



FOLK HEROES OF UKRAINE

TRANSLATED BY
MARY SKRYPNYK



FOLK HEROES OF UKRAINE

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UKRAINE

Translated and Adapted from Ukrainian
By MARY SKRYPNYK

COSSACK HERITAGE

Canadians have a many-splendoured heritage — derived from many peoples of many lands. Those of Ukrainian descent can be proud of their Cossack ancestors, and of the inspiring breath of freedom which they brought to the human story.

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A Word from the Translator

The translations in this book were taken from a series appearing in the popular weekly magazine, "Ukraine", published in Kiev. Written by prominent Ukrainian writers, they embodied, in a new and exciting way, the heritage of the Ukrainian people in their portrayal of the men who shaped Ukrainian history and whose daring deeds and deathless spirit remain forever enshrined in folklore and legend.

In the decision to translate and adapt this series for the readers of "The Ukrainian Canadian", where they appeared in 1963-64, I felt they would be a contribution to a greater knowledge of Ukrainian history and heritage to generations whose native land is Canada, but whose culture and traditions also derive from the land of their fathers.

Once the series began we found that our readers shared this opinion. We were urged to publish them in a booklet as part of the celebrations of 1966 -- the 75th anniversary of Ukrainian immigration to Canada.

The publishers hope that it will also find a modest place in the literature of Canada's centennial year.

By MARY SKRYPNYK

Toronto, 1966.

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"COSSACK LEAVES FOR THE SICH", Oil, by L. Zhemchuznitsov. 1887.

THE COSSACK REPUBLIC

By OLENA OPANOVICH

THE Zaporizhyan Sich is one of those historic world riddles that many generations of researchers have pondered and tried to explain.

"Pirates, brigands!" screamed the Polish "szlachta" in Sejm and in Senate. Raging with hatred and fury, they demanded the destruction of the Zaporizhyan Sich, that its Cossacks be wiped off the face of the earth.

"The glorious Zaporizhya" is what the peasants called the Sich. This is where they fled from the feudal order, seeking help from its ruthless, intolerable oppression. The Zaporizhyan Cossacks — "holy knights, defenders of the homeland" — were immortalized in the folk ballads, songs and legends of the people.

"Nest of anarchy" — said Tsarina Catherine the Second about the Zaporizhyan Sich.

"The Zaporizhyan Army" was the name given by the Ukrainian people liberated from the rule of the Polish nobility over Ukrainian lands in the battles of 1648-1654. The same name was given to the Ukrainian cossack-peasant rebel army in 1648, which embodied within itself the finest traditions of the Zaporizhyan Sich.

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THE victorious Zaporizhyans became the heroes of many novels, paintings, poems, operas, films and plays.

The French writer and philosopher Voltaire was fired with admiration at their heroism and sought to find their parallel in world history.

The brilliant Russian writer Gogol wrote fervently: "So this was the Sich! This was the nest from which flew all the proud and the strong, like lions; from which

flowed freedom and cossackdom throughout all Ukraine."

Karl Marx called the Zaporizhyan Sich "the first Christian Republic". "With the emergence of the Cossacks", he stated, "the spirit of freedom poured out over Ukraine."

The Zaporizhyan Sich played a progressive role in the history of the Ukrainian people. But historians to this day haven't answered all the questions to its hidden secrets, or examined all the facts relating to the conditions of life, customs and history of the Zaporizhyans.

No accurate accounts of the exact time the Sich was established are available. But in the se-

cond half of the XVI century the Sich was already known far beyond the borders of Ukraine. European rulers sent their ambassadors to the Zaporizhya and invited the Cossacks to unite with them against the Turkish Sultan. It was with this in mind that the German emperor sent his ambassador, Erich Lyasota, to the Sich.

When did the Ukrainian Cossacks emerge on the historic arena and what did their appearance represent?

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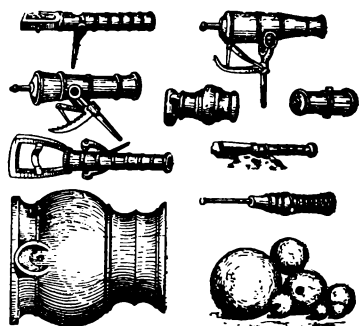
IT WAS the threshold of the XV century — a dark, difficult hour in Ukrainian history. Her lands were fragmented by Lithuanian, Polish and Hungarian feudal princes.

The Halych-Volyn and then the Kiev principalities fell under the attacks of foreign invaders. The southern Ukrainian steppe had been turned into a bridge-head for the marauding attacks of the Turkish and Tatar magnates on both Ukraine and Russia.

It was then that the people formed their own armed forces. These were the Cossacks, and they took upon themselves one of the main functions of a state — the defence of their native land.



COAT OF ARMS OF THE ZAPORIZHYAN ARMY.



**GUNS OF THE ZAPORIZHYAN
COSSACKS.**

The sparsely populated area of the south-western region of Ukraine bordered with the nomadic Tatar Hordes. Here it was that the first devastating and bloody wave of attacks took place. It was to this territory of the Southern Kiev (Cherkas and Kaniv districts) and Bratslav Regions (southern Pobuzhya) that the peasants and city poor, who carried the full weight of feudal and foreign oppression on their shoulders, fled from far-off Halychina, Volyn and Podilya, from the cities and villages of Northern Kievshina. As Bohdan Khmelnytsky later said, the Sich was formed of "people who could not take servitude and joined the Cossacks." It is no accident that the word "Cossack", in the Turkish translation, means a "free person".

The bravest and most courageous of the people joined the ranks of the Cossacks — for they had to face military marches and battles, prolonged and constant struggles against the enemy. But these recent peasants, accustomed only to the land, not only fought. Around them lay vast stretches of fertile earth, deep-flowing rivers, the virgin steppe, rich in wild life. The Cossacks took to the plough, hunted the predatory beast, began animal husbandry and established handicraftsmanship. They founded hamlets and villages, built new cities and towns and rebuilt the ruins of the old. It was actually the Cossacks that returned the Tatar-devastated Ukrainian steppe to life.

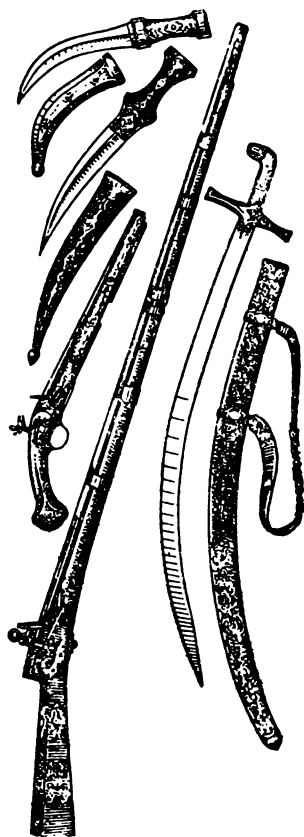
In time the Cossacks created a system of fortification on the lower banks of the Dnieper, on the Dnieper islands, beyond the rapids. Lost in the Dnieper's marshy meadows, hidden in the thick overgrowth of willow and reed, the Cossack fortress was inaccessible to the Turkish-Tatar invaders. The rapids also made difficult access for the Polish nobles.

The Cossacks adopted a composite of traditional Ancient Russian defensive structures in which an important role, besides earthen

fortifications, was played by the erection of the "zasida" (barricades of branches laid with their sharpened points outward in front of the ramparts — M.S.). From the word "zasidka" (barricade of trees) comes the "Zaporizhska Sich". Some historians, however, believe that the correct origin lies in the word "sikty" (to chop, as with a sword — M.S.). The name Zaporizhya was given because the territory was beyond the Dnieper rapids.

The Polish government correctly regarded the Cossacks a threat to their domination in Ukraine, a threat to the feudal system. The Polish kings attempted to establish control over the Cossacks and at the same time utilize them as a defence for the southern borders and in the struggle against the peasant uprisings. That is why in 1572 King Sigizmund-August took some of the Cossacks into the service of the Polish state. They were entered into a special register. But the registered Cossacks were lost in the sea of cossackdom, which continued to grow even after the introduction of registration. The Zaporizhyans united into one organization — the Zaporizhyan Army.

SEVERAL times the Sich changed the site of its location. It is supposed that it was first situated on the island of Khortitsya. There, in the middle of the XVII century Prince Dmitro Vishnevet-sky built a fortified castle, the garrison of which was manned by Cossacks. No historic documents



WEAPONS OF THE ZAPORIZHYAN
COSSACKS.

have yet been found to give evidence that it was exactly here that the Cossacks built their first Sich. Khortitsya, however, was always a part of the Zaporizhyan Sich.

Documents do exist that tell of the Sich in the 70's of the XVI century and its location on the island of Tomakivka and in the 90's on another Dnieper island — Bazavluk. It was about the Bazavluk Sich that Erich Lyasota left reminiscences. From 1638 to 1652 the Sich was situated on Mikitinsky Rih. Here is where the rebel army that elected Bohdan Khmelnitsky its Hetman was formed. From here, under his command, the Cossacks advanced on April 22, 1648, to join the rebel movement along the Dnieper and begin the great liberation war of the Ukrainian people.

The lengthiest history belongs to the Chortomlitska Sich. The life and activities of the celebrated Otaman Ivan Sirko, fighter against the Tatar invaders, is connected with its history. The Chortomlitska Sich, on orders from Tsar Peter the First, was burnt down and laid to ruin because a unit of its officers and Cossacks went over to the side of Mazepa. After this the Cossacks went further south and established the Sich on the river Kamyanets.

But the Tsarist authorities were not prepared to accept this either. The Cossacks finally had to settle in Oleshky, which at that time was under the rule of the Crimean Khans.

To live in subjection to an ancient enemy — the Tatar feudaries — was unusually hard. Time and again the Zaporizhyans turned to the Russian state with petitions to allow them to return to Russian dependency. Finally, in 1734, on the eve of the Russian-Turkish war, the Tsarist government gave consent. The final, New, or Pidpilenska Sich, as it was also called, was then established, so named because it was situated on the Pidpilna river.

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THE LIFE and customs of the Cossacks were described in many reminiscences published by foreign and Russian officers who had been associated with them. But the most valuable information comes from their own documents in the state archives. The Sich had active diplomatic relations with the governments of many countries and its inner organization was guided by a highly-developed, capable leadership. The Zaporizhyan military chancellery was led by well-educated and

well-known people of the time, among whom were historic chroniclers. There was even a school. But because of the violence of the times many of the historic documents were lost. The materials available are mostly from the New Sich. They constitute a unique archival treasure of world importance.

An unusually interesting and precise account of the outer appearance of the Sich was made by the Cossacks themselves. In 1672, in Moscow, Zaporizhyan ambassadors — Otaman Ovsy Shashol and his Cossacks, described the Chortomlitska Sich. Outwardly it resembled a fortress city. On its left the fortress was flanked by the river Chortomlik, on its right by the Prohnoy. Behind the fortress flowed the Skarbna. The steep banks of these three rivers formed a natural protection. This was supplemented by a thirteen-metre wide rampart and trench. On the fourth side the fortress faced open meadow. Here the ramparts were studded with loop-holes and further fortified with a palisade of sharpened and tarred palings. On this side also, stood a tall defence tower some 43 metres in width and before it, some 216 metres in circumference, a special earthen fortification with openings for cannon. On the opposite

side and leading up to the ramparts stretched a row of wooden boxes filled with earth. The fortress could be entered or left only through seven narrow tunnels, fortified by armed loop-holes. During the winter months the Cossacks kept the three rivers free of ice, thus hampering access to the fortress.

In the centre of this fortified compound was an open square with a church, surrounded by 38 "kurens" or barracks peculiar to the period — large wooden huts covered with hides or reeds. In the square also were the buildings housing the officers and the army arsenal where the field cannon and ammunition of the fortress were stored. Beyond the fortified city, beside the port, stood the "Greek House", the lodging for foreign ambassadors and merchants. The Zaporizhyan Sich carried on a lively trade and was the transit point for all trade in Ukraine and Russia with the East.

Beyond the walls of the compound, in the suburbs of the Sich, were the homes and artisan workshops. The Cossacks — excellent gunsmiths, also produced gunpowder of high quality. They especially excelled in ship-building. Their boats, which they called "chaiki" (seagulls — M.S.)

successfully competed against the mighty Turkish fleet. The Cossack masters of ship-building were often invited to Moscow.

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THE only Cossacks who actually lived in the "kurens" were those who constituted the garrison of the Sich. The "kuren" also had an army-administrative and economic importance as a unit. At its head was the Otaman. The greater majority of the Cossacks and their families lived in lodgings outside the fort and later even in villages on Sich territory. These lands, in the second half of the XVII century began to be called "free lands of the Zaporizhyan Army".

No women were allowed in the Sich and bringing them in was risking punishment by death. This was dictated by the unusually difficult and dangerous conditions of life in the Zaporizhya where everything was subordinated to the demands of constant war. Besides Ukrainians, who composed the majority, the Zaporizhyan Cossack forces also included many Russians and Byelorussians, as well as representatives of other nationalities.

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IN the course of its battles against foreign invaders the Sich cre-

ated a highly organized army. Every Cossack was officially called a "comrade of the Zaporizhyan Army" which to some extent reflected elements of democratic relations. All the Cossacks were divided into regiments of from 500 to 1,000, and later to even more men. These were under the command of a colonel. The regiments were divided into squadrons (sotni) of 100 men, led by a lieutenant (Sotnik). The squadrons were stationed in the "kurens". The entire Zaporizhyan Sich was ruled by the Hetman or, as he was called, the "starshoi" (elder). Later he was called the "Koshoviy (camp) Otaman". While on a march his power was absolute. Together with the military clerk, the judge and the transport guide, the Koshoviy Otaman formed the governing body of the Zaporizhyan Sich. This body or "starshina" was elected every year at a general meeting of the army council, which met three or four times a year and resolved such questions as came up, met ambassadors, made decisions on military marches, divided lands and property between the "kurens", etc.

The Zaporizhyan Sich manifested many of the characteristics of the early bourgeois republics. As time went on, however, the

"starshina" and the wealthier cossacks violated the democratic order and through the use of demagoguery, bribery and force, endeavoured to change its laws to individual privileges, forcing their will on the Council. All the higher positions were held only by the wealthy Cossacks. Toward the end of the Sich's existence the "starshina", together with the Tsarist government, reduced the elective principle to a stupid formality. A constant and bitter class war came into being. The greater mass of Zaporizhyans were the poor and destitute Cossacks who carried the entire burden and dangers of the military marches and were also the most active force in the peasant-cossack uprisings.

By the first half of the XVIII century the Zaporizhyan Cossacks had developed an army equal to the finest in Europe.

The Cossacks combined in themselves the qualities of both infantry and navy, building up celebrated fleets of sailing and rowing flotillas. They fought their sea battles skilfully and also carried the responsibility of shore defence. There are historic records to show that the Zaporizhyans used, in their campaigns, a form of submarine ship, much earlier than they were used in

Western Europe. They courageously attacked not only individual ships of the enemy, but whole Turkish fleets, destroying the ship's officers and freeing the slave rowers from the Turkish galleys; sending them back to their native land or accepting them into their ranks.

The most widely-used tactic of army procedure employed by the Cossacks was the so-called encampment. The men were dispositioned in the centre of a four-cornered mobile entrenchment which was formed of lined-up and fortified wagons. The camp was used in battle and in the marches and was called the "moving fortress". During the march the infantry often came out from behind the wagons, but in times of danger they remained within their armed circle. According to a contemporary, 100 Cossacks within an encampment could defend themselves against a Tatar attack of 1,000 men or more. Locked in their armour, the Polish lancers were also defeated by the immovable wall of the moving fortress.

The Cossacks were armed with sword and lance as well as with fire-arms — muskets, cross-bows and firelocks. It is known that they also used incendiary rockets as early as the beginning of the

XVI century. Besides the arms and the necessary ammunition, every soldier had to have an axe, a scythe, a shovel, rope, etc. These were necessary for filling in the ramparts and building fortifications, as well as for tying up the wagons in the encampment.

Contemporaries described the Zaporizhyan Cossacks as men of great physical strength and endurance, indefatigable in battle. The Turkish chronicler, Mustafa Naima, writing about a battle at sea between the Cossack "chaiki" and the Turkish fleet, had this to say:

"It can be openly acknowledged that in the whole world one cannot find a braver people. They show not the least fear of losing their life, and even less fear of death."

The Zaporizhya was governed with iron discipline. The betrayal of the Cossack brotherhood or the native land was considered the greatest crime. The Sich became the place where military talents were developed, where characters of steel were minted, where hearts burned with patriotism and hatred of all oppression.

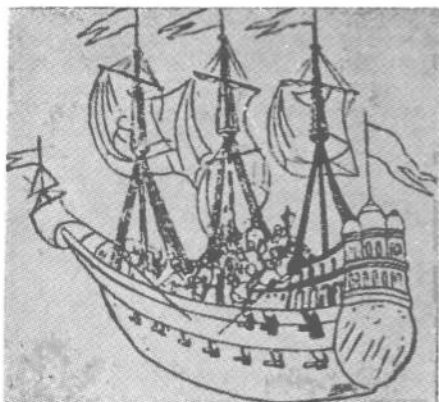
It produced famous military generals and wise statesmen. Out of it also came such legendary

leaders of people's rebellions as Severin Nalivaiko, Taras Tryasilo, Pavlo Pavliuk, Ivan Sulyma, Dmiro Hunya, Petro Zahaydachny, Bohdan Khmelnytsky, Ivan Sirko, Maksym Zalizniak and Semen Paliy.

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THE Cossack campaigns of the first quarter of the XVIII century were particularly broad in scope. During this period, on more than one occasion, they enshrouded the capital of Turkey "with the smoke of musketry fire" and forced the Sultan, before whom the authorities of the countries of Western Europe trembled, to shudder in fear himself.

The greater number of campaigns, particularly in the 20's and 40's of the XVII century, the Zaporizhyans conducted together with the Don Cossacks with whom they had formed close ties in earlier united struggles against foreign invaders. The Zaporizhyan and Don Cossacks became a military barrier against Turkish-Tatar aggressions not only in Ukraine, but for other countries of Europe. The impact of the Cossack attacks which shattered Turkish-Tatar rule in the lands bordering the Black and Azov Seas, was also of great importance to the liberation struggle of the



COSSACK SHIP from an 18th century engraving.

neighbouring people of the Balkan peninsula enslaved by the Turkish Sultan. But the most important result of the Cossack campaigns was the liberation of numerous prisoners of war. Hundreds, and sometimes thousands of slaves — Russian, Ukrainian and Byelorussian — were freed by the Zaporizhyans.

The role of the Cossacks in the entire socio-economic life of the period was so great, their ties with the people so strong, that in the documents of the XVII-XVIII centuries all Ukrainians were called "a nation of Cossacks" or the "Ukrainian Cossack nation."

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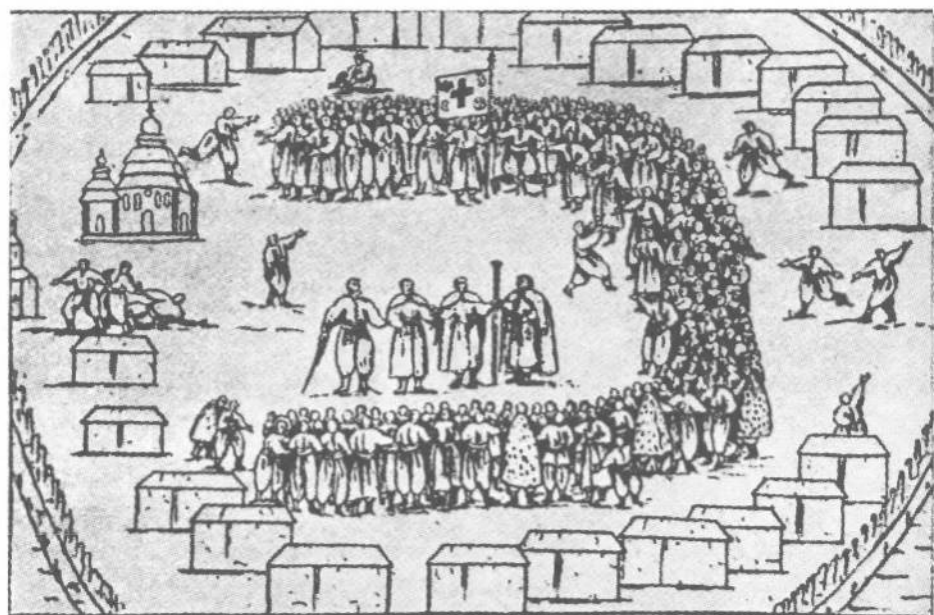
DECADES passed. The Sich remained the haven for lovers of

freedom. From here the waves of rebellion against aristocratic Poland and feudal oppression spread throughout the land. The great war of liberation, 1648-1654 began, and here the Zaporizhyan Sich too, played a leading role.

The historic Pereyaslav Rada reunited Ukraine with Russia. But aristocratic Poland would not give up its Ukrainian lands. The Zaporizhyan Cossacks had to continue spilling whole seas of blood before the Pereyaslav decisions came into effect. Only in 1689 was the Sich officially amalgamated with Russia.

The Tsarist government gave the Sich authority over a large territory to the south of the rivers Tasma and Orel (within the borders of today's Zaporizhsk, Dnipropetrovsk and Kirovohrad regions). The Sich also retained the right of local self-government and granted a share of provisions and military equipment.

After the reunification of Ukraine with Russia the Zaporizhyan Cossacks continued to be in the vanguard of the struggle against the Polish magnates and Turkish-Tatar aggression. In the course of their struggles the Sich produced the talented general Ivan Sirko, who was eight times elected "Koshoviy Otaman". His



THE COSSACKS ELECT AN OTOMAN. From an 18th century engraving.

name is connected through legend with the widely-known letter of the Zaporizhyans to the Turkish Sultan, where the haughty ruler and his threats were ridiculed with deadly sarcasm.

The Zaporizhyan army had gained such fame, had so distinguished itself for its courage and military skill, that high-ranking Russian officers considered it an honour to be accepted into one of its "kurens". Among the more prominent of such Russian "kuren colleagues" we find the name of the illustrious Russian general Kutuzov.

In the XVIII century the Zaporizhyan population grew through the many fugitives who fled from the exploitation of feudal serfdom. The Zaporizhyan poor were an active and militant force in the liberation movement of the Haidamaki. The outstanding leader of the rebel masses, Maksym Zalizniak, also came out of this environment and, in the words of Taras Shevchenko, he had "neither home, nor orchard, nor pond" of his own.

The Cossacks also fought selflessly in the ranks of the rebellious peasantry in Russia. There

were many Cossacks in Puhachov's army. After his defeat in a battle with the Tsarist army, Puhachov intended to go to the Zaporizhyan Sich and as he put it himself, "cross the seas to the Zaporizhyan Cossacks."

There were many revolts among the Cossacks themselves — the Cossack poor against the "starshina" and the wealthy Cossacks who, as time went by, intensified their exploitation and oppression. The biggest revolt in the Sich flared up on December 26, 1768. The Cossacks seized the army artillery, released the imprisoned Haidamaki, laid to ruin the buildings of the officers and wealthy Cossacks. The Koshoviy Otaman Kalnishevsky, disguised as a monk, barely escaped from the rebels who surrounded his residence. Barricading themselves in the Sich, the rebels put up a heroic defence against the Tsar's punitive army. But the forces were uneven and the revolt was quashed.

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AFTER reprisals against Puhachov and the end of the war

with Turkey, the Tsarist government decided to liquidate the Zaporizhyan Sich. It had by this time lost its importance as a southern military outpost. The border lands were incorporated into the interior. The Sich also, with the great number of fugitives that found safety on its territory, constituted a threat to the Tsarist government. It was a living spark of continuous anti-feudal revolt.

The autocracy, conducting its policy of national and colonial oppression, liquidated the Hetman rule on the Left Bank of Ukraine as early as the 60's of the XVII century. It couldn't reconcile itself to the peculiar order or the self-government of Zaporizhya. The Zaporizhyan lands were distributed among the Russian and Ukrainian landowners. A large section of its population was enslaved in serfdom.

But the people, in their ballads, songs and legends, have glorified the memory and made immortal the military deeds of the Knights of the Cossack Republic.



SEVERIN NALIVAIKO

SEVERIN NALIVAIKO

By IVAN LE

LET'S take a peep into the distant past. Let's go back three centuries into antiquity, when the peasants were serfs, when Polish and Lithuanian magnates ruled not over hundreds of Ukrainian villages, but over such towns as Bila Tserkva, when life had become intolerable not only for the peasant, but for the town artisan and when even the Cossack was left without a spot to pasture his horse. . . .

Such was the period of Severin Nalivaiko.

Just exactly when he was born has not been established in archives. What is known is that Nalivaiko was born in the Podilya District of Ukraine and that his father was an artisan-furrier in the town of Husyatin.

The henchmen of the magnate O. Kalinowski, to whom Husyatin belonged, hounded the old furrier to death. Severin, with his mother, then moved to the town of Ostroh to live with brother Demyan, who later became the author of anti-Uniate literature and a participant in the struggle for liberation.

The tortured death of his father fell like a burning ember into the heart of Severin. It remained smouldering even after he joined the Zaporizhyan Cossacks in their campaigns against the Turk and the Tatar, and continued to flame, when returning from the campaigns, he served as a lieutenant in the palace guard on the estate of Prince Ostroszski.

Nalivaiko had already gained a reputation as an excellent gunner and he could have enjoyed the favours of his influential patron. But the Cossack lieutenant, day after day, saw the injustice meted out to the common people by the feudal guards, by the man-agement and the priests. The wounds of his childhood did not heal, but festered as time went on, calling him into struggle against the oppressors. He left the service of Ostroszski and headed a rebel detachment.

Angry, and prepared to fight to the end with the ruthless feudal magnates, the Ukrainian and Russian peasantry flocked to Nalivaiko's band of rebels. But where to get arms? Nalivaiko

gave the order to start a campaign against the Turks and Tatars in Moldavia. There they would be able to capture swords and lances and then return with an appeal to the Zaporizhyans to unite with them against the rule of the magnates.

In October, 1594, the rebel army began to attack in Bratslav. They were joined by the local peasantry and townspeople. Soon their numbers exceeded 12,000 men. They seized Bar, Husyatin, Cherkass, Kaniv and other towns and then went on to Volin. After the capture of Lutsk, Nalivaiko returned to Byelorussia and in the spring of 1595 took Mohyliv, Slutsk, Bobruysk.

The Polish King Sigizmund III, perceiving the danger to Polish rule in Ukraine and in Byelorussia, assigned the Crown Hetman Zholkewski to stifle the revolt. Other Polish and Lithuanian magnates also added their forces.

Under these combined attacks, through heavy fighting, the rebel army moved back to Luben, planning to cross the Russian border and find protection from the Tsar. But by the river Solonitsya their retreat was cut off. In an armed camp surrounded on three sides by wagons tied together and on the fourth side by mud, the rebel army heroically defended itself for two weeks. Finally their strength could hold out no longer — the supply of food was gone, epidemics broke out.

During this time the Zaporizhyan Hetman, Loboda, was carrying on secret talks with Zholkewski, who promised the Cossacks amnesty if they gave up their arms. The enraged rebels killed Loboda, but the Cossack leaders continued their plans of betrayal. On July 7, 1596, the traitors delivered Severin Nalivaiko, Matviy Shaula and other leaders to the enemy. Several thousand of the rebel army were killed, only a few were able to escape to the Zaporizhya.

In this bitter fashion ended the first armed rebellion of the peasants, cossacks and townsmen of Ukraine against feudal oppression.

The beloved people's leader, the courageous Nalivaiko, was taken to Warsaw. For ten months he lived through torture and imprisonment. The handsome warrior and romantic hero of the Ukrainian people was promised freedom and the love of the Polish aristocratic beauty Barbara, if he would only give up his ideas . . . But his mind and heart were true to the peasant love of his life, Melashka, whom he had once saved from the advances of a feudal army officer.

In one of the many legends about Nalivaiko it is said that he was burned to death alive. But in truth, after long months of prison and torture, his enemies beheaded him on April 11, 1597. His name, however, has lived in the memory of his people and is written forever into the pages of Ukrainian history.



TARAS TRYASIŁO

TARAS TRYASILO

By I. RODACHENKO

THE REVOLT of Ukrainian cossacks and peasants, led by Severin Nalivaiko, suffered defeat when faced with the combined forces of the Polish king and nobility. But this did not discourage the Ukrainian people.

In 1628 the Polish government placed Hritsko Chorniy, a dedicated supporter of Poland, in command of all registered Cossacks. The Zaporizhyan Cossacks, opposed to Polish rule, elected as their Hetman, Taras Fedorovich Tryasilo.

On being elected, Tryasilo immediately called on the people to take decisive armed action against the Polish magnates and their supporters. In the spring of 1630 he assembled an army of 10,000 men and marched out of Zaporizhya to meet with the enemy.

Below Korsun, Tryasilo and his army encountered a detachment of Polish troops led by Konetspolski, routed them utterly, then sent a letter to the crown hetman with their demands — demands which had many times been placed before the Polish government. Konetspolski, refused to consider them.

Early in April the main forces of the Polish army came into Kiev.

At this time also, some 28,000 peasant rebels joined Tryasilo's army. He crossed the Dnieper with this force and, awaiting the battle with Konetspolski, entrenched himself near Pereyaslav, between the Alta and Trubezh rivers.

Konetspolski's army presented a formidable force with its German mercenaries and arms. The first skirmishes with Tryasilo's rebel army, however, ended in defeat, and Konetspolski was forced to retire to some distance to watch and wait.

On May 22, after dark, Taras Tryasilo attacked the enemy camp. A tremendous battle followed. That night (later it became known as "Taras's Night") Konetspolski's army sustained heavy losses; some 300 officers of the Polish nobility were killed, among many hundreds of the regular army. This was more than what had been killed during the three years of the Polish-Swedish war which had ended just the preceding year. Tryasilo also

took all of Konetspolski's artillery and supplies.

But it wasn't long before Konetspolski returned with another big army to face the Cossacks. This time he contacted them for negotiations toward peace.

Konetspolski won. He got help in his efforts from that section of the Cossack command who, to safeguard their own wealth and property, sought favours from the Polish king.

Taras Tryasilo assembled those who were loyal to him and returned to the

Zaporizhya. Later, more than once, he led his army against the Tatars and Turks, freeing Ukrainian slave-captives from their oppression. He also negotiated with the Russian government, seeking help from Moscow in his struggles against the Polish nobles.

How the life of this great people's hero continued and ended is not known. Historic documents do not record these facts, but the name of Tryasilo remains among the legendary heroes of the Ukrainian people's struggle for freedom.



BOHDAN KHMELNITSKY

BOHDAN KHMELNITSKY

By NATAN RYBAK

ON that long-ago day the sun hung like a copper disk over Pereyaslav. On the square, surrounding the raised platform, a huge throng of representatives from all parts of Ukraine ebbed and eddied. The Iron Hetman, Bohdan Khmelnitsky, then proclaimed:

"With the Russian people forever united — we'll stand!"

"We'll stand!" echoed thousands of voices the length and breadth of the square, assertively, firmly.

On that day the fate of Ukraine was being forever resolved.

The chroniclers testify that the voice of Hetman Khmelnitsky echoed solemnly, courageously; that under the bushy brows the eyes shone brightly; that the Hetman mace was pointed to the north, and that every word he uttered, carved a trail into the future.

This happened over 300 years ago . . . Since then the entire history of Ukraine has shown how far-reaching was this historic action, which became the high point of the illustrious career of Bohdan Khmelnitsky.

Studying the hetman's features we renew in memory the milestones of his toilsome army life. He was born in Pereyaslav in 1595. In this same city he made the solemn pledge of everlasting unity between two brother nations. Neither peace nor indifference were his companions. One of his characteristics from early youth was his irreconcilability to the invading enemies who plundered his native land and who, with fire and sword, wreaked punishment on the disobedient.

It was not accidental that Bohdan Khmelnitsky headed the struggle for liberation from Polish rule. His strength lay in the fact that he placed the interests of the people above his own personal interests. In this he stood far ahead of the established leadership of wealthy Cossacks who, first of all, were concerned in winning for themselves the privileges of nobility and property. "I'll make everyone a Cossack," Khmelnitsky would often threaten the Cossack "starshyna". This meant that then all would be free and independent. Of course, he could not actually bring this about. It needed

another couple of centuries of struggle for the common people to win their freedom. But the national liberation war of the Ukrainian people, led by Bohdan Khmelnytsky, won some historic victories which opened up new horizons for Ukraine and broke her dependence on Polish magnates and Tatar khans.

Folk ballads, chroniclers and diplomatic letters tell us of those long-ago years and fill our hearts with respectful thanks toward these courageous knights, who in the cause of freedom and truth, marched into torture and threw themselves into countless bloody conflicts. In battles near Zhovti Vody, where Khmelnytsky brought one of the biggest Polish armadas to its knees; near Pilyava, near Zborov — the Cossack Hetman, whom the people of Ukraine first called Hetman of all Ukraine on both sides of the Dnieper, showed not only his personal courage and talent as a military leader, but also his abilities as a statesman and a diplomat.

As early as 1648, long before the Pereyaslav Treaty, Khmelnytsky took steps toward creating contacts with Moscow. Month after month these contacts strengthened, taking on the character of inter-state relations. This relationship ended in the Pereyaslav Treaty with Moscow in March, 1654.

Khmelnytsky's personal life was austere. Traitors tried to poison him

several times during his lifetime. His first wife, Helena, of Polish descent, turned out to be a spy. Some of his trusted military leaders also defected to the enemy. His younger son, Yuras, became a tool in the hands of the Jesuits. The older son, Timish, died in a battle before which his father risked his life in trying to get help from the Crimean Khan.

Only now can we evaluate the greatness and far-sightedness of all of Hetman Khmelnytsky's activities. Of the 60 years of his life, 45 were spent in military service in defence of his homeland.

Bohdan Khmelnytsky died in Chihirin on September 18, 1657. He was buried in Subotov. The hatred of the enemy was so great that they desecrated his grave. For a long time the Ukrainian people would not believe that their hero had actually died, but continued to compose songs and ballads in which Khmelnytsky was alive and well, marching around Ukraine and gathering Cossacks and peasants under his banner.

During the terrible years of World War II the Soviet Ukrainian government established the Bohdan Khmelnytsky medal for bravery. The city where he was born, Pereyaslav, is now called Pereyaslav-Khmelnytsky. The name of this great son of the Ukrainian people remains to this day a symbol of unswerving faith in the mighty force of the people.



MAKSYM KRIVONIS

MAKSYM KRIVONIS

By PETRO PANCH

IT IS quite probable that there isn't another country in the world that has, through the centuries, lived through so many wars and was subject to so much plundering, as our Ukraine. And after each of these wars the country was left devastated, in smoking ruins. The flames of these battles ruined not only the countryside, but burned many historic documents. That is why there is so little available material about Maksym Kryvonis. Even his real name is unknown, for the name Kryvonis (crooked nose -- Ed.) was given him because of that battered feature which, no doubt, had been damaged in some battle. He was also called Vilshansky, and this, one can surmise, came from the fact that he was born in the village of Vilshany.

Whatever is known of him was discovered by historians in a pamphlet which appeared in Poland in 1648 under the title "Knave of Hearts", and which has been preserved to this day. This document, in page after page, makes biographical mention of Kryvo-

nis who, it seems, served as a blacksmith for the landowner Nemirich. Full of anger against the lord he served, Kryvonis runs away to the Zaporizhyan Sich.

The Sich became a military academy for the rebel. In time he received the rank of Cherkas colonel and this is evidence of exceptional military and civil service. The courageous warrior led more than one expedition against the Turks, Polish lords, and even against the Spanish army when he, with a company of Cossacks, helped the French to liberate Dunkirk. The Tatars, in their constant forays on Ukraine, turned tail when they heard that Maksym Kryvonis was leading the attack against them. Polish artists painted his portrait. And the death of this famous colonel was even announced in the French press.

His greatest service, however, was the organization of a people's rebellion against the Polish nobility in 1648. The rebels were united and led by Bohdan Khmelnytsky, but no less decisive, to my mind, were the slogans put forward by Kryvonis:

"Don't listen to the nobles, don't listen to the authorities like slaves anymore, come and join me. Our fathers knew no master's laws on these meadows, flowing with our blood...

"Enough of this fleeing by the nobility, enough of these heavy taxes, the heavy labour of serfdom, and the tributes of slavery!

"There is no way to rid ourselves of all these injustices and cruel treatment, except by breaking the nobility with our strength and destroying them completely! Arise, all you toilers, and we'll gain liberty for ourselves now, or never!..

"I swear, that I will spare neither my strength, nor my life .."

These words inflamed the oppressed people to battle, for they appealed to their very hearts.

The Polish army, at that time, was one of the largest in Europe, and outnumbered the Zaporizhyans several times. About the Cossacks, the Polish Crown Hetman Potocky had said contemptuously: "They are not worth the trouble of lifting the swords of our knights against them. We'll send one

or two companies and they'll make short work of them with cat-o-nine-tails". But exactly the opposite happened. Only Prince Vishnevetski was able to flee from the field of battle at the river Pilyava.

The Polish nobility were indeed frightened by the rebel army of Maksym Kryvonis, the numbers of which they couldn't substantiate, because it involved the entire Ukrainian people. Added to this was the brilliant talent of the peasant leader, which brought the people victory in spite of the larger forces of the enemy.

That is what happened at the battle of Korsun, when the Polish troops were driven back; that is how it was in the Pilyava battle. Just a rumour that Maksym Kryvonis with his rebel forces was approaching forced the panic-stricken enemy to retreat all the way to Lviv without once looking back. Even in Lviv, which was turned into a fortress, the garrison stationed on Zamcha Hora suffered defeat.

Today, the street that leads to this hill in Lviv carries the name of Maksym Kryvonis. A thankful people revere the memory of their hero.



IVAN BOHUN

IVAN BOHUN

By MYKOLA ZARUDNY

IT WAS an exceptionally cold winter in 1651. The winds roared noisily over Vinnitsya, covering the narrow streets and hilly shoreline of the Buh river with snow, beating in frenzy against the tall stone walls of the fortress.

In the monastery cell it was as quiet as a grave. There was a smell of incense. Behind an unsteady table, leaning his head in his hands, sat Vinnitsya's Colonel Ivan Bohun, in deep thought. The twice-heated supper brought in by his batman lay before him untouched.

The scouts had brought in a report that the villages and forests along the Buh were being occupied by the armies of the Crown Hetman Martin Kalinowski. The Colonel knew that Kalinowski would never forgive him his defeat in Krasny and in the battles beyond Vinnitsya. Perhaps tomorrow, or even earlier, today before daybreak, the Polish Hetman would order an attack.

Some days had passed since Bohun sent messengers to Chihirin, Pryluka, to Bratslav and Liubech where the

Cossack companies were encamped, asking for help. But there had been no reply in return to his plea. And Kalinowski had twice as many men and artillery. What to do, what to tell his officers and the Cossacks who awaited his, Bohun's orders? If only Nechai were here... But he wasn't.

Bohun remembered the fierce battle at Krasny. The depleted detachments of Danilo Nechai had been forced to leave the fortress. They had barely established new lines of battle in the street when fresh ranks of enemy cavalry poured into the attack. The Cossacks fought back with brave despair while Kalinowski brought more and more fresh troops into the battle. Danilo was forced to order a retreat. At this time the noble Baybuza also joined the battle against the Cossacks. Nechai, riding high in his stirrups, flashed his sabre through the thick of the enemy... The horse wheezed and reared, its mane clotted with blood.

The wounded Nechai was fast losing his strength. His comrades couldn't fight their way through to him. Again

and again his sabre flashed over the heads of the enemy until finally, it dropped from his hands... Nechai had fallen...

Perhaps for the first time, Bohun dropped a bitter and rare Cossack tear.

Kalinowski did not triumph for long. Ivan took over from Danilo to lead the Cossacks against him. They took ruthless revenge for the death of their renowned warrior Nechai, returning to Vinnitsya on the heels of their enemy. And now...

Think, Bohun, think!

The colonel came out of the cell. The batman brought his horse forward, but Bohun, walking past the towers, stepped out beyond the gates. Below him, shrouded in the snowstorm, lay the ice-bound Buh. The river crackled in its icy chains as if it wanted to break out from its frozen prison, to free its broad waters to cut off the enemy.

The decision came suddenly. Bohun quickly returned to the fortress and ordered a meeting of the small council.

... That night the Buh came alive. Hundreds of Cossacks armed with picks, axes and chisels attacked the ice, and when the water again formed into a thin sheet of ice, they covered it with straw, which the falling snow soon concealed with a thin carpet.

When all was ready, the advance troops were given an order to go into battle with the army of Kalinowski. He, evidently, expected this, for he immediately threw his cavalry into attack on the fortress. The artillery roared, the Cossacks retreated. The crown troops moved forward. . . .

A black wave rolled over the Buh.

Bohun's men waited. Suddenly the air was rent with frenzied cries: the first line of Kalinowski's troops were sinking into the river. The Cossacks opened up a rapid fire, the river flowed red from the blood of wounded and dying. The finest companies of the Crown Hetman came to an inglorious end in the cold waters of the Buh.

The battle ended in victory, but Ivan Bohun, a man of great military talent, unexpectedly left the city and the fort. He foresaw that Kalinowski would bring in everything available so that, at any price, he would vindicate his defeat in the eyes of the Polish Diet and the Polish King.

And that is what happened. New enemy troops were sent to Vinnitsya.

In the meantime the Cossacks from Chihirin, Bratslav and other companies of Bohdan Khmel'nitsky's army rushed in to help. The Polish Hetman finally realized Bohun's strategy and gave the order for his troops to retreat. After several days of bitter struggle, Kalinowski, convinced of his defeat, fled with some of his officers, leaving the field of battle strewn with thousands dead and all his artillery.

Later, meeting Bohun, Bohdan Khmel'nitsky said:

"Your glorious exploits, renowned colonel, will never be forgotten...

These words were indeed prophetic.

Over 300 years have passed since the death of Ivan Bohun — a true son of Ukraine, a fighter for its happiness and freedom. Three hundred years! Years which have not erased his name and fame. He lives in ballad, folk song and legend, ever alive to the Ukrainian people to whom he dedicated his talents, his heart and his life.



IVAN SIRKO

IVAN SIRKO

By ANATOLY SHIYAN

THE YEAR and date of birth are unknown — what is known is that the future officer of the Zaporizhyan army, Ivan Dmitrovich Sirko, was born in the Cossack village of Merefi, near Kharkiv.

This was a man of unusual courage, audacity and boldness. He was also a great military strategist. With only a handful of Cossacks he often attacked an army of hundreds and came out of the struggle victorious. His adversaries feared him "more than fire, more than a hurricane, more than the sea".

With his comrades, the bold Otaman marched across Crimea attacking the Tatar villages. He even stopped occasionally in the Khan stronghold, Bakhchisarai, and disturbed the peace of the Turkish Sultan himself.

Using the Cossack boats, the "Chaika's" — overcoming the winds and the storms of the Black Sea, the intrepid Zaporizhyans reached Turkish shores to free hundreds and thousands of Ukrainian and Russian slaves taken prisoner in Turkish raids on Ukraine.

During his lifetime Sirko took part in some 55 battles and lost only a few of them.

Like all the Zaporizhyans, Sirko admired courage. He was just and fair in his relationship with his comrades and, on occasion, deeply enjoyed his drink, too. He hated his enemies with all his heart and plagued them not only with the force of his arms, but with the sharpness of his tongue, for which he also had a talent.

This sharpness, spiced with good Ukrainian pepper, showed itself with particular expressiveness in the letter to the Turkish Sultan Mahomet IV, who had commanded the Zaporizhyan Cossacks to surrender voluntarily, "without resistance".

Here is how the Zaporizhyans answered the Sultan:

"You — devilish Turk, accursed son and brother of the devil as well as Lucifer's secretary! What kind of a knight are you? . . . What the devil casts away, your army devours. You will never reign over our Christian

sons. We are not afraid of your army, and will fight you on earth and on the sea. You are a Babylonian cook, a Macedonian wheelright, a Jerusalem brewer, an Alexandrian goat-skinner, an Upper and Lower Egyptian swine-breeder, a Tatar bowman, a Kamenets hangman, a Podolian thief, a nephew of the viper himself, a buffoon of the entire world and underworld, and a fool before our God.

What the devil kind of a warrior are you when you can't even kill a hedgehog with your bare behind!

Face of a pig... Dog of a butcher, unbaptized brow. Let the devil himself take you!

This is how the Cossacks are answering you, despicable creature...

We don't know the date for we have no calendar. A month in the sky, a year in the book, and a day for you is as long for us, so kiss us for this you know where!...

Otaman Sirko with all his Zaporizhyan army."

Sirko is the subject of many legends and songs. Like a radiant star he shines in the history of our people, a bright and undying memory.

Ivan Sirko died in 1680 in his own home in Hrushivka. He was buried near those places where once upon a time the Chortomlitska Sich was stationed, on the territory of the present Kapulivka village, in the Dnipropetrovsk region of Ukraine.



SEMEN PALIY

SEMEN PALIY

By YURIY MUSHKETYK

WHENEVER a Cossack was guilty of some misdemeanor before his comrades in the march, Semen Paliy dismounted him and made him carry his sword. This was not, as it may seem, a light punishment, for the sword was of no mean size — it weighed some 70 pounds.

This is how an ancient Cossack legend boasts of Paliy's strength. Another legend tells us that this famous knight was not afraid to challenge the devil himself to a duel.

Legends, of course, are very often exaggerated truth. But Paliy actually was a man of unusual strength — faithful to his comrades, immeasurably devoted to his native land and to its people — strong also in the trust, love and respect that he won and commanded among his men and comrades.

Semen Pilipovich Paliy was born in the 40's of the XVII century in the little town of Borzni, Nizhinsky District. Before he became a leader of rebel forces he finished two schools: the Kiev-Bratsk College and the school of the Zaporizhyan Sich. After this,

throughout his whole life, he was rarely without a book. An avid reader, he knew several languages and prominent diplomats of the period spoke of him as a highly cultured man.

Paliy was noted too, for his beautiful handwriting. Notable also was his dexterity with a sword in the Zaporizhyan Sich, where his fame grew so swiftly that only his youth prevented him from becoming an officer of high rank. During these early years and later, he took part and led many expeditions against the Tatar fortifications of Kizekermen, Ochakiv and Budzhak.

Through the waterless, arid steppe, leading their horses, marched the cossacks. Facing high winds swirling clouds of black dust, they wrapped their horses' noses in wet burlap, covered their own faces with their caps or handkerchiefs, turned their backs against the fury of the wind. Finally — the wind died down. The sentry manning the high walls of the Kizekermen fortress stood on guard dreaming peacefully to the tinkling water of the fountain in the orchard. Suddenly... the Zaporizhyans appear out of

a near-by ravine. Armed with long hooks and ladders, they scaled the fortress walls, stepping right out of their saddles. The sentry barely had time to fire one salvo in defence.

Kizekermen floats up into the sky in smoke. But the Cossacks too, find themselves in serious difficulty. The Tatars had mustered their forces to defence and the Cossacks are surrounded on all sides with the river at their backs. It seemed as if this was going to be their last night... their last bonfire. Paliy sat with furrowed brow, deep in thought... In the morning the Tatars storm the Cossack camp. Leading the horde, in search of glory, was the young murza (Tatar prince). He gallops up to the embankment and then pulls up, disconcerted. His eyes open in astonishment — then fill with hatred. On two spears driven into the ground hung a tambourine with a charcoal drawing of a large fig. The Cossacks, during the night, had made rafts of reeds and escaped across the river.

These were difficult times for Ukraine. Difficult for the Right Bank of the Dnieper — and especially difficult for the Kiev district. This area had, in those days, earned itself the name of "The Ruin". For many years it was the arena of struggle between Russia and Poland, and to top it all off it was completely destroyed by the Tatars. The lands of this area were not ploughed, people did not settle there. But Paliy, finally, gathered a group of several hundred Cossacks together and brought them into the area for settlement. Fastiv was chosen as the centre and a fortress built there. The Polish nobility, in the beginning, offered no opposition to this settlement; they even

encouraged it, expecting that the Cossacks would become a shield for them — a line of defence against the Turks and Tatars. Other Cossack regiments, faithful to Paliy in his struggle with the Polish nobility, followed Paliy.

Feudal oppression also drove countless other unfortunates to the Fastiv colonel, not only from Podilya, but from Volyn, Moldavia and from Halychina. The tiny state was ruled by an elected body, feudal service did not exist. Taxes were paid in grain and only for the upkeep of the army. Strictly speaking, nearly all the taxpayers, of the grown men, were part of Paliy's army. During a period of over 20 years Paliy and his army had to cross swords with many would-be pretenders to leadership. The Polish aristocracy had also begun to fear him. In the autumn of 1689 the Poles, using intrigue, arrested Paliy and imprisoned him in the Nemirov fortress.

In the spring of the following year a large merchant train passed through Nemirov. During the night, when the city had fallen asleep, bags and boxes burst open to release the Cossacks hidden within. After a short struggle the surprised sentries were overcome, the door to the prison cell opened, and the imprisoned leader once again sat on his horse. The Cossacks then returned to Fastiv, carrying with them all the fortress arms.

All his life Paliy dreamt of uniting the scattered Ukrainian lands. He sent one letter after another to Moscow. Messenger followed messenger in hopes that with Moscow's help the Ukrainian lands could be saved from Polish encroachment, the Cossack freedoms preserved.

In the beginning of the XVIII century the Polish parliament decreed the liquidation of the Cossack community of Right Bank Ukraine and the final enslavement of the peasants into serfdom. In answer to this decree Paliy, with his devoted followers Abazin, Samus and Iskra organized a rebellion. Day after day, month after month, were drowned in the blood of battle. Aristocratic Poland, losing all hope of victory, proclaimed a general mobilization. In the meantime the enemy had taken Bar, Vinnitsya and Bratslav, but were soon compelled to leave these cities. The wind of rebellion blew stronger and stronger across the land, fanning the flames in Podilya, Volyn, Kiev. The rebels took Berdychiv, Ladizhin, Bila Tserkva.

It seemed as if victory was in sight. Then it was that Hetman Mazepa and his officers, not wishing to lose their rights and privileges, went to the aid

of the Polish nobility. The left Bank Hetman had long been dissatisfied and uneasy about Paliy's popularity and support. He was even afraid that the Cossacks might elect the popular leader in his, Mazepa's place. Lured into a trap — on the pretense of a council meeting — the Hetman arrested Paliy and Tsar Peter sent the Fastiv colonel into exile to Siberia.

He was released from exile in 1709, a year before his death — after Mazepa's treachery had become known. Held up by two of his comrades, Paliy sat on his horse and watched the battle of Poltava from a hilltop. Broken physically and weary at heart, he wanted nothing more than to return to his beloved Fastiv. Here his comrades awaited him in a land again seething with the flames of rebellion, groaning under the weight of oppression — the land for which he had so long desired peace, happiness and progress.



OLEKSA DOVBUSH

OLEKSA DOVBUSH

By **VOLODIMIR HZHITSKY**

SEVEN cities of ancient Greece argued between themselves as to which among them was the birthplace of Homer. And no fewer villages in the Hutsul district aspire to being the cradle of the legendary hero of the Carpathians, fighter for people's freedom, Oleksa Dovbush. The most likely probability, however, is the village of Pechenizhin, where, sometime around 1710, the baby Oleksa was born into a family of poor peasants.

Dovbush began his servitude at an early age. He became a herdsboy on the estate of his master as a child, and in time, a herdsman. From childhood he also knew extreme poverty, saw the inequality that existed: the landed gentry, who lived in luxury and the serfs who worked for them, barely keeping body and soul together. He often felt the heavy hand of his master and the whips of the hirelings who served him. Of unusual intelligence, the boy early began to think about the injustice all around him, about how it could be done away with.

Long before Dovbush was born, the Carpathian hills hid the rebel bands

of the area, the Oprishki, who fought for the liberation of the people from the feudal oppression of Polish and Ukrainian aristocracy, against the local rich, the money-lenders, the tavern keepers and other leeches who filled their pockets at the expense of the peasants. While tending the master's sheep as a youngster, Oleksa heard many stories of the famed Oprishki and their leaders — like Chepets and Savka, who took part in the rebellion of Polish peasants in 1651 — about Vinnik and Nestor. He then made up his mind that when he grew up he would join these rebel bands. This dream finally came true. After his father, Vasil Dovbush, was cruelly beaten up by the landlord's overseer, Oleksa left home and went into the mountains, into Verkhovina.

His strength, courage and good sense, soon drew the attention of his rebel comrades and he was chosen leader of one of the detachments.

Under the slogan "The Oprishok is for Equality in the World", Dovbush and his men stole from the rich and divided the money among the poor. The

fame of his goodness spread far and wide. Aggrieved peasants turned to him, as to a judge, for the law of the state was never on their side. Dovbush listened to their grievances and then went out to punish the oppressors.

The maneuverability of Dovbush's rebel group created panic among the nobility and his enemies. They could make no headway against him with either the local feudal hirelings nor with the king's army. Prince Potocki sent 2,000 soldiers into the mountains to capture him, but he remained elusive and uncaptured. He had loyal, devoted friends and scouts in every village in the area.

For eight years the indomitable Dovbush continued his battle with the powerful aristocracy. Like the vast majority of the peasantry he was illiterate, but this did not prevent the

Carpathian rebel from dreaming of a general peasant rebellion and a peasant state.

Dovbush died in Kosmach in 1745, the victim of a traitor's bullet. He was shot by Stepan Dzvinchuk, a wealthy peasant, who allowed himself to be bought over by the feudal lord Yablonsky.

Perhaps more than any other Ukrainian fighter for liberty, Dovbush and his deeds have been woven into the songs, legends and proverbs of the Ukrainian people, his name commemorated in town and village. His struggles against the nobility have formed the basis for many novels, poetry and musical compositions. Famous artists have painted his portrait, sculptors immortalized his image in wood and stone. Thus his name and deeds remain ever alive in the hearts of his people.



IVAN HONTA

IVAN HONTA

By **MYKOLA SIROTIUK**

IN the person of Ivan Honta we have a very interesting and characteristic of Ukrainian history phenomenon — the change of allegiance of some of the finest representatives of Cossack officers to the cause of the rebellious people. Severin Nalivaiko, who was in the service of Prince Ostroszski, did this toward the end of the XVI century; Bohdan Khmelnitsky, a Cossack lieutenant in Chihirin, turned to the people a half-century later, and then 120 years after that — Honta, a lieutenant in the personal guard of Prince Potocki in Uman.

The action of Honta in this succession is, however, of particular interest. While the break of Nalivaiko and Khmelnitsky with their earlier generally privileged status was dictated in some measure by personal injustices, among other reasons, Honta had no such experiences. To the contrary, he was most fortunate. Intelligent, handsome and of a spirited nature, this son of the people quickly rose up the ladder of military service. He was generously favoured by his wealthy master, receiving in payment for his devotion

two villages as his own personal property: his own village Rozsishky and the neighbouring Oradivka. Potocki also had in mind to give him a title and later the military command over an area in the Uman district.

Such generosity, it is clear, arose not out of the kindness of the prince, but because he recognized the exceptional talents and popularity of his dark-mustached lieutenant. These were very evident, for although the command of the Uman regiment was in the hands of Colonel Obukh, Honta was its spirit. Honta had the undivided support of the Cossacks — he was respected for his courage and his sense of justice. The prince fully realized that to keep Honta was to keep the entire Uman regiment in obedience to his service — a reliable source of strength against peasant revolts.

All this must be taken into consideration, for without it one cannot grasp the deeply patriotic meaning of Honta's deed. He was sensitive and responsive to the grievous misfortunes and acute suffering of his people and passionately dreamed of a better fu-

ture for his native land. It was probably this dream, nurtured through many years, that gave him the strength to withstand the temptations and promises of Prince Potocki; to fire his Cossack regiment to rebellion and lead them to Maksym Zalizniak; to die a heroic, martyr's death.

When the powerful flood of rebellion spread over the territory of the Dnieper's Right Bank, the lieutenant, with one decisive gesture, broke the golden threads that bound him to the prince. Not only did he become a rebel himself, but he brought his only son, whose name, unfortunately, is not known, into the rebel ranks. Elevated to the rank of colonel at the Cossack Council, Honta took great pains to give the rebel army a precise military training and to establish a new social order in the liberated areas. On his orders Uman was divided into regimental areas that had, as their main task, the provision of arms and food to the insurgents.

It is known that the Polish king's detachment of Colonel Huryev traitorously disarmed and liquidated the rebel camp situated below Uman. This same Huryev, before his delivery of Honta to the Polish authorities, applied a little personal torture while he was in chains. At the orders of this sadist-colonel Honta's wife and four daughters were birch-whipped in his presence before they were sent into exile.

Honta was tried by a military field-tribunal in the village of Serba (now Hontivka). The sentence was monstrous in its blood-thirsty vengeance. The convicted man was to be punished for 14 consecutive days. During the first ten days the executioner was to

peel strips of skin off his body, on the 11th day he was to have his feet cut off, on the 12th — his hands, on the 13th his heart was to be torn out, and on the 14th he was to be beheaded. This savage sentence frightened even the king's huntsman, Branitski, who was supposed to oversee the execution of the sentence. On the third day he ordered that Honta be beheaded and that the rest of the punishment be inflicted on his dead body.

Honta revealed exceptional courage during those torturous three days. It is said that on the evening of the third day he was guarded by one of the men of the aristocratic standard-bearing panzer division. Expecting that the prisoner had some valuables, the nobleman asked:

"Sir! Tomorrow will see your last day on earth. Would you be good enough to give a soldier who spends your last hours with you something to remember you by."

"Most willingly", answered the doomed man. "Remind me tomorrow. I'll give you a belt."

All night the soldier delighted in the thought that he would get a gold belt studded with precious stones. As soon as it grew light and Honta was led out of his cell, he grew agitated.

"Sir," he begged. "Allow me to remind you of the promised belt."

"I haven't forgotten," answered Honta, smiling contemptuously, "in a minute they will be taking belts out of my skin. You may have the first one for good remembrance..."

The person of this great Ukrainian patriot has become entwined in legends

and stories, repeated to this day. In these the original facts of history are intermingled with fantasy.

Honta's son has also become part of folk fantasy. He was fortunate in that he escaped from the clutches of the enemy and fled into Voloschina. During the Turbayev rebellion (1789-1793) and after the Decembrist revolt there were rumours to the effect that the young Honta had returned from Voloschina and was calling on the serfs to join him in wreaking vengeance on the nobility.

The Haidamaki, their leaders Honta and Zalizniak, have become popular heroes of both earlier and present-day Ukrainian literature. Their deeds and daring are enshrined in historic novels, poetry, songs and plays. Among these is Shevchenko's epic poem "Haidamaki", M. Panchenko's play "Koliyivschina", and I. Kocherba's "The Diamond Grindstone". Ivan Honta and Maksym Zalizniak are also included among the historic personages in my book "The Falcon Fraternizes."



USTYM KARMALIUK

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By **VASIL KUCHIR**

UNIQUELY picturesque, the district of Podilya was the beauty of Ukraine, but the days were dark and evil in the first half of the 19th century. The great Ukrainian Kobzar Shevchenko wrote about them: "The village seemed as if by fire razed, the people seemed as if deranged, dumbly they slave in servitude, taking their children with them too!..." The landowners, possessors, overseers, innkeepers and gendarmes smothered the peasant day and night, prevented him from drawing a free breath. The feudal lord sold his serfs like cattle, gambled them away at cards — separating father and son, husband and wife, a girl from her loved one. Falsehood and slavery all around them, the people, exhausted, were silent. . . .

Silent? No, not silent! Over village and farm, market-place and inn, ever louder were heard the words of a song whose message flew threateningly over the whole land: "The sun is rising over Siberia, so boys, don't idle, but place your trust and hope in me, Karmaliuk!"

Out of the depths of the peasant

masses grew a formidable avenger of the people's wrongs, Ustym Karmaliuk. Born in 1787, he was the son of a peasant serf from the village of Holovchintsi, Litynsky district. While still a youth the landowner Pihlovsky sent him into the army for 25 years for disobedience. Within a year Karmaliuk fled the army and organized his first rebel company. They burned the landlord estates, but Karmaliuk was soon captured. The Kamyanets-Podilya military tribunal sentenced him to 500 lashes and then back into the army. The sentence was carried out, but Karmaliuk escaped again. This time the rebel band attacked not only the landowners in the Litynsky area, but in the neighbouring Olhopil and Letychiv districts.

Court documents of the period and reports of secret agents testify that Karmaliuk was completely illiterate, that he signed himself with an X or fingerprint by wetting his finger, then dipping it into soot. But he spoke fluent Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, Byelorussian and Jewish. He explained his actions in this way: "God created Adam

— a free and hardworking man. But the Tsar divided him into two Adams — Adam the slave and Adam the master. The Tsar went against God. So that when we destroy Adam the master, God will give us great thanks!"

So Karmaliuk fought against the nobility and against the Tsar. It was not surprising then that he always found shelter and sympathy in every peasant cottage, among the servants of the great estates, among the prisoners of far-off Siberia, in the villages of Russia and even in Moscow, where he always went into hiding when returning to his native Ukraine.

During the years 1817-35 the courts of the Tsar passed sentence on him four times, sending him to Siberia each time with the added punishment of lashes. But he escaped again and again, returning to the struggle.

Peasant revolts led by Karmaliuk reached exceptional strength and became more widespread during the years 1830-35. The revolts took place not only in the Podilya district, but spread into Bessarabia and the Kiev districts as well. The army of revolt at this stage numbered some 20,000 peasant serfs, the destitute from small towns and army escapees of many nationalities.

The threat to tsarism was indeed great and the government created the so-called Haluzynetska Commission with extraordinary powers (it was quartered in the village of Haluzyntsi, Letychiv District) to deal with the problem. Its members included high ranking officials of the secret service

from St. Petersburg. The police and spy ring surrounding Karmaliuk grew ever narrower. But they were not able to take him alive. He was killed from ambush in the village of Shlyakhovi Korychintsi by the noble, Rudkivsky, and buried like a thief in the field, his grave levelled with the earth so that none would recognize it.

The medical report notifying the authorities about the death of their much-hated rebel Karmaliuk informed them that only a few gold pieces, two small sacks of nails, because he repaired his own boots, and a bag of bullets and powder were found on his person. This was the entire wealth of a man who immediately gave to the poor what he took from the wealthy. A special government act decreed that the entire family name be changed from Karmaliuk to Karmany, meaning thieves and ruffians. And it was only a few years ago, when the village of Holovchyntsi was renamed Karmaliukove, that the great grandchildren of this legendary hero were issued new passports bearing their correct family name.

The magnificent image of this people's rebel has found its worthy reflection in folk song, legend and story. Taras Shevchenko called him a "glorious knight". Maxim Gorky said that the name of this peasant leader "will remain great through eternity". Among those who have used Karmaliuk as a subject in their creative work are Ukrainian writers M. Staritsky, Marko Vovchuk and the author of these lines as well as the artist O. Sirotenko, film director H. Tasin, and the well-known historian, Ivan Hurzhy.



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