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## The Complete collection of laws of the Russian Empire as a primary source for the history of Terek Cossacks

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### Abstract

This article considers if the Complete collection of the laws of the Russian Empire may be used as a primary source for the history of Terek Cossacks. The author analyzes the laws which dealt with the Don and Volga Cossacks migrations to the Caucasus, with new stanitsas development, with hundreds of peasants, retired soldiers and native Caucasians becoming Cossacks. Such migrations led to the official establishment of the Terek Cossack host. The Complete collection of laws of the Russian Empire is a valuable primary source for the history of Terek Cossacks; it shows that the state has been the main force in establishing the Terek Cossack host.

### For citation

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### Keywords

Complete collection of laws of the Russian Empire, the history of Cossacks, Terek Cossacks, the North Caucasus Line, the North Caucasus, primary sources.

## Introduction

The Complete collection of laws of the Russian Empire (CCL) is a multivolume collection of legislative acts adopted from 1649 to 1913. It is a well-known and widely used historical source. However, to study the history of the Terek Cossacks this source is used quite rarely and with regard to a few laws. Most of the normative acts containing information on this problem remain unstud-

ied. This gap makes us review the Complete collection of laws, analyze it and try to extract new information shedding light on the formation of the Terek Cossacks.

The Complete collection of laws of the Russian Empire includes legislative acts since the middle of the XVII century, so the early period of the history of the Northern Caucasus Cossacks is not reflected there, but many events of the XVIII-XIX centuries are documented well enough.

The Complete collection of laws contains official documents and therefore it is a more reliable source, than historical works of the XVIII – beginning of XX century, which often contain errors and inaccuracies, but are nevertheless used in modern works on the history of the Cossacks.

### **Complete collection of laws of the Russian Empire on the formation of the Tersky Cossacks and establishment of the Terek Cossack host**

A number of legislative acts indicate the resettlement of Cossacks to the Caucasus from other regions of country. One of them states that in 1688 schismatics appeared on the Kuma river, who moved there from the Don: "...pope de Dosifey, Paphnutiy, and Feodosiy gathered with many adherents and advisers, with thieves and schismatics like they and went from the Don to the steppe on the Kuma river ... and live close to Circassian..." [CCL-1, 1830, vol. 2, 943 (No. 1310)]. Other documents show that these Cossacks-schismatics wanted to go to Greben stanitsas to winter. They had supporters among the Terek and Greben Cossacks [Additional primary sources..., 1872, 228]. The ataman Ivan Kuklya was even suspected of supporting schismatics and wanting to settle them in Terek stanitsas [ibid., 266]. Someone from the schismatics could really move there.

If the schismatics fled to the Caucasus from the persecution by the tsarist authority, in XVIII century this authority repeatedly move the Don Cossacks to the Caucasus. Decrees of December 3, 1723 and January 13, 1724 "commanded to move 500 families in Agrahan, and 500 families on the Greben of the Don Cossacks from Zapolny rivers" [CCL-1, 1830, vol. 7, 252 (No.4462)]. But then the authority refused to resettle the Don Cossacks in Greben stanitsas and settled "500 families – from the fortress of the Holy Coss on the Sulak River, and 500 families – from the fortress Holy Cross on the Agrakhan" [ibid, 286 (No.4509)]. Later decrees mention that after the appearance of the Kizlyar fortress in 1735, Cossacks from Agrahan and Sulak were resettled to the Terek [CCL-1, 1830, vol. 9, 840 (No. 6978)], where they founded three new stanitsas not far from Kizlyar.

Under Catherine II, when Russia's policy in the Caucasus became active again, the state also adopted documents about the increase in the number of the Cossacks on the Terek. In 1765 the Empress adopted the report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs "On increasing benefits for maintain immigrants to settle in the tract of Mozdok, on admission to the service and award of ranks and salary to them". According to this document, which was also included in the Complete collection of laws [CCL-1, 1830, vol. 17, 189; ibid, vol. 43, 105-107 (No. 12432)], maintain "elders" who moved to Mozdok, could get different ranks depending on their nobility and merit, and simple

mountaineers were supposed "to join the Cossacks" [CCL-1, 1830, vol. 43, 106 (No. 12432)]. Kizlyar commandant Potapov offered to recruit 200 private Cossacks from the mountaineers and 14 "elders", but, in the opinion of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "for the first case" 100 Cossacks and 6 "elders" were enough. This plan was approved. The new department was called the Mozdok Mountain Cossack Team.

However, one hundred Cossacks-mountaineers were clearly not enough for the defense of Mozdok and adjacent territories, so in 1770 it was decided "to move 100 people from fabulous Cossacks living on the Don to this fortress and settle there" [CCL-1, 1830, vol. 19, 6 (No. 13404)]. They were obliged to serve in fortress artillery. Thus, the stanitsa Lukovskaya was founded, although its name is not mentioned.

The same document commands "from the Volga host settled on Volga between Tsaritsyno and Demetrieviskoe which consists of 1057 families to move 517 families by equal number from each of their stanitsa and settle near Mozdok on the river Terek down between this place and the last Greben town Chervleny, ordered the local commandant to divide them into 5 stanitsas" [ibid.]. Cossacks resettled from the Volga founded stanitsas – Mekenskaya, Naurskaya, Isherskaya, Gulygaevskaya and Kalinovskaya and created Mozdok Cossack regiment. But what can be said about the origin of the Volga Cossacks?

This information is also contained in the Complete collection of laws: 1057 families of the Don Cossacks were relocated to the Volga by the Tsar decree in 1733 [CCL-1, 1830, vol. 9, 222, 231 (No. 6497, 6508)]. That is, the Volga Cossacks are the same Don Cossacks, relocated first on the Volga, and then to the Caucasus. In addition to them for 50 families of the Don Cossacks were also relocated in every stanitsas of Mozdokskiy regiment [CCL-1, 1830, vol. 19, 7 (No. 13404)]. New stanitsas formed a fortified line between stanitsa Chervlenaya and Mozdok. For several years later, this line was continued further west.

In 1776, Governor of Astrakhan Prince P.S. Potemkin in his report, which was also included in the Complete collection of laws, drew attention to the fact "that from Mozdok to Azov the 500-mile-long border against Circassians and Cubans was not covered at all". He offered to move remaining Volga Cossacks to the Caucasus and settle them in six villages [CCL-1, 1830, vol. 20, 374 (No. 14464)]. This plan was approved by Catherine II, but the following year it was amended: instead of six it was decided to create ten new villages and in addition to the Volga Cossacks to resettle also Hopersky Cossacks to a new fortified line [ibid., 519 (No. 14607)]. Thus, Volzhskiy and Hopersky Cossack regiments were formed in the Caucasus.

On December 22, 1782 Catherine II approved the decree "On the division for those who wish the lands to settle that make up the vast steppe, stretching along the line of Mozdok" [CCL-1, 1830, vol. 21, 784 (No. 15619)]. After that, Russian villages and countryside began to appear near the fortresses and stanitsas where retired soldiers, peasants, small-holders lived. In total, 38 new settlements were founded by 1788 [Butkov, 1869, 170]. Over time, many of these villages will turn into stanitsas, and their residents will become Cossacks.

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The activity of general Ermolov was the beginning of a new stage of formation of the Terek Cossacks. On his initiative, a number of new stanitsas were established. On December, 1823, "Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers" was adopted which was approved by the Tsar and included in the Complete collection of laws. This document significantly increased the number of Cossacks, but it is unknown to most historians studying the Terek Cossacks, and not even mentioned in modern works. According to this document, many new stanitsas were founded: from the stanitsa Stavropolskaya part of the Cossacks were planned to move to a new stanitsa "at Kislye vody", another stanitsa appeared "at the post and the river Esentuki", and other – "at the fortress Konstantinogorskaya". Cossacks from the stanitsa Alexandrovskaya of Volga regiment moved to these two stanitsas. In addition, 100 families from the stanitsa Georgievskaya resettled to the Lysogorsky regiment and had to form a new village there. Another village was supposed to establish within 7 miles from Babukov aul. This aul is also became stanitsa, and its "residents Abazines and Kabardians living since 1783 on the land of Georgievsky Cossacks and not performing until now any service and duty had to be enrolled in this regiment following the example of their 85 fellows, who have already joined the Cossacks " [CCL-1, 1830, vol. 38, 1302 (No. 29682)].

According to the "Regulations", structure of the newly formed Mountain Cossack regiment was supposed to include "two Ossetian villages, one on the lands of the stanitsa Ekaterinogradskaya, and another near this in the number of 473 souls" [ibid.]. Thus, the stanitsas Chernoyarskaya and Novoosetinskaya were established. Besides this, the Greben host included "70 souls of Georgians, more than 40 years living in the stanitsa Novopetrovskaya, but not having any status". The Terek-Kizlyar host moved from Kizlyar in a single stanitsa, and "okochenskie Tatars" joined it in a "number of 351 souls, which before belonged to the Terek host, but later... did not belong to any class of people paying taxes". In addition, 911 "state peasants" of the villages Nikolaevskoe also "joined the Cossacks on their own will. Similarly, was supposed village Pavlogradskoe of the Mozdok district, located between the lands of the Cossack and Ossetian; the village Soldatskoe Prokhladnoe and Piblizhnoe of the same district, lying in the border of the Line, and the village Alexandria in the Kizlyar district, where Russian peasants live, in total 1333 souls, to include in the Cossack villages and consider inhabitants to be the Cossacks" [CCL-1, 1830, vol. 38, 1303 (No. 29682)].

So, there were several new villages, and the number of Cossacks increased by 3895 man (not counting women) [ibid.]. New Cossacks were Russian peasants, economic peasants-"malorossy" (stanitsa Prokhladnaya), small-holders (stanitsa Priblizhnaya), descendants of retired soldiers (stanitsa Soldatskaya) and the Ossetians (stanitsas Chernoyarskaya and Novoosetinskaya), Abazines and Kabardians (stanitsa Babukovskaya), the Georgians (stanitsa Novogladkovskaya).

In 1829, a new decree was issued "On the classification of state settlements Gosudarstvennoe and Kurskoe of the Caucasus region to the formed mountain Cossack regiment" [CCL-2, 1830, vol. 4, 127 (No. 2693)]. Thus, two more Cossack stanitsas were established.

Since the state was interested in increasing the number of Cossacks during the Caucasian war, in 1820-1830 a number of decisions were adopted to facilitate joining to the Cossacks. In 1827 a decree was issued "On the permission of the small-holders and other state peasants to be ranked in the Cossack regiments, settled on the Caucasian line and on the enrollment of them in line ones". According to this decree, all state peasants and small-holders were allowed "to join the line Cossacks" of their own free will [CCL-2, 1830, vol. 2, 854]. In 1828 another similar decree was signed [ibid., vol. 3, 842 (No. 1418)].

In 1829, new legislative acts were adopted: "On the permission to accept small-holders and state peasants in the Caucasian Line Cossacks without certificates of leave warrant from secular societies ", "On the moving of vagrants on the line from the Provinces nearest to the Caucasus region" and "On the distribution of vagrants moving to the Caucasian line".

The first resolution was made easier the enrollment of peasants and small-holders in the Cossacks [CCL-2, 1830, vol. 4, 692-693 (No. 3205)]. The second prescribed "to send vagabonds who are healthy, able to work and not older than 35 years, to the Caucasian line to work for the Cossacks" [ibid., 109 (No. 2671)]. It also allowed people who lived in the Caucasian province "without legalized residence permit" for more than 2 years, "and capable of the Cossack service to enroll forever and with their families in the Cossack class of the Line regiments" [ibid].

According to the third resolution, if vagrants given to Cossacks in workers are "honest", then 3 years later they should be also enrolled in the Cossacks [CCL-2, 1830, vol. 4, 110 (No. 2672)]. The state was so interested in increasing the number of Cossacks during the Caucasian war, that they achieved it in every possible way. However, in 1833, a decree on enrollment of vagrants in the Cossacks still was canceled. It was decided to give people who did not have documents and did not "remember kinship" to the soldiers [CCL-2, 1834, vol. 8, 96 (No. 2672)]. This was perhaps for the reason that runaway serfs could be among the vagrants.

In 1832, "Regulations on resettlement of Malorossiisky Cossacks, small-holders and other state settlements for enrollment in the Caucasian Cossack line hosts and regiments" was adopted. According to this document, "to enroll in the Caucasian Cossack line hosts and regiments all Malorossiisky Cossacks in general and those of small-holders and other state villagers who own less than five acres of land per capita in the number of registered males in addition to forests should resettle" [CCL-2, 1833, vol. 7, 640 (No. 5630)]. The government with the help of migration tried not only to strengthen the Cossack hosts, but also to solve the problem of land shortage of peasants.

In 1832 there were also decrees "On leaving sons of soldiers, married Cossacks in the Cossacks" [CCL-2, 1834, vol. 8 (1), 233 (No. 6149)] and "On permission for freed and those who get freedom according to the court decisions, to join the Cossack line hosts" [ibid., 773 (No. 6647)]. These decrees also contributed to the increase in the number of Cossacks.

In 1832, the decree was adopted "On strengthening the defense of the Caucasian Line through the enrollment of inhabitants of some nearby state villages in the class of Line Cossack". 32 vil-



lages were turned into stanitsas, and their inhabitants became Cossacks [CCL-2, 1833, vol. 7, 883 (No. 5796)]. Some of these stanitsas were located on Terek, the other – in the Kuban. Among the new stanitsas were Sablinskaya, Aleksandriiskaya, Verhnepodgornaya, Nizhnepodgornaya, Nezlobnaya. Georgian villages Shelkozavodskoe and Porubachevo, as well as Armenian villages – Derbentskoe, Karzhalinskoe and Malahalinskoe stationed near Kizlyar was transformed into stanitsas. A few years later, Armenian societies were excluded from the Cossacks, but Shelkozavodskaya remained a Cossack stanitsa.

In 1838 it was decided to establish four new stanitsas along the Georgian Military Highway: "The first on the place of the Prishibinskoye fortification, the second between the Uruk and Minaret, the third on Ardon and the fourth on Arhon". It was supposed to settle the "Malorossiisky Cossack regiment No. 2 in these villages, renaming it at the beginning of the formation, according to the Highest Will, in the Vladikavkaz Cossack regiment " [CCL-2, 1839, t. 13 (2), 36 (№ 11446)]. The Malorossiisky Cossack regiments were formed in Poltava and Chernigov guberniya and sent to Poland during the uprising of 1830, and then were moved to the Caucasus.

Between the stanitsas of this regiment military settlements were built where married "lower ranks" lived who have served more than 15 years in the Caucasian corpus. In 1842 the decree was adopted: "To attach to the Vladikavkaz regiment the military settlements, placed on the Georgian Military Highway, namely Vladikavkazskoe, Nikolaevskoe, Kotlyarevskoe and Alexandrovskoe, with the renaming of military countrymans in the Cossacks " [CCL-2, 1843, vol. 17 (2), 8 (No. 16058)]. The number of Cossacks again increased at the expense of retired soldiers.

In the middle of the XIX century the decrees were adopted aimed at increasing the number of Cossacks. In 1850 – "On permission to transfer to the Cossack hosts of regular lower ranks for joint service with their fathers and brothers" [CCL-2, 1861, vol. 34 (1), 402-403 (No. 34449)]. In 1851 – "On permission to the married lower ranks of regular troops, in the Caucasus located, to settle in the stanitsas of the Caucasian line Cossack host, with enrollment in the Cossacks" [CCL-2, 1860, vol. 33 (1), 728 (No. 33280)], in 1853 – "On enrollment of dissenters of state department in the Caucasian line Cossack host " [CCL-2, 1854, vol 28 (1), 175 (No, 27160)], in 1858 – one more decree about permission to married lower ranks to settle in stanitsas and to enroll in the Cossack host [CCL-2, 1860, vol. 33 (1), 728 (No. 33280)]. In the same year the decree was adopted on creation in 1859 of seven new Cossack stanitsas in the Caucasus. It was planned to move Cossacks and peasants of the North Caucasus, the Don and internal provinces in these stanitsas [ibid., vol. 33 (2), 282 (No. 33641)].

In 1860, a decree was adopted on the establishment of six new stanitsas in the Caucasus [CCL-2, 1862, vol. 35 (1), 369 (No. 35657)]. Among these stanitsas were Umakhan-Yurtovskaya, Galashevskaya, Alkunovskaya and Datykhovskaya [ibid., 612 (No. 35833)]. In the same year, according to another decree, another village Dzhalkinskaya was founded [CCL-2, 1862, vol. 35 (2), 201 (No. 36276)]. It was planned to establish five new villages in the Terek region in 1861 [ibid., 203-204 (No. 36283)].

At the turn of 50-60 years of the XIX century, there were two events that defined the border between the two periods in the history of the formation of the Terek Cossacks. It was the end of the war in the North-Eastern Caucasus (1859) and the formation of the Kuban and Terek Cossack hosts.

On February 8, 1860 the "Decree to the effect that the right and left wings of the Caucasus line to call the Kuban and Terek regions, and all the space to the North of the main range of the Caucasus mountains – the North Caucasus" was adopted [CCL-2, 1862, vol. 35 (1), 122 (No. 35421)]. Apart from the fact that this decree introduced a term "North Caucasus" such widely known and used today, he also established a new administrative division of this region, which had far-reaching consequences, including for Cossacks. On May of the same year, the commander of the right wing of the Caucasian line became to be called the Chief of the Kuban region, and the commander of the left wing – the Chief of the Terek region [ibid., 604 (No. 35822)].

On November 19, 1860 another decree was adopted, which played a great role in the history of the Terek and Kuban Cossacks: "On some changes in the Positions of the Cossack hosts of the Chernomorsky and Caucasian line hosts, renamed in the Kuban and Terek Cossack hosts". The former Chernomorsky Cossack host was now called Kuban, and it was joined by "the first six brigades of the Caucasian line host, in full force, with the land that they had hitherto used...". It was prescribed "from the rest brigade of the Caucasian line host, also in full force, with the land, the whole economy and the buildings in this area, to form a special host and name it "Terek Cossack" [CCL-2, 1862, vol. 35 (2), 391 (No. 36327)]. Thus, two new Cossack hosts were created in the Caucasus and a border was drawn between them, which corresponded to the administrative border between the Kuban and Terek regions. Only then the concepts of "Terek Cossack" and "Kuban Cossack" acquired their modern meaning. Cossacks who lived in the Terek region and served in the Terek Cossack host, became known as Terek. Those of the Cossacks, who were on the other side of the border, in the Kuban region, served in the Kuban Cossack host and became known as Kuban.

Not all Cossacks agreed with the division of the Caucasian line Cossacks into two parts, as evidenced by a letter of major general of the Tersky Cossack host I.I. Safonov to the major general of the Kuban Cossack host I.D. Popko. The letter says, " unexpected division of the Caucasian liner Cossack host followed in 1860 caused bewilderment among the Cossacks and did not meet their expectations. This measure did not satisfy anyone, did not bring any significant benefit to either the Cossacks or the government; on the contrary, the lack of unity of management of the Cossacks led only to the suspension of their domestic growth, dangerous to only enemies of Russia" [Popko, 2001, 515-516].

But despite this discontent, the new administrative division of the North Caucasus and the Cossacks was preserved, and in the XX century border, which was conducted by officials only in the second half of the XIX century, was perceived as an ethnic border and almost initially existing.

After the end of hostilities in Chechnya and Dagestan further increase in the number of Cossacks became not as important as before. In this period, the people of some stanitsas were excluded from the Cossacks. On October 1860, a decree was adopted "On the abolition of Babukovskaya villages of the Caucasus line Cossack host with providing the inhabitants thereof from the mountain people the opportunity to settle in the Great Kabarda" [CCL-2, 1862, vol. 35 (2), 164 (No. 36204)]. Babukovtsy has repeatedly filed petitions against the expulsion of them from Cossack hosts. The Caucasian administration, in turn, considered them unreliable. By middle of 1861 the inhabitants of stanitsa Babukovskaya left her. Most of them moved to Kabarda. Cossacks of stanitsa Nezlobnaya were resettled in place of this stanitsa [The documents..., 1904, vol. 12, 1252].

In 1869 stanitsa Zheleznovodskaya of the Terek Cossack hosts also "converted" to "civil status" and was a part of the Stavropol province [CCL-2, 1873, vol. 44 (2), 416-417 (No. 47849)].

## Conclusions

The complete collection of laws of the Russian Empire contains valuable information on history of formation of the Terek Cossacks, including the resettlement of the Don and Volga Cossacks in the Caucasus, the date of foundation of many Terek villages, the increase in the number of Cossacks.

Like no other source, the CCL shows the important role of the state in the formation of the Terek Cossacks. It was the state that enrolled thousands of people in the Terek Cossacks, but it could also expel entire villages from the Cossack host. Tsarist government established dozens of villages, resettled many thousands of people in the Caucasus, united separate groups of the Cossacks and divide them at its discretion.

It was the decision of the government according to which the Terek Cossack host was created in 1860, and since then those who served in this army and their families began to name the Terek Cossacks.

The complete collection of laws, like no other historical source, shows that the Terek Cossacks were formed by various social groups: peasants, retired soldiers, small-holders. Legislative acts also testify to the ethnic heterogeneity of the Terek Cossacks, which included in addition to the Cossacks of Russian origin Ukrainians, or "Malorossy", as well as Ossetians, Kabardins, Abasins, Georgians. And they are often included in the Terek host whole villages, which contributed to the long-term preservation of their languages and culture.

At the same time, the information contained in the Complete collection of laws on the history of Tersky Cossacks are not complete and exhaustive. Despite the name, it contains not all regulations, including relating to the Cossacks. This source does not contain any of the materials on the history of many Terek stanitsas. Besides this, it took some time to implement a decree after its adoption, sometimes quite significant, that should be considered in the study of history. For this reason, the Complete collection of laws of the Russian Empire must be supplemented and checked by other sources.



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## **Полное собрание законов Российской империи как источник по истории формирования терского казачества**

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### **Аннотация**

Статья посвящена вопросам использования Полного собрания законов Российской империи в качестве источника по истории формирования терского казачества. Автор выявляет и анализирует целый ряд законодательных актов, в соответствии с которыми на Кавказ переселялись донские и волжские казаки, появлялись новые станицы, в состав казачества зачислялись тысячи крестьян, отставных солдат и представителей народов Кавказа. Начало новому этапу в истории казачества положил указ о создании Терского казачьего войска. Полное собрание законов Российской империи является ценным источником по истории формирования терского казачества и показывает, что важнейшую роль в этом процессе сыграло государство.

### **Для цитирования в научных исследованиях**

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**Ключевые слова**

Полное собрание законов Российской империи, история казачества, терское казачество, Кавказская линия, Северный Кавказ, исторический источник.

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