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MATERIALS FROM THE ARCHIVAL FONDS OF THE RUSSIAN STATE HISTORICAL ARCHIVE OF THE FAR EAST (RGIA DV) ON INTERDEPARTMENTAL INTERACTION OF THE BORDER SERVICES OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE IN THE EAST OF THE COUNTRY ON THE EVE OF WORLD WAR I

Abstract

The article studies issues of interdepartmental interaction between border and customs services of the Russian Empire in the east of the country on the eve of World War I (1909-1917). Customs officers and frontier guards came under supervision of the same minister of finance, although worked under different deputy ministers. Customs officers were under the authority of the customs fees department director, the head of the Special Corps of Border Guards was also one of the deputies of the Minister of Finance. In 1913-1914 in the Far East there was a network of customs outposts and posts in the Chita and Vladivostok customs districts. The Vladivostok district numbered 255 customs officers, the Chita district numbered 301. A number of customs surveyors had state horses. The main job of the surveyors was to ride in twos to the border and detain those who smuggled goods in the frontier zone. Frontier guards relied on frontier posts staffed by the 3rd (3 sotnias) and the 6th Transamur (1 sotnia) border regiments. Each regiment consisted of three sotnias, in 1913 each sotnia numbered up to 140 frontier guards under three officers. Total of nearly 600 frontier guards and 556 surveyors provided protection of 2 866 km

of the Russian border with China from Chita to Vladivostok. The professed main objective of the frontier guards and the customs officers in 1913-1914 was prevention of smuggling. The authorities compensated for insufficient personnel of border services in the east of the Russian Empire by promoting interaction of customs and boundary posts: surveyors of the department of customs fees were to guard the frontier and implement passport and visa control, while frontier guards were to assist in detention of smugglers and in creation of human intelligence network in the border zone, which was to identify smuggling routes and pass messages on the results of operational work to customs officers.

Keywords

Archival Fonds of the Russian State Historical Archive of the Far East (RGIA DV), Customs, Ministry of Finance of Russia, customs offices, Far East, fight against smuggling, Vladivostok, Chita.

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