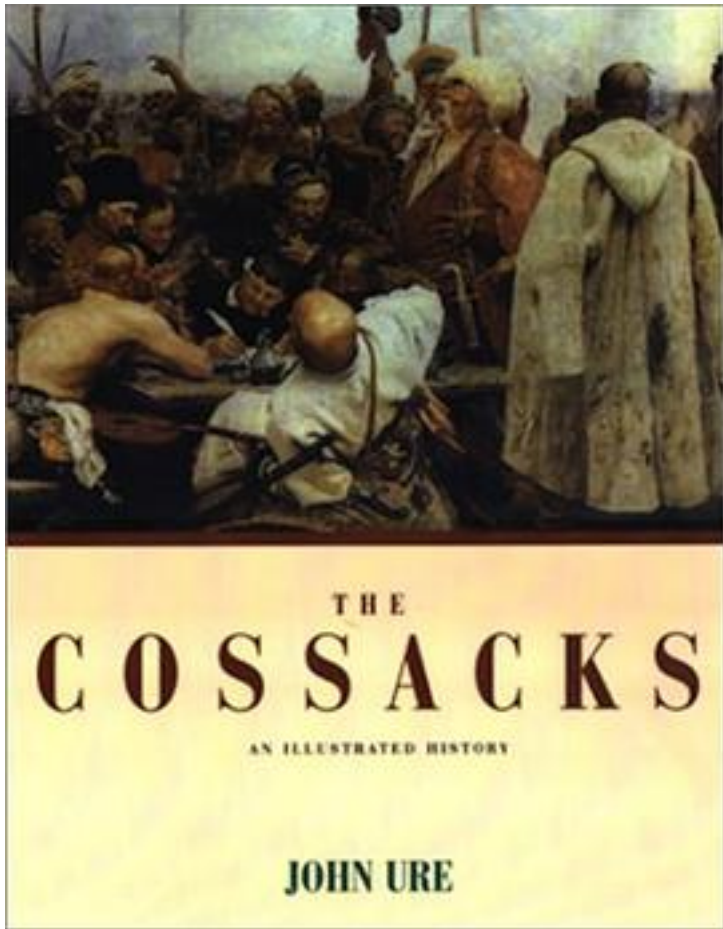


# Cossacks, the



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著者:Ure, John

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The word "Cossack" conjures up different images to different people. To some, these ruthless riders from the steppes of Asia —with their spectacular fur hats and flashing sabres—are the romantic embodiment of dash and daring; to others, they are

horsemen from hell—alternately rebels against the Romanovs and vicious instruments of Tsarist repression. Both images are equally true.

Lavishly illustrated with 135 photographs, paintings, and lithographs, *The Cossacks*, by career diplomat and noted travel writer John Ure, traces the story of these great warriors from the time of Ivan the Terrible, through the uprisings of the Volga pirate Stenka Razin and the impostor Pugachev, to the harnessing of the Cossack Host to the Tsarist cause. He recounts their fearsome exploits in Napoleon's retreat from Moscow, in the conquest of the Caucasus and in the "Great Game" in Central Asia; how they split in the Russian Revolution between White interventionists and the Red Army; how Hitler lured many of them to turn against Russia during the Second World War, and how Stalin, in turn, persecuted them. And he explodes the long-held theory that the Cossacks are a purely historical phenomenon by detailing present-day activities of Cossacks in Bosnia, Chechnya, and elsewhere.

John Ure brings them vividly to life—in dramatic words and pictures—mining the most dramatic stories from the rich vein of Cossack legend and lore. The Cossacks emerge from this narrative in all their brilliant glory: dashing and cruel, unpredictable and immensely brave.

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