

What ~~was~~ is the destiny of a Cossack child, a boy, born on the threshold of a great war? Yakov was just an infant in 1812, when his father Maxim Guzikov volunteered to enlist as soon as ~~military recruitment~~ ~~the draft~~ for the war against Napoleon was announced. The competition to be ~~accepted~~ ~~drafted~~ was fierce; many applications were turned down. It was unusual for the Ural Cossacks to volunteer in such large numbers ~~for a new recruitment~~. After all, military service was just one ~~of the~~ Cossack's ~~duty~~ ~~ies~~. The first duty was ~~your duty~~ to God. The second duty was to ~~the~~ ~~your~~ Tsar. The third duty was to ~~your~~ family. And then all other duties followed: to the Army, to the country... Army ~~s~~Service was just a business —; a way to make money, if you had no other business talents. For some Cossacks it might be a passion, but they were not highly regarded. ~~there~~... A love for armed combat was considered sinful, a road to Hell... Quite a few combat veterans found their way to the local monastic retreats: in their life of self-~~denial~~ ~~abnegation~~, in the most austere environment, they begged the Lord Almighty for forgiveness: forgiveness for all their 'heroic achievements' in their numerous armed ~~forays~~ ~~expeditions~~, for all the medals they received for 'bravery', for all the lives they cut short... If you didn't create life — where was your right to take it? Most Cossacks didn't rush to join the ~~A~~Army. When their time came, they joined in an orderly manner, served their time with dignity and diligence and afterwards ~~went~~ ~~got~~ back to their families and domestic life, a life of prayers and ~~a~~ hard seasonal labour.

Commented [O1]: The problem here is that a draft is compulsory military service.

Commented [O2]: (not a specific Cossack)

Commented [O3]: I'm not sure where 'there' is. In the Army? Or in Budarino?

Commented [O4]: Fine as it is, but I had to look it up as I wasn't sure of the meaning.

Commented [O5]: Suggest these inverted commas as there is a disconnect between shame and forgiveness, and 'heroic achievements'/'bravery'.

Commented [O6]: Means 'short raids or incursions'.

Commented [O7]: Expeditions are journeys or excursions. 'Missions' or even 'invasions' (if that is what they were) might convey a stronger sense of military purpose.

A war against Napoleon was a different matter. The Tsar pleaded for help, and his plea could not be ignored. And above all, ~~through~~ ~~the~~ ~~hordes~~ of Catholics, the Antichrists in disguise, had poured into the country, threatening all true believers. Fighting the French was a holy duty ~~for~~ every ~~Orthodox~~ Christian. All Cossacks stood as one when the recruitment began, all Cossacks were volunteers: every ~~man~~ ~~body~~ paid from his own pocket for the right to participate in the ~~Patriotic~~ ~~Holy~~ War. Maxim Guzikov was one of the chosen: a good Christian, well read in the Holy ~~B~~books and strong in ~~F~~faith, who would not fall for Western trinkets and temptations; a good proprietor with a strong household and good working ethics; an experienced warrior ~~who had undertaken~~ ~~with~~ a lengthy ~~assignment~~ ~~expedition~~ in the past; and still young and strong. He was a father of three sons, which meant a great deal: even if he died on a battlefield, he had already ~~produced~~ ~~made~~ three future Cossacks for the Army... They tried not to send very young and childless Cossacks into bloody battles.

Commented [O8]: Am concerned that 'hordes' has two different meanings within a fairly short space of text. 1) a race or tribal group of nomads; 2) a large group of people.

Commented [O9]: Suggest adding this because Catholics are Christians too.

Commented [O10]: Was it called the 'Holy War?'. One source I consulted suggested 'Patriotic War' was the name.

