

FaR 2021**International Forum “Freedom and responsibility in pivotal times”****CHANCE FINDS AS SOURCES HISTORICAL RESEARCH OF
THE OMSK REGION SETTLEMENT**

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Abstract

The paper is devoted to the study of material artefacts accidentally found in various areas of Omsk region for the purpose of argumentation or refutation of some pages of settlement of the territory of the region in the 18-19th centuries. The active settlement of the territory of the present Omsk region began at the beginning of the 18th century. Servicemen, Cossacks, immigrants, and exiles who came to a new place not only quickly adapted to the local climate, harsh Siberian conditions, but also introduced their knowledge, traditions, and experience to the life of a small local population. The paper presents some objects depicting the coat of arms of the Russian Empire confirming that despite the distance from the capital the uniforms and insignia of branch made by key producers were regularly delivered and actively used by the population. The military attributes of the 18-19th centuries found by the author and presented in the paper indicate the active presence of the representatives of military units here. The discovered remains of a dugout away from rural areas and villages indicate that despite the harsh living conditions, there were many people who could survive in a relative isolation and even absolutely alone. The authors tried to argue some facts of the history of invasion and development of the territory of Omsk region, as well as its settlements through specific artifacts. The presented sources not only replenish collections and museum exhibits, but also provoke interest in historical research and contribute to constructive controversy.

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1. Introduction

As the wisdom says: “even the stones speak if they are stones of history”. Historical science is based on the events of the past and the facts proving them. Such facts are obtained from various sources – evidence of history: physical, written, pictorial, and phonic. The task of history as a science is to collect, interpret, explain the totality of facts in order to identify the causes, factors and patterns of the historical process. Although modern historical science has a huge arsenal of facts, the appearance of new sources is ongoing. Besides, some people confirm the interpretation of earlier described events, others complement and the third refute. Historical knowledge is a complex, time-consuming, but fascinating process, and the more supporting facts, artifacts will be obtained, the closer we will be to the truth, the more successful the process of forming the national memory will be.

2. Problem Statement

Despite a significant amount of theoretical and empirical research on the history of the settlement of Omsk region, new sources that can either confirm or refute the described facts and events of history continue to appear. The task of researchers is to study, describe, include in the scientific circulation new sources and facts in order to establish the historical truth.

3. Research Questions

The subject of this paper is some material sources that supplement certain pages of the history of the settlement of the territory of Omsk region in the 18-19th centuries.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to analyze and describe accidentally found artefacts indicating some features of the process of settlement of the territory of Omsk region in the 18-19th centuries.

5. Research Methods

Let us turn to the history of development of the territory of the present Omsk region. To date, there are many sources describing the historical past of the region. The theoretical sources of the present study include the following. One of the main sources of study of the history of the Russian Empire of the third quarter of the 18th century is the research by Pallas (1788) “Travel to different provinces of the Russian state at the behest of the St. Petersburg Imperial Academy of Sciences”. The “Materials for the History of Siberia” by Potanin (1867); and “A chronological list of events from the history of the Siberian Cossack army (since the establishment of the West Siberian Cossacks in the occupied territory)” by Putintsev (1891) are of great interest. The work by Sedelnikov et al. (1903) *Eastern Part of Kyrgyz Region* contains a mass of facts about daily routine, life, religion and economic activity of the population of Siberia of the end of the 19th century (1903), *Reference Book of Omsk Diocese* by Golubishin (1914), *Monuments of Siberian History of the 18th Century* (1885) (Monuments of Siberian history, 1885), work of Matveev et al. (2005)

Past of Omsk Diocese, Zlatkin (1964) *History of Dzungar Khanate (1635-1758)*, as well as the publication *History of Siberia. Siberia as Part of Feudal Russia* (History of Siberia. Siberia as Part of Feudal Russia, 1968).

The source book “History of Siberia and the Far East” widely presents an overview of modern studies of Siberia (History of Siberia and the Far East, 2021).

Modern local history studies present a particular value. Thus, a certain renaissance of historical and local history and an increase in interest in artifacts was caused by a series of publications on the history of the Cherlak district of Omsk region by Novikov (2008) “Essays on the history of Cherlak and Cherlak district” (1720-1985), “Our native Cherlak region” (Our native Cherlak Territory (a collection of materials for the 110th anniversary of Boris Ivanovich Maslatsov), 2019; Our native Cherlak Territory (a collection of materials of the III and IV district annual conference named after B.I. Maslatsov for 2019-2020 dedicated to the 300th anniversary of Cherlak), 2021), as well as the publication of the study manual “Salt Turn on the Middle Irtysh (station, redoubt, village on Irtysh defensive line of the 18-19th centuries.) As a result of these studies, the history of a number of settlements and villages was recreated; the chronological framework of certain local stories was clarified.

In addition to theoretical scientific sources, the empirical method of studying material artefacts accidentally found in various areas of Omsk region was valuable for this study. The methods of analysis, analogies, comparison, and description made helped the authors to recreate some pages of the history of the settlement of Omsk region in the 18-19th centuries.

6. Findings

It is known from sources that the active settlement of the territory of the present Omsk region dates back to the beginning of the 18th century. Communication with Eastern Siberia, the territory of the Far East, the designation of southern borders required new settlements: villages, stanzas, outposts. Servicemen, Cossacks, immigrants, and exiles who came to a new place not only quickly adapted to the local climate, harsh Siberian conditions, but also introduced their knowledge, traditions, and experience to the life of a small local population.

In turn, while assisting the new Siberians the Russian state demanded that they fulfill all civilian duties: military service, land lease payments, and tax remissions.

The Russian Empire, being a state with vast territory, sought to spread and maintain the attributes of its power everywhere. This also applied to the present Omsk region. Even today, many years later we can find objects with the coat of arms of the Russian Empire near the settlements formed in the 18-19th centuries confirming that despite the distance from the capital the uniforms and insignia of branch made by key producers were regularly delivered and actively used by the population.

The badge of the Russian Postal Service (Figure 01) was accidentally found in the ground near one of the remains of a residential building in the village of Solyanoye, Cherlaksy District. A watch bell (rynda, Figure 02) was among the unnecessary things in one of the houses of the village of Cherlak. Many buttons (Figure 03) with traces of goldplating and silvering, with the coat of arms of the Russian Empire, are very often found by people in the gardens of their homes.



Figure 1. Badge of the Postal Service of the Russian Empire



Figure 2. Bell (rynda)



Figure 3. Uniform buttons

A button with the inscription “London” (Figure 04) on the back found in Irtysh village of Cherlak district (former Izylbash village) most likely belonged to a high-level official, since it was gilded buttons made in England that were ordered in the 19th century for the uniforms of the nobility, including provincial noblemen.



Figure 4. Uniform button

Numerous casings, bullets, cartridges (Figures 05-07) found in the vicinity of relatively large settlements of Omsk Region confirm that the young people of the “conscription” age, as expressed in modern terms, underwent regular military training, where they were taught military service skills and how to handle arms. Many firearms casings can be especially found on the outskirts of villages, presumably in places organized for target shooting. Researchers Borodovsky and Chibyshev (2021) note: “Modern finds of numerous items of military attributes of the late 18th - early 19th century on the Irtysh defensive line confirm the presence of the representatives of army units here” (p. 5).



Figure 5. Berdan rifle cartridge, Mosin rifle cartridge, 19th century



Figure 6. Piece of the Cossack sword scabbard



Figure 7. Elements of horse harness of the 18-19th centuries

The Siberians, mainly from Cossacks, served on the southern borders of the present-day Kazakhstan with China, participated in the wars of the Russian Empire. Thus, in the vicinity of the Bazhenovo village (one of the oldest villages in the Sargatsky district of Omsk region), a medal of a participant in the Crimean War of 1853-1856 (Figure 08) was found.



Figure 8. Medal “For participation in the Crimean War”

The medal “For a campaign in China” (Figure 09) found in the vicinity of the village of Cherlak testifies to the participation of the Cherlak Cossacks in the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion of 1898-1901.



Figure 9. Medal “For a campaign in China”

A button of a uniform of the Belgian Army soldier (Figure 10) was found in the vicinity of the village of Achairskoye. Such a button from the First World War could get into Omsk only through a participant in these events. By the way, Belgium, as a state participant in the First World War, became the first victim of German aggression and took part in it with a very limited number of military men.



Figure 10. Button of the Belgian Army soldier

The territory of Omsk region was settled quite consistently. This was dictated by the need to develop the routes of the Moscow-Siberian tract, the direction from Tobolsk along the Irtysh to the southern borders of the Russian Empire. These settlements have been studied by local historians and described in numerous sources. However, life arose in completely undeveloped places, sometimes remote from routes and roads. People may have sought privacy for various reasons. Fugitive serfs, criminals who managed to escape from the convoy on the way to hard labor, other people for various reasons settled alone. People built simple houses using the terrain under the steep slopes and steep shores. Silhouettes of such dugouts can still be found on the banks of rivers and lakes, on the islands of Irtysh. The authors found the remains of such a dwelling on the left bank of the Irtysh near the village of Kharlamovo, Omsk district. The dugout was located 10 meters from the water edge, the entrance to it was from the side of the river. On the back of this dwelling is a tall forest-overgrown mound. Interestingly, 3-5 meters from this dwelling a forged knife (Figure 11) and a chair were found, and the most interesting was the two-penny coin of 1812. Definitely, the settlements in this part of Omsk region appeared only at the end of the 19th century. Thus, it can be concluded that the settlement of Omsk region, mainly organized and systemic, was at the same time partly chaotic. Despite the harsh living conditions, there were many people who could survive in a relative isolation and even absolutely alone.

The residents of Omsk region were actively involved in the transit of various cargo, goods, mail through our territory.

There are well known several routes of the Moscow-Siberian tract through the settlements of Omsk region. The residents of Tarsky, Tyukalinsky, Bolsheukovsky, Kolosovsky, Sargatsky, Nizhneomsky, Kormilovsky, Kalachinsky villages and other districts of Omsk region were engaged in transportation, kept shops and inns. The “Salt Path” from Tobolsk through Omsk region to the salt lakes of the present Omsk and Novosibirsk regions was described and studied.

In addition to these routes, the so-called “Tea Road” ran through the territory of Omsk region on the right bank of the Irtysh River from China. In the 18-19th centuries tea was brought to Russia mainly from China and was quite expensive. The long and dangerous road of Chinese merchants through outposts and settlements on the banks of the Irtysh to Omsk, Tara and Tobolsk, was apparently justified by the received profit.



Figure 11. Steel and knife

In confirmation of this stable route in the area of the village of Pokrovo-Irtysk located on the right bank of the Irtysk upstream of the river, 75 km from Omsk, 19th-century coins of the Chinese Qing dynasty (Figure 12) were found. Coins were found in different places, and were apparently lost by different people, presumably Chinese merchants.



Figure 12. Qing Dynasty Coins (China)

7. Conclusion

The basis of historical science is the search and study of sources. The authors tried to argue some facts of the history of invasion and development of the territory of Omsk region, as well as its settlements through specific artifacts. They were objects from among chance finds that reflect the history of our small homeland and its place in the historical development of the Russian state. The presented sources not only replenish collections and museum exhibits, but also provoke interest in historical research and contribute to constructive controversy.

History is an ongoing process of accumulation and discovery of new facts and evidence. Due to this process, the development of theoretical knowledge, the expansion of the possibilities of empirical research, it becomes possible to identify and introduce new historical sources into scientific circulation for the most accurate understanding of the events of our history. This is important both in the worldview, and in the moral and practical sense. The great Russian scientist M.V. Lomonosov wrote: “history gives rulers examples of government, subjects – obedience, soldiers – courage, judges – justice, young – old men’s mind, the elderly – pure hardness in advice, everyone – well-meaning jollification united with untold use” (Lomonosov, 1961). In modern Russian society, the study of the past is an important element of educational work aimed at creating a sense of patriotism and love for the country among younger generations. It seems that history as a science contains significant heuristic potential for an adequate understanding of the essence of the complex socio-political and economic processes that took place in Siberia.

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