

HISTORICAL HYMNS

Historical hymns are those which refer to a specific historical event in the lives of Doukhobors—a trek, an act of persecution, the killing of a Doukhobor martyr. Many historical hymns are of fairly recent composition but describe events that took place during the last years of the nineteenth century in Russia, when persecution of the Doukhobors was pursued with renewed force by Tsar Nicholas II.

Let Us Recall, Brethren, Our Struggle

(Record 2, Side 1)

PEA 261-1599

Sung by the Nick Makortoff choir of mixed elders
Grand Forks, B.C., July 1963

The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes a vocal line with lyrics and piano accompaniment. The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are in Russian and describe a struggle.

[solo] [tutti]

Вспо - - - мним, бра - - - тья, мы всю
стра - - - жду, За что бро-си - ли до -

ма: Нас и - - - - зг - на - ли ве-дь за прав - - - -

The first system of the musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef. The second staff is a vocal line in treble clef with the lyrics "ма: Нас и - - - - зг - на - ли ве-дь за прав - - - -". The third staff is a piano accompaniment line in bass clef. The fourth staff is a piano accompaniment line in bass clef. The music is in a major key and 4/4 time.

ду, Мы стра - да-ль-цы за Хрис-та. Нас

The second system of the musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef. The second staff is a vocal line in treble clef with the lyrics "ду, Мы стра - да-ль-цы за Хрис-та. Нас". The third staff is a piano accompaniment line in bass clef. The fourth staff is a piano accompaniment line in bass clef. The music is in a major key and 4/4 time.

И - - - - зг - - на - ли ве-дь за прав - - - -

ду, Мы стра-да-ль-цы за Хрис-та.

Вспомним, братья, мы всю стражду,
За что бросили дома;
Нас изгнали ведь за правду,
Мы страдальцы за Христа. } (2)

Мы познали путь Господний
И всемирную любовь,
И за правду, за свободу } (2)
Проливали свою кровь.

Наш Христос Душеспаситель,
Он путь жизни нам открыл,
И Своею крестной смертью } (2)
Закон Божий утвердил.

И любовью вдохновляя,
Он велел врагов любить.
Мы оружие побросали, } (2)
Чтоб убийцами не быть.

Взявший меч погибнет всякий,
Миру Он всему сказал.
Кто же слов Его не слушал, } (2)
Меч убийства в руки взял.

Мы же словом дорожили,
Чтоб убийства нам избежать:
Ружья мы в костер сложили, } (2)
Ночью в поле стали жечь.

Пламя оружие пожирало
И клубился дым столбом.
Ружья там, в огне стреляли, } (2)
Издавая звук кругом.

Братья, сестры собирались,
Пели Господу мольбу.
Вдруг казаки показались — } (2)
Приготовились к бою.

Сотня целая казаков
Быстро скачет к нам сюда;
Сотник Прага, как разбойник, } (2)
Закричал войскам: "Ура!"

Словно буря урагана
Налетела на людей,
Потоптать хотел нас Прага } (2)
Копытами лошадей.

Сыпались на нас удары,
Только слышно свист плетей.
Кровью все мы обливались, } (2)
Становились все тесней...

Нас избитыми погнали
Губернатора встречать.
Мы же шапок не снимали } (2)
И не стали величать.

Все оружие сгорело,
Только в память осталось:
Ружья, шашки, все что было — } (2)
В одну грудку все слилось.

И в войсках служить не стали
Кто тогда солдатом был,
Всех их в тюрьмах истязали } (2)
И сослали всех в Сибирь.

А по селам в наказанье
Власти ставили надзор:
И что делали казаки — } (2)
Не расскажешь весь позор...

Мы во кротости, в смиреньи
Положили злу конец,
И живем теперь в моленьи, } (2)
Христос наш Царь, Бог — Отец.

— Петр Е. Дьячков

Translation:

Let us recall, brethren, our struggle,
Why we had to leave our homes;
'Twas for truth they drove us out; } (2)
Pains, for faith in Christ, we bore.

We recognized our Saviour's pathway
And perceived His universal love;
For the cause of truth and freedom } (2)
We have had to shed our blood,

Christ, the Saviour of our souls,
Showed the path of life to us;
With His death upon the Cross } (2)
The law of God He sanctified.

With His love, forever inspiring,
He told us, foes, to love;
So, our weapons we discarded, } (2)
Human life we'd take no more.

He who lives by the sword shall perish,
To the whole world Christ proclaimed.
Only those who heeded Him not } (2)
Took in hand this blade of murder.

The words of Christ we valued highly,
Murderous deeds we wished to avoid;
We built a bonfire of our weapons } (2)
Which burned in the field late at night.

The flames kept devouring the weapons,
Columns of smoke rose up toward the sky;
Some guns discharged in the fire, } (2)
Making their loud echoes heard far and wide.

Brethren and sisters did assemble
And sang their prayers to our Father above;
Suddenly a detachment of Cossacks appeared } (2)
And prepared for battle.

Fully one hundred of these mounted Cossacks
Speedily raced to our group gathered 'round;
Their captain, named Praga, like a murderous chieftain } (2)
Shouted to his horsemen "Hurrah!"

Then it was as if a whirlwind
Had attacked our people;
Praga wished to trample us down } (2)
With the hooves of his horses.

Lash after lash on our backs kept descending,
The whistle of whips only was heard;
With blood we all were spattered,
But we kept closing our ranks even tighter. } (2)

Battered and bloody, we were then herded
To face the Governor;
But we did not bare our heads } (2)
And did not honour him.

All our weapons burned completely.
Only a memory of them remains.
Guns and sabres of all assortments } (2)
Became one bulky, leaden mass.

Whoever was a soldier at that time
Refused to serve in the army;
They were all jailed and tortured } (2)
And exiled to Siberia.

As punishment the villages
Were placed under surveillance by the authorities;
And the shameful deeds committed by the Cossacks } (2)
Are too numerous to recount.

In humility, in meekness,
We put an end to evil;
Now we live in prayer; } (2)
Christ is our Tsar, God is our Father.

Composed by Peter E. Diachkoff

DATA:

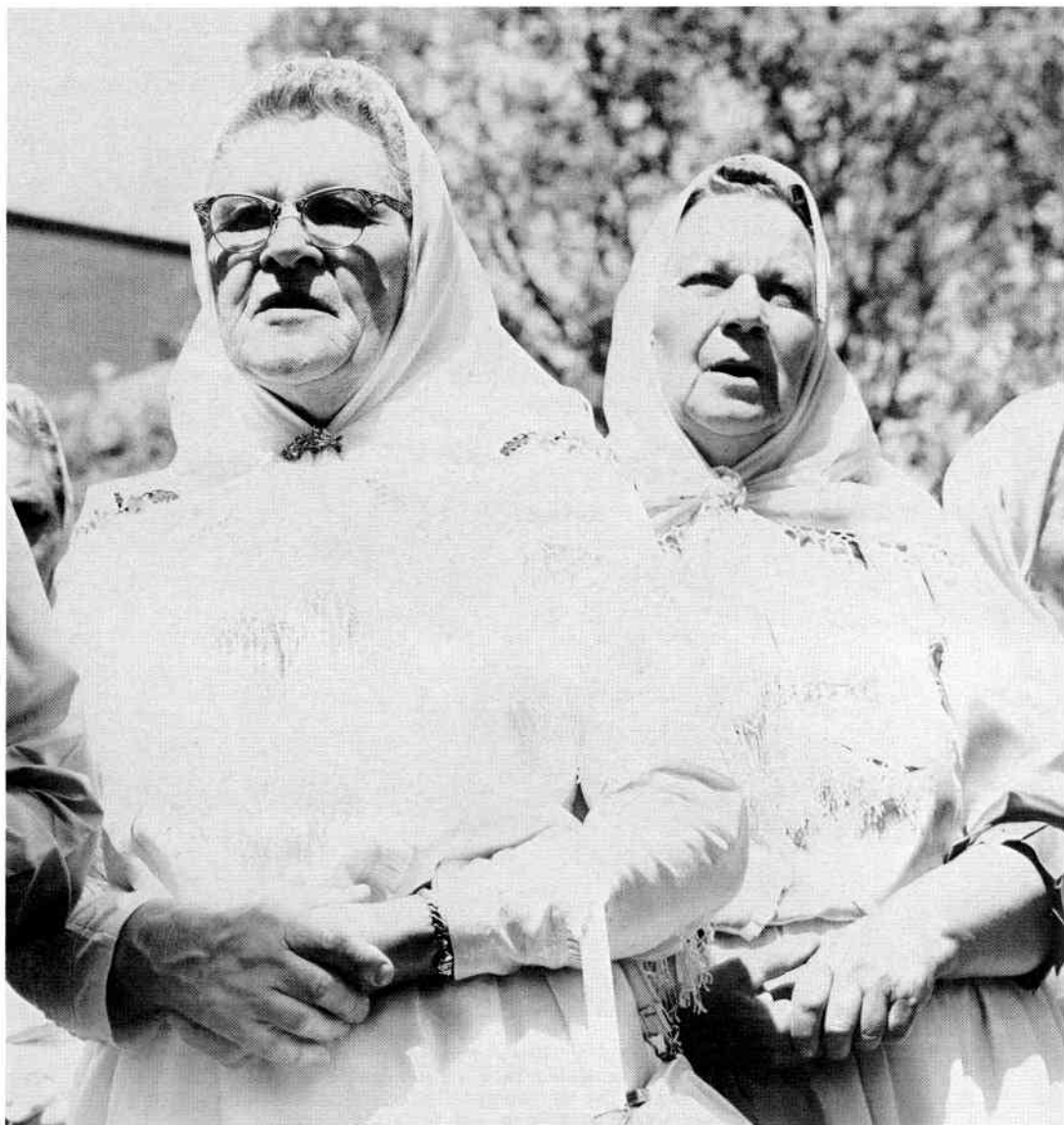
This historical hymn tells of the persecutions and tortures the Doukhobors underwent in Russia in the 1890's just prior to their immigration to Canada. More specifically, it deals with the famous 'burning of the guns' episode in the Wet Mountains on June 29, 1895. The Doukhobors' imprisoned leader, Peter Vasilievitch Verigin, had sent orders to his faithful followers to burn every weapon they could lay their hands on to symbolize the Doukhobor belief in non-violence. Other directives included non-cooperation with government decrees, involving military service and payment of taxes to pay for wars of destruction. (Previously some Doukhobors were conscripted into the army.) These new Verigin directives so

maddened the authorities that they sent in mounted Cossacks, who descended upon the psalm-singing Doukhobors assembled near the pile of burning weapons and beat them with their lead-tipped whips. Later, many who refused to serve in the army were tortured and exiled to Siberia. This was the last of a long series of persecutions that brought about the immigration of the Doukhobors to Canada in 1899. The date of the burning of the guns, June 29, is a happy coincidence of three important events—St. Peter's Day in the Orthodox Church, Peter Verigin's birthday, and 'the burning of the guns.' As such, it is the most important observance on the calendar for many Canadian Doukhobors.

The hymn was composed in Canada in the early years of this century by Peter E. Diachkoff, who had taken part in the anti-militarist demonstrations described in the text.



The 'Hideaway,' a typical Doukhobor village of the middle Verigin culture, just west of Grand Forks. These older villages are now being supplanted by modern bungalows, in which individual families live on communally-controlled land, a compromise between total communism and private ownership.



Women elders singing at the Peter's Day observance, Verigin, Saskatchewan, 1964

Slowly Moves the Procession

PEA 267-1624

Sung by the U.S.C.C. Youth Choir
Grand Forks, B.C., July 14, 1963

Moderate ♩ = 88

The musical score is written for a four-part choir and piano accompaniment. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes a vocal line with lyrics and piano accompaniment. The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'Moderate' with a quarter note equal to 88 beats per minute. The time signature is 4/4. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are in Russian.

[solo] [tutti]

Тя - нут - ся о - бо - - зы И ко - н - вой и - - дет;

Льют - ся там и сле - - зы О - н мо - ло - дежь ве - дет.

Гон - ят ду - хо - до - - - - - це - - - - - ъ,

Гон - ят их в Си - бирь. Гон - - - ят их в Си - бирь.

Тянутся обозы
И конвой идет;
Льются там и слезы,
Он молодежь ведет.

ПРИПЕВ:

*Гонят духоборцев,
Гонят их в Сибирь.*

На пытку их гонят,
Розгами там сечь.
Они Отца молят:
Удержать дух-меч.

Им лишь вот минуло
Двадцать один год,
Молодость настала,
А на сердце лед.

Сердце каменеет,
Пробегают дрожь,
Душа холодеет:
“Буду-ль к пыткам гожд?”

Вот уж их пригнали
К железным вратам,
В цепи заковали,
Сечь их будут там.

И вот в одно утро,
Команда гремит,
Передают им устно:
“Вас крепко будут бить.”

“Сюда!” по команде,
Властно кричит он:
“Палачей и розги,
Разгоню им сон.

“Ложись Духоборец,
На холодну земь!”
Кричит полководец:
“Будешь ли ты нем?”

И вдруг засвистала
Колючая розга,
В тело крепко села,
Боль дошла до мозга.

“О, Боже, как больно,
Больно — умираю,
Ох, бить уж довольно,
Сознание теряю.”

Палачи все пьяны,
Больно так секут,
Кровью они рьяны,
Ручьи уж текут.

Палачи взяли,
Его понесли,
В карцер поместили,
Члены замерли.

“О, мама, ты мама,
Мама и отец,
Сейчас вы все дома,
А мне здесь конец.”

По утру приходит
Дежурный солдат,
Одного отводит:
“Умер там твой брат.”

ПРИПЕВ:

*Умер Дузоборец
Умер он теперь.*

Пришли его взяли,
Его все друзья,
В поле схоронили,
Не знала семья.

Умер, ты, наш воин,
Мир, тебе, покой;
И ты не был болен,
Получил убой.

— Г. В. Верещагин.

Translation:

Slowly moves the procession [of wagons],
The convoy is on its way;
Tears are flowing freely,
The convoy is escorting a group of youths.

REFRAIN 1

They are taking away the Doukhobors, } (2)
They are taking them to Siberia. }

They are headed for torture,
Flogging awaits them there;
But they pray to God
To help them retain their spiritual might.

They have just now passed
Their twenty-first birthday;
They have reached their full youth,
But their hearts are like ice.

Their hearts turn to stone,
Shivers run up their spines,
Their souls become cold:
“Will I be strong enough to withstand the tortures?”

Now they are arriving
At the prison’s iron gate;
They are bound in chains,
Flogging awaits them here.

And so in the morning
The command resounds;
It is announced to them verbally:
“You will be soundly flogged.”

“Over here!” is the command.
Authoritatively the order is issued:
“Bring out the rods and floggers,
We’ll get the sleep out of their eyes.

“Lie down, Doukhobor,
Over here, on the cold floor!”
Cries the colonel in charge:
“Will you, or are you deaf and dumb?”

Suddenly begins the whine
Of the cruel, prickly lash;
It bites deeply into the flesh,
The pain permeates to the very core of consciousness:

“Oh God, how painful,
It is so painful, I am dying;
Oh, please stop the lashing,
I am losing consciousness.”

The floggers are all drunk,
They lash so unmercifully;
The blood has made them wilder,
Streamlets are flowing already.

The floggers picked him up
And carried him away;
They placed him in a cold cell,
His legs were paralysed.

“Oh mother, dear mother,
Mother and dear father,
You are all safe at home,
But for me this is the end.”

Early in the morning,
The soldier on duty comes;
He calls aside one prisoner:
“Your brother over there has died.”

REFRAIN 2

The Doukhobor passed away, } (2)
Now he is dead. }

They came and they took him,
All his friends so dear;
They buried him in a field,
Unknown to his family.

You have passed away, our hero [warrior],
Peace to you and rest;
You were so hale and healthy,
But your life was taken away.

DATA:

This hymn was composed in Canada in 1929 by Gabriel Vasilievitch Veraschagin whose father had died on the exile-trek to Siberia in the 1890's. The events described in the text offer an intimate glimpse of the tortures young Doukhobors had to undergo for refusing military service.



The Doukhobor Community Centre in Grand Forks, British Columbia, which now serves as the central meeting place for all the Orthodox Doukhobor communities in the area

The Doukhobor Prayer Home at Verigin, Saskatchewan, where Peter's Day and other celebrations are still held. It was the former residence of Doukhobor leader Peter Vasilievitch and his son Peter Petrovitch.

