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Documents of the Boundary Archive on Land Management and Land Surveying of the Rostov Uyezd of the Yekaterinoslav Gubernia and the Don Host Lands in the Late 18th – First Half of the 19th Century

Abstract

The article analyzes possibilities of identifying and using previously unknown documents of the Land Survey Archive for studying land management and features of land surveying in the Rostov uyezd of the Yekaterinoslav gubernia and the Don Host Lands. The Rostov uyezd differed from other uyezds of the Yekaterinoslav gubernia, as it did not border with it, located inside the Don Host Lands. The processes of settlement and development of new lands in the south of the Russian Empire were reflected in the administrative-territorial structure of these two territorial entities. In contrast to land surveying of the Don Host Land, the Land Surveying Archive has preserved an extensive collection of land surveying materials for the Rostov uyezd of the Yekaterinoslav gubernia, in which documents related to the establishment of boundaries between these territories and land disputes with the Don Cossacks have been deposited. The objectives of the study include comparative analysis of the initial land surveying documents identified in the fond of field notes with the data of the Economic Notes on the Rostov uyezd of the Yekaterinoslav gubernia and study of controversial and petty cases in order to clarify the features of the land management of two neighboring territories. To obtain statistical data on the Rostov uyezd, a database has been compiled on the basis of the Economic Notes, containing information on demographic and land resources of the uyezd. The analysis of primary documents has shown that the main work on surveying the territory of the Rostov uyezd took place in the early 19th century. However, in adjacent territories, land disputes were recorded in the first decades of the 19th century that sprang from granting new lands to the Don Cossacks, settlement of new settlers in the state wasteland of the Rostov uyezd, and frequent barring of Cossacks from traveling to their lands through the uyezd territories. They delayed land surveying and preparation of the final documents. The study of the field notes materials permits to identify reports (skazki) of the local population and dacha owners, containing initial information for the Economic Notes compiled for the Rostov uyezd. Analysis of controversial and petty cases clarifies the mechanism for resolving land disputes, establishing borders, and transferring territories to the Don Cossacks. Surveying documents introduced into scientific use permits to study the features of land management and surveying of neighboring territories, differing in their settlement and development, which in the second half of the 19th century merged into the Don Host Oblast.

Keywords

Historical sources, Economic Notes, field notes, skazki of the local population, land surveying, Don Host Lands, Novorossiia, Rostov uyezd, land development.

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