

# ***FOLK SONGS OF OLD RUSSIA***

----- a program of Russian-Ukrainian songs



**St. John's Russian Orthodox Choir of Spring Valley, N. Y.**

**director, Lawrence Havriliak**



# The St. John's Russian Orthodox Choir of Spring Valley New York

conducted by Lawrence Havriliak

The St. John's Russian Orthodox Choir is made up of 25 voices composed principally of Americans of Russian ancestry and molded together into a group whose technique is animated by this unity of spirit.

The history of the choir dates back more than twenty-five years, but it has been during the last two years that enthusiastic acclaim and international prominence has come to the group. "EXCELLENT CHOIR" has been the appraisal of such eminent critics as Richard Bertrandias, Director of Programming, "Radio Liberty," a record review by Edward Tatnall Canby of Audio Magazine; and Irving Kolodin of the Saturday Review.

## About the Composers

### Dimitri Bortniansky (1751-1825)

Russian composer born in the Ukraine and trained in St. Petersburg under Galuppi and later in Venice. After his travels in Italy he returned to Russia where he became the director of the Imperial Chapel Choir in 1779.

### Alexander Illyinsky (1859-1919)

Born in Tsarkoe-Selo and died in Moscow. Pupil of Kullak (piano) and Bargiel (composition) at the Berlin Academy. From 1885 he was professor at the Conservatory of the Philharmonic Society at Moscow. He composed incidental music for *Aedipus Rex* and *Philoctetus* by Sophocles.

### M. Wedel (1750-1810)

Born in Kiev and educated in the Kiev Theological Academy. His natural tenor voice led to his becoming a voice student at the academy.

In Moscow he studied privately since Russia was without a conservatory until 1862. Nostalgia brought him back to his home town and it was here he was employed by a general as adjutant and director of his choir. Wedel lived as an ascetic devoting himself increasingly to the service of God. While visiting the Petcher Larve Monastery he met with an orphan boy and took him to live with him. The boy, Peter Turchaninov, later became a well known composer of ancient church music.

### Edward Napravnik (1839-1916)

Born in Bohemia and arrived in Russia in 1861. He was soon called to direct at the Mariyinsky Opera House where he conducted for over 50 years and became chief conductor until his death. Operas of the contemporary composers from Glinka to Tchaikowsky were performed by Napravnik. A song "Oh Countryside—My Native Land" from one of his two operas is presented in this album.

## Folk Songs of Old Russia

### Hopak ..... Davidowsky

The story tells of a fickle maid who cannot decide which of the two Cossacks she prefers. "If I flirt with Ivan I will lose Stephan. Oh, how can I in love be true?" (Finally she abandons both.)

### A Far Away Land ..... Napravnik (arr. Havriliak)

Russia is, and always has been, a land of virgin forests.

*"Oh countryside, my native land,  
With thy broad steppes, thou has parted and spread  
beyond.  
Thou has covered thyself and overgrown with dark  
forests, broad and spacious."*

### The Monotonous Bell ..... Traditional

Margaret Bennett, soprano

The song tells of a long journey on a road in open country. The monotonous ringing of the horses bell and the sad song of the coachman bring forth memories of other nights and other fields.

### At the Smithy ..... Traditional (arr. Havriliak)

At the smithy the blacksmiths strike, smite and swing their sledge-hammers in sing-song fashion. This song tells of Dunya: of asking her to come for a stroll in the forest and of the new dress she will wear that Sunday.

### Volga Boatman ..... Traditional (arr. Havriliak)

The Volga Boat song is the best known song of the barge-man of the Volga. The men drag the barges along the river by ropes carried over their shoulders. The song is in reality a chantey which the men sing to relieve the strain of the ropes.

### Twelve Brigands ..... Traditional

Michael Fill, baritone

As truly heard from the lips of the revered monk Pitirim at the Solovetsk monastery, twelve bandits who lived in the forest had robbed and killed many people. Their chief held captive a beautiful girl whom he had carried away in one of their invasions. One day his conscience was awakened by the Lord. He then entered the monastery and there spent rest of his days. In the last refrain it is revealed that the monk Pitirim was actually the former bandit chief.

### The Cabbage Patch .... Traditional (arr. Orlov-Havriliak)

Andrew Phil, baritone

One can almost feel the peasants enjoying their song as they work in the fields. Twilight is approaching, work is almost done. "Homeward ye geese — it is evening, the rains have come, and the cabbages are fluttering."

### The Bending Branch ..... Traditional (arr. Havriliak)

Irene Kroner, soprano

*Only grief my heart is rending,  
Like a trembling leaf in fall.*

## Russian Choral Classics

### Bortniansky: We Praise Thee, O Lord

We praise, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord. All the earth doth worship thee, the Father everlasting. To thee all Angels cry aloud; the Heavens, and all the Powers therein. To thee Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of thy Glory. O Lord, have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us. O Lord, let thy mercy be upon us, as our trust is in thee. O Lord, in thee have I trusted; let me never be confounded. Amen.

Sung after the Liturgy at a service identified as "The Office of Thanksgiving at The New Year," this hymn is also known at the *Hymn of St. Ambrose*, Bishop of Milan. It belongs to the *Te Deum*.

Soloists: Margaret Bennett, Peter Romanchak

### Illyinsky: Psalm 134 (Responsive Benediction of the Night Watch)

Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord. The Lord that made heaven and earth, bless thee out of Zion.

Soloists: Margaret Bennett, Martha Judd, Mary Powers, Irene Kroner.

### Bortniansky: Psalm 68

Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him. As smoke is driven away, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.

### Wedel: Confession (An Easter Hymn from the Lenten Service)

O Lord, Creator of Life, Open the door so I may enter and purify my soul within Thy Divine graciousness.



Lawrence Havriliak

## About the Conductor

Lawrence Havriliak is among the top ranking Russian Choral masters. He became the choir master of St. John's Russian Orthodox Choir in 1957. Irving Kolodin of the Saturday Review wrote of "A Russian Christmas" (Cook 1095) "an excellent choir and a discriminating director in Havriliak." A baritone soloist, Mr. Havriliak sang with the world famous Serge Jaroff Don Cossack Chorus touring Europe with them in 1953-54.

## Hear These Other Fine Cook Recordings Conducted By Lawrence Havriliak

Russian Easter (a Russian Easter midnight service)

The St. John's Russian Orthodox Choir .... **Cook 1096**

A Russian Christmas (a program of Russian-Ukrainian carols)

The St. John's Russian Orthodox Choir .... **Cook 1095**

If your dealer does not stock COOK records write direct to

**COOK** Laboratories, Inc. Stamford, Conn.