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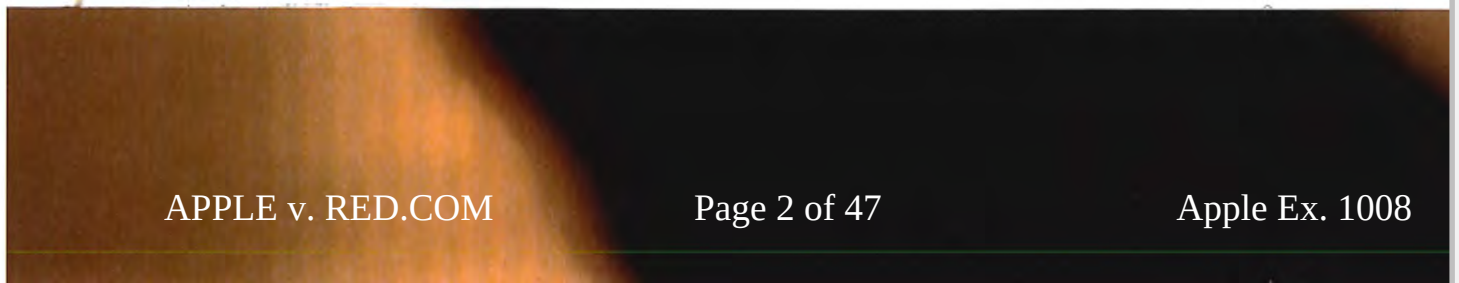

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ISBN 0-321-44193-1

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed and bound in the United States of America

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Importing

Before you can do any work in Aperture, you have to get your pictures out of your camera and onto your Mac's hard drive. There are many ways to do this and you don't have to have Aperture simply to copy images from a camera. However, since Aperture is designed to facilitate your *entire* digital workflow, it includes a full-featured importer that can transfer images from a media card or directly from your camera.

When you import into Aperture—from a card reader, a camera, or a folder that's already on your Mac—Aperture copies the imported images into its own library. You can then freely delete the images from their original location, because Aperture has its own copies inside its library.

But Aperture's Import facility lets you do much more than simply copy images into the Aperture library. With the tools built in to the Aperture import facility, importing can mark the beginning of your sorting and organization process.

You can configure Aperture to automatically launch any time you plug a camera or card reader into your Mac. Select Aperture > Preferences and change the When a Camera Is Connected, Open pop-up menu to Aperture. (From this same menu, you can also configure your Mac to open a different application, or to do nothing at all, freeing you to manage the copying process yourself from the Finder.) Note that even if you have this menu set to open nothing, if Aperture is running when you connect a camera or media reader, then its Import dialog box will still automatically open.

TIP: *Your Mac's image importing options can also be configured outside of Aperture. Your Applications folder should contain a program called Image Capture. With a media card mounted on your desktop, launch Image Capture and select Image Capture > Preferences to specify the application that you want launched when a camera or media card reader is connected.*

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applied to the original master data, on the fly, whenever the image is displayed or output. That list of edits is called a *version*.

When you first import an image into Aperture, the program automatically creates a version for that image. Because you have not yet applied any edits, that version of the image looks exactly like your original untouched master file (**Figure 3.1**).

Figure 3.1 The thumbnails and images that you see in Aperture's Viewer and Browser are actually a combination of two files: the original raw data and the list of edits and changes that gets applied to that data any time the image is written to the screen or output.

In Chapter 5, you'll see how to create additional versions of an image.

Importing from a Camera or Media Card

Depending on how you configure Aperture (as just discussed), the Import dialog box may appear automatically when you attach a camera or media card reader to your Mac. If you have not configured Aperture to automatically launch when a camera is connected, you can invoke the Import dialog box manually. This procedure is also handy when you want to import images that are already on your drive.

The Import dialog box is divided into three main areas: the thumbnail view, in the middle of the dialog box, where you can select and arrange images for import; the Info pane (at the right), where you can adjust the time stamp of your images, rename images, and add metadata; and, if you're importing images already on your drive, a file browser (at the left) for selecting the folder that you want to import from (**Figure 3.2**).

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