

A C H R O N I C L E O F A F A M I L Y

THE TOKMAKOVs



Transbaikalia · Trekhrechyë · Australia

From about 1650 to the present day



The valley of the river Argun at daybreak. An artist's reconstruction.

Compiled for Alex Tok · the tok.info family-tree project · September 2026

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BY WAY OF A PREFACE

How this book is to be read

“This is the story, as it took shape in my memory and in my imagination.”

L. N. Tolstoy, Hadji Murad, introduction



o man of the name of Tokmakov who might be your great-grandfather or your great-great-grandfather has as yet been found in the papers. This is the first thing that must be said, and said before all else, because without it everything that follows will deceive. There has been found neither a parish register entry, nor a service record, nor a form, nor a line in a ship's list — nothing that one might take up in one's hands and say: here he is.

And yet this book is not an empty one. It tells of that world out of which the people of this name came: of the steppe beyond the Argun, of the Host to which they were ascribed, of how they crossed the river with their families and their cattle, of how they lived thirty years upon foreign soil and how they were turned out of it, of the steamers, of the red earth near Katherine. All this is known for certain and is confirmed by sources. It is known, too, that two or three Tokmakovs were indeed in that world, and it is known just where they were and in what year.

One link only is wanting — that link which would bind them to you. But that link lies in the inventories of the archives, and at the end of the book it is said in which of them precisely, and how it is to be got out of them.



There is a passage in Tolstoy for the sake of which it would be worth while to undertake any pedigree whatever. He says that if we would understand the laws of history we must take for observation an infinitesimally small unit — a differential of history, that is, the homogeneous tendencies of men — and attain to the art of integrating these infinitesimals, that is, of finding the sum of them. In other words:

history is made not by tsars, but by the fact that in such and such a year a peasant decided not to sow, and the women bore fewer children, and a thousand such decisions added themselves together into that which was afterwards called a migration or a war.

And the family is just such an infinitesimally small unit. Not because it is small and of no consequence, but because it is only at that level that the causes are still real ones. Above it there are already only words.



The three rules to which this book holds

First. Everything that is here stated as a fact is taken from a named source. The sources are enumerated in the appendix, and every one of them may be verified.

Second. Where what is said is an inference and not a fact, it is so stated plainly — by the words “apparently”, “it must be supposed”, “most probably”. The reader would do well to notice these words: they mean that behind the sentence there stands no document.

Third, and chief of all. Where nothing is known, so it is written: it is not known. In a pedigree an honestly marked gap is worth more than a confident guess, because a gap can be filled, whereas a guess, once written down, will be repeated by the grandchildren as truth.

In the appendix, at the end of the book, all this is brought together into tables — dry ones, written in another style. It has been done on purpose. A chronicle and an inventory are different things, and they ought not to be confounded.

PART ONE

The Land Beyond the River

“Though hundreds of thousands of people, crowded into one small space, had done their best to disfigure the land on which they huddled together... spring was spring even in the town.”

L. N. Tolstoy, Resurrection, part one, chapter I



A works settlement of the Nerchinsk country in winter. An artist's reconstruction.

CHAPTER ONE

The Word

okmak is a beetle. A heavy wooden mallet, turned out of the butt of a tree, with which one beats the earth that it may settle; with which a pile is driven home; with which grain is pounded in a mortar when there is no mill, or when the mill is far away. The thing has neither ornament, nor the name of a master, nor a price; it is made in an hour out of whatever wood has come to hand, and serves until it splits. It is not bought. It is taken up in the hands when something heavy must be struck and there is nothing to be sorry for.

The word is not a Russian one. It came out of the Turkic tongues — in Turkish tokmak, in Tatar tukmak, in Kirghiz tokmok, and everywhere it means one and the same thing: a wooden mallet, a club, a beater. The Russian language took it long ago and made it so far its own that a verb came of it — токмачить, that is, to beat, to pound — and the old expression «дать токмача», which meant to strike with the fist.

And from this word came the surname. A man who was stubborn, thick-headed, heavy to move and light with his fists was called Tokmak; his son was written down Tokmakov; and after two generations nobody any longer remembered for what the grandfather had been so nicknamed.



From this there follows a thing which must be understood once and for all, because upon it stumble all who begin to search for their own. The beetle was in everybody's hands. The word was known in Vyatka, and near Kursk, and in Transbaikalia, and the nickname was given independently of one another in hundreds of villages, between which lay thousands of versts and which knew nothing whatever of one another. The surname Tokmakov arose anew as many times as there were stubborn peasants to be found.

A shared surname, therefore, proves nothing. Precisely nothing. Two Tokmakovs are two men whose forefathers were independently nicknamed after one and the same piece of wood. Kinship between them must be proved by papers or by the male chromosome, and out of the surname it can never be deduced.

OF WHAT MUST BE SAID AT ONCE, THAT WE MAY NOT HAVE TO RETURN TO IT

There was in Russia a princely family of Tokmakov as well — from Prince Ivan Vasilyevich Tokmak Nozdrovaty-Zvenigorodsky, first mentioned in 1538, Rurikids of the Zvenigorod line. His sons, Yury and Vasily, were voyevodas under Ivan the Terrible.

They served by Kolomna and Kashira and died out long before the Russians came out to the Argun. The Transbaikal Tokmakovs, on the other hand, figure in the documents as rank-and-file Cossacks, rising in the service to uryadnik and podkhorunzhy.

There is no connection whatever. And when at a family dinner somebody speaks of the princes, this is what should be answered: our surname is one with theirs, but our origin is another — they were nicknamed and we were nicknamed, only at different ends of the earth and in different centuries.

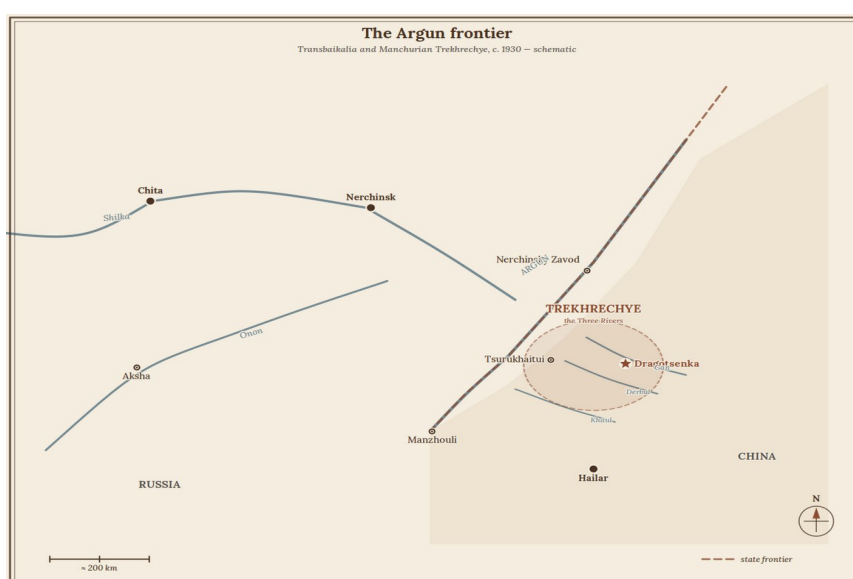
There are, besides, towns named Tokmak — in Kirghizia and in the Zaporozhye country. The root is the same, Turkic, but they have no relation to the surname, and

“we come from Tokmak” is the commonest and the emptiest of all the errors that are made in this business.

And last of all, of the spelling. In the old Siberian registers one and the same family was written now *Токмаковы*, now *Токмоковы* — as the sexton caught the sound, so he wrote it down; the unstressed «a» sounded like «o», and this troubled nobody. Both spellings must be searched for. In the Latin alphabet the surname was written Tokmakov, and Tokmakoff, and Tokmakow, and Tokmacoff. The rule is a simple one: in a paper issued in Manchuria it will more likely stand Tokmakoff, and in an Australian one of the 1960s — Tokmakov. He who searches for the one will lose the other.

CHAPTER TWO

The River That Was Not a Frontier



The Argun borderland: Transbaikalia, the river, and Trekhrechy — the Three Rivers country — beyond it. A schematic map drawn for this book.



he Russians did not come out to these parts all at once, nor was it of their own will that they stopped where they stopped. Through the whole of the seventeenth century the Cossacks and the serving men went eastward, in the forties came out upon the Amur, and there ran against a power that proved too hard for their teeth. The Treaty of Nerchinsk of 1689 — the first treaty in history between Russia and China — pushed them back from the Amur and drew a line, which in time became the river Argun. Nerchinsk itself became the chief town of that country, and from it everything else proceeded.

What distinguished Transbaikalia from the rest of Siberia was silver. The Nerchinsk mines, which began to be worked at the beginning of the eighteenth century, bound to the treasury a numerous settled population — the mining peasants, ascribed to the works in perpetuity. Beside them along the frontier stood the guard-posts: Cossacks in small settlements, Tungus and Buryat sotnias taken by Russia into frontier service. Out of these two bodies — the ascribed peasants and the frontier Cossacks — came that population of which we are speaking.



Now of the river itself, and this passage in the book is of more moment than many others.

To a man looking at a map the Argun is a state frontier, a line dividing two empires. To a man who lived upon it, it was neither a line nor a barrier, but was that bank to which the cattle were driven over. Argudyaeva writes of this in the very first lines of her article: the Transbaikal Cossacks, chiefly from the stanitsas along the Argun, went over to the almost unpeopled Trekhrechye “from times long past”, driving thither their herds and their droves to pasture. In summer they mowed hay there. Sometimes they ploughed up the virgin soil, and the rye that grew upon it was such as they had never seen on their own side. In winter they lived at the zaimkas with the cattle, and in the forest killed the hoofed beast and the fur-bearing one.

There was for them no frontier here. There was water, which is crossed by a ford in July, when it falls, and over the ice in December, when it stands.

Separate Russian khutors appeared in Trekhrechye as early as the end of the nineteenth century.

— Argudyaeva, 2019, p. 27

And out of this the following comes, and it is worth the consideration of everyone who pictures to himself a flight across a frontier as a desperate crossing in the night. Two generations before the first Tokmakov went beyond the Argun as a fugitive, men of his estate went over there every summer with their cattle. When the hour came, they were not going into the unknown. They were going out to the distant hayfield.



Cossacks riding out into the steppe.



Flocks upon the open steppe.

CHAPTER THREE

The Host



On the 17th of March, 1851, by a decree and upon the representation of the Governor-General Nikolai Nikolayevich Muravyov, the Transbaikal Cossack Host was established. Into it were brought the frontier regiments, the Transbaikal town regiment, and the Tungus and Buryat formations. Men were wanting, and thereupon there were enrolled as Cossacks in perpetuity the peasants ascribed to the Nerchinsk mining works, together with their posterity.

Upon this last line it is well to pause, because in it, in all probability, lies the answer to the question whence a Cossack family came by a peasant's nickname for a surname. The man whose grandfather had been nicknamed the Beetle was written down a

Cossack not for valour and not by descent, but because the Host was short of revision souls, and he stood upon the books of the works. So the ploughman became a Cossack — being in nothing changed thereby, save in a paper.

It must, however, be said plainly: not one source names the Tokmakovs among those enrolled in 1851. This is not a fact but a supposition — but a supposition which ought to be tested first of all, because it explains the whole picture at a stroke.



By the beginning of the twentieth century the Host held about ten million desyatinas and was divided into four military departments — the Troitskosavsk, the Aksha, the Nerchinsk and the Nerchinsk-Zavod — in which there were reckoned 63 stanitsas and 515 settlements. The Cossack estate was abolished by the constitution of the Far Eastern Republic in 1921, that is to say, it existed exactly seventy years: less than a human life.

The Tokmakovs stand in the list of the “Transbaikal surnames” — that acknowledged circle of the old settler and Cossack families of the region, where beside them are the Taskayevs, the Tashlykovs, the Tonkikhs, the Toporkovs, the Trukhins and the Turushevs. And the present-day figures for the spread of the surname confirm the same thing from the other end: the two largest nests of Tokmakovs in Russia are the Kursk province and the Transbaikal territory.

CHAPTER FOUR

Eight Crosses



A Transbaikal Cossack, about 1900.



A Russian peasant woman of the Manchurian steppe, the 1930s.

Both the figures above are invented. Not one photograph of a Tokmakov forebear has been found; these are painted guesses at how a Cossack of the Host and a settler woman of the next

generation looked and in what they were dressed. They are placed here for the imagination, and not for proof.

Now of the men who really were.

In the award lists of the Cross of St George (the Insignia of the Military Order) — the soldier's George — for the China campaign of 1900–1902, gone through by the Chita historian V. Yu. Aprelkov, there stand eight Cossacks of the name of Tokmakov. All eight are Transbaikalian men. All eight received the cross upon Chinese soil.

Name	Rank and unit	Stanitsa	For what and when
Vasily Tokmakov	Junior uryadnik, 1st Verkhneudinsk Regiment	Staro-Durulguyevskaya	Cross of St George, 4th class, No. 85492 — for the taking of Old Niuzhuang, 11 September 1900
Ivan Tokmakov	Cossack, 1st Chita Regiment	Pervaya Chindantskaya	Cross of St George, 4th class, No. 90846 — for the taking of the fortress of Hunchun, 17 July 1900
Innokenty Tokmakov	Sergeant-major, 1st Nerchinsk Regiment, 5th sotnia	Durulguyevskaya	Cross of St George, 4th class, No. 90246 — for the action at Idzhou, 12 February 1901
Ioakim Mitrofanovich Tokmakov (1879–1939)	Podkhorunzhy, 1st Nerchinsk Regiment, 4th sotnia	Durulguyevskaya	Cross of St George, 4th class, No. 90841 — for the action at the village of Syao-Sytkhe, 15 December 1900
Mefody Tokmakov	Cossack, 1st Chita Regiment	Pervaya Chindantskaya	Cross of St George, 4th class, No. 90848 — for the taking of the fortress of Hunchun, 17 July 1900
Pyotr Tokmakov	Cossack, 1st Chita Regiment	Pervaya Chindantskaya	Cross of St George, 4th class, No. 90844 — for the taking of the fortress of Hunchun, 17 July 1900
Pyotr Tokmakov (the second)	Cossack, 1st Verkhneudinsk Regiment	Pervaya Chindantskaya	Cross of St George, 4th class, No. 90134 — for a skirmish with the khunkhuzy, 20 March 1901
Fyodor Tokmakov	Junior uryadnik, 1st Verkhneudinsk Regiment	Pervaya Chindantskaya	Cross of St George, 4th class, No. 90206 — for the expedition into Eastern Manchuria, March–April 1901

This list should be read not as a military document but as a family one, and then two things come out of it.

The first is the numbers. Ninety thousand eight hundred and forty-four, eight hundred and forty-six, eight hundred and forty-eight. Every other one. Three Tokmakovs — Pyotr, Ivan and Mefody — received their crosses for one and the same affair, upon one day, the seventeenth of July, for the taking of one fortress, and served, therefore, in one sotnia. It is so that brothers are rewarded. In the source this is not said; it is an inference, but an inference of such a kind that it may be verified by the regimental service records, and it is worth the verifying.

The second is that they all come from two neighbouring stanitsas: Pervaya Chindantskaya and Durulguyevskaya, both of them in the Aksha district, upon the Onon. That district was Cossack to the last degree: in 1910, out of 42,127 inhabitants 41,779 were reckoned Cossacks. Add to them the village of Verkhny Tsasuchey upon the same Onon, whence came the brothers of whom the talk will be further on — and there comes out a close nest in one river basin.



The name had its officers too — six of them at the least. Of one of these it is needful to speak apart, because this whole book hangs upon his life as upon a nail.

Alexander Matveyevich Tokmakov, born on the 13th of March, 1867. The Irkutsk military gymnasium; from 1884 a junior uryadnik; service in the 1st Mounted Regiment of the Host; by 1914 a lieutenant-colonel. In the China campaign of 1900 he commanded the 2nd sotnia and crossed the frontier on the second of July. Senior adjutant of the 2nd military department. In the World War, quartermaster of the 3rd Separate Transbaikalsk Cossack Brigade. The orders of St Stanislaus of the third and of the second class, of St Anne of the third and of the second, of St Vladimir of the fourth with swords. In 1920 and 1921, mayor of Chita.

He died at Harbin on the 15th of October, 1944.

Chita and Harbin are that very axis upon which the whole of the story that follows is held; and he passed along it himself, the whole of it, from the beginning to the end, and died at the end of it ten months before the Soviet army came there. No encyclopaedia will call him a famous man. For this book he is of more importance than all the famous ones.

The rest: Alexander Konstantinovich (b. 1892), son of a sotnik on the retired list, an esaul, chief of the guard of the Russian colony at Hankow in 1919–1923; Ivan Konstantinovich (b. 1878), a podyesaul, senior adjutant of that same 2nd department, and still in the post on the 1st of January, 1920; Alexei Vasilyevich, head of the Host's harness and saddlery workshop; Ivan Matveyevich upon the forestry of the Host; Mikhail Konstantinovich, a sotnik.

The patronymics repeat themselves in such a way that the thought suggests itself: Alexander and Ivan Matveyevich are brothers; Alexander, Ivan and Mikhail Konstantinovich are three sons of that same sotnik on the retired list. In the sources this is not to be found. But what is before us is not a handful of men who happen to bear one surname, but a serving family in several branches, and that is plain to be seen.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Riddle of the Onon



And here there appears in this history the first crack, of which it is honester to speak at once than to plaster it over.

All the Tokmakovs that it has been possible to find in the Transbaikalsk documents are Onon men. Pervaya Chindantskaya, Durulguyevskaya, Verkhny Tsasuchey; all of it the Aksha district, all of it the basin of the Onon. Not one has been found upon the Argun

line — neither in Tsurukhaituyevskaya, nor in Olochinskaya, nor in Duroyevskaya, nor in Chalbuchinskaya, nor in Klyuchevskaya, nor in Dono.

And it was precisely from the Argun line that men went away into Trekhrechye. It could not have been otherwise: Trekhrechye lies straight opposite it, across the river, and thither for ages the cattle were driven from those very stanitsas. From the Onon to the Argun is three hundred versts of steppe.



How this is to be explained is not known. Two explanations may be offered, and neither of them has been verified.

Either the Onon family of the Tokmakovs removed to the Argun line at some time before 1920. The transfer of Cossacks between departments was an ordinary matter, and from 1851 to 1900 men were moved about a great deal within the Host.

Or else there was upon the Argun a nest of Tokmakovs of its own, a separate one, of which we simply know nothing, because to this day those inventories have not been digitized. That Familio attaches bearers of the surname to Nerchinsk and to Khada-Bulak — and that is already eastward of the Onon group, nearer to the Argun — makes the second explanation quite possible.

There is one document which would settle this question in a single line. Of it, in the third part.

PART TWO

The Crossing



“War is not a polite recreation, but the vilest thing in life, and we ought to understand that and not play at war.”

L. N. Tolstoy, War and Peace, volume three, part two



A ferry crossing with cattle. An artist's reconstruction.

CHAPTER SIX

Foreign Soil for the First Time

he generation of the Tokmakovs born in the seventies and the eighties had been in Manchuria twice over before any one of them came there as a refugee. First as soldiers. Afterwards as neighbours of a Russian town that had grown up upon foreign soil.

The Boxer rising took the Russian columns across the frontier in the summer of 1900, and the Transbaikals went in the foremost ranks. Every one of the eight decorated Tokmakovs whose names stand in the preceding chapter received his cross upon Chinese soil: at Hunchun in July, at Old Niuzhuang in September, at Syao-Sytke in December, at Idzhou in February of the following year, in the raid through Eastern Manchuria in the spring. Alexander Matveyevich took his sotnia across the frontier on the 2nd of July. Ivan Konstantinovich was that same summer at Aigun, at Yakshi and on the Khingan.

There came back from the campaign a generation of Transbaikals who knew Manchuria not by the map but with their feet: its roads, its towns, its winters — and the chief thing, that a Russian can live there. That knowledge lay without use for twenty years. And then it was wanted, all at once and by everybody.

**The Road**

A Russian street in Northern Manchuria in winter, in the 1930s. An artist's reconstruction.

The second thread was the railway. The Chinese Eastern was begun in 1897; it cut through Northern Manchuria and created Harbin — a Russian town upon Chinese soil, with Russian churches, schools, a polytechnic institute, newspapers and a Russian administration along the whole of the line. Hailar, the trading town nearest to Trekhrechye, was a station upon it.

For the Cossack of the Argun, Hailar, and afterwards Harbin as well, became the places to which one goes for a reaping-machine, to which one carts wool, and to which one gives up one's children for the secondary school. Argudyaeva remarks that the husbandmen of Trekhrechye bought their tractors, reapers and threshing-machines —

almost all of them of foreign make — at Hailar and at Harbin. The railway did not merely carry the Russians into China. It created there a Russian world of husbandry to which a Cossack family could attach itself without ceasing to be itself.



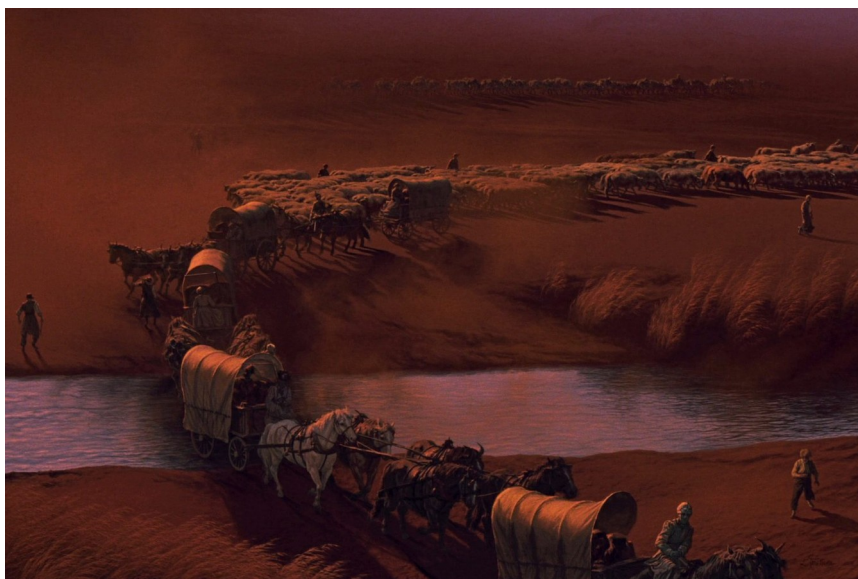
What the First War Decided

In the years of the war there came a change, small to the eye and decisive in substance. Argudyaeva has set it down in a single sentence: the masters of the khutors and zaimkas upon the Chinese bank, "having lived through the first world war, ceased to return home to the left-bank Argun Cossack settlements and stanitsas, brought their families out of Transbaikalia, and took up permanent residence along the river Khaul."

Up to the year fourteen the Chinese bank was a summer pasture. After the year eighteen men were living there. When the Civil War began, the road outward was already beaten.

CHAPTER SEVEN

How a River Is Crossed



A crossing of the river with families, waggonettes and herds at dusk. An artist's reconstruction.



he Transbaikalian Host was for the most part upon the side that lost. Ataman Semyonov held Chita and Transbaikalia with Japanese support through the whole of 1919 and the beginning of 1920; and when that prop fell away, his units and the remnants of the Kolchak and Kappel armies rolled eastward and southward, into Manchuria. In 1921 the constitution of the Far Eastern Republic abolished the Cossack estate altogether — that same estate into which, seventy years before, men had been enrolled for ever.

In the years of the revolution and the Civil War in Russia there poured into Trekhrechye a stream of refugees, and thither withdrew the units of Ataman Semyonov and of other leaders of the White movement, broken by the Reds. In

this period the Cossacks who had not accepted the Soviet power crossed over the river Argun to the Chinese side in numbers, with their families, their cattle and their goods.

— Argudyaeva, 2019, p. 28

Read the enumeration over: with families, with cattle and with goods. Not with a bundle and not with a portmanteau. Across an international river they were bringing a working husbandry — cows, sheep, horses, carts, the plough, seed corn, the icon, the samovar — and they brought it not because they were rich, but because without it there is nothing to be done upon the other bank. He who left his cattle behind went for a hired labourer.

Argudyaeva writes that in the riverside places along the Khaul they dug earth-huts. Afterwards they set up houses. Afterwards they sowed corn and mowed hay. The population of the Khaul basin grew several tens of times over by the refugees out of Siberia, Transbaikalia and the Maritime Province.



The road itself is known too. The settlement of Shchuchya, founded in 1880 by Peshkov and Derevnin, was the gate. “It was precisely through it,” writes Argudyaeva, “that in the 1920s there withdrew into Trekhrechy and further into the depths of Manchuria the broken units of Semyonov’s, Kolchak’s and Kappel’s men and several thousand refugees, chiefly out of the well-to-do Transbaikal Cossack families.”

Twenty-five or thirty houses. Several thousand people with their cattle passed through them. What went on there that autumn is not described in the sources.

IF YOUR FAMILY CROSSED IN THESE YEARS

A family that went out between 1918 and 1922 would belong, in the language of the community itself, to the first wave of refugees, and not to the later “tridtsatniki” — those who fled from the collectivization about the year 1930.

This distinction was in Trekhrechy a living one and a bitter one, and it was written down: in the form a man was asked when and through what point he had crossed the frontier. And in August 1945 it cost lives. The “tridtsatniki” were reckoned not emigrants but runaway Soviet citizens, and they were taken first.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Trekhrechyē



A Russian settlement in Trekhrechyē: log cabins along the street, a wooden church, flocks of sheep upon the steppe. An artist's reconstruction.



rekhrechyē is the basins of the three right-bank tributaries of the Argun: the Gan, the Derbul and the Khaul, in the north-western corner of Inner Mongolia, upon the Hulunbuir upland. It lies directly opposite Russian Transbaikalia, and the nature there is the very same: the same steppe, the same edge of larch forest, the same winter with a wind against which there is no shelter. In this likeness lies the whole matter. The Cossacks who settled there were not adapting themselves to a foreign country. They were continuing their accustomed life upon the other bank of the same river.

The upshot was that there arose in Trekhrechyē Russian settlements which preserved, in natural conditions practically similar to those of Transbaikalia, the traditional manner of life proper to the Russian population alone.

— Argudyaeva, 2019, p. 27

The Chinese authorities did not hinder the colonization: the country stood almost empty. In the twenties and the thirties the Russians spread along the Derbul and along the Gan. By 1945 there lived in sixteen settlements and three hamlets more than ten thousand Russians; by another reckoning, nineteen villages and about twelve thousand people. The census for the end of 1944 gives the figure more exactly: 9050 people, of them 4739 men and 4311 women. At the end of the thirties and the beginning of the forties the Russians made up above eighty per cent of the whole population of the country.



How They Worked There



Haymaking upon the steppe meadows. An artist's reconstruction.

The husbandry changed twice. At first they lived by hunting and by fish. Afterwards cattle-breeding became the chief thing, and corn was sown for themselves. And from the thirties tillage came to the front, and came swiftly.

Of free land there was much, and it was such that the first harvest upon the virgin soil paid for everything. And therefore they passed quickly from small sowings to great ones. They ploughed at first in the Transbaikalian way: with horses and with oxen, with plough and harrow; they reaped with sickle and with scythe; they threshed with a horse-driven threshing-machine, and where there was water, with a water-mill. Afterwards the machine appeared: the tractor, the reaper, the threshing-machine, almost all of foreign make, bought at Hailar.

Cattle they kept in such numbers that the figures seem invented, and they are not invented. At Svetlokoluy there fell to a family from five hundred to a thousand sheep, and the son of that peasant who first set up a *zaimka* there had more than six thousand of them. At Lapsagor there were not more than twenty households, and to each household not less than a thousand head. At Verkh-Kuli they bred camels.



The Settlements

The chief merit of Argudyaeva, who leaned upon the field notes of Anatoly Kaigorodov — a native of those parts — is that she named the settlements one by one: who set up the first *zaimka* and in what year, and in what year the Russians went away from it. If your family was in Trekhrechye, it was in one of them. The full list with all the particulars is carried into Appendix II; here are named only those of which one must know in reading further.

- **Verkh-Kuli** (now Shan-Kuli). The first *zaimkas* were set up about 1890 by the Transbaikalian Cossacks Aksyonov, Chegodayev and the brothers Chipizubov. At first they fed themselves by hunting; they took to the land only from 1925. The settlement stood at a crossing of roads, and travellers always halted in it. By the thirties there were a posting-inn, two Chinese eating-houses, three shops, a

butter-making of its own, a cheese-dairy and a felt-boot works, and branches of Japanese trading firms. Two churches: the Old Believers' Church of the Dormition, built in 1911-12, and the later Orthodox Church of the Intercession. Good fields, good hayfields and the near market of Hailar brought it to the first place in Trekhrechye for corn and for meat. By 1945 about fifteen hundred Russians by Kaigorodov's reckoning and two thousand by Shakhmatov's. **The largest and the richest settlement of the country.**

- **Dragotsenka** — in Chinese Sanhe, and under the Japanese Nairumtu. Founded in 1880-82 by Kokukhin, Kulikov and Derevtsov. The centre of the country and the one Cossack stanitsa, to which all the other settlements were subordinate. Of it, the next chapter.
- **Klyuchevaya and Tuluntuy** — two settlements upon the Derbul, of which Argudyaeva writes plainly that a part of their inhabitants went away to Australia.
- **Shchuchya** — that same gate through which the whole emigration came in.
- **Narmakchi** — a small settlement of fifteen or twenty houses, set up by the Cossacks Pervukhin out of Argunsk in Transbaikalia. They kept sheep. The whole of its Russian population was **deported** to the USSR in 1956 — not moved out, not gone away of itself, but precisely deported, and the word in the source stands exactly so.

CHAPTER NINE

Dragotsenka

Dragotsenka, the trading and administrative centre of Trekhrechye. An artist's reconstruction.



o Dragotsenka men drove upon every business that a man can have with authority: for leave to marry, to put their children to school, to the court, to the doctor, with papers. Everything that in another place is called a state was here contained in one dusty street.

Founded in 1880-82, it grew fast because it stood in the middle and because from it the cart-roads went out in every direction. First it became a trading centre, then an administrative one, then a cultural one. It was the one Cossack stanitsa in the country, and all the settlements of Trekhrechye were subordinate to it. And it was the one place

where the Chinese made up a noticeable part of the inhabitants — they kept small shops, eating-houses, tailoring shops, barbers' shops and posting-inns in their own separate quarter.

By 1944 there lived in it about three thousand people: some fifteen hundred Russians, nine hundred or a thousand Chinese and five hundred Japanese, not counting a garrison of about three hundred bayonets.



It is worth enumerating in full what there was there, because the enumeration is of itself a portrait of a well-being such as refugees ought not to have.

The trading and industrial branch of the Russian firm of I. Y. Churin and Co., with a steam roller-mill and repairing and mechanical workshops. Branches of three Japanese firms. An electric station. Works for spirit, for leather, for felt boots and for butter. Saddlers' workshops and repairing and mechanical ones. Motor garages. A bakery. A post and telegraph office. A posting-inn. A branch of the People's Bank of China. An aerodrome built by the Japanese. Two joiners' workshops and two of smiths and locksmiths, three tailors', a laundry, a public bath-house, three bootmakers', eight eating-houses and restaurants, two Chinese posting-inns and a Japanese hotel.

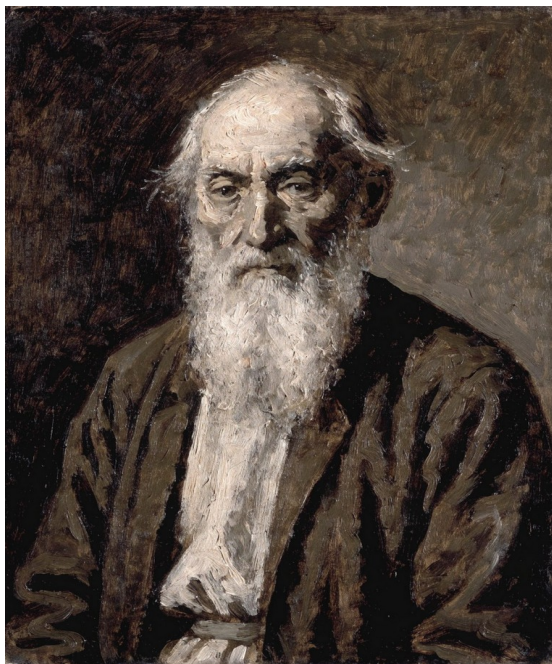
The administration of the South Argun province — so was Trekhrechye renamed under the Japanese. A police administration and a gendarme administration. The Cossack stanitsa administration. A forestry office. A branch of the Japanese mission. A branch of the Bureau for Russian Émigrés. A hospital with a surgical department.

A Chinese school, and the one Russian eight-year school in the country, and with it mechanical workshops and a boarding-house where the children from the Cossack settlements round about lived during the school terms. A weekly newspaper, "Cossack Life". A Russian club.

And in the midst of all this — a great cathedral in the name of the holy apostles Peter and Paul.

Eleven years later there remained here nothing of all that has been enumerated.

CHAPTER TEN

Two Churches

An elderly Old Believer, in the 1930s.



The interior of a village chapel.



he society of Trekhrechye was not of one kind, and what divided it was not poverty and not riches, but faith. Argudyaeva divides the Russian settlers into Old Believers and the officially recognized Orthodox. Among the Old Believers there were both popovtsy of the Austrian concord, who had come for the most part out of the Transbaikalian stanitsa of Dono, and bespopovtsy, who emigrated from the Maritime Province at the end of the twenties and the beginning of the thirties.

The bespopovtsy stayed nowhere long, and the cause of their removals, named in the source plainly, was not a matter of husbandry: an unwillingness to live in one settlement with the popovtsy and with the worldly. They took themselves up and went further — to the Eastern line of the railway, from there to Shirfovaya, from there to the neighbourhood of Harbin, into their own villages of Selinhe, Medyany, Kolumbe, Romanovka. And therefore in some settlements there stood two churches, six hundred paces the one from the other, and the people who went to the different ones did not make matches between themselves.



For a man seeking his own, this is not theology but the practice of the search, and moreover the most important part of it.

If the family was Orthodox in the official sense, it is written down in the ordinary parish registers of the parish: birth, marriage, death, with the names of the parents and of the godparents. The road is straight.

If the family was of the Old Believers, then before 1905 it might not be in the church books at all. Or it stands in a separate section. Or in the schismatics' registers, which were kept not by a priest but by a police official. And marriages solemnized by the old

rite were before 1905 held to be legally void — and the children of them were written down illegitimate, with the father living and the family firm.

It follows that before going to the archive one must know the answer to this question. And the answer exists — in one column of one form, of which there will be speech in the third part.



Beside the Russians there lived in the country the Chinese — a thousand or eleven hundred people before 1945, almost all of them at Dragotsenka; the Japanese from 1932; and the native peoples. Of the Orochens there were reckoned up to two hundred and fifty, and they hunted on horseback, mostly along the Gan. The Evenks hunted upon deer. The Mongols and the Buryats roamed in the steppe belt and pastured cattle for the rich Russian masters.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Autumn of Twenty-Nine



he Soviet power did not like this migration, and it sent punitive detachments. Especially distinguished, writes Argudyaeva, were the Transbaikal partisans under the command of S. I. Tolstokulakov, who went several times in 1929 to the right bank of the Argun and to the Khaul.

After their raids the cabins burned, and not a few people perished, among them old men and children. The poorly armed Cossacks could not beat off the punitive detachments. The settlers who survived, abandoning all their goods, fled to the river Derbul and the river Gan.

— Argudyaeva, 2019, p. 28

The villages that were attacked at the end of September and the beginning of October are named: Tanekhe, Tsankyr, Komary, Damysovo, Naidzhin-Bulak, Ust-Kuli, Labdarin, Verkh-Kuli. At Tanekhe sixty-two people were shot, grown men and lads. In all more than a hundred and forty were killed. Above six hundred settlers were led away across the river, into the USSR; more than a hundred of them were shot there.

Of the victims named by name two were children: Nikolai Pinegin, twelve years old, and Pavel Bazhenov, fifteen.



Upon the Khaul there remained after this a few zaimkas and two small villages, Yernichnaya and Karavannaya, where many of the Chinese had Russian wives. And therefore the map of Russian Trekhrechye after the year twenty-nine is a map of the Derbul and the Gan: the Khaul settlements were burned, and the people went eastward, inland, further from the river by which one can cross.

The lists of the killed, such as have been published, are incomplete, and there are no Tokmakovs in the digitized part of them. This is the absence of evidence, and not evidence of absence. A complete list by name does not exist and probably never existed.

PART THREE

The Form



“History, that is, the unconscious, general, hive life of mankind, uses every moment of the life of kings as a tool for its own purposes.”

L. N. Tolstoy, War and Peace, volume three, part one, chapter I



A sledge on a winter road at night. An artist's reconstruction.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Paper

They bring a man into a room where a table stands, and on the table lies a sheet of paper. The sheet is ruled into columns. The man sits down and begins to write into the columns that which no one has ever asked him: what his father was called; what his father's father was called; from what stanitsa he comes; of what estate he is; of what faith; in what year and by what place he crossed the river; how many children he has and when each of them was born; which of his kin remained on the other side.

Then they stand him against the wall, and a man in uniform takes him twice — full face and from the side. Then they give him an ink pad and take his fingers. Then he signs, and the sheet is carried away and laid in a cupboard where there are tens of thousands of such sheets.

He does this because otherwise there is no living: without this paper he can neither hold land, nor put his son to school, nor go to Hailar. He does it unwillingly and, probably, with anger — at the Japanese, who set the whole thing going, and at himself, that it has to be done. Answering the question about his parents he answers, it must be supposed, quickly and without thinking, for who does not know what his father was called.

He does not know that he is filling in the one document by which his great-grandson at the other end of the earth will one day be able to establish who he was.

**What it was**

In 1932 the Japanese proclaimed Manchukuo, and Trekhrechye was renamed the South Argun province, with its administration at Dragotsenka. The Japanese appeared: the soldiers of a small garrison, officials, advisers, merchants, teachers. They built an aerodrome. They showed a learned interest in the country as well — in 1943 there came out at Tokyo a study of the dwelling and the manner of life of the Russians of Trekhrechye.

And in 1934 they established the Main Bureau for the Affairs of Russian Émigrés in the Manchurian Empire — BREM. Registration in it was obligatory for all Russian émigrés of Manchukuo, including Trekhrechye, which was conducted through the Hailar branch. Dragotsenka had a branch of its own. It also published Cossack Life.

Here one must stop and weigh what had happened, for this is one of those mockeries of which history is full.

The Japanese apparatus of supervision compelled every adult Russian in Manchuria to fill in a most detailed form about himself and about his family. In August, 1945, the Soviet army seized the whole card-index entire and carried it away to Khabarovsk. There it lies to this day — fond R-830 of the State Archive of Khabarovsk Territory (GAKhK). And so it came about that a Transbaikalian Cossack family which had lived thirty years in a Manchurian village is documented better than its own brothers, who went nowhere and stayed to plough near Aksha.

The files in the fond, by the archive's own account, are about fifty-six thousand. Earlier references name forty-four thousand; the Familio guide, "more than fifty". The reckoning must be made within that interval.



What is in a file

The foundation of each is the form. In it there are commonly set down:

- the surname, the name and the patronymic; the date and place of birth — often with the exact Transbaikalian stanitsa or settlement named;
- the estate. The line "Cossack of the Transbaikalian Cossack Host" would close at one stroke the whole question to which the first part of this book is given;
- the confession — Orthodox or Old Believer, that is, the answer to the question of the tenth chapter; the nationality; the citizenship and the date of its change;
- education, occupation, place of work, property;
- military service: the White armies, the units of Semyonov, the regiments of the Host;
- political views and connexions — a column of the Japanese intelligence, and unexpectedly full of matter;
- the family: wife, children with their dates of birth, parents, brothers and sisters, kin remaining in the USSR;
- addresses in Manchuria, and when and by what point they crossed the Argun;
- photographs, often full face and in profile; sometimes signatures and fingerprints;
- correspondence, permits, recommendations. In a file there are commonly from ten to sixty sheets.

One such file would answer in a single sheet everything that this book is obliged to go round: from what stanitsa they came, what faith they held, when and where they crossed, what the children were called and what the parents were called. The riddle of the Onon of the fifth chapter would be settled in one line.

The index of the files has been put by the archive into open access. How it is to be looked at, and how a file is to be ordered, is told in Appendix IV.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Ninth of August



An emptied steppe settlement in winter. An artist's reconstruction.



n the 9th of August, 1945, the Soviet forces entered Manchuria. Marshal Malinovsky's Transbaikal Front moved upon the Hulunbuir and Hailar sector — that is, straight through Trekhrechye. On the 19th of August the commander of the Kwantung Army, General Yamada, capitulated at Changchun. The war which all had awaited four years was over in these parts in ten days.

Behind the front came SMERSH. About a hundred and fifty experienced officers of counter-intelligence were deployed; their work was co-ordinated by Isai Babich and Alexander Misyurev; the counter-intelligence of the Transbaikal Front — the very one that covered Hailar and Trekhrechye — was headed by A. A. Vadis. Operative groups were dropped by parachute into Changchun, Mukden, Port Arthur and Dairen.

From the 9th of August to the 18th of September SMERSH reported 2,249 arrests throughout Manchuria: 317 officials of the Japanese military mission, 349 of its agents, 569 Japanese gendarmes, 305 leaders and members of the Russian Fascist Union, 75 men of BREM and 162 persons under the head of "traitors". Ataman Semyonov himself was taken on the 25th of August in a suburb of Dairen, with two sons and an uncle. Lieutenant-General Baksheev, who had headed the Transbaikal Cossack organisation in Manchuria, was arrested as "the deputy of Ataman Semyonov". Vlasievsky, the head of BREM, and Rodzaevsky, the leader of the fascists, were carried away to Moscow.

These 2,249 are a reckoning of named political objects. How many of the common émigrés were deported, there is no trustworthy figure. Estimates of ten and of fifteen thousand circulate; it has not been possible to confirm them, and therefore they are not asserted here.



For the settlements another figure matters, and it is more terrible.

Two independent sources — the English-language survey of the history of the Russians in China and the Encyclopaedia of Transbaikalia — give one and the same thing: after the invasion the organs arrested and carried off to the camps about a quarter of the male population of Trekhrechye. The cattle were confiscated.

A quarter. That is, in a settlement of a hundred households twenty-five men were gone, and in every fourth house there remained a woman, children and an old man, and there remained no cow.

Hardest of all it went with the tridtsatniki — with those who had fled from collectivisation about 1930: they were held to be not émigrés but Soviet citizens who had absconded. And vulnerable was every man who had held under the Japanese any post whatever — and registration in BREM had made every adult legible to the new authority at a single glance. The paper which twelve years earlier a man had filled in with anger and without thinking now lay upon the table of an investigator.

THE FORK OF AUGUST, FORTY-FIVE

For very many Trekhrechye families this month is the point at which the family tree divides in two: the men carried away eastward into the camps, and the women, children and old people left with the farm and without cattle.

And it is the same point at which, bitter as it is, the keeping of records improves. Those arrested pass into the Soviet documents of the repressions: the Open List, the lists of Memorial, the volumes of the Book of Remembrance of Eastern Transbaikalia. There are given the date of arrest, the charge, the sentence, the camp and, if there was one, the rehabilitation.

Everyone whose ancestor Tokmakov disappeared in 1945 must search there first, and not in the archives of the emigration.

Mara Moustafine, whose history of a Harbin family has become the model of how the BREM archive is to be worked with, describes the same thing from the side of the town: thousands of émigrés guilty of nothing were seized by the agents of SMERSH and carried off to the camps, and the fault was often no more than that a man had represented his community before the Japanese authorities.

PART FOUR

The Dispersal



"Six feet from his head to his heels was all he needed."

L. N. Tolstoy, *How Much Land Does a Man Need?*, last sentence



A locomotive on the winter line. An artist's reconstruction.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Ten Years of Waiting

n the 1st of October, 1949, the Chinese People's Republic was proclaimed. The Russian farming settlements of Trekhrechy — private owners of cattle with great flocks, in a state which had set its course for collectivisation — had no future, and this was understood by all who lived there. The figures speak more plainly than any words.

Year	Russians in Trekhrechy	What was happening
1928	2,130 (out of 2,330 in all)	The refugee wave settles
1933	5,519	The tridtsatniki arrived, fleeing collectivisation
1945	about 11,000 (out of 13,100)	The summit. 16 settlements and 3 outlying hamlets
1955	about 3,000	After ten years of arrests, confiscations and the first departures
1972	23	The end

Eleven thousand, and twenty-three. Between these two numbers lie twenty-seven years.

**The Virgin Lands or the sea**

On the 18th of April, 1954, the Virgin Lands campaign was proclaimed in the Soviet Union, and the recruiting among the Russians of China began almost at once. The Encyclopaedia of Transbaikalia refers the first departures for the Virgin Lands to that same year. Argudyaeva describes the whole exodus in a single formula: the Russians quitted Trekhrechy "by agreement between the Chinese and the Soviet authorities", predominantly for the opening up of the virgin lands, "and a part of them set off for Australia and other countries of the Asia-Pacific region".

The offer was to all appearance a generous one: land, machinery, wages, a homeland. For a family which had ploughed a foreign soil for thirty years under three foreign authorities succeeding one another, the word "homeland" meant much.

And for a family whose men had been taken in forty-five, that same word meant something altogether different.

In this lay the choice. And therefore one and the same settlement in one and the same year could scatter to Kazakhstan and to Queensland — and it happened that own brothers parted so, and never saw one another again.

**How they were evicted**

Argudyaeva and Kaigorodov between them give the year of departure for every settlement, and that row of years is dry and terrible. 1955 — Barzhakon, and the

beginning of the eviction from Verkh-Kuli and Dragotsenka. 1955–56 — Dubovaya, Klyuchevaya, Tuluntuy, Pokrovka, Labdarin, Chelotuy, Lapsagor. 1956 — Karagany, Shchuchya, Svetlokoluy, Shirfovaya, and the deportation of the whole Russian population of Narmakchi. 1955–57 — Popiray, Ust-Kuli, Verkh-Urga.

Single families held on far longer. Three families in Dubovaya — until 1975. Two in Klyuchevaya — until 1970. Some at Verkh-Urga until 1970, at Ust-Urga until 1972. For twenty years after all had gone, two families lived on in the emptied settlement.

The Russians began to be evicted from Dragotsenka in 1955 ... The inhabitants of Verkh-Kuli began to be evicted from the settlement in 1955. They left very unwillingly; many went away to Australia.

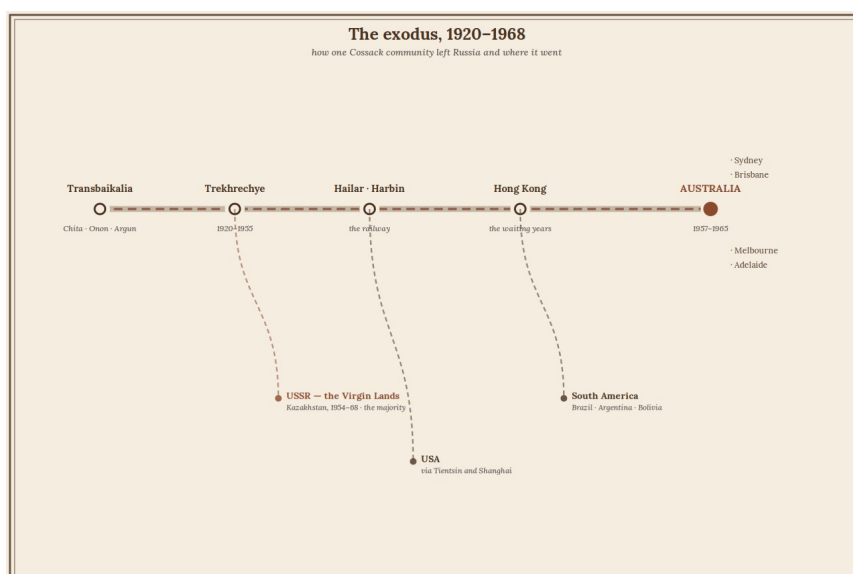
— Argudyaeva, 2019, pp. 32–33

“They left very unwillingly” — and that is all that is said of how the richest settlement of the country was quitted by the people who had set it up with their own hands. There is nothing more in the source, and one ought not to invent for them.

One thing must be stipulated. A separate order of eviction for the years 1955–57 it has not been possible to find, and it cannot be asserted that there was one. What is documented is the sequence: the arrests of forty-five, the confiscation of the cattle, collectivisation, the recruiting for the Virgin Lands from fifty-four, the evictions and departures from fifty-five, the softening of Chinese policy towards the White Russians from fifty-six as the divergence with Moscow widened, and the general permission to go away to third countries from 1962.

Large figures of repatriation circulate for this period also — six thousand families in 1954, nine and a half thousand in the first half of 1955, eleven thousand and more in 1958–59. These figures are taken from Kazakhstani researches upon the resettlement out of the People’s Republic of China, and they relate almost wholly to the Kazakhs and Uighurs of Sinkiang, and not to the Russians of Manchuria. They must not be cited as figures of Trekhrechy.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN Where They Went



The exodus: how one Cossack community left Russia and where it scattered. Drawn for this book.



he Encyclopaedia of Transbaikalia sums the matter up shortly: the Chinese authorities permitted emigration to Australia, Brazil, Argentina and Bolivia; by the end of the sixties the departures were in the main at an end; and in 1968 the last Russian families removed to Kazakhstan and settled afterwards in the Krasnoyarsk territory and in the Argun country — that is, two hundred versts from that bank from which their grandfathers had gone across the river half a century before.

Argudyaeva names Australia three times: for Klyuchevaya, for Tuluntuy, and — with a particular emphasis — for Verkh-Kuli, the largest settlement of the country, of which it is said simply: many went away to Australia.

Where	Who	When
The USSR — the Kazakhstan virgin lands, afterwards the Krasnoyarsk territory and the Argun country	The majority. Those who believed; those who had kin remaining; those who had nothing to fear from a Soviet file	1954–1968, thickest in 1955–57
Australia	The largest direction into third countries. Through the church and intergovernmental organisations, by way of Hong Kong	Chiefly 1957–1965
Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, Bolivia	Considerable groups, especially the Old Believer communities, who sought land and a greater distance from any authority	From the end of the 1950s
The United States and Canada	The Shanghai and Tubabao stream; Old Believers who removed thither from South America	1949 — the 1960s
The Old Believers of Pokrovka	In the 1930s they went away to the Greater Khingan; after the war they refused to return to the USSR, went away to South America, then to Oregon, then to Alaska, where they founded Nikolaevsk	The 1950s — the 1960s

The last row is worth the reading twice. One settlement upon the Gan sent its people first to the Greater Khingan, thence to South America, thence to Oregon, thence to Alaska — and there they set up a village and called it Nikolaevsk. Four continents in thirty years, and all of it that no one might hinder them from praying in their own way.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Hong Kong

A steamer at the wharf in an Asian harbour, the end of the 1950s. An artist's reconstruction.



o one sailed from Trekhrechye. A family going away from Verkh-Kuli or Tuluntuy to Australia at the end of the fifties went by stages: by cart and by railway to Hailar; along the former Chinese Eastern Railway to Harbin; then the long haul southward through the whole of communist China to the frontier at Shenzhen; and from there into Hong Kong.

There they waited. For months, and it happened for years too — in boarding houses and cheap hotels which the international organisations paid for, until some country or other consented to receive them.

About twenty thousand White Russians passed through Hong Kong from the mainland after 1949. The narrow place was a terrible one: in 1952, the last year of the work of the IRO, eight hundred and eighty people went away from Hong Kong for resettlement. Eight hundred and eighty out of twenty thousand. They lived upon allowances, were treated at the charge of the UNHCR and the World Council of Churches, and whoever could went into service or onto the building sites. The government of Hong Kong thought of setting up a camp upon the island of Lantau, and thought better of it.

There were three chief directions: Australia, Brazil and Canada. The United States and Israel received people also.

TUBABAO — THAT IT MAY NOT BE CONFOUNDED

The camp of Tubabao on the Philippine island of Samar, where from January, 1949, until the spring of 1953 there lived about five and a half thousand Russians — sixteen districts with elected elders, three Orthodox churches, a school, a hospital, and over all of it Archbishop John (Maximovitch) of Shanghai — is the SHANGHAI evacuation of 1949. Upwards of three thousand persons went away from there to the United States and about fifteen hundred to Australia.

The people of Trekhrechye, who went away a decade later, took another road: Harbin —

Hong Kong. If your family is from a Trekhrechye settlement, Tubabao is almost certainly not its history — though it is a part of the history of that community to which they came.

The organisations through which all this went were several, and they are worth the remembering, because in their papers lie the names: the IRO, which worked from 1947 to 1952; the UNHCR; ICEM, the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration, which organised and paid for the passages themselves; the World Council of Churches; the Australian Council of the WCC, which conducted the intake from 1957; and the diocesan committee for the aid of refugees of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, founded at Sydney in 1956 under Archbishop Sava, which helped about four thousand persons.



A country market in the Australian back country, at which the newcomers of these years found their first work. An artist's reconstruction.

PART FIVE

The Other Hemisphere



“What energy!” I thought. “Man has conquered everything and destroyed millions of plants, yet this one will not submit.”

L. N. Tolstoy, Hadji Murad, introduction



Cultivated blocks upon the red earth. An artist's reconstruction.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

What Australia Required of Them

Arthur Calwell became in 1945 the first Minister for Immigration of Australia, and with him began the programme which in that country was called shortly: populate or perish. In July, 1947, an agreement was signed with the IRO for the reception of displaced persons out of the European camps. By 1952 about a hundred and seventy thousand people had come, and among them some twenty thousand Russians — but these were Russians out of Europe, and they came upon a two-year contract which bound them to do any work whatever in any place whatever to which the government should send them.

The Russians out of China were a separate stream, and a later one, and the two must not be confounded. In the whole time of the cold war Australia received about fourteen thousand seven hundred Russian refugees from China. The Dictionary of Sydney says: more than half of the fourteen thousand who came under the special humanitarian programme for the White Russians from China between 1947 and 1985 settled in Sydney. The peak fell in the years 1957-1959, when 3,672 people arrived — a quarter of the whole stream — in those first years when the business was conducted not by officials but by church organizations.

One voyage gives an idea of the whole: the steamer Anking, which sailed on the twelfth of November, 1957, with three hundred and two migrants on her list.

By faith the stream of 1957-59 was 79 per cent Orthodox, 13 per cent Protestant, 2.8 per cent Catholic, 2.7 per cent Jewish and 2.4 per cent other. That is a tolerably exact portrait of who was still left in China by that year.



As to how they were appraised on entry, there is nothing to be said firmly, and it is better to confess as much than to conjecture. The Australia of those years held to a policy formally committed to racial exclusion. In the scholarly literature there are noted disputes whether to call the newcomers "White Russian refugees" or "Russian migrants from China" — a question of classification with obvious consequences. But no clear formulation as to how an official appraised an applicant of mixed Russian and Chinese origin could be confirmed. And the question was a living one: Elizabeth Ivanov writes that a part of the second-generation emigrants in Australia looked mixed on account of Chinese wives, and spoke Putonghua and Cantonese.



The Camps



The farewell dinner: the corded trunk by the door. An artist's reconstruction.

Those who came were taken first to a reception camp. The chief of them was Bonegilla in Victoria, which worked from 1947 to 1971. Besides it there were Bathurst, Greta and Kapooka in New South Wales; Benalla, Rushworth and Somers in Victoria; Northam, Graylands and Cunderdin in Western Australia; Woodside in South Australia; and Stuart and Wacol in Queensland.

Wacol is worth remembering by everyone whose kin settled in Queensland. It was opened in 1949 upon a tenth part of a former army area and became the largest migrant centre of the state: designed for a thousand six hundred people, it held by 1952 nearly two thousand in refitted weatherboard huts. From 1975 Vietnamese refugees were kept there; it closed in 1987; and since 1992 a prison has stood upon that place.

The National Archives of Australia gives warning that few of the papers of the camps themselves have been preserved. But the personal registration cards of all who passed through Bonegilla are whole — series A2571 — and these cards are surprisingly full: the alien registration number, the photograph, the name, the citizenship, the date of arrival, the ship, the date of departure, where the man went, his trade, his education, the address of his nearest relatives, a description of his person, and the whole history of his stay in the camp.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The Red Earth

Where they came ashore: the Russian settlement of Australia. A schematic map drawn for this book.



he people of Trekhrechye in the fifties were not the first Russians in Australia, and the community to which they came had a history of its own already — one which had taken shape, unexpectedly, not in Sydney but in Brisbane.

The census of 1921 counted 4,138 Russians in Australia: 1,444 in New South Wales, 1,139 in Queensland, 943 in Victoria and 612 in the other states. By its share of the population Queensland was the Russian state. By the end of the thirties there were about three thousand Russians in the country, some half of them in Queensland and about one thousand two hundred in Brisbane itself.

The pre-war Brisbane community was not white but red: many had fled after the unsuccessful revolution of 1905. They set up a Union of Russian Workers, published a newspaper and kept a library of a thousand books in the Russian House in Merivale Street. In March, 1919, in the days which have gone into Australian history as the "Red Flag riots", seven or eight thousand men, for the most part soldiers returned from the front, fell upon the Russian community; nineteen policemen were severely injured; fifteen Russians went to prison for seven years for a red flag hung out; and Alexander Zuzenko, who had led the defence of the Russian House, was deported from the country as a Bolshevik.

Then came the Cossacks. Sixty-six Ural Cossacks landed on the fourth of November, 1923, under General Tolstov, who had made his way first through China. In Queensland Russian Cossack stanitsas were established in due form: at Cordalba, three hundred kilometres from Brisbane, where between 1924 and 1934 there lived about a hundred and fifty Russians in forty-five families; and at Tully, where by 1934 there were about a hundred families. There were among them Cossacks of the Transbaikal Host, of the Don, of the Kuban and of the Urals.

It was money that drove them north. Cutting sugar cane gave sixteen to eighteen shillings and sixpence for an eight-hour day against ten for ordinary country work.

Diplomas signified nothing, and a mining engineer cut cane on the same footing as a ploughman.



Hand-cutting cane in Queensland, the 1930s.



A young Russian migrant labourer, the end of the 1950s.



A Tokmakov on the Katherine River



The road north, to Katherine. An artist's reconstruction.

To the north of the town of Katherine, in the Northern Territory, there is a locality which is called by that very name — Cossack. Its streets bear the surnames of the Russian Cossack farmers who settled there between the wars: they came through Manchuria, cut cane in Queensland, worked upon the track gangs of the Katherine to

Birdum railway, and afterwards took up land for peanuts when the government cut it into blocks.

One of those streets is called Tokmakoff Road.

It is named in honour of Alexander Tokmakov. The neighbouring one, Lea Road, is named in honour of his wife Lea. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation confirmed the street names in an article of February, 2021. And the community materials of the newspaper Edinenie add that for the sake of which all this stands here:

ALEXANDER TOKMAKOV

After the revolution he lived in China. He came to Australia in 1930.

He held land upon the Katherine River from 1933 to 1959 — twenty-six years.

His wife was called Lea. His children were called Irina, Victor, Peter and Veronica.

He came from near Chita.

From near Chita. The capital of Transbaikalia, the heart of the Cossack Host, the town in which in the years twenty and twenty-one Alexander Matveyevich Tokmakov was mayor and in which in 1891 Polina Vasilyevna Tokmakova was born. All that is told in the first part of this book converges upon that one word.

His neighbours were Zimin, Smirnov, Krylov, Ivanets and DeJulia. Andrei DeJulia, who came in 1924, was killed in the bombing of Darwin in the year forty-two. The peanut business collapsed upon bad harvests and interruptions of sale even before the war, and the greater number were ruined; some went over to cotton.

It must be said plainly, however, what this proves and what it does not prove. It proves: that a Tokmakov from the Chita country came through Manchuria to Australia and there farmed for a quarter of a century. It does not prove: any connexion either with Trekhrechye or with Your line. He came in 1930, that is, a generation before the exodus from Trekhrechye. This is the inter-war wave, which went by way of China — the same country, but not the same decade.

And for all that, this trace is the best of any there are, and here is why: there are four children's names attached to it. Irina, Victor, Peter and Veronica Tokmakov, born, most probably, in the twenties to the forties. They must be looked for in the registers of the Northern Territory and of Queensland, in the electoral rolls, in the Ryerson Index and in Trove. They may have living descendants.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Domes Under Tin



A Russian Orthodox church in an Australian suburb, the 1950s. An artist's reconstruction.



he Church was for this migration no incidental thing. It was the institution which received it.

The Australian and New Zealand diocese of the Russian Church Abroad was established by a decision of the Synod in December, 1946. Bishop Theodore (Rafalsky) arrived in Brisbane at the end of 1948 and in February, 1950, was titled Archbishop of Sydney, Australia and New Zealand. By 1948 there were reckoned in the diocese about five thousand faithful, eleven parishes, sixteen priests and three deacons. By the beginning of the eighties there were twenty parishes in Australia, four in New Zealand and one in Tasmania; at present about forty-two centres. The diocese's own history connects this growth directly with the refugees who came out of Manchuria and China at the beginning of the fifties.

St Nicholas Cathedral in Vulture Street, in the Brisbane suburb of Woolloongabba, is the oldest institution of Russian Australia. Archpriest Alexander Shabashev came to Brisbane in 1923, likewise by way of China, and served at first in the Anglican church of St Thomas. The parish was formed in 1925; a cottage in Vulture Street was bought and rebuilt in 1925-26. Under Archpriest Valentine Antonieff, appointed in 1933, a proper church was raised to the design of Gregory Mekhonoshin; they began to build in 1935 and consecrated it, probably, at the beginning of 1936. And on the fifth of November, 1948, Bishop Theodore consecrated it as the first Russian Orthodox cathedral of Australia. Since 1992 it has stood upon the Queensland Heritage Register.

In Sydney the census of 1954 counted 5,472 Russians in New South Wales, three quarters of them in the city itself; after the post-war reception Sydney displaced Brisbane. They settled at Strathfield, Burwood, Croydon, Fairfield, Cabramatta, Hurstville, Carlton, Blacktown, Lidcombe, Homebush and Bankstown. The Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul at Strathfield — the ground bought in 1949, built in 1950-53, consecrated in December, 1953 — became the seat of the archbishop and the centre of

all Russian life. The monastery of All Saints at Campbelltown took in seven families, about eighteen people, straight from the steamer Anking in 1957.

Adelaide is of particular importance. The official historical note of the state of South Australia says plainly: the Russians came there chiefly from Harbin and Trekhrechye in Manchuria and from Kuldja, Chuguchak and Urumchi in Sinkiang. St Nicholas church was opened in 1969 in Greenhill Road at Wayville.



The Second Trace

When, soon after the consecration of that church, a Russian Community Centre — the "Russian House" — was founded in Adelaide, there entered into its first executive committee John Strokowsky, Urey Pozydayev, Nicholas Donner, Luke Ambrose, Nicholas Kovanko and Ieva Tokmakoff.

A Tokmakov was among the founders of a Russian community organization in a community which, by the official note of the state, consisted chiefly of people from Harbin and from Trekhrechye. The year is that very year in which the people of Trekhrechye were coming.

"Ieva" is most likely Lev or Eva, written down by an ear not its own. There is, however, a discrepancy which must be resolved: the state's note puts the founding of the Centre at a time soon after 1969, while the Centre's own site carries its history from 1949 and names no founders. Upon the answer depends in which decade this Tokmakov came. The question must be put to the Centre itself, and put soon: the people who knew this man are still alive.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Town People and Country People



he most valuable observation in all that has been written of Russian Australia belongs to Elizabeth Ivanov, who teaches the Russian language in Sydney, and it consists in this, that the division which had taken shape in China survived the removal entire.

The Russian emigrants in China were divided into two groups: the town specialists — doctors, engineers, chemists — in Shanghai and Harbin, and the country settlers in Trekhrechye, the basin of the three rivers, where they led an agricultural manner of life in families of up to twelve children. In Australia the distinction between the "town" and the "country" families was preserved, and the parishes formed themselves along that boundary.

— Elizabeth Ivanov, Jordan Russia Center, 2021

In the town families there were from one to three children. In the Trekhrechye families, up to twelve. Graduates of the Harbin Polytechnic found places easily as engineers and draughtsmen in the public service of New South Wales. The country people went on to the farms, into the market-garden holdings, on to the cane, on to the dairy farms and into the factories.

And the parishes formed themselves along that same line — that very line which in Trekhrechye ran between the popovtsy, the bespopovtsy and the worldly, and which

made the bespopovtsy pull up and go further on. The people carried across the ocean not only their icons and the samovar. They carried across also the knowledge of whom one does not sit down with at one table.



And they brought China with them besides, without themselves perceiving it. In Russian Australia the pelmeni are eaten with soy sauce and sour cream. The pirozhki are made with rice noodles. The second-generation emigrants speak Putonghua and Cantonese. The weddings last two days, and on the "second day" the young couple cook soup for the guests, and the guests hinder them in the cooking and throw money and scraps of newspaper upon the floor, putting their hosts to the proof.

Ivanov's conclusion is of more importance than any other for the man who is compiling a pedigree: "I have grown used to proceeding upon the assumption that everybody is somehow or other kin to everybody." In a community so small and so closed this is not a figure of speech. It is a method of search — and, later on, a warning in the reading of DNA matches, because endogamy raises the number of shared centimorgans, and a predicted second cousin turns out to be a fourth cousin twice over.

One reservation. That the division into town people and country people was preserved is documented. That the people of Trekhrechy sat down precisely in Queensland and in the west of Sydney is not. The Cossack farming Queensland is documented for the layer of the twenties and thirties, and the western Sydney for the post-war Chinese stream in general; but not one source ties the Trekhrechy people of the fifties and sixties precisely there. If in the family it is remembered otherwise — write it down as a family tradition, upon a separate line.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

What Became of the Names



A village schoolroom.



Inside the izba: the stove and the icon corner.



he terminations -ov and -ev were written in the Australian papers as -off. This is to be seen in the very names of the streets in the Northern Territory: Tokmakoff, Ivanoff, Kriloff, Sergeef, Jegorow, Egoroff, Antonieff, Shabasheff, Chuproff. This tradition came out of the pre-revolutionary transliteration, French in its origin, which was accepted in Manchuria and in the travel documents issued in China, and it passed directly into the Australian ships' lists, the naturalization files and the electoral rolls.

The given names changed too. Ivan became John. Yevgeny became Eugene. Grigory became Gregory. Ksenia became Jenny. And the surnames were shortened for an employer who could not pronounce them.

And so it comes about that one and the same man stands in the papers as four different men: Ivan Petrovich Tokmakov in the BREM file; Ivan Tokmakoff in the ship's manifest; John Tokmakov in the certificate of naturalization; and J. Tok in the electoral roll. He who looks for one of them will lose the other three.

Of "Tok" it must be said particularly and honestly. The post-war migrants did indeed shorten Slavonic surnames, and Tokmakov becoming Tok is a clipping phonetically natural. But no documentary evidence of precisely that shortening could be found: neither a scholarly work, nor a community mention, nor an entry in a document. If there is in the family an oral tradition that somebody was called Tok, that is family evidence, and it must be written down as evidence. The practical conclusion, however, is one and the same in either case: to search the Australian indexes for "Tok" as a surname in its own right alongside all the variants of Tokmak-.



The Arithmetic

This story ends, as every story of migration ends, in arithmetic.

The census of 1986 counted in Australia 46,400 people of Russian origin, 21,600 speaking Russian at home, 15,200 born in Russia or the USSR, and 34,200 of those whose father was born there.

Read that proportion attentively, for it is itself the answer to the question what became of the language. Of three quarters the father was born in Russia. Russian is spoken at home by fewer than half. The language was lost in one generation after the arrival — while the fathers who spoke it were still living.

In 2021 Russian origin was given by 98,107 people, and those born in Russia numbered 23,864. The gap between these two numbers is itself the demographic sketch of this very story: a numerous posterity born in Australia, whose migrant generation has for the most part gone already, plus a separate and far later influx which has no relation whatever to Harbin and Trekhrechye.



And yet Elizabeth Ivanov remarks a thing which goes against this arithmetic. The Russians of Australia, she writes, have kept customs "which have vanished — or perhaps never existed at all — among the Russians in America": the abundant table, the two-day weddings, the less stiff manner of living. And she explains it simply: "In a country from which it is more than twenty hours' flight to Europe, to America and to Russia, change comes slowly."

That very distance which scattered these people preserved what they carried away with them.

PART SIX

The Living

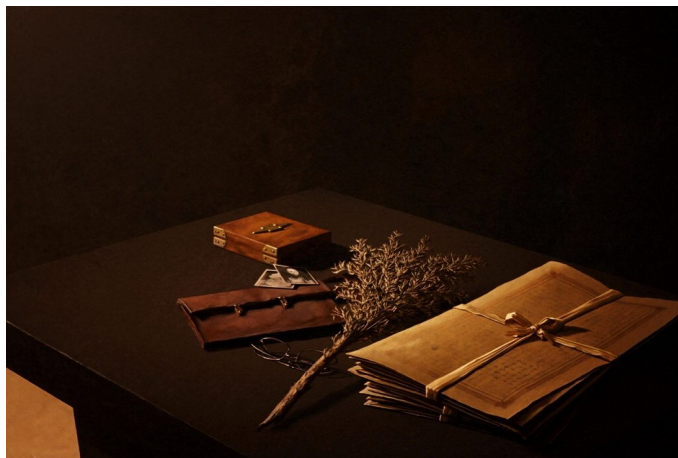
“All happy families resemble one another; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.”

L. N. Tolstoy, Anna Karenina, part one, chapter I



A settler family upon the steps of its house. An artist's reconstruction.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

The Name in the World Today

What commonly survives a migration: a bundle of papers and two photographs. An artist's reconstruction.

Sooner or later everyone who busies himself with a family asks one and the same question: are there any Tokmakovs left in the world, and are they kin to me? It must be answered with two reservations, without which the answer will deceive.

THE TWO RULES OF THIS CHAPTER

FIRST. Not one of those named here is a known relative of yours. The surname is polygenetic — the whole of the first chapter is about that. A shared surname proves nothing. Wherever the open sources give so much as a hint of Far Eastern, Harbin or Cossack origin, it is said so; wherever there is none — and there is none almost everywhere — that too is said.

SECOND. Only those are named who have themselves come out into the public space: teachers with a university page, authors, sportsmen with a federation profile, officials named in the organisations' own material. The name, the town and the role by which the person may be found are given. No addresses, no contacts, no dates of birth, no information about families. Private persons are not indicated at all.

Where the name has really spread

The picture is narrower than one expects, and that narrowness is itself the news.

In Russia there are two chief nests: Transbaikalian Territory and the Kursk province, unconnected with one another. A third, separate and northern, is on the Vyatka, where the Tokmakovs have been known since the eighteenth century: two families at Khlynov by 1747, the home place near Stroykovo and Astafyeva Gora in the Luza district. There are bearers of the name in Perm Territory, attached to Cherdyn. There are some in the Ukraine, in Belarus and in Kazakhstan. From the Transbaikalian records of the repressed further names have been added — Avvakum Vasilyevich, born in 1897, of Chindant, Alexander Pavlovich, born in 1871, and Dmitry Nikolayevich, born in 1875, of Tsasuchey — and all of them again are of the Onon. On the Argun line there is still nothing.

In China there are two lines, unconnected with one another and both documented. One is Cossack: Alexander Matveyevich, who died at Harbin in 1944, and Alexander Konstantinovich, head of the guard of the Russian colony at Hankow in 1919–1923. The other is mercantile, and of that below.

In Australia there is a family at Katherine and a founder at Adelaide. In the United States there is one clearly Far Eastern line, of which separately.

And now of what there is not. There are no Tokmakovs in New Zealand and none in Canada — under any spelling. None in Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, Bolivia or Uruguay — the search was made in Portuguese and in Spanish, through the whole literature on the velhos crentes and the viejos creyentes and through the White émigré material, and it gave nothing in any one of the five countries. None in Israel, none in France, none in the Baltic lands and none in Moldova. In Germany and Great Britain the presence is thin and recent, post-Soviet, without any connection whatever with Manchuria.



The most important negative result

There is not a single Tokmakov anywhere in the whole Old Believer chain of migrations.

Not at Woodburn in Oregon. Not at Nikolaevsk in Alaska. Not in Brazil, nor in Bolivia, nor in Uruguay, nor in Argentina. That chain — Xinjiang and Manchuria, then Hong Kong, then Brazil and Argentina in 1958–60, then Oregon in 1964, then Alaska in 1968 — moved a fairly closed circle of families: the Kalugins, the Basargins, the Fefelovs, the Reutovs, the Martyushevs, the Kuzmins, the Ovchinnikovs, the Anufrievs, the Yakunins. There are no Tokmakovs among them, and the search through the Oregon, the Alaskan and the academic Old Believer literature came back empty.

Set this beside what is said in the fourth chapter: service in the Host, regimental appointments, eight holders of the Cross of St George, officers who came through the cadet corps. Both rows point the same way.

In the tenth chapter the question — Orthodox or Old Believers — is called an open one, and on it depended which books were to be searched. This is the first real evidence upon it, and it points to Orthodoxy. It is still an inference, and only the column in the form will settle the matter. But one may already act upon it: to search first of all in the ordinary parish registers.



Two traps

Tukmakov is not Tokmakov. The Ukrainian chess grandmaster Vladimir Tukmakov comes up in the search continually, especially through Hebrew, which does not distinguish "o" from "u". It is another surname. All such results are to be thrown out.

Tokmok in Kirghizia, Tokmak in the Zaporozhye country and Tokmak in Uzbekistan will bury any enquiry under geography. That is no evidence about the surname.



Bulgaria

If ever you have to explain to a relative why a shared surname proves nothing, cite Bulgaria.

Tokmakov and Tokmakova exist there as a native Bulgarian surname, formed from the Ottoman Turkish tokmak — the same word, the same meaning, the same wooden beetle — and without any Russian participation whatever throughout the whole of its history. Professor Maria Tokmakova, vice-rector of the Medical University of Plovdiv and president of the Bulgarian Society of Cardiology in 2018–2020, is no distant kin to the Transbaikalian Cossack Tokmakov. They are two entirely unconnected families, each of which was independently named after a tool of labour.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

The Line That Came Out of Tientsin



f all the living bearers of the surname found anywhere in the world, exactly one has a well-founded connection with the Russian Far East. It begins with a man who died in 1997.

George Basilus Tokmakoff was born at Tientsin on the 9th of July, 1928, in a family of Russian émigrés; his father was called Vasily, his mother Klavdia, born Kalinina. In 1947 he removed from China to the United States. He took his degree at the University of Washington, defended his doctorate at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies in London, and from 1963 to 1993 was professor of Russian history at California State University at Sacramento. His book on Stolypin and the Third Duma came out in 1981. His personal papers, covering the years 1891–1996, are kept at the Hoover Institution.

In the obituary printed in the journal *Slavic Review* it is said that he left two children: Andrei and Larisa.



Andrei Tokmakoff is professor of chemistry at the University of Chicago, Henry G. Gale Distinguished Service Professor. By the sum of his distinctions he is the most titled bearer of the surname now living anywhere at all: the National Academy of Sciences of the United States (2022), the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (2018), the Zewail Prize (2016), the Lippincott Award (2014), the Plyler Prize (2012).

In his published life it is stated that he took his bachelor's degree at California State University at Sacramento in 1988 — in that very campus where George Basilus Tokmakoff taught until 1991, and in whose obituary a son Andrei is named.

On his own pages nothing whatever is said of this. It is an inference, and a strong inference, but not a document.

If it is correct, then the Tientsin line of this surname is continued today at Chicago — and it is the only branch of it outside Australia with a demonstrable Manchurian origin. Whether it is connected with your family there is no evidence either for or against. It is worth occupying oneself with, not because of the surname, but because both lines came out of one and the same small Russian world in the north-east of China, at a distance of two decades. And because one analysis of the Y chromosome would settle in a month what the archives may never settle at all.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

Twenty Tokmakovs

he picture, if one gathers all the known bearers of the surname over a hundred years, comes out unexpectedly distinct. The genuine achievements are concentrated in three fields and almost nowhere else: Soviet children's literature, martial valour in the years of the war, and — wholly outside Russia — American physical chemistry.

There is not one famous sportsman named Tokmakov. Nor an academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Nor a composer, a conductor or a singer of all-Russian standing. Nor a minister, a governor or the mayor of a large town. Nor a post-Soviet man of business of any noticeable scale. All these are confirmed absences, and not gaps in the search.

The full list with the grounds for it is carried into Appendix III. Here the first eight are named — those that would stand a test in any work of reference.

N o.	Name	Years	What he is known for
1	Irina Petrovna Tokmakova	1929–2018	The most widely read bearer of the surname in any language: "Trees" (1962), "Alya, Klyaksich and the Letter A" (1968), translations of Carroll, Milne, Barrie, Tove Jansson, Lindgren. State Prize of Russia. Tokmakova, however, only by her husband — born Manukova.
2	Andrei Tokmakoff	b. about 1966	Chemist, University of Chicago. National Academy of Sciences of the United States, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Zewail, Lippincott and Plyler prizes.
3	Lev Alexeyevich Tokmakov	1928–2010	People's Artist of Russia; gold medal of the Bratislava Biennial; works in the Tretyakov Gallery. Illustrated Rodari, Lindgren, Preussler and the books of his wife. His father, a physician, was arrested in 1937.
4	Evgeny Petrovich Tokmakov	1916–2010	Hero of the Soviet Union, the 13th of April, 1944. Reconnaissance pilot, 164 combat sorties. Born at Chita. Of him the next chapter.
5	Pyotr Mikhailovich Tokmakov	d. 1921	Commander-in-chief of the Tambov rising of 1920–21 and chairman of the Union of the Toiling Peasantry. A full cavalier of the Cross of St George. Died of a wound; his grave has not been found.
6	Yakov Gerasimovich Tokmakov	1913–1966	Hero of the Soviet Union, the 29th of June, 1945, for the Berlin operation. Born at Orekhovo-Zuyevo.
7	George Basilus Tokmakoff	1928–1997	Professor of Russian history at Sacramento for thirty years. Born at Tientsin.
8	Ivan Fyodorovich Tokmakov	1838–1908	Moscow merchant of the first guild. His firm opened at Hankow in 1886 and became one of the largest Russian tea houses in China.

TWO TRAPS WHICH THIS LIST SETS

THE TEA HOUSE. The firm of Ivan Fyodorovich Tokmakov opened at Hankow in 1886. Alexander Konstantinovich Tokmakov, a Transbaikalian esaul, was at the head of the guard of the Russian colony in that same town in 1919–23. Two entirely unconnected lines in

one Chinese treaty port at a distance of thirty years. A coincidence tempting and signifying nothing.

THE CROSSES OF ST GEORGE. Pyotr Mikhailovich Tokmakov of Tambov was a full cavalier of the Cross of St George — that is, he wore the same award as the eight Transbaikalian Cossacks of the fourth chapter. Tambov is five thousand versts from the Onon, and the surname is polygenetic. Say this aloud every time anyone remarks the resemblance: remark it they infallibly will.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

A Street in Chita



A country road and a wayside cross in the autumn steppe. An artist's reconstruction.



f all the notable bearers of this surname in the world, exactly one was born at Chita.

Evgeny Petrovich Tokmakov was born on the 29th of September, 1916. His father was called Pyotr.

He finished the flying school in 1939, flew in civil aviation, and in '41 was called up. He flew on the Pe-2 — on reconnaissance, and a reconnaissance man goes alone and without cover. By November of 1943 he had photographed eleven thousand seven hundred and twenty-nine square kilometres and made one hundred and twenty-nine successful sorties. In August of '42 he discovered seventy-five aeroplanes on the Kursk aerodrome, and near Orel forty-nine German bombers. On the 13th of April, 1944, they gave him the Hero of the Soviet Union. In all, during the war, he made one hundred and sixty-four combat sorties. His squadron was the first to photograph Berlin and made one hundred and twenty-seven sorties in the Berlin operation.

The Order of Lenin. The Order of Alexander Nevsky. Three Orders of the Red Banner.

In '46 he was demobilised as a major. In '53 he finished the Lvov Institute of Trade and Economics and afterwards had charge of the food industry of the province. He died at Lvov on the 4th of August, 2010, at the age of ninety-three.

At Chita there is a street of his name.



For this book he is not a curiosity but a trace, and a hot trace.

A man born at Chita in 1916 had a father — Pyotr Tokmakov, living at Chita in the tens. That is to say, precisely that town and precisely that generation to which belong the Onon holders of the Cross of St George from the fourth chapter, and Alexander Matveyevich Tokmakov, who was mayor of Chita in 1920 and 1921 and died at Harbin.

That birth was entered in the parish register of a Chita parish. Those books are whole. They lie in the State Archive of Transbaikalia Territory, in fond 282, and they can be ordered.

Not one source that it has been possible to reach names his parents or indicates his estate. That is exactly the kind of question which an archive answers cheaply and quickly.



He was born at Chita in the year when his fellow Cossacks were still carting hay from beyond the Argun. He was not two years old when the Civil War began, and not five when they abolished the estate in which his grandfather had been enrolled for ever. Other Tokmakovs in those years were crossing the river with their cattle and going away into Manchuria — and he stayed and grew up, and twenty-five years later flew over Berlin, and died at Lvov, at the other edge of the country, five thousand versts from the steppe in which he was born.

A street in Chita bears his name. Nothing else of him is left.

EPILOGUE

What comes next



his book began with the admission that not one Tokmakov ancestor of yours has been found, and it ends with the same. Something, however, has been added: it is now known where exactly he is to be sought, and that is not at all the same thing as knowing nothing.

All that we have may be gathered into one sentence thus. There is a surname that arose from a beetle and arose independently many times. There is a Cossack family of that surname in Transbaikalia, documented from 1900 by eight crosses and six officers. There is a riddle: they are all of the Onon, yet it was from the Argun that men went away into Trekhrechye. There is a country beyond the river where for thirty years a Russian agricultural colony of eleven thousand souls lived, and there is the year in which it ceased to be. There is in Australia a road named after a Tokmakov who came from near Chita. There is at Adelaide a signature under a founders' list. And there is at Chicago a professor of chemistry whose father was born at Tientsin.

Between these points there are no lines. Lines are drawn in archives, and they can be drawn.



The order of proceeding is set out in detail in Appendix IV. Here I shall say only what to begin with, because the first three steps are free and are done in a week.

First: the two datasets of the University of Sydney, compiled from the BREM files at Khabarovsk and from the Australian documents together. Download them and search for "Tokmak". Five minutes, and they may settle everything.

Second: the internet index of BREM of the State Archive of Khabarovsk Territory, the block for the letter "T". Write out every entry with its date and place of birth.

Third: RecordSearch of the National Archives of Australia — the lists of arrivals, the registration of aliens, naturalisation, the selection files of the migrants.

And fourth, which will not bear putting off for a single day: DNA analysis of the eldest living relatives. An aunt or a great-uncle born at Harbin or in Trekhrechye carries twice as much of the needed family DNA as their grandchildren, and their matches will be a generation or two nearer to the Transbaikal kin. The archive will wait. People will not.



One thing last.

Tolstoy says that to understand history one must take an infinitesimally small unit for observation — the homogeneous tendencies of ordinary men — and learn to sum them. All that is told in this book is such a unit: a few hundred families who in one and the same years resolved upon one and the same thing — to carry their cattle across the river — and out of these resolves there was composed that which in the works of reference is called the Russian emigration in Northern Manchuria.

Not one of these people was ever asked. Not one of them is remembered by name. Yet it was precisely they who made history, and not those by whose names the chapters in the textbooks are called.

One of them, most probably, was called Tokmakov.

A P P E N D I C E S

The Inventory



A chronicle and an inventory are different things, and they ought not to be confused. What follows is the inventory.



A herd fording a river. An artist's reconstruction.

APPENDIX I

The Table of Proof

Everything set out in this book is gathered here with its evidential status marked, so that nothing may afterwards be quoted as something it never was.

Statement	Status
Tokmakov comes from tokmak, a wooden beetle or mallet — a Turkic loan-word — by way of a nickname for a stubborn or pugnacious man	DOCUMENTED
The surname arose independently many times over; there is no single Tokmakov family	DOCUMENTED as etymology; INFERRED in its application
The princes Tokmakov-Zvenigorodsky descend from Ivan Vasilyevich Tokmak, first named in 1538	DOCUMENTED
Your family is not connected with the princes	INFERRED — reliable, and may be stated
Zabaikalsky Krai is one of the two chief concentrations of the surname in Russia	DOCUMENTED
The Tokmakovs are among the recognised "Transbaikal surnames"	DOCUMENTED
The Tokmakovs were Transbaikal Cossacks of the Pervaya Chindantskaya and Durulguyevskaya stanitsas and of the village of Verkhny Tsasuchey — the Onon basin, the Aksha district	DOCUMENTED
Eight Tokmakov Cossacks were decorated with the Cross of St George in the China campaign of 1900–01; six officers of the Host before 1920	DOCUMENTED
Three of those eight were brothers or close kinsmen in one sotnia	INFERRED from the almost consecutive award numbers — checkable
Tokmakovs in the Argun-side stanitsas (Tsurukhaituyevskaya, Olochinskaya, Duroyevskaya, Chalbuchinskaya, Klyuchevskaya)	NOT FOUND — a genuine gap, and the key open question
The Tokmakovs descend from the Nerchinsk mining peasants enrolled as Cossacks in 1851	NOT FOUND — only a probable mechanism
Tokmakovs in the Russian emigration in China — Harbin, Hankou, Tientsin	DOCUMENTED
Tokmakovs in Trekhrechy itself	NOT FOUND in any accessible source. BREM is not digitised
A Tokmakov among the victims of the raids on Trekhrechy in 1929	NOT FOUND — the published lists are expressly called incomplete
Not one Tokmakov in the Old Believer chain of migrations (Oregon, Alaska, South America)	NOT FOUND — and this points to the family being Orthodox

Statement	Status
Tokmakoff Road in the Cossack locality, NT, is named after Alexander Tokmakov	DOCUMENTED (two independent sources)
Alexander Tokmakov came to Australia in 1930; held land on the Katherine River in 1933–59; wife Liya; children Irina, Viktor, Pyotr, Veronika; from near Chita	DOCUMENTED (one community source — requires confirmation)
The Alexander Tokmakov of the NT is connected with the Trekhrechy family	NOT ESTABLISHED — the wrong decade; a trace, though a strong one
Ieva Tokmakoff, founding committee of the Russian Community Centre, Adelaide	DOCUMENTED; the date is disputed (1969 by the state reference work, 1949 by the Centre's own site)
The Russians of South Australia came chiefly from Harbin and Trekhrechy	DOCUMENTED
Evgeny Petrovich Tokmakov, Hero of the Soviet Union, was born in Chita on 29 September 1916	DOCUMENTED
Andrei Tokmakoff (Chicago) is the son of George Basilus Tokmakoff, born at Tientsin	INFERRED, strongly, but NOT DOCUMENTED
Tokmakovs in the records of Sydney or Brisbane, in Trove, in the naturalisation files	NOT CHECKED — the sources block automated access
"Tok" as an Australian shortening of the surname	NOT FOUND — only family tradition, if such there is
About a quarter of the male population of Trekhrechy was deported to the Gulag after August 1945	DOCUMENTED — two independent sources
A specific eviction order for Trekhrechy of 1955–57	NOT FOUND — the evictions are documented, a single order is not

APPENDIX II

The Settlements of Trekhrechye

From Yu. V. Argudyaeva, who rests on the field notes of A. M. Kaigorodov, and from P. Shakhmatov. Who founded the place, in what year, and in what year the Russians left.

Along the Derbul

Settlement	Founded	Founders and character	Russians left
Dubovaya	1880, zaimki	Yegor Peshkov and Veniamin Volgin. The first homesteads with log houses, barns and kitchen gardens — 1925–26: the brothers Ivan and Ignaty Zolotovskiy, Georgy, Makar and Pyotr Kaigorodov, V. P. Katkov.	1955–56; three families until 1975
Klyuchevaya	1885, zaimki	Six km from Dubovaya, near the confluence of the Derbul and the Derbukan. A. A. Volgin, K. L. Zverev, G. Poluektov. About two dozen households by 1913; a church was built.	1955–56; two families until 1970 → some to AUSTRALIA
Tuluntuy	1882–85, zaimki	Zhigalin, Kayukov and the brothers Alexander and Timofey Fomin. By 1945, Upper and Lower Tuluntuy, divided by a creek; a church and a primary school in the centre.	1955–56; three families until 1965 → some to AUSTRALIA
Popiray	1895	The zaimka of Kozulin. By head of livestock it was reckoned the richest in Trekhrechye.	1955–57
Karagany	c. 1890	The zaimka of Fyodor Shirokikh; it grew to thirty-five households. Its growth was held back by the nearness of the Soviet border.	1956
Shchuchya	1880, zaimki	I. Peshkov and D. A. Derevnin; 25–30 houses. The gate through which the broken White units and several thousand refugees withdrew in the 1920s. About 200 inhabitants by 1945.	1956

Along the Gan

Settlement	Founded	Founders and character	Russians left
Pokrovka	1925, zaimki	In the spurs of the Greater Khingan on the Ilgachi; Pyatkov and Vyryshev. Besides Cossacks — Old Believer peasants, intelligentsia and former workers of the Votkinsk and Izhevsk factories: a smithy, a pottery, a sheepskin-coat works, an apiary. Two churches: the Old Believer Church of the Protection (priest Ioann Starosadchev) and the Orthodox Church of Our Lady of Kazan. A school, a youth club, a court of arbitration.	1955–56; a few families until 1962
Ust-Kuli	1907, zaimki	Twelve km from Verkh-Kuli; Ye. V. Volgin and Paramonov. Thirty households, a school and two churches — the Old Believer Dormition and the New Rite Protection.	1955–57; a few families until 1960
Labdarin	1895–1900	Kargin, Kosyakov, the Kustov brothers. Arable farming, market gardening, trades; two Chinese shops. Today the city of Argun, of several tens of thousands of inhabitants.	1955–56; Chinese came in their place

Settlement	Founded	Founders and character	Russians left
Chelotuy	1914	The zaimka of A. P. Morozov on the lower Gan; small, but one of the richest in sheep.	1955–56
Svetlokoluy	1910	The zaimka of I. Ye. Bizyanov; 50–60 households by 1945. Up to 500–1,000 sheep to a family; the founder's son had more than 6,000.	1956

Between the Derbul and the Gan

Settlement	Founded	Founders and character	Russians left
Verkh-Kuli	c. 1890	Aksyonov, K. I. Chegodaev, the Chipizubov brothers. An inn, two Chinese eating-houses, three shops, a butter works, a cheese dairy, a felt-boot works, branches of the Japanese firms. Two churches. First place in the region for grain and meat; they bred camels. By 1945, 1,500 Russians (Kaigorodov) or 2,000 (Shakhmatov). THE LARGEST AND RICHEST SETTLEMENT.	Eviction from 1955. They left very unwillingly; MANY TO AUSTRALIA
Dragotsenka	1880–82	F. Kokukhin, A. Kulikov, V. Derevtsov. The only Cossack stanitsa of the region and its centre.	Eviction from 1955
Barzhakon	1922	P. D. Bانشchikov and T. I. Lopatin. Arable farming and stock-raising.	1955
Laptsagor	1905	The zaimka of P. Bylkov. By 1945 no more than 20 households — and no fewer than 1,000 head of stock to a household.	1955–56
Verkh-Urga / Ust-Urga	1920	Yermolin and Martemyanov; Kachikov, Sokolov and Fomin. Twenty km up the Gan, a monastery.	1955–57; single families until 1970–72
Shirfovaya	1930s	In the upper Gan; one of the poorest. They lived by fish, bartering it round the settlements for wheat and oats. Founded by Old Believer hunters. Three km away, the Holy Trinity monastery.	1956
Narmakchi	later than Verkh-Kuli	15–20 houses; the Pervukhin Cossacks from Argunsk in Transbaikalia. Sheep-raising.	The whole population DEPORTED in 1956

APPENDIX III

Twenty Tokmakovs

By the sum of achievement and public standing. Positions 1–8 are beyond dispute; 9–14 are creditable but narrower; 15–20 are a weak tail, and this is marked rather than dressed up. L = living, D = deceased.

#	Name	Dates	Field	Grounds	L/ D
1	Irina Petrovna Tokmakova	1929–2018	Children's literature	The most widely read bearer of the name. State Prize of the Russian Federation. Tokmakova by marriage only — born Manukova.	D
2	Andrei Tokmakoff	b. c. 1966	Physical chemistry, USA	National Academy of Sciences of the USA (2022), American Academy of Arts and Sciences (2018), the Zewail, Lippincott and Plyler awards. University of Chicago.	L
3	Lev Alexeyevich Tokmakov	1928–2010	Book illustration	People's Artist of Russia; gold medal of the Bratislava Biennial; work in the Tretyakov Gallery and the Pushkin Museum.	D
4	Evgeny Petrovich Tokmakov	1916–2010	Military aviation	Hero of the Soviet Union; 164 combat sorties; his squadron was the first to photograph Berlin. Born in Chita.	D
5	Pyotr Mikhailovich Tokmakov	d. 1921	Peasant rising	Commander-in-chief of the Tambov rebellion; a full St George Cavalier.	D
6	Yakov Gerasimovich Tokmakov	1913–1966	Military	Hero of the Soviet Union for the Berlin operation. Orekhovo-Zuevo.	D
7	George Basilus Tokmakoff	1928–1997	History, USA	Professor of Russian history at Sacramento; papers at the Hoover Institution. Born at Tientsin.	D
8	Ivan Fyodorovich Tokmakov (merchant)	1838–1908	Tea trade	A firm at Hankou from 1886 — one of the largest Russian tea houses in China. NOT a Cossack line.	D
9	Mariya Tokmakova	living	Cardiology, Bulgaria	Vice-Rector of the Medical University of Plovdiv; President of the Bulgarian Society of Cardiology 2018–20. A BULGARIAN line.	L
10	Ivan Fyodorovich Tokmakov (historian)	1856–1922?	Archaeography	Director of the Moscow Main Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1877–1902; some 128 descriptions of towns and churches. Contemporaries reproached him with compilation.	D
11	Alexander Ivanovich Tokmakov	1949–2001	Folk music	Honoured Artist of Russia; the ensemble «Кольцовский край»; songs in the golden fund of the radio.	D
12	Vladimir Nikolayevich Tokmakov	b. 1968	Literature and media	Union of Russian Writers, Russian PEN Centre, Rossiyskaya Gazeta. Born at Barnaul.	L
13	Vladimir Georgiyevich Tokmakov	b. 1960	Diplomacy	Consul-General of Russia in Rio de Janeiro 2016–22 and in São Paulo from 2022.	L
14	Alexander Matveyevich Tokmakov	1867–1944	Military and municipal	Lieutenant-colonel of the Transbaikal Cossack Host; city head of Chita 1920–21; died at Harbin. By importance for this family, the first of all.	D

#	Name	Dates	Field	Grounds	L/ D
15	Oleg Ivanovich Tokmakov	b. 1940	Painting	Union of Artists of the Russian Federation; a work in the State Russian Museum.	L
16	Evgeny Alexeyevich Tokmakov	1884–1964	Theatre	People's Artist of the Chuvash ASSR. The primary biography could not be read — verify it.	D
17	Vasily Lvovich Tokmakov	1954–2010	Children's literature	Son of Lev and Irina. He died the day after his father.	D
18	Andrew Tokmakoff	living	Ecoinformatics, Australia	TERN AusPlots, University of Adelaide. The Australian thread.	L
19	Valery Nikolayevich Tokmakov	1962–2014	Literary translation	Listed in the reference literature; the particulars could not be confirmed.	D
20	Valery Afanasyevich Tokmakov	unknown	Bandy, Irkutsk	Both sources proved inaccessible. Eastern Siberia — worth checking for that reason alone.	?

Below the line, but all of them real: Alexander Konstantinovich Tokmakov (esaul, Hankou 1919–23); Konstantin Tokmakov (compiler of sporting maps, d. 2025); Alexander Tokmakov (Kobe University, Japan).

Living bearers with a public professional profile, not one of whom is a known relative of yours and in not one of whom any sign of Far Eastern origin has been found: Pavel Tokmakov (California, Toyota Research Institute); Kirill Tokmakov (Birmingham, Aston University); Egor Tokmakov (Berlin, Amazon Web Services); Kamil Tokmakov (Stuttgart, the High Performance Computing Center); Ulyana Tokmakova (chess, FIDE profile); Olga and Alexei Tokmakov (dance sport).

APPENDIX IV

The Plan of Search

In descending order of expected return, not in chronological order. Steps 1 to 3 are free and can be done in a week.

Step 1. The two University of Sydney datasets — free, immediate

Sheila Fitzpatrick's project has issued two open-access datasets which tie the Manchurian and the Australian ends together at once. The second was compiled both from the BREM files at Khabarovsk and from Australian records. Download both and search for "Tokmak". This is the most productive single action available.

List of "Russian" migrants arriving in Australia by the China route <https://hdl.handle.net/2123/31761>

Counting "China" Russians: Russian migration from China to Australia, 1946–54 <https://hdl.handle.net/2123/31755>

Step 2. The BREM index, State Archive of Khabarovsk Territory — free

An electronic alphabetical catalogue of the personal files. Go through the block for the letter T and write out every entry for Токмаков and Токмакова with the exact name, date of birth, place of birth, estate, confession, dates of the documents and number of leaves. It is an index only, the images are not published — but it gives the exact identification needed in order to request the file. This is the step most likely to shift the matter off dead centre.

GAkhK — Российские эмигранты в Маньчжурии <https://gakhk.khabkrai.ru/projects/brem/>

Step 3. The National Archives of Australia — free, and largely digitised

RecordSearch gives free searching by name. Search every spelling; the archive uses both "naturalisation" and "naturalization". It matters which of the two streams is searched: the displaced-persons dossiers of 1947–53 belong to people who came from Europe, and a Trekhrechye family did NOT come that way but in the stream of "Russians from Red China" of 1957–65, by way of Hong Kong.

Series	What it is	Dates
A2478	Selection documents of non-British European migrants	1951–65
A2559	The same — under the assisted-passage schemes	1966–73
A1630 / A2495	Migration case files of the Hong Kong post — MOST LIKELY	post-war
A1, A659, A435, A446	Naturalisation files: 1903–38, 1939–43, 1944–50, from 1953	various
A1652, A3907	Naturalisation name-index cards	various
A2571	Name index cards, migrant registration, Bonegilla	1947–56
C1115 / C3109 / C1492	Sydney: inwards ships passenger lists; ship index; IRO nominal rolls	1923–66
BP319/2, J715–J733	Brisbane and Queensland: inwards passenger lists and registers	1924–65
A6119 / A6122 / A6126	ASIO files — Russian émigrés were systematically of interest	from 1949

Step 4. The two named threads — free, and urgent

The Northern Territory: Alexander, Liya, Irina, Viktor, Pyotr and Veronika Tokmakov. The Northern Territory and Queensland registries, the Commonwealth electoral rolls, Trove, the Ryerson Index. Naturalisation and alien-registration files at the NAA. Land and lease records for the Cossack locality for the years 1933 to 1959; the Katherine Museum and the local historical society.

Adelaide: the Russian Community Centre on Portrush Road at Norwood and the ROCOR parish of St Nicholas. Ask about the founding committee, about the Tokmakoff family, and about which foundation date is the right one — 1949 or 1969. People who knew this person are still alive.

Step 5. The BREM file — paid, slow, decisive

1. Identify the person in the index from step 2.
2. Send the archive, by email and in Russian, a тематический or генеалогический запрос: фонд P-830, the full name, the date and place of birth exactly as they stand in the index; ask for electronic copies of the личное дело.
3. A genealogical search is a paid service. Thirty days at the least, and commonly longer. The real bottleneck is the transfer of money from Australia; here it ordinarily pays to hire a researcher living in Russia (look through forum.vgd.ru).

GAKhK: 680000, г. Хабаровск, ул. Дмитрия Нагишкина, 4а. Telephone +7 (4212) 30-51-15. Email gakhk@archiv.khv.ru. It is worth naming in the same request the fonds P-829 (the Union of Cossacks in the Far East) and P-832 (resettlement and registration lists).

Step 6. Transbaikalia, once the stanitsa is known

- Ф. 282 — Церкви Забайкальской области, 1722-1934. Metric books, исповедные ведомости, брачные обыски. The records run mainly from 1818 to 1923. HERE TOO lies the record of the birth of Evgeny Petrovich Tokmakov at Chita in 1916.
- Ф. 8 — Забайкальская духовная консистория.
- Ф. 210 — Нерчинское горное правление; опись 3 — the personal files of mining officials and workmen. Important because of the enrolment of the mining peasants as Cossacks in 1851.
- Ф. P-62 — Забайкальское областное статистическое бюро, 1922-26: household and surname lists — a cross-section taken on the eve of the departure for Trekhrechye.
- The Host fonds: послужные списки (service records) and станичные посемейные списки (stanitsa family lists). Cossacks were not covered by the ordinary revision tales, and so it is the посемейные списки that must be asked for. Search by name in the catalogue at zabarchives.ru rather than guessing at numbers.

Step 7. The free Russian databases

- ВГД (forum.vgd.ru) — the central genealogical forum; threads on the Transbaikal Cossacks, on Harbin sources, on the emigration from Harbin. Start a thread of your own: this is how Russian researchers find one another.

- Открытый список (ru.openlist.wiki) — 3.35 million records of victims of repression, searchable by mask.
- Мемориал (lists.memo.ru) — the consolidated database, including the "Harbin operation" of 1937–38 against those who had come back from Manchuria.
- Familio (familio.org) — surname distribution, historical settlements, guides to the archives.
- Яндекс. Поиск по архивам — handwriting recognition in metric books. Transbaikalia does not yet take part; check periodically.
- Энциклопедия Забайкалья (ez.chita.ru) and ria1914.info — the stanitsas, the Host, the officers.

Step 8. DNA — begin now

Test the oldest living relatives first of all. At least one Tokmakov of the male line ought to give a Y-chromosome sample (FamilyTreeDNA, Big Y-700): surname plus haplogroup is the only instrument able to distinguish an Argun-side Cossack Tokmakov from unrelated families of the same name. AncestryDNA has the best coverage for Australia; MyHeritage for the post-Soviet space; GEDmatch so that people tested in different laboratories may meet. Join the Cossack-DNA and Russia-Slavic DNA projects.

A caution: the Cossack stanitsas married within a narrow circle, and endogamy inflates the number of shared centimorgans. A predicted third cousin may turn out to be a fifth cousin twice over.

Step 9. Rules of work

- **Patronymics are free genealogy.** Иван Петрович Токмаков is Ivan, son of Pyotr. Every document gives up the father's name of itself.
- **Tokmakov and Tokmakova are one surname.** Australian indexes constantly reckon them two.
- **The calendar.** Julian until 1918. Add twelve days to nineteenth-century dates and thirteen to twentieth-century ones. A man born on 20 December 1899 Old Style was born on 1 January 1900 New Style. Record both; never silently "correct" one.
- **Every spelling, every time:** Tokmakov, Tokmakoff, Tokmakow, Tokmacoff, Tokmakof, Tockmakoff, Tokmokon, Tokmakova — and Tok. In Cyrillic also Токмаковъ with the pre-reform hard sign.

APPENDIX V

Chronology

Date	Event
1538	First mention of Prince Ivan Vasilyevich Tokmak Zvenigorodsky — a princely family, unconnected with this one
1689	The Treaty of Nerchinsk fixes the Russo-Chinese frontier
1747	Two Tokmakov families in the town of Khlynov, Vyatka — a separate northern cluster
18th c.	The Nerchinsk silver mines tie the population to the treasury as mining peasants
1851, 17 March	The Transbaikalian Cossack Host is created. The mining peasants are enrolled as Cossacks in perpetuity
1870–1900	The first Russian zaimki on the Chinese bank: Ivanovka 1870, Yernishnaya 1875, Chernousikha 1885, Manerka 1890; Dubovaya and Shchuchya 1880, Klyuchevaya 1885, Verkh-Kuli and Karagany c. 1890, Dragotsenka 1880–82
From 1897	The Chinese Eastern Railway is built; Harbin and Hailar become Russian centres in Manchuria
1900–1902	The China campaign. Eight Tokmakov Cossacks are decorated with the Cross of St George on Manchurian soil
1914–1918	The First World War. The holders of the zaimki on the Chinese bank cease to come back and move their families across for good
1916, 29 September	Evgeny Petrovich Tokmakov is born in Chita
1917–1922	Revolution and Civil War. The Cossacks cross the Argun with families, livestock and property. Shchuchya serves as the gate
1920–1921	Alexander Matveyevich Tokmakov is city head of Chita
1921	The Cossack estate is abolished by the constitution of the Far Eastern Republic
1923–1934	Russian Cossacks settle in Queensland: 66 Ural Cossacks on 4 November 1923; stanitsas at Cordalba and Talli
1929, Sept–Oct	Soviet punitive raids burn out the settlements along the Khaul. More than 140 killed, over 600 carried off into the USSR
1930	Alexander Tokmakov arrives in Australia
1930s	The tridtsatniki bring the numbers of Trekhrechy to 5,519 by 1933. Arable farming overtakes stock-raising
1932	Manchukuo is proclaimed; Trekhrechy becomes the South Argun province
1933–1959	Alexander Tokmakov holds land on the Katherine River in the Northern Territory
1934	BREM is established. Registration is compulsory for every Russian adult in Manchuria
1944, end of year	9,050 Russians recorded in Trekhrechy: 4,739 men and 4,311 women
1944, 15 October	Alexander Matveyevich Tokmakov dies at Harbin
1945, 9 August	The Soviet Transbaikalian Front enters Manchuria through the Hailar sector
1945, Aug–Sept	2,249 political arrests across Manchuria. About a QUARTER of the male population of Trekhrechy is carried off to the camps; the livestock is confiscated

Date	Event
1946, December	The ROCOR Diocese of Australia and New Zealand is established
1948, 5 November	St Nicholas at Brisbane is consecrated as the first Russian Orthodox cathedral in Australia
1949	The People's Republic of China is proclaimed. Tubabao opens; in Queensland, the Wacol camp
1953, December	The cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul at Strathfield is consecrated
1954, 18 April	The Virgin Lands campaign is announced; recruitment begins among the Russians of China
1955	Eviction begins from Verkh-Kuli, Dragotsenka and Barzhakon. About 3,000 Russians remain
1955-1957	The settlements empty one after another. The whole population of Narmakchi is deported in 1956
1957-1959	The peak of the Australian intake: 3,672 people. The Anking sails on 12 November 1957 with 302 migrants
1962	China permits emigration to third countries
1968	The last Russian families leave Trekhrechy for Kazakhstan
1969	St Nicholas is consecrated at Adelaide; Ieva Tokmakoff is on the founding committee of the Russian Community Centre
1972	Twenty-three Russians remain in Trekhrechy
1986	Australian census: 46,400 people of Russian ancestry, 21,600 speaking Russian at home
2010, 4 August	Evgeny Petrovich Tokmakov dies at Lvov
2021	Australian census: 98,107 people of Russian ancestry, 23,864 born in Russia
2022	Andrei Tokmakoff is elected to the National Academy of Sciences of the USA

APPENDIX VI

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Cultural Atlas — statistics of the Russian population of Australia <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/russian-culture/russian-culture-population-statistics>

Twenty Tokmakovs

Герои страны — Токмаков Евгений Петрович https://warheroes.ru/hero/hero.asp?Hero_id=20338

Slavic Review — obituary of George Basilus Tokmakoff <https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/13718AB16D03D7484B11C70DFD815345/S0037677900042571a.pdf/george-basilus-tokmakoff-1928-1997.pdf>

Online Archive of California — the George Tokmakoff papers, 1891–1996 <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt3j49r8cg/>

University of Chicago — Andrei Tokmakoff <https://chemistry.uchicago.edu/faculty/andrei-tokmakoff>

University of Adelaide — Andrew Tokmakoff <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/directory/andrew.tokmakoff>

Medical University of Plovdiv — Mariya Tokmakova <https://mu-plovdiv.bg/en/faculties/faculty-of-medicine/departments/i-st-department-of-internal-diseases/section-of-cardiology/>

Tea-Terra — the Tokmakov tea firm at Hankou, 1886 <https://www.tea-terra.ru/2017/11/18/30118/>

Archives and working tools

GAKhK — the BREM index <https://gakhk.khabkrai.ru/projects/brem/>

GAZK — for genealogical researchers <http://www.gku-gazk.ru/index.php/zaprosy/issledovatelyam-rodoslovnoj>

The archives of Zabaikalsky Krai — the fond catalogue <https://zabarchives.ru/funds>

NAA RecordSearch <https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/>

Trove — digitised newspapers <https://trove.nla.gov.au/search/category/newspapers>

The Ryerson Index <https://www.ryersonindex.org/>

ВГД — Всероссийское генеалогическое древо <https://forum.vgd.ru/>

FamilyTreeDNA — the Cossack-DNA project <https://www.familytreedna.com/groups/cossack-dna/about>

On the Style of This Book

The narrative part is written in imitation of the manner of L. N. Tolstoy: long periods resolving into a short plain phrase; the repetition of the key word instead of a synonym; a thing described as though it were being seen for the first time; the refusal to name a feeling where an object can be named; impersonal constructions where the cause is not known. This is an imitation of a manner and not a borrowing of a text: not one sentence of Tolstoy's is here passed off as the author's own.

All the epigraphs are genuine and have been checked against the texts. Their sources are given beneath each of them.

The following were used in the work upon the style: V. B. Shklovsky, "Art as Device" (1917); B. M. Eikhenbaum, *The Young Tolstoy* (1922); V. V. Vinogradov, "On the Language of Tolstoy" (1939); N. G. Chernyshevsky on "the dialectic of the soul" (1856); K. N. Leontiev, *Analysis, Style and Atmosphere* (1890); Isaiah Berlin, *The Hedgehog and the Fox* (1953); Gary Saul Morson, *Hidden in Plain View* and *Anna Karenina in Our Time*; Richard Gustafson, *Leo Tolstoy: Resident and Stranger* (1986).

On the Illustrations

All the illustrations were made by a generative model specially for this book. They are artist's reconstructions and not archival photographs: they depict typical scenes and settings of the places and years described, but not particular people, buildings or events. They should not be reproduced as historical evidence.

This applies with particular force to the human figures. Every face here is invented. Not one is an ancestor, not one is painted from a surviving photograph, and not one should ever be captioned with a family name.

The maps are schematic and were drawn for this book from the coordinates of the settlements and the approximate outlines of the rivers; they serve to show how the places lie in relation to one another, and they do not serve for measurement. The border, the headpieces and the initial letters were drawn as vector artwork in imitation of Russian house-carving and old printed ornament.

Compiled for the tok.info family-tree project · September 2026

Every statement about a particular person should be verified against the documents before it is entered in the family tree.