet” [qaluyiit (dip nets)].

In both lay and scientific circles there is general knowledge of the importance of blackfish as a major source of food among the Eskimo. Little has been said about the local importance of the sticklebacks, taken by dip nets

rather than by a weir trap of splints, or nowadays, wire netting. These tiny members of the family Gasterosteidae are normally taken during the winter months, literally by the hundredweight. They seldom average more than two inches in length, and often that two inches includes a segmented parasite nearly as large as its host.

Notwithstanding this far from appetizing fact, these “needlefish” are a good food for both man and dog. And so important a food that even in these days of handy trading posts, a failure of the run to come, or to come late, may mean a near famine among those who regularly prepare for and depend on such run[s]. In short, these tiny fish are, during the winter, the staff of life among the Kaluyagamut and to some extent their neighbors, the Askinukamut [Askinakmiut]. Kipniak [Qip’ngayaq] or Black River seems to be the northerly limit of their plentiful occurrence. There is some reason to believe there may be two or more genera among these nest builders of the Bering Sea littoral.<sup>19</sup> Occasionally in dipping for sticklebacks a somewhat larger fish, possibly a dace, are taken. These shapely bodied shiners (chimukaleet [cemerliq (smelt)]), three to five inches in length, are a treat indeed and even tastier than larger pan fish.

The Kialivigamut [Kaialivigmiut], often mentioned as a “tribe” are a part of the Kaluyuagamut. The name means the people of the upper place. Their spring and summer camps are near the mouth of the Azun River on Hazen Bay. Between Kialivik [Kayalivik] and the several former

villages of the Kashunoks was the longest stretch of coastline within Yut territory along which there were no regular winter villages. In the days of dog team travel, this was the one day's trip that under ordinary trail and weather conditions was difficult.

Within the past few years, the Kashunoks, instead of occupying two or more winter villages nearer the coast, have moved to Chevak up the Kashunuk River. The Kashunok [*Qissunag*] folk are a part of the Askinukamut, who included the large village of Napukayahak [*Naparyaraq*] on Hooper Bay and several villages along the south foot of the Askinuk Mountains. In the early 1900s the people of Kutmuit [*Keggatmiut* (var. *Marayarmiut*)] on the north side of the Askinuks were considered by their neighbors the Magemut [*Maarmiut*], as belonging to the Askinukamut. But the Kutmuit folk resented this, often speaking disparagingly of the people of Napukayahak and Kashunok.<sup>20</sup>

The statement in *Alaska Natives* [Anderson and Eells 1935:29] that the Nunivagamut [Nunivaarmiut] had settlements on the Kashunok probably had its source in the fact that Nunivakers did come to the mainland to join the Kashunoks in their goose drives during the molting season.<sup>21</sup> Tradition says that the Nunivak folk were allied with the Hooper Bay warriors in their strife with the Malemut, the general name of the Yut for the Inuit.

The correct pronunciation of Nunivak is Nu-nee-vahk [*Nunivaag*].<sup>22</sup> Among the Yut, the one people whose vocabulary includes distinctively St. Lawrence Island words are the Nunivaks.

The Magemut are the folk who occupy the lake country (above brackish water) from east of Chevak and the Askinuks, north past Kusilvak Mountain, the name derived not from the word for mink, *emukamutuk* [*imarmituq*], but from the word for water, *muk* [*meq*].

Ekogmut is not correctly applied to the Yut of all the Yukon. They are all properly Kwichpukamut (Kweeshpugamut) [Kuigpagmiut] people of the Big River. Ekogmut [*Iqugmiut*] applies particularly to the formerly large village of that name now generally called Russian Mission. It is also correct to term as Ekogmut the inhabitants of the several villages from Ingarahathluk [*Ingrirralleq*] (Holy Cross) to the original inhabitants of the section just below Ohogamut [*Iquarmiut*] (Bennetts).<sup>23</sup>

Ekok [*Iquk*] means "end." Ohogamut is a corruption of Ikwagamut [*Iquarmiut*]. Ikowak [*iquaq*] also means "end," and in this instance indicates the exact end of the Ungulak Mountains, rounding which the Lower Yukon makes its farthest southing.<sup>24</sup> The comparatively short dis-

tance occupied by the Ekogmut is one of the most important in Alaska from the viewpoint of anthropology, and a distance or section which so far has received scant attention scientifically.<sup>25</sup>

The Ekogmut's direct contact with the Yugwileinguk emphasizes this section's importance.

The Unaleet [Unaliq] or Ungalikthlugamut are the farthest north of the Yut. Their country was and is along the southerly shores of Norton Sound and a part of Pastol Bay. "Unaleet" signifies "those down there."

Ungalik [*ungalaq*] is the word designating the warm easterly and southerly winds that may occur at any time, often bringing rain even in winter. These warm winds have great importance in the economic and other phases of the life of the Yut. The words Ungalik and Ungalikthluk [possibly *ungalaggluk*] occur over and over as place names in Yut territory. Invariably they designate river valleys or passes through the country that are natural "draws" for these winds.

It is not unreasonable to hazard the guess that the term which the Chugachamut applied to their easterly and southeasterly neighbors the Eyak Indians [Birket-Smith and De Laguna 1938:343–345] derived from the fact that these Indians lived towards the quarter from which these warm winds first descend from the higher altitude over the Pacific Ocean.

## NOTES

1. Extensive confusion exists in the literature with respect to the names, scales, and geographical boundaries of Yup'ik Eskimo groups in Southwest Alaska (see Pratt 1984a, 1984b, 2009:258–279; cf. Fienup-Riordan 1984; Shinkwin and Pete 1984), which is the main focus of Waskey's account. Many of the group names and boundaries he described have been critically evaluated previously (Pratt 1984a, 1984b) and are illustrated here in Fig. 4 and Table 1. Three additional maps (Figs. 1, 2, and 3) show the locations of numerous places mentioned in Waskey's essay.
2. This term refers to speakers of the Norton Sound–Kotlik dialect of the Central Yup'ik language (Jacobson 2005:xix; cf. Pratt 1984a:66–67, 118–119n4).
3. These remarks concerning "fairness of skin" and "color phases of the Eskimo race" should be taken with a large dose of skepticism. "Fairness" is a relative term,



and Waskey's conjectures are not supported by scientific evidence.

4. The main route of this portage extends from the vicinity of Lower Kalskag on the Kuskokwim to Russian Mission on the Yukon (cf. Zagoskin 1967:273–274).
5. Birket-Smith and De Laguna (1938:341–345) identified the “Ugalakamut” as “a branch of the . . . Shallow Water People, one of the eight tribes of the Prince William Sound Eskimo.” Their position on this point seems solid; however, other authors have instead correlated the Ugalakmiut with the Eyak Indians (e.g., Oswalt 1967:5).
6. Since Birket-Smith and De Laguna (1938:345) cite La Pérouse (1797:206f) as the source of this information, he was apparently the person who described the craft as an “umiak.”
7. Today most of these people refer to themselves as Alutiiqs, Chugach, and/or Sugpiat (cf. Ganley and Wheeler 2012). In the literature they have also been identified as the “Prince William Sound Eskimo” (e.g., Birket-Smith and De Laguna 1938:343) and the “Pacific Eskimo” (e.g., Clark 1984).
8. The Aglurmiut were characterized by Oswalt (1967:4) as “the most perplexing of all Alaskan Eskimo tribes”—a reference to confusion about their actual identity and geographical range at historic contact. The earliest Russian accounts about these people state that warfare with other Yup'ik groups forced them to migrate from the Kuskokwim River area to Bristol Bay and the northern Alaska Peninsula sometime prior to 1819 (cf. Pratt 2012). Waskey's remarks about this group are unique in two ways: they contain no reference whatsoever to the reported “Aglurmiut migration” and also assert that these people insisted they were “Aleut.”
9. Speakers of the Inupiaq language and frequently identified as the “Malimiut” (see Ganley 1995; Ray 1975:130–139), the movement of these “Northern Eskimo” southward from the Seward Peninsula evidently began sometime after ca. 1850.
10. Jacobson (2012:608) translates *talliquq* as “flipper of seal, foreleg of animal.” Waskey's translation of the term as “elbow” appears to be an error. Yup'ik terms for “elbow” are *cingun*, *ikusek*, and *ikuyek* (Jacobson 2012:211, 285–286). For further information about this placename problem see VanStone (1988:103–104n23).
11. The source of this statement has not been located. Waskey may have been quoting from memory and probably erred in attributing the statement to Petroff. It most closely matches Dall's (1877:19) description of the Nushagagmiut territory.
12. The “Tatlaiksuk” is identified on modern maps as the Tatlawiksuk River; it lies just above Swift River about 21 km northeast of the village of Sleetmute (Orth 1967:951). Zagoskin (1967:268) reported the Eskimo name for this river as “Talgiksyuak” (possibly *Taillerviksaq*) and its Indian name as “Talgotno.”
13. Moose or caribou skin boats were common in much of the north (primarily among Athabascan peoples); they were usually built for one-time river journeys associated with spring subsistence activities or for carrying heavy loads. Data concerning their use by Eskimos are more limited, but Yup'ik oral history documents the construction and use of boats covered with the skins of moose, caribou, brown/grizzly and black bears (e.g., Andrew and Andrew 1988; Coffing 1993; Fienup-Riordan 2007:158–164; Spein 1988). The Yup'ik name for this type of skin boat is *angyaqatak*. Boat coverings used by Nunamiut in the Brooks Range included caribou and sheep skins (Campbell 1998:plate 57; 2004:91–97, fig. 39). Osgood (1940:378–380) provides an excellent description of the construction and use of moose skin boats by the Ingalik [Deg Hit'an]. Other Athabascan groups that used such boats include the Dena'ina (e.g., Kari 2003), Upper Tanana (Hosley 1981:537–539, fig. 14; McKennan 1959:93–94), and Gwich'in in (e.g., Osgood 1936:57–58, 62; Slobodin 1981:518). Sheep and/or goat skins were also used as boat coverings by Ahtna (De Laguna and McClellan 1981:650), Eyak (Birket-Smith and De Laguna 1938:54) and Tlingit (De Laguna 1972:330–331).
14. The Yup'ik name for Stony River is *Teggalkum Kuiga* (“stone river”) or *Teggalkuq* (“stone”) (Kari 1985:169; cf. Zagoskin 1967:267–268). Zagoskin (1967:268) reported the Yup'ik name for Swift River as “Chagvanakhtuli” (“fast”). A more accurate spelling and translation of this name is *Carvanertuli* (“one with very strong current”).
15. “Yugwileingut” corresponds with the “Inkalik–Yug-elnut” of Zagoskin (1967:243, 265), and both terms refer to the Ingalik [Deg Hit'an].
16. The term “Inkiller” is a reference to the Koyukon people (e.g., Arndt 1996:197; Zagoskin 1967:243).
17. For another explanation of this term see Zagoskin (1967:300–301n95).

18. “Chukaktolik” was actually affiliated with the Kuigpagmiut, not the Akulmiut. This is emphasized by the fact that when the village was abandoned ca. 1950 the majority of its former residents relocated to Pilot Station on the lower Yukon River. The Akulmiut village Waskey probably meant to name here was “Chakwaktolik” [*Cuukvagtuliq*], located near the north shore of Aropuk Lake [*Arurpak*] some 60 km south of Chukaktolik.
19. The male stickleback constructs a small, barrel-shaped nest from vegetation (e.g., Jordan and Evermann 1896:745–749).
20. The reported resentment probably stemmed from the fact that the people of “Kutmiut” (sometimes called “Old Scammon Bay”) spoke a different dialect of Yup’ik from that spoken by the people of Hooper Bay and Chevak. Language was historically a crucial marker of group identity and also a commonly used means for differentiating between Native populations in the Yup’ik region.
21. The extent of connections that existed between the people of Nunivak and those of the Hooper Bay–Chevak area were overstated by several early authors (cf. Pratt 1984a:96–98), as Waskey recognized. But his suggestion that such overstatements may have been based on Nunivakers formerly traveling to *Qissunaq* to join its residents in “goose drives during the molting season” is problematic, for at least two reasons. First, geese (e.g., Canada, black brant, white-fronted) were plentiful on Nunivak Island—so its people had no need to make long journeys away from home to procure this resource. Second, an extensive collection of oral history data exists concerning the Nunivak Eskimos, and it appears to lack any mention of cooperative goose drives with *Qissunaq*-area people.
22. This spelling is based on the common pronunciation of Nunivak by General Central Yup’ik (GCY) speakers (cf. Jacobson 2012:463); however, in the Nunivak dialect (Cup’ig) the name is pronounced differently and spelled *Nuniwar* (Amos and Amos 2003:230). This difference also extends to the spelling of the islanders’ group name: i.e., Nunivaarmiut (GCY) versus Nuniwarmiut (Cup’ig).
23. “Ohogamut” was apparently also known as *Urra’armiut* (George 1988:7; Jacobson 2012:688). Robert Drozda (personal communication, 20 March 2013) suggests this name may have been applied to the site by people of the Kuskokwim River. He speculates that it may have been so named due to its location at or near one end of a well-known trail/portage that (on the Kuskokwim side) began near the village of Akiachak.
24. The name Waskey gives for these mountains (i.e., “Ungulak Mountains”) is based on the Yup’ik place name *Ungluq*, which refers to a mountain (“Ungalak Mountain”) near Devil’s Elbow of the lower Yukon River that was reportedly the nest site of a giant eagle, or *tengmiarpak* (Hansen 1985:119–121; cf. Jacobsen 1977:110; Pratt 1993).
25. Waskey’s “Ekogmut” discussion underscores a central problem that occurs over and over in historical and anthropological accounts reporting the names and geographical locations of traditional Yup’ik groups in southwest Alaska. That is, the names of specific local groups are often extended to encompass members of other local groups who identified themselves by their own, entirely different, names (i.e., autonyms). The resulting “regional group” names distort and over-simplify traditional Yup’ik socioterritorial organization in numerous ways (cf. Pratt 2009:76–98, 214–279). When combined with uncritical research, such designations may be used in ways that not only perpetuate old errors, but also introduce new inaccuracies to an already complex problem (e.g., Funk 2010:528, fig. 3).

## REFERENCES

- Amos, Muriel M., and Howard T. Amos  
2003 *Cup’ig Eskimo Dictionary*. Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks.
- Anderson, H. Dewey, and Walter C. Eells  
1935 *Alaska Natives: A Survey of Their Sociological and Educational Status*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA.
- Andrew, Wassilie, and John Andrew  
1988 Oral history interview (88CAL063). Lisa Hutchinson, interviewer; Phillip Guy and John Andrew, interpreters. 12 July; Kwethluk, Alaska. Translated and transcribed by Alice Fredson; reviewed and edited by Monica Shelden. Bureau of Indian Affairs, ANCSA Office, Anchorage.
- Arndt, Katherine L.  
1996 Dynamics of the Fur Trade on the Middle Yukon River, Alaska, 1839 to 1868. Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Anthropology, University of Alaska Fairbanks.

- Birket Smith, Kaj, and Frederica De Laguna  
1938 *The Eyak Indians of the Copper River Delta, Alaska*. Levin & Munksgaard, Copenhagen.
- Campbell, John Martin  
1998 *North Alaska Chronicle: Notes from the End of Time (The Simon Paneak Drawings)*. Museum of New Mexico Press, Santa Fe.
- Campbell, John Martin (ed.)  
2004 *In a Hungry Country: Essays by Simon Paneak*. University of Alaska Press, Fairbanks.
- Clark, Donald W.  
1984 Pacific Eskimo: Historical Ethnography. In *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 5, *Arctic*, edited by David Damas, pp. 185–197. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.
- Coffing, Mike  
1993 Skin Boats Are Way to Go on the Kuskokwim. *Tundra Drums* 21(10):4 [3 June]. Bethel, Alaska.
- Dall, William H.  
1877 *Tribes of the Extreme Northwest*. Contributions to North American Ethnology, vol. I. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.
- De Laguna, Frederica  
1972 *Under Mount Saint Elias: The History and Culture of the Yakutat Tlingit*. Smithsonian Contributions to Anthropology, vol. 7, pt. 1. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.
- De Laguna, Frederica, and Catherine McClellan  
1981 Ahtna. In *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 6, *Subarctic*, edited by June Helm, pp. 641–663. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.
- Fienup-Riordan, Ann  
1984 Regional Groups on the Yukon–Kuskokwim Delta. *Études/Inuit/Studies* 8(supp.):63–93.  
2007 *Yuungnaqpiallret/The Way We Genuinely Live: Masterworks of Yup'ik Science and Survival*. University of Washington Press, Seattle, in association with the Anchorage Museum Association and Calista Elders Council, Anchorage.
- Funk, Caroline  
2010 The Bow and Arrow War Days on the Yukon–Kuskokwim Delta of Alaska. *Ethnohistory* 57(4):523–569.
- Ganley, Matt L.  
1995 The Malimiut of Northwest Alaska: A Study in Ethnonymy. *Études/Inuit/Studies* 19(1):103–119.
- Ganley, Matt L., and Polly C. Wheeler  
2012 The Place Not Yet Subjugated: Prince William Sound, 1770–1800. *Arctic Anthropology* 49(2):113–127.
- George, Wassillie, Sr.  
1988 Oral history interview (Tape 88CAL173). Robert Drozda, interviewer; Vernon Chimegalrea, interpreter. 30 August; Akiachak, Alaska. Translated and transcribed by Lucy Coolidge Daniels; reviewed and edited by Irene Reed. Bureau of Indian Affairs, ANCSA Office, Anchorage.
- Hansen, Susan A.  
1985 Yup'ik Eskimo Oral History and Lore from the Lower Yukon River. Draft manuscript on file, BIA ANCSA Office, Anchorage.
- Hosley, Edward H.  
1981 Environment and Culture in the Alaska Plateau. In *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 6, *Subarctic*, edited by June Helm, pp. 533–545. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.
- Jacobsen, Johan Adrian  
1977 *Alaskan Voyage, 1881–1883: An Expedition to the Northwest Coast of America*. Translated by Erna Gunther from the German text of Adrian Woldt. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Jacobson, Steven A.  
2005 *Yup'ik Dialect Atlas and Study*. Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks.  
2012 *Yup'ik Eskimo Dictionary*, 2nd ed. Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks.
- Jordan, D. S., and B. W. Evermann  
1896 *The Fishes of North and Middle America*. Bulletin of the United States National Museum, no. 47, pt. 1. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.
- Kari, James  
2003 Notes on Dena'ina Watercraft. In *Shem Pete's Alaska: The Territory of the Upper Cook Inlet Dena'ina*, edited by James Kari and James A. Fall, pp. 102–104. University of Alaska Press, Fairbanks.
- Kari, Priscilla Russell  
1985 *Wild Resource Use and Economy of Stony River Village*. Technical Paper no. 108, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Subsistence, Juneau.
- la Pérouse, Jean-François de Galaup, comte de  
1797 *Voyage de la Pérouse Autour du Monde, publié conformément au décret du 22 avril 1791, et rédigé par M. L. A. Milet-Mureau*. 4 vols., atlas. Imprimerie de la République, Paris.

- McKenna, Robert A.  
1959 *The Upper Tanana Indians*. Yale University Publications in Anthropology 55. Yale University Press, New Haven.
- Nelson, Edward W.  
1899 *The Eskimo about Bering Strait*. Bureau of American Ethnology, Annual Report for 1896–97, vol. 18, pt. 1. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.
- Orth, Donald J.  
1967 *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*. U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper no. 567. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.
- Osgood, Cornelius  
1936 *Contributions to the Ethnography of the Kutchin*. Yale University Publications in Anthropology 14. Yale University Press, New Haven.  
1940 *Ingalik Material Culture*. Yale University Publications in Anthropology 22. Yale University Press, New Haven.
- Oswalt, Wendell H.  
1967 *Alaskan Eskimos*. Chandler Publishing Company, San Francisco.
- Petroff, Ivan  
1884 *Report on the Population and Resources of Alaska, Tenth Census of the U.S.A., 1880*. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.
- Pratt, Kenneth L.  
1984a Yukon–Kuskokwim Eskimos, Western Alaska: Inconsistencies in Group Identification. M.A. thesis, Department of Anthropology, Western Washington University, Bellingham.  
1984b Classification of Eskimo Groupings in the Yukon–Kuskokwim Region: A Critical Analysis. *Études/Inuit/Studies* 8(supp.):45–61.  
1993 Legendary Birds in the Physical Landscape of the Yup'ik Eskimos. *Anthropology and Humanism* 18(1):13–20.
- 2009 Nuniwarmiut Land Use, Settlement History and Socio-Territorial Organization, 1880–1960. Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Anthropology, University of Alaska Fairbanks.
- 2013 Rethinking the Aglurmiut Migration. Paper presented at the 40<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Alaska Anthropological Association, 13–16 March, Anchorage.
- Ray, Dorothy Jean  
1975 *The Eskimos of Bering Strait, 1650–1898*. University of Washington Press, Seattle and London.
- Shinkwin, Anne, and Mary Pete  
1984 Yup'ik Eskimo Societies: A Case Study. *Études/Inuit/Studies* 8(supp.):95–112.
- Slobodin, Richard  
1981 Kutchin. In *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 6, *Subarctic*, edited by June Helm, pp. 514–532. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.
- Spein, Elena  
1988 Oral history interview. Lisa Hutchinson, interviewer; Phillip Guy, interpreter. 21 July; Kwethluk, Alaska. Translated and transcribed by Alice Fredson; reviewed and edited by Monica Shelden. Bureau of Indian Affairs, ANCSA Office, Anchorage.
- VanStone, James W. (ed.)  
1988 *Russian Exploration in Southwest Alaska: The Travel Journals of Petr Korsakovskiy (1818) and Ivan Ya. Vasilev (1829)*. Translated by David H. Kraus. Rasmuson Library Historical Translation Series, vol. IV. University of Alaska Press, Fairbanks.
- Zagoskin, Lavrentiy A.  
1967 *Lieutenant Zagoskin's Travels in Russian America, 1842–1844*. Translated by Penelope Rainey; edited by Henry N. Michael. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.