



**Romanov News**  
**Новости Романовых**

*By Ludmila & Paul Kulikovsky*

**№94**

January 2016



*Tsarevich and Grand Duke Alexei Nikolaevich by Peter P. Pershin*



## Romanov News' wishes for 2016

For many people it is a tradition to make New Year wishes, which for some are an expression of hope for things to happen in the new year and for others a list of goals to be worked towards during the year. Romanov News wishes listed below are a part of both. These wishes are not new for us, but we would like to use this opportunity to remind all our readers, what we wish and work towards.

It is certainly our hope that these wishes will happen now rather than later, and even if in most cases we can do little to make it happen, we can pray and keep reminding people (including authorities) about these outstanding issues. On some of these wishes we are actively working and on some are other good people working, which gives us more than just hope, that these wishes might be fulfilled in the near future - if not this year, then next year!

1. *Burial of Tsarevich and Grand Duke Alexei Nicholaievich and Grand Duchess Maria Nicholaievna.*
2. *The remains of Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovich and his secretary Brian Johnson, shot in Perm, to be found.*
3. *The remains of the four Grand Dukes, shot in the Peter and Paul Fortress, St. Petersburg - Paul Alexandrovich, Dimitri Konstantinovich, Nicholas Konstantinovich and George Mikhailovich - to be found.*
4. *The graves of the Alapaevsk Martyrs; Grand Duke Sergei Mikhailovich; Prince John Konstantinovich, Prince Konstantin Konstantinovich and Prince Igor Konstantinovich; Prince Vladimir Paley (Son of Grand Duke Paul Alexandrovich); and Feodor Remez (Secretary to Grand Duke Sergey Mikhailovich) in Beijing, to be found.*
5. *The grave of Grand Duke Nicholas Konstantinovich, who died in Tashkent, to be found.*
6. *The monument of Emperor Alexander III from the yard in the Marble Palace to be moved to its original place at the Moscow train station in St. Petersburg.*
7. *A monument to Emperor Alexander III established in Moscow - as a replacement of the monument destroyed at the Cathedral of Christ the Savior in Moscow. Could possibly be in Kremlin or in the coming park at the Romanov Boyar House.*
8. *Burial of Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov.*
9. *The red stars on the Moscow Kremlin towers to be replaced with eagles.*
10. *Voikovskaya metro station to be renamed.*

These are also the main guiding for articles in the coming issues of Romanov News. Stories about these wishes will take priority and the development in any of them will be followed closely.

*Paul E. Kulikovsky  
Editor of Romanov News*





## **The Tsarevich Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria burial-case continues**

### **St. Petersburg authorities have given permission for the restoration of the tomb of Alexander III**

15 January. RIA Novosti - The Committee on State Control, Use and Protection of Monuments of History and Culture (KGIOP) of St. Petersburg issued a permit to perform work on a further examination and restoration of the tomb of Emperor Alexander III in the Peter and Paul Cathedral, told a representative of the committee.

Opening the tomb of Emperor Alexander III was completed on 27 of November 2015. All work carried out in the presence of representatives of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation Government and the Russian Orthodox Church. Concerns about the autopsy of the tomb in the Soviet years were not confirmed.

"There is issued a permit to perform work on the additional survey, restoration of the crypt, marble tombstones and the fence of the tomb of Emperor Alexander III in the Peter and Paul Cathedral Peter and Paul Fortress," - said the representative.

According to her, monitoring of the restoration work is carried out with gradual acceptance. Work is carried out on the basis of an agreed design and draft documentation and then approved. She did not specify dates of the completion of the restoration work.

### **The tomb of Alexander III in St. Peter and Paul Cathedral was restored**

25 January. Interfax - Restorers have completed the restoration of the tomb of Emperor Alexander III in the Peter and Paul Cathedral, St. Petersburg, reported the press service of the State Museum of History in St. Petersburg.

"The restoration works have been completed. Restored are the brick arch vault, the flakiness floor slabs is set in place, as well as the Carrara marble headstone and historical lattice around the burial," - it was said.

The press service added that the area of the cathedral is now fully accessible for visitors.



### **The Russian Orthodox Church believes that it is necessary to continue the search for the remains of the family of Nicholas II**

The search for the remains of Tsarevich Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria Romanov near Koptyaki road near Yekaterinburg should be continued; until, presumably, is found only a small part of them, told at a conference in the framework of the Christmas Readings XXIV a member of the Synod of the ROC Committee for the Causes of Saints engaged in the study of the issues the death of the Royal family, Archpriest Oleg Mitrov.

According to Archpriest Oleg Mitrov, found bone remains marked "signs of exposure to high temperatures and sulfuric acid." Also, according to expert estimates, "a sharp discrepancy between the calculated and actual weight of ash (remains) revealed."

"This shows that in the prospecting work was discovered only one of several places of the criminal burial of the remains of two people. It would seem that this conclusion is pushing a consequence of the continuation of the search, the search for other graves, but this task is ignored. We need to continue searching for other places of dumping Tsarevich Alexis and Grand Duchess Maria" - said the priest, adding that it is "the issue of colossal importance." According to him found remains really belong to representatives of the Royal family.

### **A member of the church committee for the canonization calls to investigate the "Brussels remains" in the case of the Royal family**

28 January. Interfax-religion - The investigation into the criminal case of the murder of the Royal family should research the remains found in Brussels, said a member of the Synodal Commission for the Causes of Saints, Archpriest Oleg Met.

"It is hoped that, in addition to the repetition of genetic examinations, which are unlikely to give any new findings, the investigation team will end the research in other important areas (...) will be able to obtain and analyze samples of skeletal remains, Sokolov exported to Europe, and will also continue to search for other places of burial of the remains of Tsarevich Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria" - said the priest in a broadcast on Thursday to "Interfax-Religion".

He recalled that the investigator Nikolai Sokolov, who led the murder case of the family of Nicholas II in the years 1919-1924, brought the alleged remains to Europe where they were put into the wall of the Church of suffering Job in Brussels.

### **Archpriest Oleg Mitrov: The investigation of the death of the Royal family and their entourage**

28 January. Interfax-religion - The questions to the death of the Imperial family, discovery of remains near Yekaterinburg, the recognition or non-recognition of the "Royal" remains have excited our society for almost 25 years. For many people, the view of the Russian Orthodox Church on these issues becomes critical. But in order that the Church can speak about it objectively, you need to study carefully historical documents of the investigation, and the results of scientific examinations.



#### *White Army investigation of 1918 - 1924*

Materials of the White Army investigation is a valuable source for the study of the circumstances of the death and burial of the Royal family, because they contain questioning of witnesses and suspects, the inspection of places of events held shortly after the crime.

On the night of 16th to 17th of July the Royal family and their servants were shot. On 17th, 18th and in the morning of 19th of July Reds tried to conceal bodies. On 25th of July White Army took Yekaterinburg. On 30<sup>th</sup> of July the investigation began. It was headed by Nametkin, but less than two weeks later, he handed the investigation to Ivan Sergeev. Sergeev led the investigation for six months from August 1918 to February 1919. He made main investigations, proved the killing of the Royal family

and its entourage. Sergeyev did not have final concept to which he drove findings, and this favorably differed him from third investigator - Sokolov

The fact that Sergeyev had not found the burial place of the Royal family and servants is easily explained, the circumstances in which he had to conduct the investigation. He did not have reliable partners, funds, valuable witnesses were destroyed in wartime, physical evidence (including the Ipatiev house) were not sealed and preserved intact. The third investigator Nikolai Sokolov led the investigation since February 1919 until he died in exile in 1924. He came to the conclusion that after the execution of the corpses were dismembered, burned at the stake, and finally destroyed by the sulfuric acid.

Sokolov's version of "ritual murder" was formed under the influence of head of the investigation - Lieutenant-General Mikhail Diterikhs, a staunch supporter of the theory of "world conspiracy". Lack of experience of Sokolov in conducting criminal cases involving sophisticated methods of concealment of corpses also played role. During the investigation, he was not acquainted with the criminological literature on cremation and didn't make an investigative experiment, checking the possibility of complete burning of the body over an open fire. Sokolov was aware of the relatively small size of the fires found at Ganina Yama (probably where clothes and shoes were burned), but being a captive of its versions, has decided that these fires have also been used to destroyed the shot bodies.

The first version of the burning bodies voiced peasants of Koptiyaki village when a campfire was found at Ganina Yama - "The Emperor was burned." Peasants' words lay on the misinformation that spread by the Bolsheviks. Indications of other witnesses who spoke about the burial of the bodies and did not mention their burning, Sokolov ignored.

The investigators had circumstantial evidence sufficient to make an assumption about the place of burial. Several witnesses spoke of a long stop of cars and carts on the night of 18th to 19<sup>th</sup> of July 1918 next to crossing №184. The investigator was aware that a bridge of railway sleepers appeared that night and it was built by "comrades" from the fence of the house of guard crossing Lobukhin. Sokolov found the bridge, walked over it, photographed, but before the end of the investigation the place never attracted his attention and the excavation was not planned. It seems that the White Guard investigation satisfactorily



solved only part of the task - to establish the fact of death of the entire Royal family and their entourage, to study the initial place of execution and place of burial of bodies in the area Ganina Yama, to bring together a number of physical evidences, interview witnesses and establish the crime.

Two investigators were unable to find bodies. But if the first one - Sergeev frankly admitted this, and intended to continue the search, then the second - Sokolov took the version of "ritual murder" and complete burning of the remains and stopped the search.

#### *Publications and memories of the execution participants*

Materials of the White Army investigation supported this ritual version formed the basis of the studied subject in the émigré literature.

In 1920s several articles were written by participants in the events in Soviet Russia, but in 1928, after Stalin's meeting with the organizer of the shooting – Goloschekin the Soviet Union had imposed a ban

on publications on this topic. Meanwhile, the number of participants of July 1918 events in Ekaterinburg left memories that allow you to reconstruct the murder and concealment of bodies. Until 1992, these memories are stored in special depositories, and were not available to researchers.

Main participants Medvedev (Kudrin) Rodzinskiy and Jurowski (in details) mentioned burial of corpses in the swampy pit at Koptiyaki road under the bridge of old railroad sleepers. It was based on the story of the burial site described in Yurovsky's memoirs, there was an attempt to search for the tomb by Ryabov and Avdonin.

#### *Search of G.T. Ryabov and A.N. Avdonin in 1976 - 1979*

Film director Geli Trofimovich Ryabov was interested in the history of post-revolutionary developments in the Urals, and he, being in Sverdlovsk asked for a meeting with local ethnographers. So he went to Alexander Nikolaevich Avdonin, who unofficially was engaged in the research of the Royal family. At this meeting a group of enthusiasts was formed, who from 1976 to 1979 studied the documents relating to the last period of the life of the Royal family and led to the search for a place of burial. This group started with the son of the shooting organizer - Alexander Yakovlevich Yurovsky, who gave Ryabov a copy of "Yurovsky' notes." Notes indicated the main landmark of burial of the Royal family - sleepers bridge.

Making topographical survey at Ganina Yama and Koptiyaki road and put it on all the famous landmarks of the documents, the group concluded the burial place of the Romanov family. From May 31 to June 1, of 1979 Avdonin and Ryabov under the guise of a geological expedition uncovered the burial. At a depth of 30-40 cm, they found wooden flooring, and underneath human remains. They seized three skulls from the burial which Ryabov took to Moscow "for possible research." When this was not possible, the skulls were returned to the burial.

In search of the Royal grave, Ryabov was patronized by Interior Minister Shchelokov. He helped to gain access to sensitive information in the archives, helped police to get an accurate map of the area, ordered the staff of the Sverdlovsk police department to assist in its work. So far there is no consensus about the role of Shchelokov in this quest. Some researchers believe that Schelokov initiated the search for the grave of the Royal family and Ryabov and his team worked according to his instructions. The official investigation believes that "Schelokov knew about the search for the remains by Avdonina-Ryabov team, showing personal interest to that the search, but has not officially reacted to the discovery of the remains of the Royal family." Investigation is trying to explain that a high-ranking Soviet official, knowing which searches conducts Ryabov, gave him access to completely classified information because of his "personal interest". But it is a misconduct for which the minister could lose his position or special operation. Until this question will not be answered there is a justified suspicion that behind these actions is some intrigue hidden from society.

The second embarrassing fact in the actions of Ryabov-Avdonin group is a violation of the integrity of the burial, a barbaric (in terms of archeology) method of opening the grave. Experts working with the exhumation in 1991, found that the excavations in 1979 caused serious damage to the integrity of the well and the remains in it. Opening of the burial took place in a hurry, without complying with the rules of archaeological work. There was no scheme of the excavation, it was not divided into squares and levels, all findings were not fixed, the particular occurrence was not described, soil was not sieved. Thus, that was lost, where a professional archaeologist would have learned a lot of information. Remains were damaged, vertebrae broken, connecting the skull and skeletons. All this has made a confusion and more confusion in further studies, which began 11 years later.

#### *Excavations of 1991*

July 10, 1991 the prosecutor's office of the Sverdlovsk region received information about the discovery of human remains in the area of Old Koptiyaki road. Eduard Rossel, the Sverdlovsk Regional Executive Committee Chairman, ordered in one day to form a team of experts and start working. The exhumation was conducted July 11-13, 1991. Surprisingly, excavations in 1991 were conducted not much better than clandestine opening of the graves in 1979. At the opening of graves, the investigative team took up 9 people in 3 days and 2 hours. It looks nothing like an archaeological site as to the qualitative

performance of such work archaeologists need at least a few weeks. The only professional that took part in the exhumation, was archeology professor Lyudmila Koryakova, who recalls that during work was constantly "coming and going" over a dozen "any kind" of the mysterious people. "Everything was organized in a hurry, without careful preparation." "Different people, paced the grave, separating the bones from skeletons and breaking their integrity." These actions forced Koryakova to make a strongly protest.



In such a careless extraction from the earth the remains was seriously affected. Belonging of membership of the bones and bone fragments was entangled. As a result of the excavations nine skeletons were found with traces of corrosive substances as well as damaged bone tissue caused by weapons and firearms. Signs of clothes and shoes in the burial was found. Bullets from pistols and revolvers, fragments of ceramic vessels, pieces of rope, pieces of grenades were found together with the bones. About 500 bone fragments were extracted. When they was spread, considered and compared, it became clear that for nine bodies it is very little. The human skeleton consists of 206 bones, so the remains of nine victims should ideally reach 1854 units. It was decided to repeat the excavation and sift through a fine sieve the whole ground. More than 20 tons of earth was removed from the pit and screened. During these studies about 300 bone fragments, 13 teeth, 11 bullets, fragments of adipose tissue, ropes and ceramic shards were found. Over half of the remains were lost. Where are they? Completely disappeared under the influence of acid, fire and time? Or they did not find them? Or they were found, but not kept? Or they were found by

someone else, apart from the investigation team? Investigation posed these questions, but didn't give answers. It immediately became clear that two bodies are not in the grave. This picture is consistent with the recollections of participants in the execution of the individual burial of two people.

One of the priorities of the investigation was to find these remains. Their discovery would be an important link in the evidence of the authenticity of the findings and could help identify all 11 people, but in the 90s it did not happen. Due to incomplete recovery of the remains of the investigation it was very important to get samples of bones and earth removed by Sokolov in Europe and later immured in the Church of Job-Suffering in Brussels, but the representatives of ROCOR refused to pass them. In 1998 - 2000, under the leadership of Avdonin excavations were conducted at the same mine where the Sokolov found the evidence. During excavations were uncovered the details of clothes and jewelry, three rifle cartridges and 62 bone object identical to those that were found by Sokolov in 1919. Studies have shown that all bone objects belong to animals. This suggests that the bones is the remains of food that are thrown into the fire, but the final answer to this question you need to study samples stored in Brussels.

During the excavations in 1991 near the south-western side of the pit, at a depth of 80 cm a power cable diameter of about 15 cm was detected. The depth of the cable is almost coincided with the location of a few skeletons that lay at a depth of 90, 92 and 100 cm. Cable severely damaged bones that were under it, turning and shattering them. It turns out that the integrity of the burial was disturbed not only by the group-Avdonina Ryabov, but at least also by cable's plotters. This is a separate serious problem that requires investigation, but the investigation did not address this problem.

#### *Examination in 1991-98*

Expert investigations of the case were held from 24 August 1991 to 24 January 1998. Conclusions of the forensic expert commission are the following:

1. Bone objects submitted for examination are the remains of nine people (4 men and 5 women).
2. All the skeletons were in conditions of one burial for a significant period of time (at least 50 - 60 years) .
3. Set of skeletons belonging to five parties making up one particular family group, namely: skeleton №4 - Nikolai Alexandrovich Romanov, №7 - Alexandra, №3 - Olga Nikolaevna, №5 - Tatyana Nikolayevna, №6 - Anastasia Nikolaevna.

Established that remaining four skeletons are the remains of: a skeleton №1 - Demidova Anna Stepanovna, №2 - Eugene Sergeevich Botkin, number 8 - Kharitonov Ivan Mikhailovich, №9 - Troupe Aloysius Egorovich.

The remains of Maria Nikolayevna Romanova Romanov and Alexei Nikolayevich were not found among the investigated bone objects.

Any damage of cervical vertebrae, indicating a possible separation of heads from the bodies were not found. Experts stated "signs of the impact of the aggressive chemical environment" on the remains. This explains the small number of surviving fragments of skeletons №8 (Kharitonov) and №9 (Trupp), which were in the place of the maximum concentration of the reagent. Experts talked about the "short-term influence of aggressive substances possibly sulfuric acid" and confirmed that "traces of the impact of high temperature on presented remains were found." Conclusions group of geneticists led by Pavel Leonidovich Ivanov and Peter Gill were: "Probabilistic analysis and evaluation. .. experimental data have shown with certainty at least 99%, that five concrete skeletons of nine members of the study are the remains of the Romanov family - father, mother and three daughters." These findings complemented a genetic study conducted in 1998 by Evgeny Rogaev, that compared blood samples of the nephew of Nicholas II Romanov, Kulikovsky-Romanov, and samples of bone skeleton №4. His conclusion sounds less categorically: "Comparative analysis suggests close relationship of Kulikovsky-Romanov with the person, mentioned among the remains as №4".

These conclusions were contested by other geneticists. Doctor of Biological Sciences, Professor, Director of the Department of Forensic Science and Medicine, University of Kitadzato (Japan) Tatsuo Nagai after DNA analysis obtained different results on 5 points from those received by Peter Gill and Pavel Ivanov. His conclusions are checked by a group of experts headed by Professor Bronte, president of the International Association of forensic experts. Analyses conducted by Bronte group, confirmed the results obtained by Nagai, and Bronte openly made a statement that the Ekaterinburg remains are not the remains of the Romanovs.

It should be noted that genetic science is developing very rapidly. In 1993, Gill and Ivanov made comparison to 6 points, but a comparison of 10 points has shown that the results based on the analysis of 6 points, often give erroneous conclusions. Already in 2000, the same research laboratory of the British Home Office, which conducted the research, has moved to the methodology of comparison of 10 points, and two years later they began to work on 16, and then 20 points. Therefore, the authors of examinations of 2007-2008, conducted in the laboratories of the United States and Austria, about genetics research in the 90s said that "the results were unreliable."

These facts well explain why the DNA testing could not be a decisive argument in the debate about the authenticity of the remains in 1998. Besides genetics, forensic experts and anthropologists solved task of identification. Basic anthropometric data: age, sex, height, as well as the cause of death were



established. Skulls were reconstructed. Computer analysis revealed the skulls expressed mathematically proven similarity between the skulls of 3, 5, 6, 7 (Olga, Tatiana, Anastasia and Alexandra), which are very different from all the others. Method photo superposition of skulls and lifetime photos allowed to personalize the remains of the Romanov sisters and to make a conclusion about the absence in the burial of Maria Nikolayevna. Experts made important conclusion that it is impossible to find scarf on the Nicholas II skull, received in 1891 in Japan, because it was erased as the result of acid.

It is recognized that, by 1998, the investigation has a lot of evidence of the authenticity of the grave, opened in 1991. It was necessary to find the remains of the missing, to complete a number of research scientists to overcome differences of opinion in some important matters. But the investigation was under pressure as a result of which studies have been discontinued, and the search stopped. A government commission has become in a hurry to prepare for burial in the Peter and Paul Fortress.

Lowell Levine, a forensic scientist from the United States in connection with the events said: "... it is difficult to talk about the scientific credibility. ... The impression is that everything that happens here, due to political considerations .....". Perhaps the proposal of the American scientist is key in explaining why in 1998 the investigation was terminated.

In 1998, the Russian Orthodox Church does not recognize authenticity of Ekaterinburg remains. In a situation where the investigation is closed, not finding all the remains and have not answered a number of principle questions; when there is disagreement on the issue of identification of the researchers, the Church, which is not an expert and cannot choose for a scientific opinion, abstained from the findings on the recognition or non-recognition of the remains.

At a meeting of the Holy Synod of 26 February 1998 was heard the report by Metropolitan Juvenal, on the basis of which the Synod expressed "in favor of the immediate burial of the remains in a symbolic grave-monument. When all doubts about the "Yekaterinburg remains" will be removed and disappear grounds for confusion regarding the confrontation in society it should be necessary to return to the final solution of the question of the place of their burial. "

Synod proposed to make a temporary burial, and to complete all the studies in order to obtain indisputable results, stop quarrels in the community on the issue. Unfortunately, the voice of the Church was not heard.

When the investigation was closed, the search for the remains of Tsarevich Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria Nikolaevna conducted since 1992 by specialists of the Institute of History and Archaeology was stopped because of the termination of funding. But it was continued by enthusiasts.

#### *Excavations in 2007*

Vitaly Shitov, local historian from Ekaterinburg and member of the Military History Club "Mountain Shield" Nikolai Neuyemen organized a group of searchers who at the weekend conducted exploration using probes and dug pits.

July 29, 2007 one of the search engines - Leonid Vohmyakov probe found bonfire. Without informing the head of archaeological works, he will "pierced it on the entire surface to a greater depth (which led to the destruction of the artifacts)," and then began to dig a hole from which several human bones, coal, iron parts, fragments of pottery drew. Only after he reported the discovery team leader Grigoriev, who phoned to archaeologist Kurlaev and Avdonin. "Having gone after them, he asked searchers to refrain from further probing." But when they arrived, they saw that the search engine Plotnikov has expanded pit up to 1 meter in diameter and a depth of 0.5 m. Arrangement of findings thus was not prepared, soil was not sieved (later found in the soil 3 teeth).

Scientific excavations according to archeological rules on 100 square meters lasted from 30th of July to 6th of August. Coals, nails, plates and corners of the boxes, three pistol bullet with traces of exposure to high temperatures and harsh chemicals possible, fragments of pottery, is completely identical

fragments found in the burial of bodies during excavations of 9 bodies in 1991, a fragment of black cloth, bone fragments and teeth were found during excavations. Anatomical compliance interposition of bone were observed.

#### *Examinations in 2007 - 2009*

46 bone fragments and 7 teeth or it's fragments were researched. Most of the bone fragments (35 of 46) had an extremely low weight (within 3 g), and poorly differentiated anatomically. It was found 10 bone fragments reliably belonging to a man and admitting the main features of group identity of personality.

In the study it was found that all of these 10 fragments of bone and 7 teeth fragments are parts of skeletons of two people. 7 bone fragments and probably 4 teeth belong to skeleton of male adolescent (probably of age 12 - 14) . 3 bone fragments and probably 3 tooth - to the skeleton of a woman (probably of age 18 - 19) .

Some remains of bones and teeth have defining characteristics of high temperatures and sulfuric acid. These infrared spectrophotometry showed that the corpses were burned at the stake, and not in the furnace; that the remains were burned first, and only then doused with sulfuric acid, and that the conditions for long-term effects of acid on the ground have not been established.

The overall conclusion of the examination is: "based on gender and age-old graves and conditions aimed at the destruction of carcasses, bone objects could belong to Tsarevich Alexei Nikolayevich and Grand Duchess Maria Nikolaevna were born respectively in 1904 and 1899, shot in July 1918".

For genetic analysis experts were selected three well-preserved bone fragments and bone samples from the burial site, discovered in 1991, allegedly belonging to Emperor Nicholas II, Empress Alexia and their daughters - Olga, Tatiana and Anastasia.

Conclusions of the examination are as follows: "According to genetic data, it is impossible to identify which one of the daughters is in the grave. It is well established that a woman, whose bone fragments and teeth are found in the burial of 2007 is the daughter of Tsar Nicholas II and the daughter of the Empress Alexandra Feodorovna Romanova. On the basis of studied samples of males from the burial in 2007, it may be identified as a son of Emperor Nicholas II and son of the Empress Alexandra Feodorovna Romanova, Tsarevich Alexei Nikolaevich Romanov. "



New genetic studies of bone samples from the burial of nine people in 1991, carried out on a new level and enabling the highest degree of reliability, confirmed the findings of genetic examinations of 1992 - 1998.

On the second grave discovered in 2007, experts noted that "it was revealed a sharp discrepancy between the calculated and the actual weight of the ash, which shows that the prospecting work was discovered only one of several criminal burial places of two people." It would seem that this conclusion is pushing to continue the investigation to find other graves, but this task is ignored.

*The positive results of the investigation of the General Prosecutor's Office*

Today the investigation of the General Prosecutor's Office in 1993 - 2009 is the most comprehensive study on the issue of the execution and burial of the remains of the royal family and their entourage despite all the deficiencies noted. Among the most important positive results of the investigation should be noted.

1. Determination of the persons who took the decision to execute the Royal family

The investigation examined the issue in details - how the decision was made about the shooting of the Royal family. Although the massacre of the Royal family was perfected in extrajudicial way, in the beginning central Bolshevik government hatched a plan of show trial.

Leaders of the Urals looked at it differently. At a time when the Royal family was in Tobolsk, the Presidium of the Ural Regional Council without documenting decided to destroy it. When the Council of People Commissars took the decision to transfer the Royal family from Tobolsk to Yekaterinburg, Urals authorities have given guarantees of the inviolability of the Royal family before the trial. Relocation of the Royal family was assigned to the old Ural militant Konstantin Yakovlev (Myachin), which have been given extraordinary powers. In spite of the guarantees issued, Ural Council troops were taken three attempts to destroy Nicholas II. All these attempts were prevented only by the intervention of Yakovlev (Myachina).

Beloborodov frankly admits: "We thought that, perhaps, do not even need to bring Nicholas II in Yekaterinburg that if given the favorable conditions during his transport, he should be shot on the road. This mandate had Zaslavsky and all the while trying to take steps to its implementation, albeit to no avail. "

During the time of the Royal family in custody in Yekaterinburg Ural ChK falsified correspondence of the Royal family of a "officer" who sought to organize an escape from the Ipatiev House in order to prove the existence of the anti-Bolshevik conspiracy. Having these "proofs" of the conspiracy, the representatives of the presidium of Ural Council a decided to initiate in Central Executive Committee and the CPC, execution of the Royal Family or - Tsar Nicholas. To this end, the military commissioner of the Urals Goloshchekin left for Moscow, where he met Lenin and Sverdlov.

Neither Lenin nor Sverdlov gave an authorization for execution. Lenin still wanted to organize a trial. "This all-Russian court trial! With the publication in newspapers. Calculate how human and material damage to the country autocrat inflicted during the reign. How many revolutionaries hung, how many died in prison on useless war! To answer to all the people! Do you think just a dark little man believed in our "good" priest-king? How long ago our good St. Petersburg worker went to the Winter Palace with banners? Only some 13 years ago! An open court trial over Nicholas the Bloody should must dispel in smoke this incomprehensible "Russian" credulity ".

Refusing Goloshchekin , Sverdlov, nevertheless, said goodbye to him rather ambiguous phrase: "So, Philip, tell comrades: the Central Executive Committee there is no official sanction to the execution." It can be understood as follows: though you don't have an official sanction, you can act independently as appropriate.

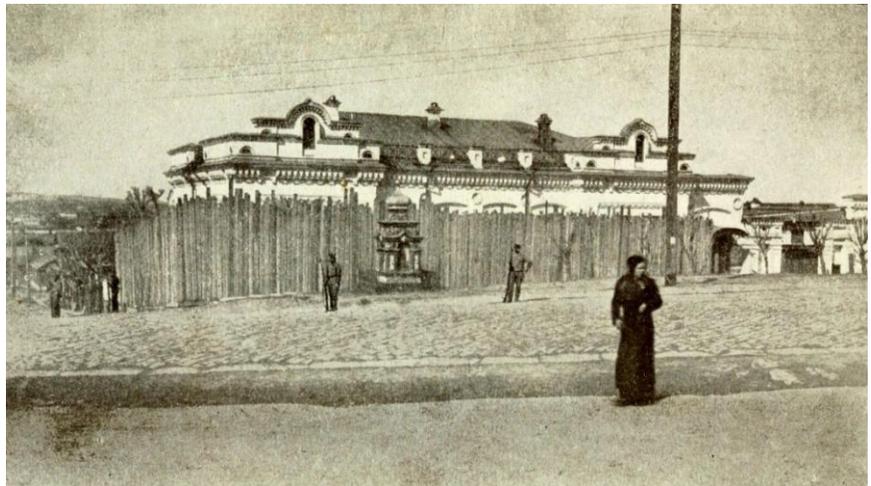
Goloshchekin was ack in Yekaterinburg on 12ve of July. On the same day, July 12, 1918 the Presidium of the Ural Regional Soviet of Workers, Peasants and Red Army Deputies adopted a formal decision on

the execution of the former Emperor. At the same time it was decided not documented the decision to execute the Royal family and members of the entourage.

The original of this resolution is not found (investigators believe that it was gone, along with all the archives of Ural Council and UralChK in July 1918), but of a resolution indirectly evidenced by the fact that before the shooting Jurowski read a paper with the motivation of execution. The text of the decision was published a week later, when the leadership of the Urals have already been evacuated to Perm, it said: "In view of the Czech-Slovak gang threatened the capital of the Red Urals, Ekaterinburg, because the crowned executioner can avoid the court of the people (just discovered a plot of Whites, had to kidnap the family of the Romanovs), Presidium of the Regional Committee of the will of the people, decided: shoot the former Tsar Nicholas Romanov, guilty before the people in countless bloody crimes."

July 16, the day preceding the death of the Royal family, telegram was received addressed Lenin and Sverdlov informing of the decision taken in respect of Nicholas II. About the upcoming executions of family members and members of the entourage said nothing. The text of the telegram was drawn up in such a way that the lack of response means the consent of the central government with the decision. Investigation did not find answer of Lenin or Sverdlov to the telegram.

July 17th, 1918 Encrypted telegram was sent: to the People's Commissars: "Moscow Kremlin to the Secretary of the CPC Gorbunov reverse test. Pass Sverdlov that the whole family suffered the same fate as the official head of the family dies during evacuation".



Morning of July 18th Beloborodov contacted by telegraph with Sverdlov and conveyed a message about the shooting and the draft text for publication.

Sverdlov said: "Today, I shall report to the Bureau of the Central Executive Committee of your decision. There is no doubt that it will be approved. Notice of execution should be followed by the central government, until it refrain from publishing."

In the evening, July 18th, 1918 decision of the Presidium of Ural Council the shooting of Nicholas II was recognized as the best by Presidium of Central Committee, and at night of 18th to 19th of July was taken into consideration at a meeting of the CPC.

## 2. Definition of the participants shooting the Royal family

Another important result of the investigation - the definition of executioners of the Royal family and their servants. The investigation concluded that the actual perpetrators of the shooting were Yakov Yurovsky (Yankel Haimovich), Grigory Petrovich Nikulin, Mikhail Medvedev (Kudrin), Piotr Zakharovich Ermakov, and Pavel Spiridonovich Medvedev. In addition to them in the execution team members attended internal security Ipatiev House. Reliably not set, who of them participated in shooting. It could be: Alexey Georgievich Kabanov, Victor Nikiforovich Netrebin, Stepan Petrovich Vaganov and Yan Martynovich Tselms (Tselmo).

## 3. Reconstruction of the shooting and hiding the remains

The investigation, based on the memories of participants in the events, the White Guard investigation materials, modern expertise with a high degree of detail reconstructed the course of execution and hiding the bodies.

Memories of the participants shooting starkly contrasted to the myth of the investigator Sokolov concerning the actions of security officers. According to Sokolov - killers were experienced, brilliantly prudent and practically left no traces, they are some super villains that put monstrous goals and reach them easily. Memoirs of participants of events clearly shows that it is not. Butchers didn't have thought-out plan of execution and burial. Before making a decision about the shooting, and they were still discussing options such as "to kill all the by daggers in their beds" or "to throw grenades to the rooms." Have not been implemented: a deliberate selection of executors, preparation of the necessary means of transport, intelligence on the ground, even a shovels were not been prepared. All of this demonstrate total lack of calculation and experience they have acquired only with time.

Prior to execution future torturers were in a state of nervous excitement. Kabanov testifies: "Nerves of all of us involved in the execution have been stretched to the breaking point."

On 16th of July execution and the concealment of bodies immediately went not on the script. Vehicle with Ermakov, which should remove the body was late for 1.5 hours. Only after the arrival of the machine Yurovsky woke Botkin and asked everyone to get dressed and come downstairs. It took about another 45 minutes of tense waiting, and about 2 hours and 15 minutes at night Royal family met their killers in the basement of the Ipatiev House.

Unexpectedly execution was dragged, shooting randomly, they not only could not get into some of the victims, but also touched some of their team. Picture of the massacre - a thick powder smoke, pools of blood, smashed brains, the smell of blood, urine, groans of the dying - all strongly acted on firing squad, someone fell into a stupor, Ermakov was absolutely furious, some people vomit.

After the first volleys Tsesarevich Alexei, Duchesses Olga, Tatiana, Anastasia, Dr. Botkin, and Demidova were still alive. First torturers shoot them, and then finished them off the blows of bayonets and rifle butts. According to the memoirs of one of the participants - "it was the most terrible moment of their death. They will not die, screaming, moaning, cringe. Especially the person (Demidova) was dying hardly. Ermakov rend her entire breast. Beats bayonet he did so much that each bayonet stuck deep into the floor. "

It turned out that some of the victims had corsets with diamonds sewn into them which prolonged the suffering of the unfortunate. Once the torturers saw the jewels, immediately began looting. Yurovsky had great difficulty to prevent him (later they collected about 7 kg of diamonds from the clothes).

Nobody knew where are the mines, where it was necessary to carry the bodies. Too many people was involved in the operation, Ermakov led the team of riders with cabs, about 25 people. Yurovsky was angry that instead of carts they took cabs, which is inconvenient to load the body. This team of workers invited by Ermakov, was like a gang of robbers (Jurowski names his squad Tabor), they began to be indignant that they were unable to take part in the shooting. Yurovsky sent them away, fearing for jewelry. The place where it all happened, it was quite busy: on the Koptiyaki road peasants went to the market, went to the hay. While Red Army surrounded road, and sent back to the peasants, the number of witnesses of the funeral grew uncontrollably.

With great difficulty, in the morning they found the mine. By order of Jurowski began to undress the corpses, collect jewels, clothes and shoes to burn and dump the body into the mine. They didn't blow up the ice at the mine before they throw the bodies, so the burial was almost at the surface. They tried to scatter on top of mine grenades - to no avail. Thus secret burial failed.



July 17th Yurovsky went to report the situation in Ural Council where they decided to make reburial. He suggested the use of deep abandoned mines located at a distance of about 9 km of the Moscow highway. In Yekaterinburg Jurowski took food, got kerosene and sulfuric acid. Back to Ganina Pit he returned only on the night of 17th to 18th of July.

Yurovsky recalled: "Extraction of corpses was not an easy matter. By morning, however, we have learned the corpses." Medvedev (Kudrin) said that when the body was taken out, it turned out that "the icy water of the mine not only completely washed away the blood, but also froze the body so that they looked like living - on the faces of the Tsar, women and girls blush even tread."

Rodzinskiy says: "It would appear at this stage first of all it should be decided, where and how to bury bodies, and then to take action. But it turned out the other way around. We arrived and the first thing to do - pulled them all and laid down." "And what to do next? We got up. Nothing is prepared. And we not even think about it. And then, you know, is already dawning, near the road. Day. People going to the market."

Medvedev (Kudrin) evidenced that the attempt to burn some bodies failed: "Guys didn't have a plan for disposal, no one knew where to take corpses or where to hide. So we decided to try to burn at least a portion of shooted to the number was less than eleven. They took the body of Nicholas II, Alexei, Queen, Dr. Botkin, doused them with gasoline and set on fire. Frozen corpses smoldering, stank, but not burned. Then they decided to bury the remains of the Romanov somewhere. " But this attempt failed when they dug a pit, out of the bushes came a local farmer, who saw it, he could be immediately killed, but he was a friend of Ermakov.



Then Yurovsky went to Moscow highway to watch the deep mines to which he was pointed. On the way, the car broke down, and, after waiting for half an hour, Yurovsky decided to walk. He liked mines. On the way back Jurowski stopped two riders, took their horses and rode to Ekaterinburg. Thence he sent to Ganina Yama trucks and drove himself. "Having passed the railway line, two miles, I met a convoy moving corpses" - says Jurowski. But security officers could not reach deep mines because the car stuck all the time. "I was assured that the road here is good - says Jurowski - but in the way it was a swamp. So we took sleepers to put to this place. Laid out. We drove well. In steps of ten from this place we stuck again. Baggage at least an hour. They pulled the truck. Moved on. Again stuck. Carry up to 4 in the morning. Nothing was done. It was late. ... The audience was busy third day. Exhausted. Do not sleep. They started to worry: every minute expected that Czechs would take Ekaterinburg. We had to find another way." "About 4 on 19th car completely stuck, so nothing else left, except to bury or burn corpses before reaching the mines."

So did security officers, 9 bodies were buried in a pit on the road, and 2 bodies they tried to burn and remains to bury separately. Yurovsky reported that two bodies (Tsarevich Alexei and maid of honor) was separated from the others and tried to burn, then buried remains under of the fire and again kindled a fire to cover their tracks well. Rodzinskiy adds: "It is important to do but number 11, because of this feature, you can find the burial."

Based on aggregate data investigation concluded that Grand Duke Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria were buried separately.

Yurovsky recalls: "Meantime they dug a mass grave for the rest. To 7 o'clock in the morning pit in depths - 2 yard and 3 - in the square was ready. The bodies piled in a hole, poured over the face, and everything the body of sulfuric acid. Pelted the earth and brushwood, imposed sleepers on the top and traveled several times -there were traces of the pit. The secret was well kept - Whites did not find the burial place. " Medvedev (Kudrin) confirms: "It is here, under the bridge of the old railroad sleepers - in the place of a country road to the Koptiyaki village where the car is stuck Jurowski - in dirty swampy pit, doused with sulfuric acid, members of the Royal family found solace worthy."

Looking at all this, it becomes clear that the funeral in the Wetlands on the road - this is not villainous cunning but an accident, an act of desperation, deadly tired and Reds who didn't sleep for two nights,

The proposed reconstruction is based on the result of an enormous amount of factual material and totally refutes Sokolov version of the complete destruction of remains. The conclusion of a forensic medical examination contains a description of the experiment, proving that even the partial destruction of human bones with an acid required: 1. The acid in an amount at least twice superior body weight (and security officers had only 182 kg). 2. Capacity for immersing the body in acid (security officers didn't have it). 3. The time at least 4 days (the security officers had less than a day). Therefore, it is obvious that the Bolsheviks used sulfuric acid not to destroy the corpses, but in order to make them unrecognizable.

As regards the possibility of destruction remains by fire, the forensics data say that the burning of the body is only possible in a special chamber at a temperature of 860-1100 ° C. In a typical fire that fueled the KGB, the combustion temperature is not more than 600 ° C, under these conditions, the bones retain their anatomical structure, and only charred. Thus, the examination data fully confirmed the facts presented in the memories of participants of hiding bodies.

#### 4. Denial version of "ritual murder"

Because Russian society, both in Russia and in exile, immediately after the assassination of the Royal family, and today, many church people held and continue to hold this version, it is a welcome analysis of this issue. The investigation considered the following arguments.

#### Poem from Heine

On the wall of the room where the murder took place, the final lines of Heine poem "Balthazar" were written which in Russian translation are as follows:

"But before the day breaks,  
Slaves killed the king."

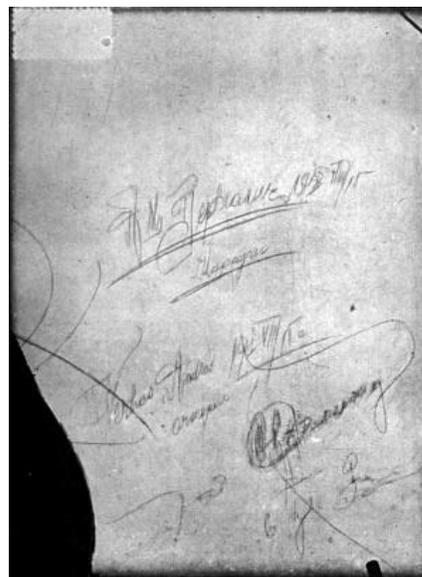
General Diteriks argued that this couplet was written in pencil by half intelligent hand on Jewish-German jargon.

First, in the writing of Yiddish is used only the Hebrew alphabet, and the text in the room was written in German.

Second, the White Guard consequently could not set the time the inscription on the wall. The fact that after Bolsheviks left the city the Ipatiev house was not guarded, and many people have visited the house, out of curiosity, took things "in memory". As the result - interior has been changed.

Third, there is no evidence that Heine has been associated with some Jewish religious trends. Although he came from a Jewish family, but this family wasn't religious. To gain access to the profession, Heine was baptized, but all his life remained indifferent to religion, and at his funeral, at his request religious rites wasn't performed. Fourthly, it is difficult to imagine that this inscription was made by a killer, for the reason that they are called "slave", "slaves." If they commit a certain ritual murder, they had to feel as judges, who stood above the Monarch.

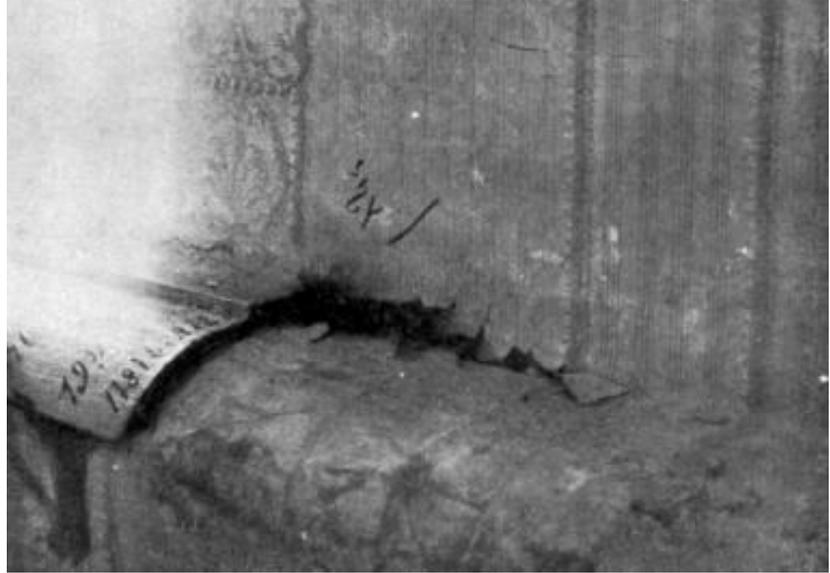
All available evidence suggests only that before the start of the investigation someone who was familiar with the works of Heine and mastered the German language visited this room. We can assume that it was either someone from the White Czechs are fluent in the German language, and for which the



Bolsheviks who killed the King, were "slaves" or Austrian-Hungarian prisoner from the protection of the house Ipatiev, who also spoke German.

### *"Kabbalistic signs"*

In April 1919 on the windowsill of the same room where were written the lines from Heine, Sokolov found the numbers and symbols, which he interpreted as a "Kabbalistic". From the transcript of the inspection of the room where the execution was carried out, we find out that it was the four groups of numbers. "In the distance of these inscriptions on the wallpaper some signs were painted as black lines". To date, no researcher has not proved that these "signs" are meaningful phrase and generally have any meaning. Most likely, the strokes that Sokolov found "cabalistic signs" were a simple test of the pen.



### *People like rabbis*

The third fact, according to supporters of "ritual version" are witnesses that near the Ipatiev house and near the site of the destruction of the bodies of the Royal family people like rabbis, a "jet-black beard" have been seen.

The presence at the execution, and concealment of corpses of people with a black beard is quite possible to explain by the custom of wearing the beard. It is known that after the execution of the Royal family before leaving for Moscow Jurowski wore a beard. As for any other signs of "rabbis" - pieces of clothing, hats, etc., then this is not a word in the testimony of witnesses.

### *Beheading and delivery to the Kremlin*

The old version of the General Diterikhs of cutting heads of Emperor, the Empress and Grand Duke, and deliver them to the Kremlin today defends Peter V. Multatuli in his book "Witnessing to Christ to death ..." published in 2006, decorating it with new "ritual details". Note that there is no evidence of this hypothesis (except that the White Guard investigation did not find the remains) as there was no and no, everything is built only on speculation. The main argument, destroying all of these conjectures consequence rightly believes finding nine skulls in the grave, opened in 1991, and fragments of two skulls found in 2007

The final and definitive conclusion of the investigation on the whole range "ritual" murder of the Imperial family argument is: "the decision on the execution of the entire Royal family was not associated with any religious or mystical motives."

Refutation version of "ritual" murder of the Royal family - it is a good contribution to the study of an extremely important question of the causes of the tragedy that took place in Russia in the twentieth century. We have to admit that the explanation of the causes of a significant part of the church community is inclined to different ideas of conspiracy, and the enemies of Orthodoxy and Russia, regardless of the name (the Masons, Jews, Satanists, world government, etc.) are endowed with some invincible mystic powers, which resistance is futile. Not only that, such a simplistic perception of the historical process actually closes the possibility of genuine understanding of the causes of the tragedy, but it also undermines Christians will to resist evil.

### 5. Detection and identification of remains

Although the definition of places of burial of the Royal family is not merit of investigation, but it prepared evidence confirming that in 1979 the group Ryabov - Avdonin found the grave of 9 members of the

Royal family and their servants, and in 2007, searchers found fragments of the remains of Tsarevich Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria.



### *Conclusion*

Despite all of these positive results of the investigation, a number of important questions remain unexplored. Apparently so in September 2015 Russia's Investigative Committee reopened the investigation into the death of the Royal family. September 23 investigators conducted the exhumation of the remains of the Romanov, buried in the Peter and Paul Fortress, and seized samples of the remains of Nicholas II and Alexandra Feodorovna.

It is hoped that in addition to the repetition of genetic examinations, which are unlikely to give any new findings, the investigation will end the research in other important areas. Answers to questions about the role of the minister Shchelokov in Ryabov's search, about who and when laid cables for the disposal, give an explanation of the small number of remains of nine bodies can receive and analyze samples of skeletal remains, exported Sokolov in Europe as well as continue to search for other places of burial of the remains of Tsarevich Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria.

---

### **Orthodox activists intend to achieve the renaming of "Voikovskaya" by the 100th anniversary of the execution of the Imperial family**

27 January. RIA Novosti - Philip Grill, Orthodox activist, leader of the public project "To rename Voikovskaya" said at a roundtable discussion at the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation: "I told the officials that we will not stop. We will in a legal way draw attention to this topic. We will picket, write letters to the authorities, the issue of renaming the agenda cannot be removed. Soon the 100th anniversary of the revolution, the execution of the Imperial family, and we cannot imagine that we will be celebrating the 100th anniversary of those tragedies, with the name in honor of this odious and unacceptable figure Voikov, we must ensure renaming of the station".



## President Vladimir Putin talked about Lenin and Nicholas II

26 January. ITAR-TASS - On the 25 of January, the Russian President critically addressed, for the second time in five days, the legacy of Soviet founder Vladimir Lenin in an a forum for the "Popular Front movement" held in Stavropol.

Last Thursday, he caused a stir by saying, during a meeting of the Presidential Council for Science and Education, that Lenin had been responsible for ideas that led ultimately to the collapse of the Soviet Union. Putin said then that Lenin's ideas like providing regions with autonomy "planted an atomic bomb under the building that is called Russia which later exploded."

In his address in Stavropol – to activists of his Russian Popular Front movement – Putin reiterated those points, recalling that Lenin and his successor Joseph Stalin had disagreed on the matter, with Stalin arguing in favor of a unitary state. Stalin was overruled, and Lenin's model that allowed for the possibility of territories seceding led to the Soviet Union's eventual breakup, he said.

In his 2005 state of the nation address, Putin famously described the collapse of the Soviet Union as "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the [20th] century."



Putin also criticized Lenin for the execution of Russia's last Royal ruler, Tsar Nicholas II, along with his family and servants in 1918, and for killing large numbers of Orthodox priests.

"Everyone accused the Tsarist regime of repressions. But what did the establishment of Soviet power begin with? Mass repressions. I won't talk about the scale, but simply of the most appalling example: the destruction and shooting of the Imperial family together with their children. Perhaps there was some idea that it was necessary to eradicate, as it were, any possible heirs. But why Doctor Botkin was killed? Why servants, people generally of proletarian origin were killed? What is the purpose? To cover up the crime."

"Remember, we didn't use to think much about this. Very well, they fought against people who resisted Soviet power with arms in their hands, but why they killed the priests? In 1918 alone, they shot 3,000 priests, and in ten years 10,000 of them. In the Don region, they threw hundreds under the ice. When you start to think about it, and you get new information, you evaluate many things differently."

On the issue of burying the body of Vladimir Lenin he said - "It should be addressed, as well as other similar issues carefully so that it does not lead to a division of the society".

"Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, in one of his letters to Molotov, I think, wrote - I can't quote him exactly – that the more reactionary representatives of the bourgeoisie and the priesthood we shoot, the better. You know, this approach doesn't tally with some of our former ideas about the essence of power."

"And the role of the communist, Bolshevik party in the collapse of the front in the First World War is well known. What was the result? We lost to a country which lost, since several months later Germany surrendered, and we ended up losing to losers, a unique occurrence in history. And for what purpose? For the sake of seizing power. How should we, knowing this today, evaluate this situation which brought enormous, simply colossal, losses to the country."

---

## Tsarskoye Selo' exhibition "A View from the Past"

January 22 Tsarskoye Selo museum-reserve opened the exhibition "Looking from the past" in the Grand Hall of the Catherine Palace.

The exhibition presents the portrait of Tsarevich Alexei Nicholaievich, which was found summer 2013 in a house under restoration, on Sadovaya Street 10, in Pushkin. Now it is restored and for the first time exhibited for the public.

Tsarskoye Selo Experts suggest that the portrait was made by Peter Petrovich Pershin, after a photo made in 1913 of the Tsarevich while in Livadia. Pershin is known as have given painting lessons to Tsarevich Alexei.

Peter Petrovich Pershin (1877 - 1956) was born in Povolszhie. He served as an officer in Moscow Grenadier Regiment. Since childhood he was fond of drawing. Was sent to Imperial Arts Academy. Attended battle-painting workshop of N. S. Samokish. Made a number of works on historical themes connected with 300-d anniversary of Romanov House. In the beginning of First World War, in 1914 as painter of battle scenes was in General Headquarters. Visited a lot of sections of the front. In 1920 emigrated with parts of White Army. He lived in Spain and France. Made books graphics, illustrated children books about Ancient Rus history, icon paintings, restoration. Died in Grass (France) at age 79.

The exhibition also presents masterpieces of portraiture from the collection of Karisalov family.

Among them there are portraits of the XVIII-XIX centuries artists such as Dmitry Levitsky, Vladimir Borovikovsky, father and son Lumpy, Orest Kiprensky, Karl Briullov, and Vasily Tropinin. Some of the works have never before been exhibited to the public.



*The portrait when found and after restoration*



The exhibition includes 29 portraits of Russian and foreign artists who lived and worked in Russia. Among the absolute masterpiece - a portrait of an young Alexander I (by Vladimir Borovikovsky); Portrait of Peter I (by Yang Kupetsky); portrait of a Grand Lady (by Georg Christoph Groot); portrait of Josephine Friedrichs and his son (by Henri-Francois Rizener), and a portrait of Catherine II (by Dmitry Levitsky).

The portrait by Borovikovsky (1802-1805. Oil on canvas), Emperor Alexander I is depicted in the uniform of the Life Guards regiment with the star and ribbon of the Order of St. Andrew. Ermine mantle attributed over the finished image and later painted by Borovikovsky.

Portrait of Peter I painted by Jan Kupetsky (1711. Oil on canvas) was made during a meeting of the Russian Emperor and the painter in Carlsbad (now - Karlovy Vary) and Torgau. Apparently, during this time the artist executed several portraits of Peter I. In a letter to Prince Alexei from January 12, 1712 Peter demanded immediately send "my person, made in Torgau" and reminds about his portraits in the letters of 14 of February and - 10 of March 1712. The need for making several portraits of the Emperor was obvious. In Torgau on 14 of October, 1711 wedding of Tsarevich Alexei with Princess Charlotte Christina Sophia took place. This portrait had never been known to researchers in our country. Experts are inclined to believe that this is the first of the portraits of Peter made by Kupetsky in 1711. The canvas was in the Castle Blankenberg of Duke Ludwig Rudolf of Brunswick-Lüneburg and appeared there, most likely at the same time of the wedding of the Duke's daughter and Prince Alexei.



In the brilliant portrait of a Grand Lady by Groot (1742. Oil on canvas), you can see the famous method of the artist - a brushstroke of vermilion in the eye Iris. The composition of fabric, figures, refined and slightly cool colors combined with youth, beauty and melancholy grace of Lady allow us to call the work of one of the brightest samples of rococo chamber portrait.



The large formal portrait of Josephine Friedrichs and son (1815. Oil on canvas) Rizener made on the order of Grand Duke Konstantin Pavlovich. According to experts, Lady and her son were standing on the terrace of the Belvedere Palace in Warsaw. Josephine Friedrichs, since 1816 (after the award of the Russian nobility) Juliana M. Alexandrova - was mistress of Grand Duke Konstantin Pavlovich.

They were in civil marriage from 1806 to 1820 and had a son - Paul Konstantinovich Alexandrov, who received name after his grandfather Paul I, and patronymic - of the godfather - Alexander I. The painting was exhibited in 1902 at the exhibition "150 years of Russian portraiture". In 1905, for its unique artistic and historical point of view Sergei Diaghilev selected it for the exhibition of famous portrait painting in the Tauride Palace. After 1917, the canvas likely, along with its owner, went abroad. For a while it was in Italy in a private collection, but now - back in Russia completed Karisalov collection.



"Portrait of Catherine II" (after 1792. Oil on canvas) by Levitsky, by assumption, experts, could have been in the Hermitage - the inscription on the back indicates a duplicate on a new canvas by the restorer of the Hermitage Mikhail Sidorov at the end of the 1900s.

"Portrait of Princess Shakhovskaya" (1785) painted also by Levitsky - casual happy discovery by collector: previous owner was a descendant of Italian traveling salesman, bought the painting at one of the European auctions. It is a pair portrait to oval one from Shuvalov Palace in St. Petersburg which is in the Art Gallery of Armenia. In connection with the acquisition of Karisalov family not only the authenticity of oval portrait was confirmed, but also exact date of creation - 1785. According to experts, it is difficult to overestimate the scientific value of such a significant expansion of the list of well-known works of the first European-style Russian portraitist Dmitry Levitsky.



For the museum is it particularly symbolic that the owner of the exhibited masterpieces is a member of the Club of Friends of the State Museum "Tsarskoye Selo", patron of the arts. Thanks to Michael Karisalov the collection was replenished with valuable objects of Russian art. They form a part of the exhibition presented in the first antechambers. Thanks to Michael Karisalov landscape with a Raspy

Arbor by Perrault, a dish from Wedgwood factory with the Imperial Farm, a portrait of Aristarkh Petrovich Kashkin, manager of Tsarskoye Selo during Catherine' II reign; Chinese porcelain vase from the living room of the Big Blue Palace at Tsarskoye Selo; Bobby-table of the XVIII century and a set of three vases in the Chinese style of decoration of the Alexander Palace; and Vase of Korgon porphyry returned to the museum.

At the opening ceremony Mikhail Karisalov donated to the museum one more painting with Tsarskoye Selo inventory numbers - "Alexander I praying at the tomb of Alexander Nevsky on the eve of departure to Taganrog", a work by Gregory Tchernetsoff, stolen during the German occupation in the palace. The return is a landmark event for the museum. It is known that Alexander I was leaving for his last journey to the south from Kamennooostrovsky Palace. The Emperor stopped on the bridge and stared at Peter and Paul Fortress, and then a few hours praying in the Holy Trinity Cathedral of Alexander Nevsky Lavra - the episode is captured by the artist.

The scene in the cathedral until recently was known from an engraving of Ivan Chesky made according to the original Tchernetsoff painting and engraved, painted with oil paints the image and pasted it onto a canvas (the two works are kept in the Hermitage). But the first in this series was the beautiful original painting by Tchernetsoff , which before the war was in Tsarskoye Selo. It was found two years ago in an auction in Berlin. In Berlin the museum tried to buy back the painting, but failed. Now thanks to Michael Karisalov the picture will find its permanent place in the museum and will be on display in the exhibition "Commemorative room of Alexander I" in the Catherine Palace.

The exhibition will run until March 21, 2016.



- Videos - 1) <http://topspb.tv/news/news95615/>  
2) <http://www.ntv.ru/novosti/1597779/>  
3) [http://www.rtr.spb.ru/vesti/vesti\\_2014/upload/22-1-2016/vyst.mp4](http://www.rtr.spb.ru/vesti/vesti_2014/upload/22-1-2016/vyst.mp4)  
4) <http://topspb.tv/news/news95540/>  
5) [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/147563/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/147563/)

## Activities in Tsarskoye Selo



### *Bridge of XVIII century is renovated in the Alexander Park*

The museum-reserve "Tsarskoye Selo" complete restoration of one of the three metal bridges in the Alexander Park. These bridges have been created by the architect Giacomo Quarenghi on the 'Ponds' in the 1790s.

Designs were made in the Sestroretsk Ironworks and suffered greatly during the Great Patriotic War. Bridge №3 was in poor condition: all the supporting structures had numerous defects and damage, and railing was totally lost.

- Restoration of lost items is made on the basis of preserved historical analogues and iconography. Marble for fencing bollards are specially selected and brought from Sayan deposit. Done a painstaking, meticulous work, which has helped to restore one of the almost lost monuments of hydraulic engineering of the XVIII century. The works were coordinated by the Committee for State Control, Use and Protection of Monuments - says Acting chief architect of the State Museum "Tsarskoye Selo" Maria Ryadova.



Project documentation for the restoration of bridges was designed in 2011, the restoration work, which was conducted by "restorative design and research center" Specialist ", began in 2015. Masters restored metal, recreated marble stone and metal railing, forged links and carry out work on the device of road surface in accordance with the historical data.

It is planned that bridges №1 and №2 be restored by May 2017.

Recall that the company "RPNTS" Specialist "has worked a long time with the museum. Its masters has restored small Chinese bridges in the Alexander Park; bridges, designed by Giacomo Quarenghi, at the pavilion "Kitchen Ruin" in the Catherine Park and Hanging (Tryasuchev) bridge in the Alexander Park - Russia's first suspension bridge, inscribed in landscape architecture.



Tsarskoye Selo received as a gift from friends dresses in Art Nouveau style. The gift is invaluable because in the museum's collection of dresses from the era of Emperor Nicholas II are less than two dozen. Museum workers are seeking every opportunity to fill up the collection. Therefore, each new arrival for them - a real treat.

Masterpieces from lace, silk and satin - the last representatives of the era of pre-industrial production, when the clothes was manually ordered according to the figure, with the help of pins. Former owner of these dresses are fortunate to live in a Belle Époque - a time when a woman was no more than a showcase for the well-being of her husband. Insanely expensive material, moreover, is so delicate, it is unlikely that these dresses ever handed over to the laundry.

It is clear that to maintain such a delicate dresses is a lot of hard work. The museum received them as a gift from the Canadian Association of immigrants.

Video - [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/146955/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/146955/)



"Tsarskoye Selo" established 60 feeders for winter feeding of birds in Catherine, Alexander and Babolovsky Park.

In the 1900s in the Park was observed mass death of old trees. In 1912, on the orders of Emperor Nicholas II was investigate its causes and a commission was composed of experts of the Imperial Botanical Garden.

One of the main recommendations of the Commission was: the birds must be fed at their permanent home park, in guarded plantations, so they will destroy the harmful insects.

Every year for these purposes the museum buys more than 300 kilograms of sunflower seeds.

Feeders are traditionally installed in places of the greatest concentrations of birds - where birds feel safe. One of them is to the smallest detail recreated on modeled feeders from late XVIII - early XIX century, like "cafe for birds" - it is a two-storey, with 12 entrances, and decorative porch.

Alexander, Catherine and Babolovsky parks are home to many species of birds. During winter in the parks there are about 25 species of birds, including chickadees, nuthatches, pikas, bullfinches, waxwings and tap dancing, crested tit-grenaderki. Birds do not just peck that is prepared for them in the manger, and carefully inspect the branches and trunks of trees in the vicinity, killing overwintering pest species.



## Merry Orthodox Christmas

Night from 6 to 7 of January, 2016 His Holiness Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Kirill conducted at the Cathedral of Christ the Savior Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom in honor of the feast of the Nativity of the Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ,.

His Holiness was joined by Metropolitan Arseny of Istra, the first Vicar of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia in Moscow; Bishop Sergiy of Solnechnogorsk, head of the Administrative Secretariat of the Moscow Patriarchate, Bishop Tikhon of Podolsk, Bishop Tikhon Egoryevsky, executive secretary of the Patriarchal Council for Culture; Archpriest Mikhail Ryazantsev, sacristan of Christ the Savior Cathedral, Schema-archimandrite Eli (Nozdrin); Cathedral clergy and the clergy in Moscow.

Prime Minister of the Russian Federation D.A. Medvedev was among the worshipers of the night service at the Cathedral of Christ the Savior.

Liturgical chants performed Patriarchal Choir of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior (Director I.B. Tolkachev).

After the Divine Liturgy, there was a prayer for peace in Ukraine.

Bishop Sergiy of Solnechnogorsk announced Christmas Message of His Holiness Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Kirill to archpastors, pastors, deacons, monks and all the faithful children of the Russian Orthodox Church.



Primate of the Russian Church and the Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev exchanged congratulations at the altar of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior.



After the Liturgy, His Holiness once again congratulated the clergy and faithful on the holiday:

".....Christmas Day - it's a great celebration of hope for the ineffable love of God...Let this love will not meet our insensitivity, our anger, our lies, our callousness. Let the love of God acts in the world, together with our good works, and may the Lord help us all to live the way they do. Merry Christmas and a great celebration of love and hope, but strengthens our good thoughts and good deeds. Amen".

See the full service here - <https://youtu.be/120KB9Bw8ZI>

---

### For the first time since 1928 Divine Liturgy on Christmas Eve in St. Isaac's Cathedral



7 Jan 2016. "Living Water" - For the first time in decades Divine Liturgy was in St. Isaac's Cathedral on Christmas night, from 6 to 7 January. The service was led by the Senior Priest of the Cathedral, Archpriest Alexy, he was concelebrated by priests from all the deaneries of the diocese, led by deacon Paul Shuklin.

During the service more than 500 people had Communion, and three thousand people prayed in the cathedral.

"We were at the main altar. The liturgy was held in "one breath", after its completion pilgrims remained in the church for a long time and did not want to leave, - said the sacristan of the Cathedral" - Until this year, the Christmas service in Isaac was committed only in the morning, and at night - only at Easter."

Father Alexy noted that for several months the service in the cathedral have been made daily, and the number of his parishioners grew.



St. Isaac's Cathedral was conceived by Peter I, whose birth date falls on the feast day of St. Isaac of Dalmatia. A later version of the church, was designed by Auguste Montferrand, and construction lasted 40 years, with the consecration taking place on June 12, 1858. The Cathedral was granted the status of

the cathedral church of the imperial capital. It was closed in 1928, and later it was opened as a museum. The first service after a long break was made by His Holiness Patriarch Alexy II in 1990. In 2005, an agreement was signed between the St. Petersburg diocese and GMP "St. Isaac's Cathedral" on joint activities in the facilities of the museum complex.

Video - <http://topspb.tv/news/news94416/>

## Honoring Countess Anna Alexeievna Orlova-Chesmenskaya



January 14, 2016 in the Chamber of Commerce of the Russian Federation a traditional celebration "Christmas in Ilyinke" was held. For 12 years it has been organized by the Church of the Prophet Elijah at Ilyinka (located next to Kremlin), with the support of the Chamber of Commerce. The event was opened and chaired by the rector of the Church of the Prophet Elijah, Archpriest Andrei (Rechitsa). He wished all present the blessing of God in the coming year and to stay in the peace and joy to all of us and the world around. Then choir performed Christmas songs.

Evening continued with greetings by the President of the Russian Chamber of Commerce Sergey Katyrin, chairman of the "Union of Russian Paratroopers" and head of the Moscow department of VOOV "Combat Brotherhood" Valery Vostrovin, First Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Defense and Security Council of the Federation Franz Klintsevich, and Deputy Head of Department national policy, inter-regional relations and tourism of Moscow Konstantin Blazhenov.



During the event a little movie about the life of Anna Alexeievna Orlova-Chesmenskaya was shown and then official ceremony took place. A memorial plaque in white marble with the names of Empress Catherine II, Empress Elisabeth Alexeievna (wife of Emperor Alexander I, the founder of Imperial Women's Patriotic Society), Princess Evdokia Nikolaievna Orlova-Chesmenskaya and her daughter Nun Agnes (born Anna A. Orlova-Chesmenskaya - the only daughter of Count Alexei Orlov, an associate of Empress Catherine II) was donated to the Church of Prophet Elijah.





The plaque was donated by Chairwoman of the Women's Patriotic Society Galina Ananina. Ludmila and Paul Kulikovskiy participated in the ceremony.

***Anna Alexeievna Orlova- Chesmenskaya***

Anna A. Orlova- Chesmenskaya may today not be so well known, if one can say she is known at all, but that is a pity as she was one of the most famous Russian philanthropists in her time - kind of a prelude to Grand Duchess Elisabeth Feodorovna. This year it celebrated 230 years since her birth.



*Anna Alexeievna Orlova-Chesmenskaya, with her Catherine II maid of honor sign and the last painting is from 1838.*

Anna A. was the Patron of the Church of the prophet Elijah on Ilyinke and in 1825 on the death of Emperor Alexander I, as a chamber-maid of honor to his wife, Empress Elizabeth Alexeievna, she established at the altar of the church a memorial plaque of white marble with the inscription:

"Remember them, Emperor Alexander I, Count Alexis, Prince Dimitri, 1825".

After Emperor Alexander and Empress Elisabeth's death, Anna A. bequeathed her entire fortune to five churches.

Countess Anna A. Orlova-Chesmenskaya - the only daughter of General-in-Chief Count Alexei G. Orlov-Chesmensky (1735-1807), was born 2 May, 1785, when her father was fifty years old. Her mother Evdokia Nikolaevna Lopuchin died, when Anne was just one year old.

Left without mother, Anna was strengthened in faith. Raised in the strict rules of Orthodoxy, girl was showing special love for God, constantly observing the church statutes.

Already in the age of eight, the girl was presented to Empress Catherine II, and she made her a maid of honor, awarding Anna her diamond cipher. Later, Anna Orlova-Chesmenskaya was maid of honor of to Maria Feodorovna (wife of Emperor Paul I), Empress Elisabeth Alexeievna (the spouse of Emperor Alexander I), Empress Alexandra Feodorovna (wife of Nicholas I) and was awarded the portraits of their Majesties, to be wore on her chest. During the coronation of Emperor Nicholas I, the Countess received the Order of St. Catherine and in 1828 she accompanied the Empress Alexandra Feodorovna on her journey across Russia and abroad.

Anna's father Count Alexei G. Orlov-Chesmensky - brother of Prince Grigory Orlov - was a retired General, living in Moscow, in his house near the Donskoy monastery (now Alexandria Palace), engaged in his favorite activity - horse breeding, developing the horse breed known as the Orlov Trotter. She was only 22 years old when her father died on 5 January 1808 (OS December 24, 1807) and she became heir to her father's vast estate.

Rejecting offers from the highest-ranking suitors, Anna after the death of his father went on a pilgrimage to the monasteries, renouncing secular life, though she did not accept vows as a nun.

In the Patriotic War of 1812 the French troops approached her estate "The Island" near Moscow, and where was the tomb her father Count Alexei Grigorievich Orlov, General-in-Chief, commander of the Russian squadron in the Mediterranean Sea for the victory at Navarino and Chesme (1770) for which he received the title Chesmensky.

The enemy ravaged the neighborhood of Moscow, but General Miloradovich learning they are close to the estate of Countess Orlova, shielded it with his troops and reflected the enemy, did not allow it to plunder the villages or trample the grave of the famous Orlov.

Countess Anna Alexeievna Orlova-Chesmenskaya sent to General Mikhail Andreyevich Miloradovich father's sword, graciously granted to him by Empress Catherine, for the destruction of the Turkish fleet at Chesme.

Anna was looking for a spiritual mentor. Metropolitan Seraphim pointed the young countess to the Archimandrite Photius (Peter Spassky). In 1820, they became acquainted, and the meeting determined the entire life of the countess until her death. He became governor of St. George's Monastery in Novgorod province and Anna bought a house nearby for permanent residence. She lived a most severe monastic life there, while spending a fortune on restoring the monastery.

On relations Archimandrite Photius and Anna has been written and invented even more. Many were unable to avoid bias, including A.S. Pushkin who wrote well known scabrous epigram about the Countess and Archimandrite.



In her estate - at the village of St. Michael - the Countess started the construction of the Church of Archangel Michael. Archbishop Dmitrov Augustine, manager of the Moscow Metropolitan, said: "They asked us from Her Excellency the Countess Anna A. Orlova-Chesmenskaya to build in her neighborhood in the village Church of St. Michael the Archangel, instead of a wooden church and with two chapels: the first - to St. Nicholas, and the second - to Saints Cosma and Damian. The Church of Archangel Michael in the village of St. Michael (now Domodedovo district) was built in 1822 - 1823 years, and was consecrated in 1824. Now the left aisle of the church is listed in the name of the Holy Myrrh-bearers.

Countess Anna Alexeevna Orlova-Chesmenskaya throughout her life continued assist financially and materially to many needy peasants, monasteries and churches.

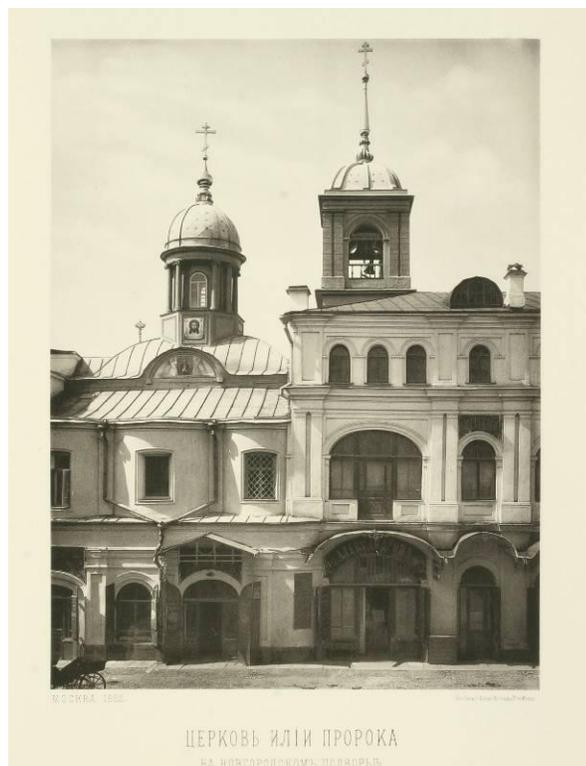
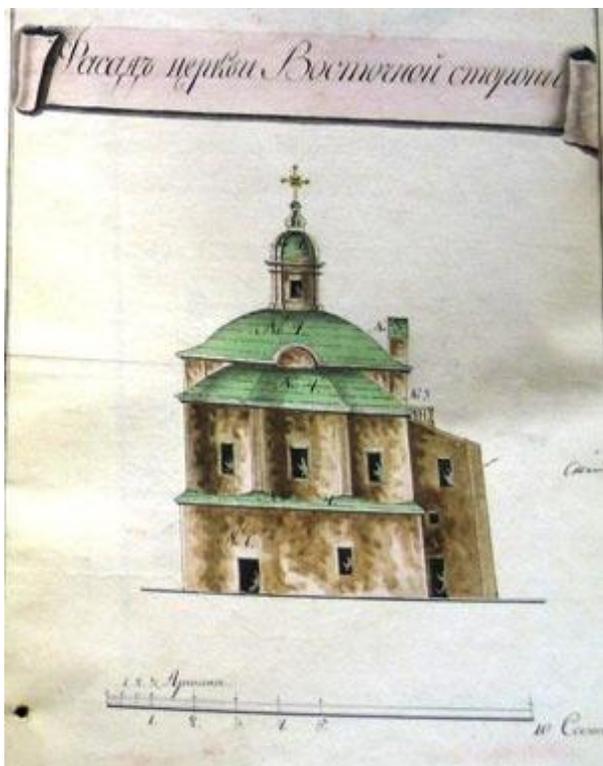
Countess Anna A. Orlova-Chesmenskaya died in 1848, and was buried in the St. George Monastery.

### ***The Church of the Prophet Elijah on Ilyinka***

Construction of the stone church was carried out from 1519 to 1521, near the Moscow trade area (Red Square) at Ilyinsky Monastery. The church burned in 1547, and suffered another fire in 1626. In the Time of Troubles, the monastery was abolished, and the church became a parish. In 1676 the church together with land was transferred to Novgorod Bishops, who build on top of the church, another church in honor of the Prophet Elijah. Ancient lower church was re-consecrated in the name of the Apostle Timothy.

In 1812, together with the entire city the Church of the Prophet Elijah were looted by Napoleon's troops and suffered from a severe fire. But after five years, the church was completely restored.

In the 1820s, to the north side a bell tower was attached. In 1864, after a change of facade and significant restructuring - in the lower church was demolished the gallery in the southern apse and arranged stairs to the upper church.



*The Church of the Prophet Elijah in an early drawing and in a photo from early XX century*

The church was closed in 1923, and then the upper tier of the bell tower was dismantled. From 1930 to 1980 the building of the church housed various institutions. On Good Friday 1995 worship resumed in

the church. In 2000 the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Alexy II visited the church on Holy Saturday. In 2001, with the blessing of His Holiness, the church was dedicated at the main church of the airborne troops of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation.

### ***The Moscow Stock Exchange***

The event on January 14 was held in an interesting building - the former Moscow Stock Exchange. Located in China-town (Moscow), it is a monument of the second half of the XIX century. Built in 1873 - 1875 by architect Alexander Kaminsky in the style of late eclecticism, on the site of the earlier construction of the 1830s (architect Mikhail Bykov) for the Moscow Stock Exchange. Traditionally the spontaneous "exchange" of Moscow merchants was the old Gostiny Dvor in China-town (Crystal Lane) next door. But in 1828 the merchants appealed to the Governor-General, Prince D. Golitsyn with a proposal to establish the Moscow stock exchange. Exchange was opened after eleven years, on 8 of November 1839.



*The old Moscow Stock Exchange in 1840s*

For the construction Moscow merchants bought land at the corner of Ilinka and Rybný lane, where once stood the Demetrios church, abolished in the XVIII century. The first building of the stock exchange, partially funded by Emperor Nicholas I, was built in 1836 - 1839 by architect Mikhail Bykovsky, but soon it became too small. For a building renovation, in 1866 an adjacent portion of area was bought. The new building was ready in 1875. It was designed for a simultaneous reception of up to 1150 people.

In 1925 another floor was built on top, designed by architect John Doe . Since the 1990s the building occupies the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation.



*Left - The Moscow Stock exchange in the 1880s. Right - the building today*

## The Russian Ball in Washington, D.C.

On Saturday, January 9th, at the Cosmos Club, in Washington DC, was arranged a Russian Ball. "Under the Gracious Patronage of Their Highnesses Prince and Princess Dimitri Romanov". Professor and Mrs. Paul du Quenoy, Chairmen, and Prince and Princess Nicholas Obolensky, Co-Chairmen was saying welcome to the strictly black-tie, national uniform and long ball gown event.

The Ball was held in memory of Prince Dimitri Obolensky (1964-2015).



The Washington Balalaika Society delivered the musical entertainment, to the guests, who dined a three-course and danced with European royalty, the diplomatic corps, and various movers and shakers on the Washington scene.

Among the guest were Prince Michael Pavlovich Romanov-Ilyinsky with wife Princess Debra.



## U.S. - Russia Fabergé Exhibit on Ice

21 Jan. By Paul Sonne. The Wall Street Journal.

An exhibit planned for the Fabergé Museum in St. Petersburg and the Virginia Museum of Fine Art in Richmond, Va., is now on hold.

Russia planned to host perhaps the world's biggest Fabergé exhibit last month, combining the vast collections of the Fabergé Museum in St. Petersburg and the Virginia Museum of Fine Art in Richmond, Va.

The giant exhibition of imperial ornaments and objects by czarist-era jeweler Peter Carl Fabergé -including up to 14 of his famous imperial eggs - seemed the perfect way to promote U.S.-Russia cultural exchange. The idea, according to Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Director Alex Nyerges, was to show "the most amazing extravaganza of Fabergé in the world" - first in Russia, then in the U.S.

But those plans are now on ice, thanks to frosty relations between Washington and Moscow. While both the Russian embassy and State Department supported the exchange, Mr. Nyerges said, Virginia state insurance authorities advised the Richmond museum to take out an extra political-risk policy that would cost around \$1 million. The cost, to insure against the U.S. collection's possible confiscation in Russia due to greater political tensions, was simply too high for the museum to pay, Mr. Nyerges said.

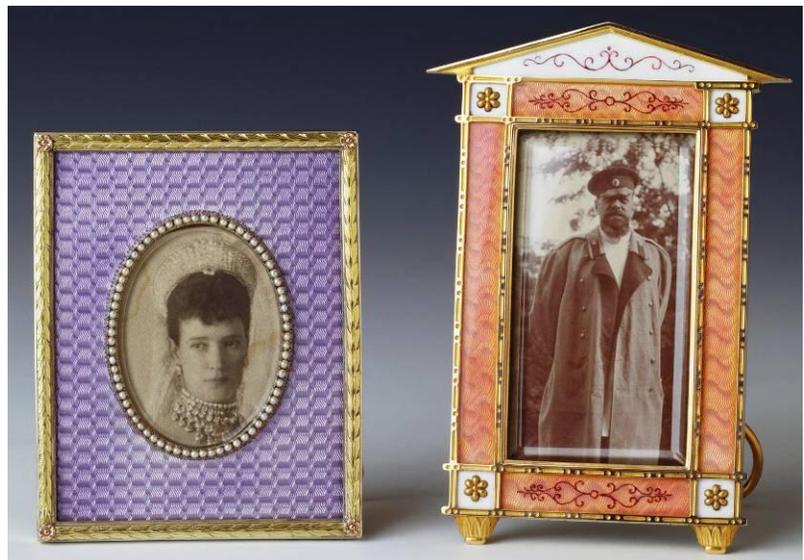
Both museums vow to hold the Fabergé exhibition in the future, but the difficulties reflect a broader problem. Relations between American and Russian museums have become stuck in a deep freeze, precluding the sort of high-profile exhibitions that were a critical feature of cultural exchange during and after the Cold War.

"We're facing unclear and troubled times," said Fabergé Museum Director Vladimir Voronchenko. "I believe it's an unpleasant moment but that it will be a short-lived one."

The chill between American and Russian museums - worse than during much of the Cold War era -began before the conflict over Ukraine. Five years ago, a U.S.-court ruling on Jewish religious documents prompted Russia to halt loans from its state museums to the U.S. Russia feared works traveling to the U.S. risked being seized.

Since then, the situation has grown worse. The deterioration of political relations has brought new difficulties, including increased insurance premiums in some cases and skittishness among museum boards. Political will to resolve the issue in both capitals has dwindled.

The result is a half-decade drought of U.S.-Russia art exhibitions at big museums such as the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York and the State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow, at a time when most museum officials say cultural ties should deepen to counteract political tension.



“We hope to be able to resume loans and cultural exchanges as soon as possible,” said Thomas P. Campbell, director and CEO of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. “This is especially important now, with the world so polarized by political and religious extremism.”

Zelfira Tregulova, director of Moscow’s Tretyakov, said the gallery is intensifying its contacts and exchanges with European partners but loans to the U.S. remain off-limits. She also said she hopes the situation will change.



Even during the Cold War era, American and Russian museums joined forces to put on some of the world’s most spectacular art exhibitions. Groundbreaking exchanges took place between the Met and the Hermitage. Cooperation blossomed further after the fall of the Iron Curtain.

Then, the landmark exhibitions stopped. In 2011, a U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., ordered Russia to hand over religious texts from its state library to the New York headquarters of Jewish movement Chabad-Lubavitch.

In the case, Chabad successfully argued that Russia should hand over the Schneersohn collection -books and manuscripts that Soviet officials seized from Chabad leaders after the Bolshevik Revolution, as well as Chabad materials Soviet forces retrieved from Germany during World War II.

Russia argued the U.S. court lacked jurisdiction. It also suspended loans to the U.S. from Russian state museums, citing fears Chabad would petition to seize the Russian assets while on tour.

Half a decade later, the standoff continues. In an emailed statement, the Russian Ministry of Culture said exchanges with the U.S. would resume once Russia received “a 100% guarantee the items sent for exhibitions will be returned.” The ministry called the cancellation of the Chabad ruling and the withdrawal of the lawsuit “necessary conditions for such a guarantee.”

Steven Lieberman, a lawyer representing Chabad, says Chabad has guaranteed the court it won’t seek the seizure of any Russian cultural assets. He called Russia’s de facto freeze on state museum loans to the U.S. a “red herring” designed to turn public opinion against Chabad’s rightful claim.

Amid the impasse, Fabergé seemed like the perfect way to resuscitate the era of blockbuster U.S.-Russia exhibitions. The Fabergé Museum in St. Petersburg is free to loan items to the U.S. because it’s a private collection, assembled by tycoon Viktor Vekselberg, not a state museum. The Virginia Museum of Fine Art, meanwhile, houses the biggest Fabergé collection in the U.S., donated by the late wife of a General Motors executive.

Soon, politics intervened. In 2014, Russia annexed Crimea. Later that year, an arbitration court at The Hague ruled that Russia appropriated the assets of defunct Russian oil giant Yukos in 2004 and owed the firm \$50 billion. The ruling opened up a legal path for Yukos affiliates to seize Russian state assets abroad.

It wasn’t long before Virginia insurance assessors, calculating the potential impact of increased political tension, recommended extra political risk coverage for the Fabergé exhibition. According to Mr. Nyerges, the insurance companies began quoting astronomical premiums after relations between the U.S. and Russia soured. Because the VFMA is a state museum it must go through state insurance authorities to receive insurance for exhibitions. The cost increase put the exhibition on hold.

Proposed U.S. legislation that would give greater protection to foreign institutions lending art to the U.S. has stalled for years. It arose after 14 works by Kazimir Malevich, while on loan in Houston from the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, became subject to a 2004 lawsuit in U.S. court by Malevich’s heirs. In an out-of-court settlement, the museum agreed to give five Malevich paintings to the descendants.

Some American art loans are still flowing to Russia. Kate Fowle, Chief Curator at the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art in Moscow, said she had secured some recent loans from the U.S. but noted that political tensions could change the situation. "If there's an inkling people aren't sure, then chances are right now that they won't lend to Russia," she said.

Vladimir von Tsurikov, Director of the Museum of Russian Art in Minneapolis, is preparing to loan paintings by Soviet-era artist Geliy Korzhev for a coming show at the Tretyakov Gallery. "I think this will be an important milestone," Mr. Von Tsurikov said, expressing hope that it will help restore relations. Still, he worries the U.S. cares less about exchange with Russia than it did during the Cold War. "I don't think this is necessarily a high priority."



---

### **Yekaterinburg opposed the renaming of the street to Tsarskaya**

18 January. Interfax-Ural - Most residents of Yekaterinburg, living in houses on the street Tolmachevskaya, opposed the renaming of its street to Tsarskaya.

Chairman of the Electoral Commission of Yekaterinburg Ilya Zakharov told, that of possible 227 registered 144 people participated in the survey. 115 people were against renaming streets, 27 - "for", and two ballots were declared invalid.



"It turns out that most of the residents are against the renaming" - a spokesman said. Results of the survey will be approved at a meeting of city council, the decision to rename the street will then be up to the administration of Yekaterinburg.

"I'm not ready to speak for the administration, I can only assume that even if they rename the street, they are unlikely to rename it on the part where these houses are, because usually we listen to the opinion of the population," - said I. Zaharov .

At the end of November 2015 members of the committee on city names in Yekaterinburg decided to rename the street Tolmachevskaya, on which there is Church on Spilled Blood to Street Tsarskaya. Earlier in this place was the house of the engineer Ipatiev, where in 1918 royal family was shot.

As an option to rename the street were also considered: "Romanovskaya", "Ipatievskaya" and "Nikolaevskaya". However, members of the commission unanimously voted for the name "Tsarskaya".

---

## St. Nicholas Cathedral in Nice reopened the doors

19 January - On the feast of the Epiphany, in Nice reopened the doors of the Orthodox St. Nicholas Cathedral. The re-consecration was held together with the Divine Liturgy and Great Blessing of Water.



The consecration was done by Bishop of Korsun Nestor and head of the Moscow Patriarchate in foreign institutions Bishop Anthony. Before the beginning of the Liturgy, after reading prayers, archpastors sprinkled the restored church with holy water.

The liturgy was attended by numerous guests, including Russian Ambassador to France Alexander Orlov, the mayor of Nice, Christian Estrosi, Deputy Administrative Department of the President of Russia Pavel Fradkov, and the Catholic Bishop of Nice André Marceau.



After the service and the great blessing of water on the occasion of Epiphany, Bishop Anthony gave those in attendance a greeting and blessing of Patriarch Kirill, who noted the importance of the event for the life of the Russian Diaspora.

Then, with the blessing of the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church, Bishop Anthony handed Order of St. Sergius of Radonezh of III degree to the Ambassador of Russia in France A. Orlov, and the Order of St. Euphrosyne, Grand Duchess of Moscow, III degree to the first secretary of the Russian Embassy in France Z.Kritskaya.

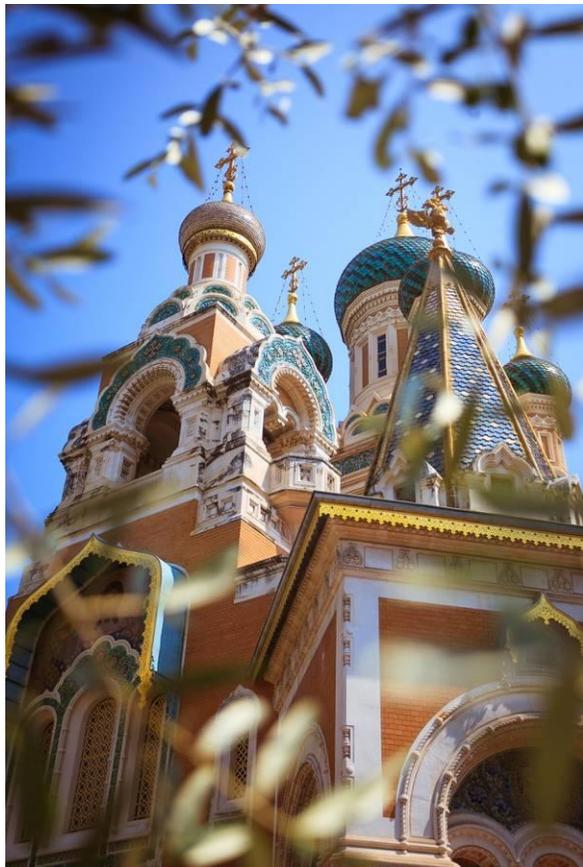
Alexandre Orlov, Ambassador of the Russian Federation in France, said - "For all in Nice and all the tourists who come to visit this church in Nice. For us it was important to restore it so that people see how beautiful it is, as it was done over a hundred years ago."

After the service a ceremonial welcome was given at the City Hall of Nice.

In 2010 the church was returned to the ownership of the Russian Federation, and on behalf of President Vladimir Putin were allocated budget funds for restoration of the architectural monument.

The restoration work was done over more than two years. As a result, the Cathedral is completely restored, including St. Nicholas Chapel. It was built in 1869 on the site of the villa Bermon, where the son of Emperor Alexander II - the Tsarevich Nicholas (Nixa) died. Upon the wish of Dowager Empress Maria Feodorovna, Nicholas II in 1903 started the construction of the new church in memory of the uncle he never saw - the first Tsarevich Nicholas Alexandrovich. Emperor Nicholas II donated 700,000 Francs from his personal funds.

The five-domed cathedral, was built on the model of Moscow churches XVII century, and was consecrated in 1912.



This is now the most beautiful Orthodox building outside Russia. Now there is neither cracks or leaks. Everything was restored at a cost of \$ 20 million.

Video 1)

[http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/147171/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/147171/)

2) <http://france3-regions.francetvinfo.fr/cote-d-azur/alpes-maritimes/nice/nice-la-cathedrale-st-nicolas-rouvre-apres-deux-ans-de-travaux-908201.html>

## The story of Kochubey, Mazepa and Poltava

Between 1687 and 1704 Vasily Leontiyovych Kochubey (c. 1640 – 15 July 1708), a Ukrainian nobleman and statesman of Tatar descent, was a close associate of the Ukrainian hetman Ivan Mazepa. In 1704 Kochubey's 20-year-old daughter, Motria fell in love with 63-year-old Ivan Mazepa. Her feelings were returned, but Mazepa didn't ask for her hand as such marriage would have been considered incestuous by canon law because Mazepa was Motrya's godfather.



Kochubey and especially his wife took this affair as a personal insult. As a result, Kochubey distanced himself from Mazepa. Between 1704 and 1707 he warned repeatedly Tsar Peter I of Russia about Mazepa's secret intention to break away from Russia. In 1707 he approached the governor of Kiev, Prince Dmitry Golitsyn, submitting detailed information about Mazepa's dealings with the Poles and Swedes and divulging the hetman's plan to side with Stanislaus I Leszczyński and Charles XII against Russia. The Tsar, however, flatly refused to believe Kochubey. He commissioned Gavriil Golovkin and Peter Shafirov to investigate Kochubey's allegations. In the meantime, Vasily Kochubey's correspondence was intercepted, he was arrested and tortured.

Having been turned over to Mazepa, Vasyl Kochubey was beheaded on 15 July 1708 in the village of Borshchahivka (Ukraine). Within few months Mazepa's dissent became known and Kochubey was given dignified burial within the grounds of the Kiev Pechersk Lavra.

The treason of Mazepa, however did not prevent Russian victory at Poltava, 1709.

Kochubey's story was romanticised by Aleksandr Pushkin in his poem "Poltava" and by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky in his opera Mazepa.



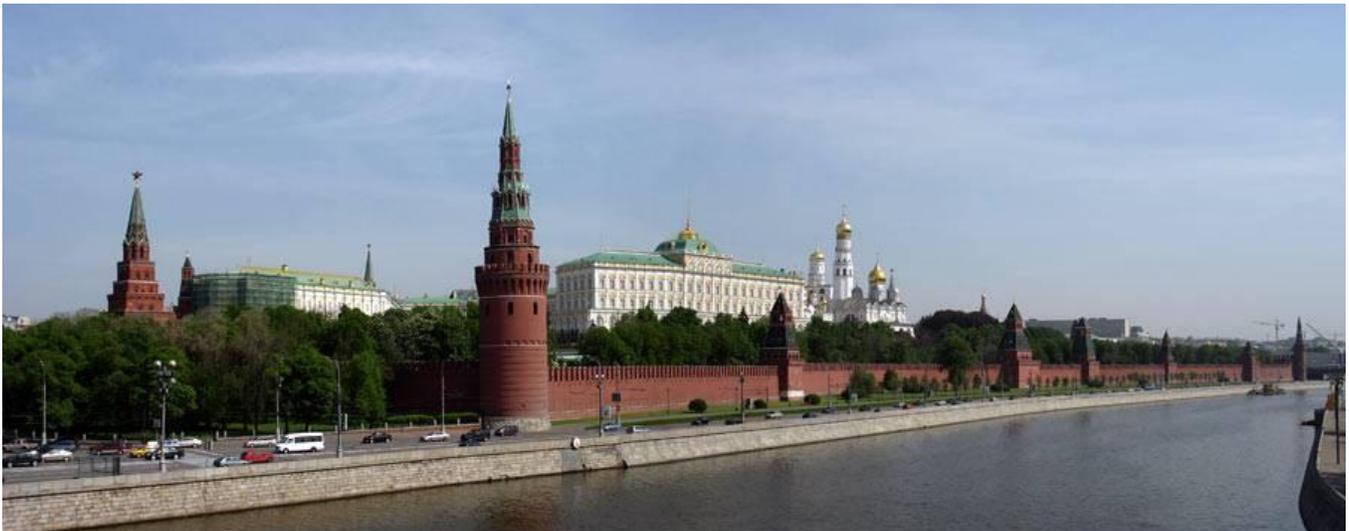
*Emperor Nicholas II and the August family at the grave of Vasily Kochubey in Kiev Pechersk Lavra, 20 August, 1911.*

## Moscow Kremlin in red or white?

The red color of the walls and towers of the Kremlin has become so familiar that it seems that they have always been like that. In fact, the Moscow Kremlin, until 1948, was not red but white!

The Kremlin, built in the time of Dmitry Donskoy, was built of limestone, which gave it a white color. Many churches and civil buildings of that time were built of limestone, which is why also Moscow became known as the white city.

During the time of Great Prince of Moscow Ivan III, on the site of the old fortifications Italian masters began the construction of new walls and towers. When building was used the new technology of the time instead of natural stone - was used bricks. Erected in bricks the Kremlin became red (or rather a brick) color. However, the Kremlin walls and towers were covered with white plaster and lime, and then the Kremlin has once again become accustomed to white.



There is a fairly widespread misconception that the Kremlin was repainted red after the arrival of the Bolshevik government. In fact, until 1948, it remained white.

Only in 1946-1947, in preparation for the celebration of the 800th anniversary of Moscow, was in the Kremlin started restoration work, and during the restoration, it was decided to repaint the entire Kremlin in red, which was done during the 1947-1948 biennium.

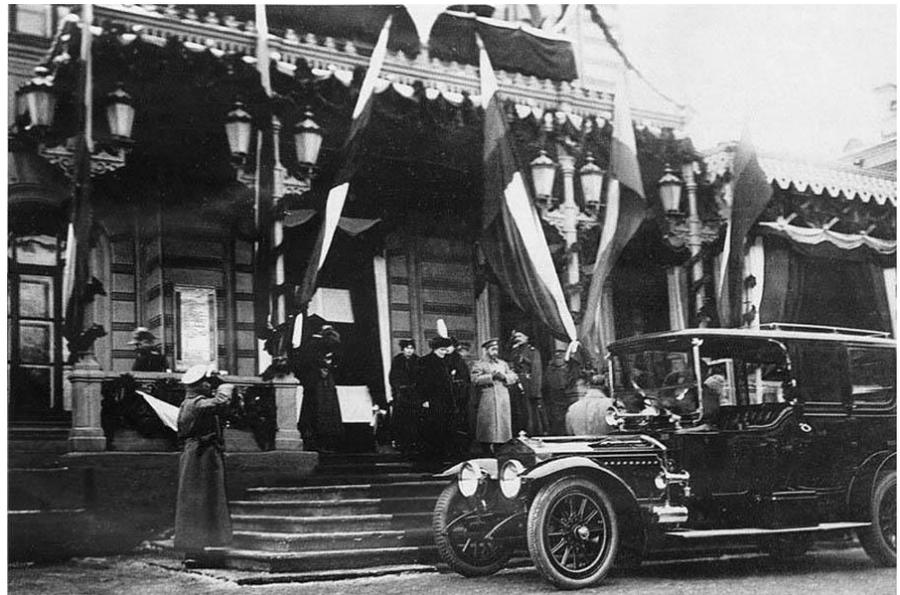
---

## Bust of Emperor Nicholas II in Tambov in the Chapel of Saint Pitirim might come

January 15, Metropolitan Theodosius of Rasskazovsky and Tambov met at the Transfiguration Cathedral with the chief of the Army of the Orthodox Mission Igor Smykov. They toured the area of the Cathedral. Discussed the plans of the Tambov diocese - a complete reconstruction of the architectural ensemble of the Holy Transfiguration Cathedral and the revival of the alley leading to the chapel of Saint Pitirim.



On this alley on 20 (7) December 1914, during his brief stay in Tambov, Emperor Nicholas II walked from the cathedral to the Pitirim's well. He left a note in his diary: "At 10 am. We arrived in Tambov. After the meeting, I went to the cathedral, familiar to me from 1904. Metropolitan Kirill perfectly and quickly celebrated the liturgy. Venerate the relics of St. Pitirim and went to his well. We stopped at a military hospital for breakfast. After breakfast we visited the hospital and three more. In the end we stopped for half an hour to talk with Alexandra Nikolaevna Naryshkin. She was ill and could not leave the house. Left Tambov under the distinct impression that all had been seen."



Igor Smykov decided to contribute to the reconstruction of the cathedral, giving the cathedral a bust of the royal martyr Nicholas II, which will be made exclusively for installation at the chapel of St. Pitirim in the Russian national sculpture studio.

---

## **In January 286 years ago Anna Ioannovna, niece of Peter the Great was approved as the new Russian Empress**

On 30 January (Old style 19), 1730, the Supreme Secret Council approved Princess Anna Ioannovna, the niece of Peter the Great, as the new Russian Empress. Though her rights were limited by the special "Conditions" document, which literally delegated all power to the Secret Council, Anna, though having spent nineteen years in exile, managed to fight them off and seize absolute power.



When Peter II, the grandson of Peter the Great, died on 30 January, 1730, there was no Heir to the throne. The Supreme Secret Council which consisted of prominent political figures, decided to pick Anna, who had lived abroad and therefore was the most harmless and easiest to control from all possible candidates, unlike Peter the Great's daughter Elizaveta, who had been raised at the court and was aware of all the court scheming.

The nobility, however, was greatly displeased by the choice, as they realized that with Anna as Empress, the Secret Council would take power and lead the country to anarchy. The Council sent ambassadors to Anna to provide her with the "Conditions" - that stated she was to govern according to their counsel and was not permitted to start war, call for peace, create new taxes, or name high officials without their consent. She could not punish nobility without trial, could not grant estates or villages, could not promote anyone, either foreigners or Russians, to court office and she could not spend the revenue generated by the state.

According to these rules, true power was allocated to the Secret Council. To become an Empress, Anna had to sign this list. The ambassadors told Anna that the nobility approved the "Conditions", but the opposition managed to send Anna a letter with the description of the real situation in it. A separate party had rise against the families of the princes Dolgorouky and Galitzine who composed the counsel, petitioning the Empress to assume the autocracy of her predecessors.

Anna thought that she should accept the Counsel's offer – if there was opposition, it gave an opportunity to reinstate her as absolute Monarch later. Anna signed the "Conditions" and, in February, 1730, moved to Russia.

When she arrived on 25 of February, 1730, a delegation of nobles came to the palace, where the Secret Council was having a session. They insisted on the Empress's audience, and requested Anna to call the Nobility Council, as the nobility were going to develop the principles of Anna's government. Anna, against the will of the Counsel, signed the petition and said, that the session of the Nobility Assembly would take place immediately. She ordered the nobles not to leave the room until they made all necessary decisions. The Assembly proclaimed Anna Absolute Sovereign and did away with the Secret Council, while Anna ordered the "Conditions" with her signature be brought to her. She tore the paper into pieces, asserting herself as absolute Monarch.

### ***Earlier days***

Anna Ioannovna was born 7 February (OS 28 January) 1693 in Moscow, her father being Tsar Ivan V (half brother of and co-ruler with Tsar Peter I ) and mother Tsarina Praskovia Saltykova.

She was primarily raised by her mother, a very stern woman. By Praskovia's orders Anna was to be raised for the nunnery. Anna knew more about magic and miracles than she did about history and geography. She grew up confined to a royal cult of domesticity. This type of confinement was known to not allow for development of personality and explains the cruel tendencies of Anna, who followed in her mother's footsteps. Her education consisted of French, German, dancing, religious text, and folklore. As she grew older she proved obstinate, with a mean streak. Her family moved to St. Petersburg by order of Tsar Peter the Great, and this had a significant effect on Anna; she enjoyed the grandeur society.

Peter the Great also arranged her marriage to Frederick William, Duke of Courland in November 1710. With her dowry of 200,000 roubles, Anna wed in a grand affair. Two dwarfs performed a parody of the wedding by jumping out of pies immediately following the ceremony. Just a few short weeks after the marriage and only twenty miles out of St. Petersburg on the road to Courland, Duke Frederick died. The cause of death was uncertain - attributed to a chill or to the effects of alcohol.

After her husband died, Peter asked Anna to stay in Kurland, which she did for 19 years, alone, abandoned and forgotten by the royal family. She was so poor she even had to ask Peter for money to pay her servants. Anna proceeded to rule Courland (now western Latvia) from 1711 to 1730, with the Russian resident, Peter Bestuzhev, as her adviser (and sometimes lover). She never remarried after the death of her husband, but her enemies said she conducted a love affair with Ernst Johann von Biron for many years.



### **Empress Anna**

Anna dissolved the Secret Counsel, exiling some of the framers of the constitution to Siberia and sending others to the scaffold.

Anna founded the Cadet Corps in 1731, one year after coming to the throne. The Cadet Corps was a group of young boys starting at the age of eight being trained for the military. There was a very rigorous training program and this also included all the schooling that was necessary for someone to be in an important position in the military. As time went on though, the program was later improved by other Emperors and Empresses, such as Catherine the Great. They began to include the arts and sciences into their schooling, rather than just the knowledge that is considered necessary for only a career in the military.

Started by Peter the Great, Anna continued to fund the Academy of Science. The point of this school was to further the sciences in Russia and to help bring the country that was so far behind up to where the Western Countries were. Some of the sciences that were taught were mathematics, astronomy, and botany. The Academy of Science was also responsible for a lot of the expeditions, specifically to the Bering Sea. The Bering Sea Expedition is one of the more famous ones that was done by the Academy of Science. While they were trying to find out if America and Asia had been at one point connected, they also studied Siberia and its people, these studies were used long after they returned from Siberia.

Many of the teachers and professors were imported from Germany bringing more of a Western feeling to what the students were learning about. Some of the students to learn from these German professors later became advisors or teachers to some of the future leaders, such as Catherine the Great's tutor, Adodurov. During Anna's reign, the Academy of Science began to include the Arts into their program. For not only was there not a school for the arts yet, but Anna was a firm supporter of the arts. Theater,

architecture, engraving, and journalism were all added to the curriculum. During this time, the foundations of what is now the world famous Russian Ballet was laid down as well.



There is a lot of mention of Germans throughout the reign of Anna. For example, she often gave them ruling positions in her cabinet and other important decision making positions. This was because she had very little trust in Russians. It was because of this strong German influence in government that many Russians came to resent them. Anna gave many privileges to those that were considered the nobility. In 1730, she made sure that the law of Peter the Great outlawed states from being subdivided, the primogeniture law, was repealed. Starting in 1731, landlords were responsible for their serfs' taxes and their economic bondage was tightened again. In 1736, the age to start in service changed to twenty with a twenty-five year service time, Anna and her government also determined that if the family had more than one son, one could stay behind so that he could work the estate.

During Anna's reign, Russia became involved in two major conflicts, the War of the Polish Succession and the Turkish wars. In the former, Russia worked with Austria to support Augustus II's son Augustus against the candidacy of Stanisław Leszczyński, who was dependent on the French and amiable with Sweden and Turkey. Russia's involvement with the conflict was quickly over, as the 1736–39 Crimean War was much more important. In 1732, Nader Shah had forced Russia to return parts of the lands in the Northern and Southern Caucasus and in northern mainland Persia that had been taken during Peter the Great's Russo-Persian War.

The war against the Turks took four and a half years, a hundred thousand men, and millions of rubles; its burdens caused great stress on the people of Russia and it only gained Russia the city of Azov and its environs. Its effects, however, were greater than they first appeared. It had given Russia its first campaign against Turkey that had not ended in crushing disaster and dissipated the illusion of Ottoman invincibility, had further shown that Russia's grenadiers and hussars could defeat twice their number of janissaries and spahis.

As her health declined she declared her grandnephew, Ivan VI, should succeed her, and appointed Biron as regent. This was an attempt to secure the line of her father, Ivan V, and exclude descendants of Peter the Great from inheriting the throne. It was recorded she had an ulcer on her kidneys. She continued having attacks of gout, and as her condition worsened, her health began to fail. Anna died on October 17, 1740, from a terrible kidney stone that made for a slow and painful death.

Ivan VI was only a one-year-old baby at the time and his mother, Anna Leopoldovna, was detested for her German counsellors and relations. As a consequence, shortly after Anna's death Elizabeth Petrovna, Peter I's legitimized daughter, managed to gain the favor of the populace, locked Ivan VI in a

dungeon, and exiled his mother. Anna was buried three months later on January 15, 1741, leaving behind uncertainty for the future of Russia.

### ***The ice house of Empress Anna Ioannovna***

Empress Anna Ioannovna is famous for her extravagant character and cantankerous temper. She surrounded herself with countless luxurious and lush courtyard, enjoying the endless amusements and entertainment. One of the most famous whims of the Empress was the Ice House.

She had six jesters to entertain her, and Avdotia Buzheninova, an aged unattractive woman, was one of them. One day Avdotia jokingly complained to Anna about not being married, and Anna promised Avdotia to marry her off to another jester, Mikhail Golitsyn. This wedding was not to entertain the Empress and the Court, and it had to be spectacular.

In spite of being a court fool, Mikhail Golitsyn had the title of prince. In 1729, Golitsyn's wife died, and he went to Italy to cast the grief away. In Italy, he fell in love with a local woman, and turned Catholic to marry her. When Mikhail and his new wife returned to Moscow, Mikhail had to conceal both the marriage and the change of religion, but the secret service learned everything quite soon. Mikhail was forced to divorce, his wife was sent back to Italy, and Golitsyn was made Anna's court jester. The new duties of the 51-year-old Mikhail included sitting in the basket near Anna's study and bringing kvass to her.



On February 17, 1740, according to a decree of Empress Anna Ioannovna, the two court jesters were made to marry and a house made entirely out of ice in the center of St. Petersburg was to be constructed in honor of the event. Anna announced her decision to the courtiers, and they convened the "Masquerade Commission" to work out the plan of the wedding. The Commission developed the project of the unique ice house for the celebration.

According to a member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, professor of physics Georg Wolfgang Kraft, the house existed for about three months - "Ice House was built in the middle of the Neva River, between the Admiralty and the new Winter Palace of Anna Ivanovna. "There was not a house more

glorious ... even if he would be made of the best marble, it was built from blue transparent ice and its color at a much dearest stone, rather than marble was like."

The architect of the project was not just anybody, but Peter M. Eropkin, the developer of the first Master Plan of St. Petersburg. Scientific and technical basis provided academician Kraft. Dimensions of the houses were reasonably small - length: 17 m, width: 5,5 m, and height 6.5 m.

Out of the frozen Neva was sawed blocks of ice, stacked on top of each other by hand and hosed with water, which in the dead of winter made them grasped better than any cement.

All its decorations and interior were made of ice, without using any other materials. A porch divided the building in two halves, with two rooms in each half: living room and dining room in one, bathroom and bedroom in another. The House was furnished with ice furniture - there were tables, armchairs, sofas, a bed and a sideboard with tableware. The tableware was made of ice too, and so were the candles. To light the candle one had to first smear it with the oil. In the ice fireplace burned ice logs, also smeared with oil.

Along the roof was a gallery decorated with sculptures, and in front of the house there were two ice cannons, which could actually fire. The fountains – two ones shaped like dolphins, and the largest one, in the shape of an elephant – threw out jets of burning oil. In the ice bathhouse, built near the main building, one could take a steam bath.

On both sides of the Ice houses were guardhouses (in ice), in which a man flailing paper lantern with "ridiculous figures," painted on its sides.

The ice winter of 1739-1740 years has stood out as extremely cold. 30 degrees of frost stayed until the spring, and the Ice House for a long time entertained all visitors.



On February 17, 1740, Golitsyn and Buzheninova got married in a church. Then, after the celebratory dinner, the newly-weds couple got into the cage on an elephant's back, and the wedding procession headed to the ice house. That procession consisted of about three hundred people of different nationalities, dressed in their national costumes. Horses, pigs, deer, goats and dog teams were

harnessed to their sleighs. When the couple entered the ice house's bedroom, two guards stood at its door to stop the jesters from leaving before morning.

After the celebration, the spectacular frozen construction remained intact until the spring. When it started to melt, some of sculptures and the biggest ice blocks were transported to the palace's own ice-house. Golitsyn and Buzheninova moved to Golitsyn's manor near Moscow. Buzheninova gave birth to two children and died in 1742. After her death, Golitsyn got married again, and died in 1778 at the age of 90.



In 2006, on the Palace Square (Not Neva River) in St. Petersburg was the Ice House of Anna Ivanovna reproduced in details after drawings of Kraft, but with the help of chain saws, heat guns and other achievements of civilization.





English BBC started 6th of January their series "EMPIRE OF THE TSARS", with Lucy Worsley. See it here:

\* Part 1 -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zkBqZ5BWY8A>

\* Part 2 -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ktll3zcrnQ>

\* Part 3 -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DQoKOMbQFFc>



Zurab Tsereteli has offered a 33-meters high figure of Christ, together with his 14 monuments of members of the Romanov family, for the 300th anniversary park of St. Petersburg.

Sculptor Tsereteli - "Now I have finished a great job - a large-scale composition "Russian history of the Romanovs." Made specifically for St. Petersburg. It consists of 17 pieces. Among them - 14 monuments of members of the royal Romanov family. They were casted in bronze. The figures are eight-meter, some six meters and five meters. It remains to finish a little figure of Christ. Christ will be 33 meter."

Tsereteli said that work on the project took him nearly 40 years. According to him, the city authorities offered to set all the sculptures in the Park of the 300th anniversary of St. Petersburg.

However the city administration deny any agreement and refuse to accept the monuments as a gift.



A funny little video - "Peterhof in stop motion: the golden age in miniature form".

Video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PUjBVtq3TWk>



The New York Public Library has released more than 180,000 digitalized free images

Among them are many photos from Russia and of the Romanov Family, some of them rare photos, which is available for free download.

The Library acquired the majority of the albums in this digital presentation during the early 1930s. Many were originally part of the Romanov palace libraries nationalized by the Soviet government and sold abroad for hard currency.

Have a look here - <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/>



A video showing the Russian Historical Society's "Historical Result 2015". It includes footage from the reburial of Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolaievich Jr. in Paris and in Moscow.

Video "Nostalgia" - Music: Andrew Ktitarëv, words: Jahan

Pollyeva. Performed by Igor Mirkurbanov, Dmitry Bak, Andrei Petrov and Roman Romanenko.

Video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hY1ydPfCfbE>



For more than half a century, the State Institute for Restoration have saved curiosities. During this time there have been recreated thousands of artifacts and works of art. Restoration work carried

out in parallel with research and experimental activities - methods of restoration and preservation of monuments are constantly being improved.

Exhibits from the collections of the Military Historical Society just arrived for restoration. They are to become part of the fund of the future museum, scheduled to open this spring. Russian and Soviet military uniform at the Research Institute will be put into proper shape. Things are unique. Many belonged to several generations of the Royal family. For example, a sample of 1907 - Shako Preobrazhensky Regiment, as well as - Grenadier cap and pouch Holstein troops with the monogram of Peter III.

"We got a hat which have belonged to Grand Duke Mikhail Pavlovich. There will certainly be a lot of work, but we have already begun - says the director of GOSNIIR Dmitry Antonov. - It kept the original tag, which reads: "The hat served His Highness in England in 1817". "

Video - [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/146863/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/146863/)



The authorities in Yalta promise to spare the "Swallow" and the villa of the Romanovs.

The authorities in Yalta stated that the borders of a gambling zone will not include cultural and historical monuments. As already reported in Yalta 16.8 hectares of land is seized in the village of Gaspra for future gambling zone in the Crimea. The first legal casino to appear on the territory of the former sanatorium of the Border Service "Pearl".

The public is alarmed, since gaming zone at Cape Ai-Todor will coexist with a business card of Crimea - the castle-museum "Swallow's Nest", as well as the villa Kharax, that once belonged to the Royal family, and the remains of the eponymous castle, built nearly 2000 years ago.

Head of Department of Architecture and Urban Planning Administration of Yalta Vladimir Pristupa said that all three objects, as well as the park "Kharax" and the adjacent beaches in the territory will not be included to the gambling zone. But he noted that the site given over to the casino will be subject to major renovation.



On 2 and 9 of January Orthodox TV channel "Spas" featured the unique exhibition "Moscow - The Holy Land of Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich and Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna," in the State Historical Museum. Main organizer, the chairman of the Supervisory Board of Fund "Elisabeth Sergius educational society", Ph.D., director of the International Center for Civil Society Studies of the Institute of World History, Russian Academy of Sciences, a member of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Company Anna Gromova told about the exhibition and exhibits.

Video from 2 January: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qvOfq5u9Heo>

Video from 9 January: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8n\\_McsfYdq](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8n_McsfYdq)



190 years ago, in December 1825 in St. Petersburg there was the uprising of the Decembrists. By that date, the State Historical Museum has prepared an exhibition, explaining what happened to the rebels in the Senate Square, the developments on 14 December, investigation and trial, and the exile of the Decembrists in the Siberian penal servitude. Well-educated, many - participants of the Patriotic War of 1812, they left a deep trace in Russian history.

"Among the lesser-known items include a plan of the Chita prison, where many Decembrists stayed in his early convict life and this plan made by one of the Decembrists - Peter Fallenberg. Here on the plan there is marked the houses in which they lived, and the wives of the Decembrists," - said the chief researcher at the State Historical Museum, Doctor of Historical Sciences Vera Bokova.

Trubetskoye, Volkonsky, Davydov - the Decembrists, followed by wives. In St. Petersburg at the time all were convinced that Siberia was continuous hard labor. But in Chita for their case it almost was not. "The work was pretty funny. They did flour, grind it on a hand mill, they cleaned the streets, the endless was digging a ditch, everything that was not particularly needed. They found their occupation, and they were happy to indulge in this, as it was an exercise, gave the ability to move. But mostly it was years spent by themselves"- explained Vera Bokova.

Famous watercolors Nicholas Bestuzhev - he painted his place of stay. Peter Borisov studied the local flora and fauna - here are presented albums with images of birds in the traditions of the XIX century zoological drawings.

Video - [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/146909/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/146909/)



In 2016 Amber Museum in Kaliningrad plans to hold the All-Russian competition of lapidary art dedicated to the 170th anniversary of the legendary jeweler Faberge.



Resurrection Cathedral of the New Jerusalem Monastery in Istra near Moscow is completely renovated and ready for worship - says the Ministry of Culture. The monastery was founded in the XVII century by Patriarch Nikon. Restoration of the architectural ensemble began in 2008. Now, after all the work, the last word is for the hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church. It must decide when Patriarch will consecrate the cathedral.

In the historical documents of the XVII century, the main cathedral of the New Jerusalem Monastery was called the Great Church of the Resurrection. It was conceived by Patriarch Nikon as the image of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the Holy Land, but his fate was not easy. In 1723, the rotunda dome collapsed and three years later there was a fire. 20 years the church stood virtually without a roof as Empress Elizabeth did not send architects. In 1941, during their retreat, the Germans blew up the Resurrection Cathedral.

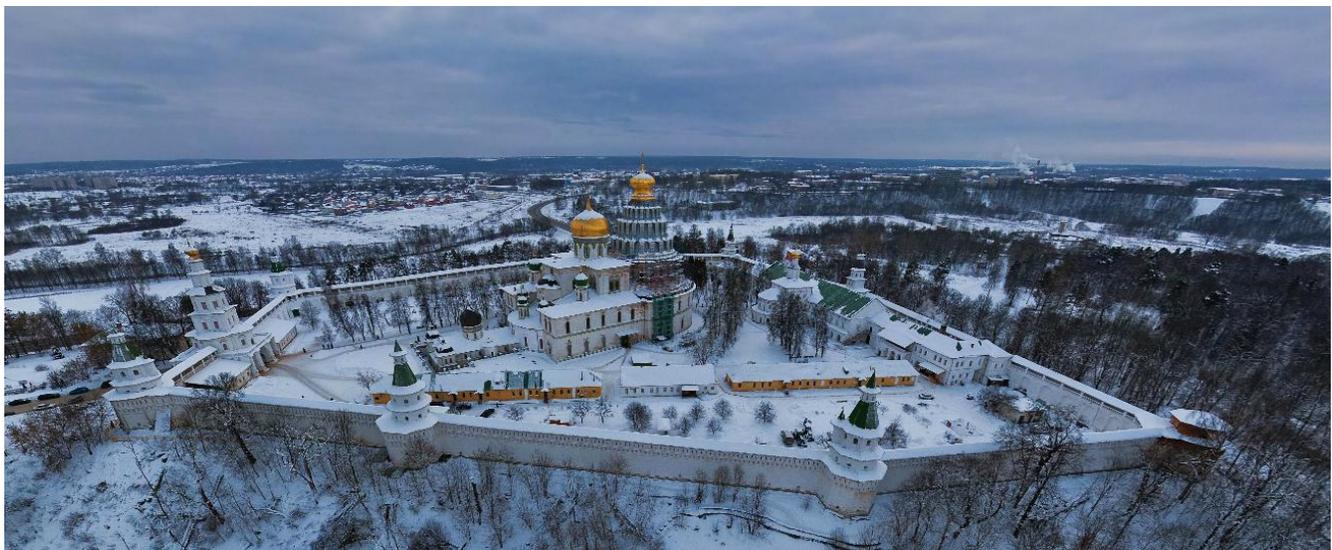
"The cathedral is completely restored, which it never was in its entire 360-year history. This all dreamed of and been waiting for and finally it is accomplished today ", - said the governor of the New Jerusalem Monastery abbot Feofilakt (Bezukladnikov).

To get around the whole Church of the Resurrection, with all its many chapels, is not enough for one day. Patriarch Nikon, whose final resting place is also located here, wanted to recreate in Istra near Moscow a Russian Palestine.

In the near future the governor will appeal to Patriarch Kirill to ask for the consecration of the great Church of the Resurrection.

Video - [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/146782/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/146782/)

See it in 360 degrees - <http://www.airpano.ru/files/New-Jerusalem-Monastery-Russia/2-2>





Masterpieces of pottery and porcelain are presented in a new exhibition. For centuries, porcelain was a symbol of luxury and power. Chinese, Meissen, Sevres - the art of porcelain production for generations was kept as secrets. In Russia there are achievements of names. This is the famous Kuznetsovsky porcelain and the earthenware Konakovsky. Products of these producers from a private collection are on display in the Museum of Decorative, Applied and Folk Art.

This collection Irina Torkunova collected over 30 years. It all started with a small stand for toothpicks - the first acquisition on the Arbat. It has grown into a collection of several hundred works.

Video - [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/147363/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/147363/)



January 18, 2016 for the readers of the library number 23 named after M. Gorky was held a historic hour on the establishment of the Romanov dynasty, the first Tsar of the Romanov dynasty - Mikhail Feodorovich, False Dmitry and Marina Mniszek. Excited children listen to the story of the Time of Troubles. At the end the library staff continues to answer questions of the guests about the very difficult, but interesting pages of the history of our country.



January 15, 2016 Yusupov Palace opened the photo exhibition "Connection of times is broken." The exhibition is an introduction to the project, "Yusupov Palace, a hundred years ago. The last days of the old world". It introduces viewers to the main characters, which will be discussed throughout the year, immersed in the atmosphere of St. Petersburg - Petrograd.

The exhibition features about 50 photographs from the collection of "Central State Archive of Audiovisual Documents of St. Petersburg" and the Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts (RGADA).

The exhibition presents views of the city in 1900- 1918, portraits of prominent public figures, members of the State Duma, members of the Imperial family and members of the aristocracy, the events that occurred in the city on the eve of and during the first months of the revolution.

The photographs captures the characters of the events of the last days of the Empire. Grand Dukes, opposition politicians, the highest Petersburg society, the largest financiers. Each of them in their own way have seen the future and sought to influence it. They were swept away by the revolutionary wave that had risen.

ИСТОРИКО-КУЛЬТУРНЫЙ ПРОЕКТ  
**"ЮСУПОВСКИЙ ДВОРЕЦ СТО ЛЕТ НАЗАД  
 ПОСЛЕДНИЕ ДНИ СТАРОГО МИРА"**  
 "В терновом венце революций грядет шестнадцатый год"  
 В. Маяковский

Конюшенный флигель Юсуповского дворца  
**ФОТОВЫСТАВКА**  
**"Распалась связь времен"**  
 при участии ЦГАКФД СПб  
 15.01.2016 – 30.04.2016

изображения принадлежат ЦГАКФД СПб

БИЛЕТЫ МОЖНО ПРИОБРЕСТИ В  
 КОНЮШЕННОМ ФЛИГЕЛЕ И КАССЕ ЮСУПОВСКОГО ДВОРЦА  
 вход с ул. Декабристов, 21  
 время работы выставки на сайтах:  
 www.mykf.ru www.yusupov-palace.ru  
 (812)314-98-83 (921)970-30-38

ММР МУЗЕЯ WWW.MIRMUS.RU Санкт-Петербург ЛЕНА ЗЕМЛЯ



The old English Court in Moscow opened after two years of restoration. The buildings of the XVI century in Moscow is almost gone. But one of them - on the street, which is called Varvarka, near the Kremlin - still exist. This building is a reminder of the close diplomatic and trade relations between Muscovite Russia and England during the reign of Ivan the Terrible. The Old English Court is historical and cultural monument of federal significance, which opened after two years of restoration.

It opened not only as an architectural landmark, but also as a modern museum, full of all sorts of media. Visitors will be able to study in detail the history of diplomatic relations between Moscow and London, and learn, for example, that at the time the relationship was marred by the execution of King Charles the First. Learning of this crime, Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich deprive the British of all privileges in Moscow, and gave the residence to other owners.

Video - [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/147201/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/147201/)



On 18 of January Russian President Vladimir Putin visited the exhibition dedicated to the 150th anniversary of the painter Valentin Serov. The exhibition is held at the State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow. There he was looking at the many paintings of the Romanov family members made by Serov. Here he is looking at the iconic painting of Emperor Nicholas II, made in 1900.



Tobolsk bridge to be named after Emperor Nicholas II. Construction of a pedestrian bridge over the St. Nicholas road begins in Tobolsk in 2016. This told the head of the city administration Vladimir Mazur. According to him, as inspiration is taken the "Alexandre III" bridge in Paris. "The bridge was built in honor of the Franco-Russian alliance, and is named in memory of Nicholas II's father. We will name the bridge in honor of Nicholas II. Not only do we have to save what we have left from our ancestors, but also to increase the architectural wealth of the city and leave something for our descendants" - said Vladimir Mazur. Construction will begin immediately after the end of the study the soil. According to the project the bridge will be made of steel, with a strong foundation. Decorating fences are with emblems of Tobolsk. In the evening, the bridge will be lighted. The construction of a pedestrian bridge over the St. Nicholas road is part of an extensive renovation of the Garden Ermak. The bridge is needed to ensure the safe transition from the Kremlin to the garden. Now to get there one has to crosses the road with heavy traffic.



Cups and a portrait of Empress Elizabeth are kept in the museum of Irkutsk. Colorless glass, silver, cutting, grinding, matte engraving. Here's a cup era of Empress Elizabeth. One of the most valuable exhibits of the art museum.

- And second, totally-unique exhibit, which attracts the attention of visitors, especially children. This is the cup of the coconut. As you know, the coconut in those days was for Russia is very exotic fruit, and in addition to any culinary use are walnut shell was deemed suitable for the manufacture of cups, - says head of research and exhibition department of the Art Museum Maria Mozhenkova.

Coconut Cup is remarkable that was made at the personal request of Elizabeth. In 1751, already is masters from Moscow. And here is the portrait of the Empress: a copy by one of the disciples of the famous court painter Caravaca.

- The portrait came to the museum in 1988. It was presented 11 years earlier, but sent for restoration. Video - <http://vesti.irk.ru/news/culture/179014/>



In the summer, probably in late July in the center of Simferopol will be installed a monument to the Russian Empress Catherine II. The project is supervised by the head of the interregional public organization "Russian unity" Elena Aksenova - the wife of the head of the Crimean government Sergey Aksenov.

- Opening is planned for the end of July. The preparatory work will begin in March - said Aksenova. According to her, the estimated cost of the monument is 31.5 million rubles. The organization has already collected more than 45 million rubles.

- In addition, the city government of Simferopol in 2016 has allocated 61 million rubles for the landscaping of the adjacent territory - said Elena Aksenova.

At a press conference Elena Aksenova has proposed to rename in honor of Catherine park in the Central city - it is there that will be installed the new monument.

- I'm very cautious about all the proposals to rename anything. It is necessary to conduct a survey of public opinion and then make the final decision, - said Elena Aksenova.

The monument is made by sculptors Constantin Kubyshkin and Igor Yavorsky. It is planned that the monument will correspond to the monument, which was erected in Simferopol, April 8, 1883 in honor of the centenary of entering the Crimea to the Russian Empire. At the time, was immortalized not only the Empress, but her associates. On the ledge of the front of the pedestal stood Prince Potemkin and Dolgoruky. Below the inscription: "His Highness Prince Grigory Potemkin-Tauride, Prince Vasily Mikhailovich Dolgoruky-Crimea". On the pedestal, at the right hand of the Empress is a bust of A.V. Suvorov, on the left - Y.A. Bulgakov, the Russian ambassador in Turkey, who signed the legendary manifesto.

The modern monument will also be made of bronze. The pedestal is of granite.



The restoration of the Mariinsky Palace in Kiev, the ceremonial residence of the President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko, will cost 200 million hryvna (642 million rubles / 8 mill. USD).

In the summer of 2015 the government allocated 100 million hryvna for the reconstruction of the palace. The money was spent on the restoration of the facades, roof construction on the left wing and landscaping.

In March 2016 the restorers will be granted an additional 100 million for interior decoration and arrangement of the wings of the palace and reception hall, which will be decorated with stucco and gilding.

The palace in Kiev was founded in 1744 by order of Empress Elizabeth. The project was made by the Baroque court architect Bartolomeo Rastrelli. At the beginning of the XIX century the Royal palace burned, so in 1870 Emperor Alexander II commissioned to reconstruct the building of the old plans of the architect Carl Mayevsky. After the restoration of the Mariinsky Palace it was named in honor of the Emperor's wife Maria Alexandrovna.



One of the main events of the Hermitage Museum in 2017 will be the 100th anniversary of the October Revolution. Preparation of a large-scale program dedicated to the storm on the Winter Palace, has already begun.

"The program will include exhibitions, publishing and research projects, - said General Director of the Hermitage Mikhail Piotrovsky. - One of the main points of focus will be the infirmary, which was located in the Winter Palace during World War I." Some of the things associated with the work of the hospital, is now exhibited in the halls of the memory of Carl Faberge. Thus, the exhibition can be seen copper kettles, pots, camping cookers, sinks, oil lamps and syringes by the brand Faberge - during the war, the famous jewelry company reoriented to produce products for the needs of the front and hospitals.

Another theme of the series for the 100th anniversary of the revolution, according to the head of the museum, will be the story and stay of Kerensky in the Winter Palace, the headquarters of the interim government. A separate project will focus on how the Soviet government ordered the Hermitage created as a public museum. Piotrovsky added that several events devoted to 1917, are scheduled to take place in the center of the Hermitage in Amsterdam.



At the Reading Public Museum opened the exhibition "The Tsar's cabinet". See the exhibition presented in a video.

Video - <http://www.wfmz.com/features/onetanktrip/one-tank-trip-the-tsars-cabinet/37673542>



The execution of the Romanov family became a part of the plot of a new computer game. The main character in the Assassin's Creed trilogy is to save the daughter of the Emperor and confront the Templars. The Russian fantasy game Assassin's Creed announced a new trilogy. Actions in the third Assassin's Creed Chronicles take place in Yekaterinburg, according to the creators of the project Ubisoft. It revolves around the shooting of the Royal Romanov family in Russia in 1918:



"Nikolai Orlov wants to leave the country with his family, but the Brotherhood invited him to perform the last task. It is necessary to get into the house, where the Bolsheviks holds the Royal family, and pick up an artifact, which for many centuries, have tried to get the Assassins and the Templars."

According to the story the entire royal family was not killed. Nicholas becomes a witness to the massacre of the children of the Tsar, but he manages to save one of his daughters - Anastasia. Orlov will save the artifact protected by Anastasia and confront the threat posed by the Templar Knights.



February 3 in the Stroganov Palace (St. Petersburg, Nevsky pr. 17) will open the exhibition "Crimea in photographs 1880-1910-ies from the Russian Museum". The exposition opens a series of photographic retrospective exhibitions "Journey to the Russian Empire," which for the first time is showing in this context the scale of the domestic product of photography from the collection of the Russian Museum. The first exhibition of the cycle is devoted to the Crimean peninsula. The exposition will last till March 2016.



A hundred years ago worked the Anglo-Russian hospital during the first world war in St. Petersburg. This event was celebrated in the palace Beloselsky-Belozersky, in St. Petersburg, with the opening an exhibition of historical photographs depicting the work of charities. In the palace was shown British newspaper "Illustrated War News" with articles about the hospital. The patron of the hospital was the British Queen Alexandra and her sister of Empress Maria Feodorovna.

The Palace for the hospital gave Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich, following the tradition established at the Russian aristocracy from the early days of the war. Hospitals for the wounded officers and soldiers was stationed in many mansions.

Empress Alexandra Feodorovna opened two hospitals - at the Emperor's residence and in the Winter Palace. The Empress with her daughters worked there as nurses. Their example was followed by many representatives of noble families.

Video - <http://topspb.tv/news/news96188/>



*Medical staff and patrons of the Anglo-Russian Hospital in Petrograd (the latter including l to r: Grand Duchesses Kyril and Maria Pavlova, the Dowager Empress Maria Fedorovna, Grand Duchesses Olga and Tatiana, Matron Miss Irvine Robertson and Lady Sybil Grey. Behind Grand Duchess Kyril is the British Ambassador, Sir George Buchanan and his wife Lady Georgina). Photograph taken at the official opening of the hospital in the Dimitri Palace on 1 February 1916*



## First volume of the collection catalog of "Peterhof" published

State Museum "Peterhof" under the chairmanship of Director General, Dr. Cultural Studies E.Y. Kalnitskaya, was released the first part of a complete catalog of the collection of the State Museum "Peterhof" - "Architectural Graphics: courtier Peter and Paul Cathedral in New Peterhof: Catalogue of the collection." Author is the Head of the Department of archival holdings GMZ "Peterhof" Yulia Zelenyanskaya.

This issue relates to a series of publications devoted to the study of architectural graphics of XVIII - XX centuries, and includes drawings and paintings made in the design and construction of the Peter and Paul Cathedral in New Peterhof in 1893 - 1905 years, and after its adoption in the operation, and conduct in 1907 - 1913 the repair of Peterhof palace administration. The catalog presents draft chief architect N.V. Sultanov, manager of the construction, architect V.A. Kosyakova, assistant manager of works, the architect R.R. Becker, palace architects A.I. Semenov and A.K. Minyaeva, as well as invited experts B.K. Pravdzika and S.B. Lukashevich.

It is accompanied by information about the stages of the construction of the Peterhof Peter and Paul Cathedral, capture the historical system of state orders that existed in the palace construction performed under the control of the Ministry of the Imperial Court in this case with the direct participation of the Peterhof palace administration.

On the opening day at Peterhof Museum hosted a workshop to discuss issues related to the history of the cathedral and the problems of its modern restoration. One of the speakers was Y. R. Savelyev, corresponding member of Russian Academy of Arts, author of the first monograph on N. V. Sultanov and reviewer catalog "Architectural Graphics: courtier Peter and Paul Cathedral in New Peterhof".

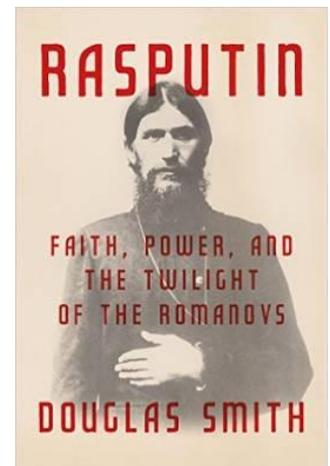


## Rasputin: Faith, Power, and the Twilight of the Romanovs

Is the next book by Douglas Smith, expected release is November 1, 2016. He is an award-winning historian, translator, and the author of "Former People", and other books on Russia. Before becoming a historian, he worked for the U. S. State Department in the Soviet Union and as a Russian affairs analyst for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in Munich. He lives in Seattle with his wife and two children.

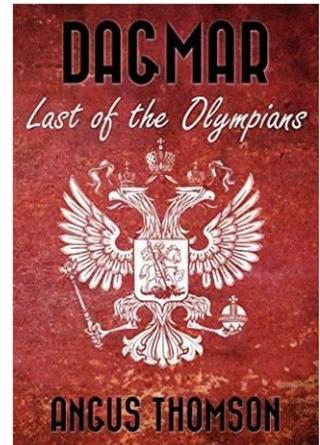
## Dagmar: Last of the Olympians

About Angus Thomson's book "Dagmar, Last of the Olympians" is the publisher's promotion saying it "spins a breath-taking tale out of real history that proves once and for all that the fact is always more exciting than the fiction. An intriguing retelling of one of the biggest turning points in Russian history, Dagmar's journey is brought to life in stunning fashion in the pages of Angus Thomson's new and daring historical novel.



Fuelled on a conscious desire for the truth, Dagmar, Last of the Olympians provides a fantastical record of one of the 20th Century's most cataclysmic and important events."

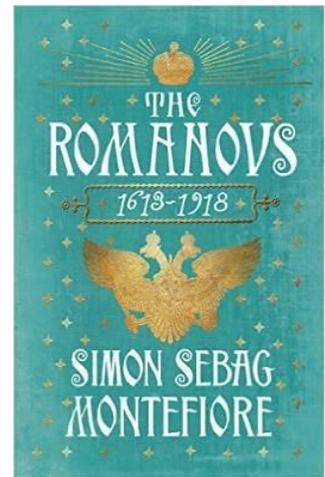
To call Dagmar, maybe better known as Empress Maria Feodorovna, an "Olympian" is already silly and when the book starts with this - "The Blood Imperial - The stunned boy became aware, aware that he was bleeding. he was destined to grow up to be the greatest, most powerful person on Earth, have anything, command anyone in the world, as long as he did not bleed, and now he was bleeding. he must not, must not, must not bleed. And yet he was bleeding. he heard whimpering and then that shattering noise again, the huge clatter of gunfire in a closed room. he turned his head and looked sideways, glaring like a horse startled by lightning. Even here, close to the floor, the smoke swirled and stank but through it he Stasia, sprawled against the striped wall. She stared at him, blood smeared across her face. Stasia opened her mouth. Then a hulking body and a plunging arm, a bayonet thrusting into her chest like a sword, and blood spurted from her mouth. he raised his head but before he could scream a boot hit the side of his face. For a moment, only a moment, he felt a revolver muzzle behind his ear." - I am already putting it away.



### **Book review - The Romanovs 1613-1918 by Simon Sebag Montefiore**

By Mary Dejevksy, 14 January 2016. The independent.

Simon Sebag Montefiore's blockbuster history of the Romanov dynasty arrives with exquisite timing. Planned, no doubt, with a view to next year's centenary of the last Tsar's abdication – and the far more problematical centenary, for today's Russia, of the Bolshevik revolution that followed – its publication also coincides with the BBC's much-praised, much-debated, dramatisation of War and Peace, as well as Lucy Worsley's series, Empire of the Tsars. Imperial Russia in general, and the Romanovs in particular, are suddenly box office. A popular wave is already in motion for Sebag Montefiore's volume to ride. And, if you take just the final fifth of the book, the historian's account of the last months, days and hours of the Romanovs will not disappoint. "Catastrophe" – the chapter which charts Nicholas II's reluctant departure and the upheavals at home and abroad that forced his hand – and "Afterlife", which speeds grimly to the brutal denouement – show Sebag Montefiore's narrative bravado at its scintillating best.



There is unlikely to have been a racier account of how the last Romanovs met their end. Naïve, even delusional, these in-bred aristocrats may have been, but they remained dignified to the end – in contrast to the panicky and thuggish executioners who rushed to act as the White forces closed in.

Sandwiched between these two rip-roaring chapters is the strange episode of Michael II, who reigned for a day, before grasping that the dynasty was no more. But Sebag Montefiore sets out to do much more than add his own brand of heightened drama to the already copious literature on Nicholas and Alexandra. His self-imposed task is to write a history of the Romanov dynasty, from its faltering start in 1613, when 17-year-old Michael reluctantly accepted the throne of a land still ill-defined and racked by clan rivalries and plots.

For the first century, there was still no fixed order of succession, and the crown passed in a not always predictable way from father to son, husband to wife, brother to brother. Somehow, though, the dynasty held, and Sebag Montefiore guides his readers from these unpromising beginnings, through the grand designs of Peter I, to the expansionism of Catherine the Great and the hesitant reforms of Alexander II, and then to Imperial Russia's inexorable decline. In the decade that follows, an autocracy claiming legitimacy from divine ordination wrestles with demands for constitutional modernity. As this bare outline should suggest, The Romanovs represents a huge and ambitious endeavor, and the finished

volume reflects an enormous amount of work. The author has been able to tap new sources, including intimate Romanov diaries, thanks in part to the opening of archives after the collapse of the Soviet Union and also to his own family contacts.

Whether all of the material crammed into these pages adds up to the definitive history of the Romanovs is another matter. For a mass of anecdote and detail, however risqué and colourful they might be (and they are often both), does not of itself make for a fully coherent narrative, where the single force that binds is chronology. There are times, too, when Sebag Montefiore's style, which tends to the showy, with adjectives piled on top of each other and touches of the archaic, starts to grate. You wait, in vain, for an overarching idea that would bring everything together, or at least an argument to give it shape.

Sebag Montefiore's prologue, it is true, is a masterly essay on Russian history, which could stand by itself. But the perfunctory epilogue, on the hackneyed theme of Soviet and post-Soviet leaders ruling essentially as Tsars, comes across as an ill-judged attempt to demonstrate contemporary relevance. Elsewhere, a remark about Romanov women being stronger characters than the men is left undeveloped, as is an acute observation about the loneliness of Monarchy. Occasional allusions to modern Russia only point up the absence of anything resembling authorial judgment. The historian does not even try to consider the achievements – or failings – of each Tsar or Tsarina as they leave the stage. The only place there is the hint of such assessments is in some of the picture captions. Regrettably, the quality and display of the pictures also leaves something to be desired. Better fewer, but better, as Lenin urged in another context.



Each chapter is prefaced with a cast list – for which even this Russian-speaking reviewer was immensely grateful. How much, though, should readers need to interrupt their progress to consult this list? Is the proliferation of so many names, variations of names, and nicknames really necessary, or does it betray a weakness of the storytelling and a misguided attempt to lend local color? The division into three "acts" – "The Rise", "The Apogee", and "The Decline" suggests an effort to impose structure, but these themes are barely reflected in the text. Beyond the section titles, *The Romanovs* is a conventional, and rather old-fashioned, popular history, in the Antonia Fraser mould.

For all the presence of strong women in the Romanov dynasty, this account also comes across as very male in tone, with a gratuitous relishing of sex and violence. Raunchy goings-on have their place in revealing the Romanovs (and their courtiers) to be lusty human beings. But it is as though Britain's Prince – and future King – Charles were to be judged primarily by the so-called "tampon tapes" rather than by anything he might do in the public domain. The violence, especially the many descriptions of fearsome punishments, seems at times self-indulgent, as if calculated to appeal to teenage boys. This emphasis has two consequences. The first is that some major landmarks of Russian history – the founding of St Petersburg, for instance, the Decembrist revolt, and the liberation of the serfs – are barely evident. If this is an intended reinterpretation of history, it would benefit from being explained. The second is that not only the Romanovs, but the Russians, emerge as almost uniquely promiscuous and brutal, even though other courts at the time – think Henry VIII of England – were hardly paragons of sophistication.

In painting so simplistic a picture, Sebag Montefiore reinforces a Western stereotype that persists to this day. The Romanovs, like the Russians they ruled, sometimes competently, often not, were a good deal more complicated than his magnum opus suggests, and the same is true of their successors.

*Editor's note - Simon Sebag Montefiore does history in the manner of a tabloid writer - Betrayal, murder, sleaziness, sex and general human depravity is what he gives you - nowadays, the safest way to a bestseller. He adds nothing new, only exaggerate stories that can fuel the hunger of the Russophobes.*

---

## The Romanovs on the road. Travels of members of the Royal family in Russia and abroad: A Collection of Articles



The collection of scientific articles presents the materials from the conference devoted to the 400th anniversary of the Romanov dynasty about the travels of Russian Tsars and members their families from the XVII-XX centuries.

In it are considered in terms of types and purposes, based on the specifics of the genre sources - note the participants, correspondence, communiques, publication in newspapers and magazines, myths of mass consciousness and so on - , as well as in the context of the formation of imperial ceremonies and etiquette rules of communication.

There is analyzed several methodological and theoretical aspects of the study and interpretation of the highest travel in Russia and abroad - in particular, language, techniques and rhetoric of their representations for different audiences.

The collection is intended for historians, philologists, specialists in the history and culture of the Russian Empire, as well as to the general humanitarian audience.

*Publisher: Nestor History, St. Petersburg. Hard cover, size 145 x 215 mm, 320 pages. Isbn no. 978-5-4469-0665-9*

---

## Anecdotes from the works of Ivan Golikov, "Acts of Peter the Great ...", historical notes of A. S. Pushkin



The book consists of three parts: an introduction, jokes about Peter the Great and comments. The preface gives a vivid, stylistically easy presentation of the history of the genre anecdote dating back to the Byzantine Empire. In the mid 30-ies of the XIX century Pushkin made 9 volumes of writings "History of Peter the Great, wise reformer of Russia." On the pages of abstract Pushkin noted anecdotes about Peter the Great. The anecdotes never came out as a separate edition. Now they are collected in a separate publication and appropriately illustrated.

*Publisher: Planet, Moscow. Hard cover, size 170 x 240 mm, 176 pages. Isbn no. 978-5-903162-95-6*

---



Under the hammer...

**Romanov related items in Auctions**



**Bruun Rasmussen, Copenhagen, Denmark, on 18 January**

Painting by Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna. Colorful wild flowers in the grass. Signed Olga. Watercolor on paper laid on paper. Sheet size 21 x 19 cm.  
Estimated Price: Dkr 2,000-3,000 (€ 270-400)



**A.H. Wilkens Auctions & Appraisals, Toronto, Canada, on 19 January**

*Russian enamel icon pendant*

Of a saint on blue ground with Russian text on verso. Height 5 cm. (2 in.) Provenance: Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna of Russia, by descent.  
Estimated Price: 200.00 - 300.00 CDN



*Photographs Guri & Tihkon Nikolaevich Kulikovsky*

As children, five in all, dated 1923. Olga's two sons. 21.5 x 15 cm (8 1/2" x 6").  
Estimated Price: 200.00 - 300.00 CDN



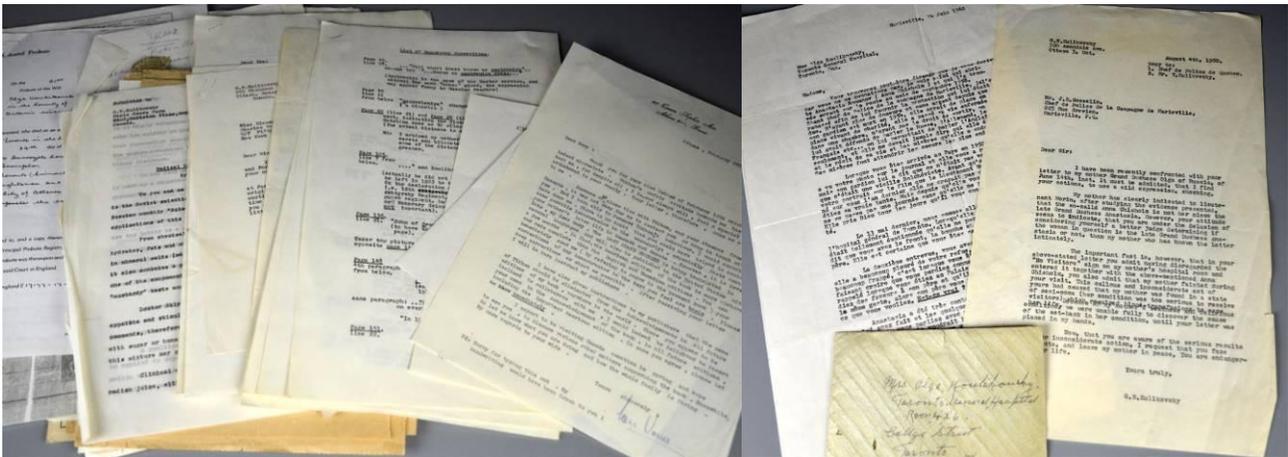
**Assorted postcards and letters**

Lot of postcards and some letters. A few to and from Olga with correspondence, one dated 1917, but mostly blank or an unknown addressee. Two Government house invitations from former Governor General Roland Michener from 1967 and 1971 and a handkerchief with a 'K'. All from Guri's old residence. Estimated Price: 100.00 - 200.00 CDN



**Assorted paper ephemera and letters**

Correspondence mainly of Guri Kulikovsky regarding the contents of the book "The last Grand Duchess", ca.1965, and the sale of Olga's jewelry. Letters regarding an imposter posing as Anastasia named Anna Chisholm and her effect on a hospitalized Olga, with an original letter from her to Olga. Last wills belonging to Olga and Nicholas among other documents. All found in the last home of Guri Kulikovsky. Estimated Price: 100.00 - 200.00 CDN



**Large lot of assorted photographs**

Mainly of Guri and family, but some older with Olga and unknown people. Negatives of unknown photography also. These have not been sorted or studied.

Estimated Price: 100.00 - 200.00 CDN

*Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna (1882-1960)*

Flower Pots with Cat on Table, watercolor on paper, signed lower left Image: 5 1/4 in. x 7 1/4 in / 13.5 x 18.5 cm. Provenance: Acquired through decent from Tikhon Nikolaevich, the son of the Grand Duchess Olga.

Estimated Price: 500.00 - 700.00 CDN



*Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna (1882-1960)*

Flowers & Copenhagen Porcelain, watercolor on paper, signed lower left Image: 13 x 18 cm. Provenance: Acquired through decent of Tikhon Nikolaevich, the son of the Grand Duchess Olga.

Estimated Price: 500.00 - 700.00 CDN

*Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna (1882-1960)*

Flower Pots on the Window Sill, watercolor on paper, signed lower left Image: 14.5 x 18 cm. Provenance: Acquired through decent of Tikhon Nikolaevich, the son of the Grand Duchess Olga.

Estimated Price: 400.00 - 600.00 CDN





*Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna (1882-1960)*

Mother & Child in the Garden, watercolor on paper, signed lower left Image: 14 x 18 cm. Provenance: Acquired through descent of Tikhon Nikolaevich, the son of the Grand Duchess Olga. Thick paper, card stock removed on back.

Estimated Price: 500.00 - 700.00 CDN

*Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna (1882-1960)*

Brookville, Ontario Farm Oil on panel, signed lower right Image size: 33 x 24 cm. Painted of Olga's farm near Campbellville between 1948-1951 and shows her pigs by the river. Provenance: Acquired through descent of Tikhon Nikolaevich, the son of the Grand Duchess Olga.

Estimated Price: 1,000.00 - 1,500.00 CDN



*Royal Copenhagen porcelain ring tray*

Hand painted with white and pink flowers and gilt rim, probably by the hand of Olga Kulikovsky. W 20.5 cm. (8 in.) Provenance: Collection of Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna of Russia, by descent.  
Estimated Price: 100.00 - 150.00 CDN

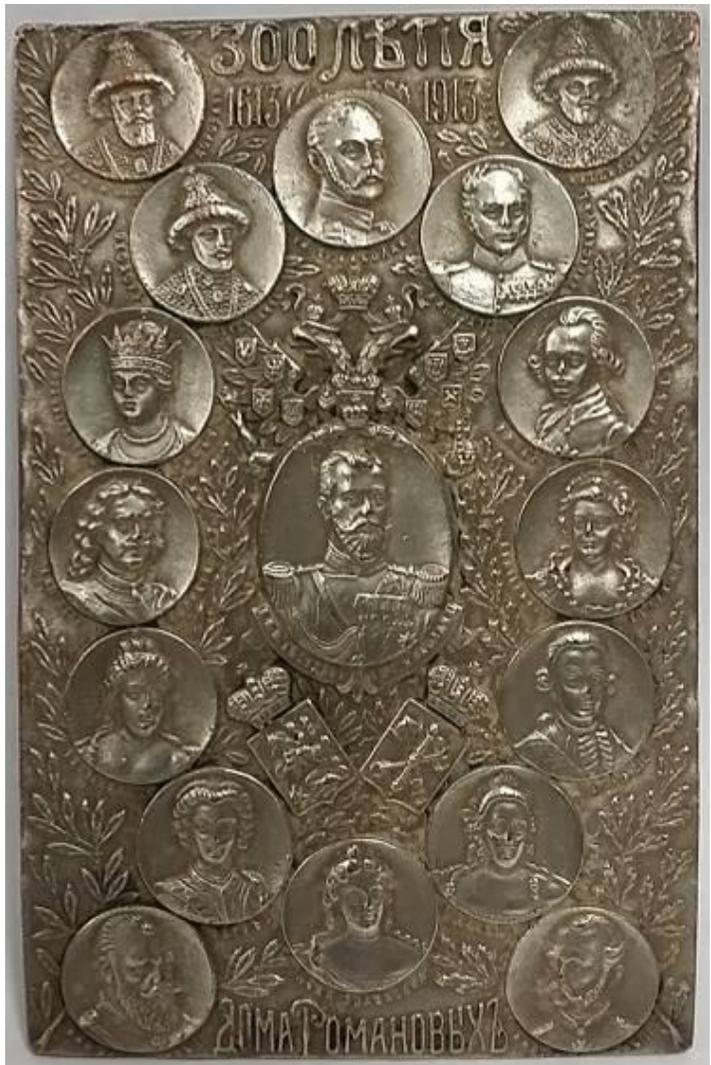


**Omega Auction, Corp., Hialeah, FL, USA,  
27 January**

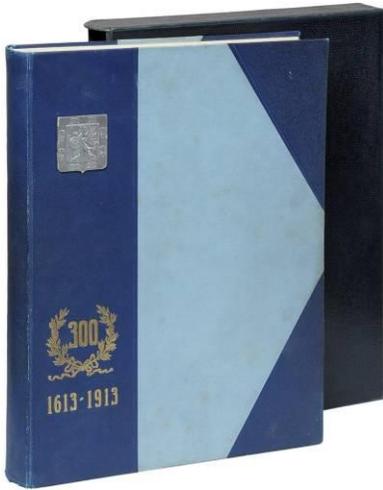
*A plaque for the 300 year anniversary of the  
House of Romanov*

Properly a newly piece.

Estimated Price: \$400 - \$800



**Antiquevarium, Miscow, Russia. 27 January**

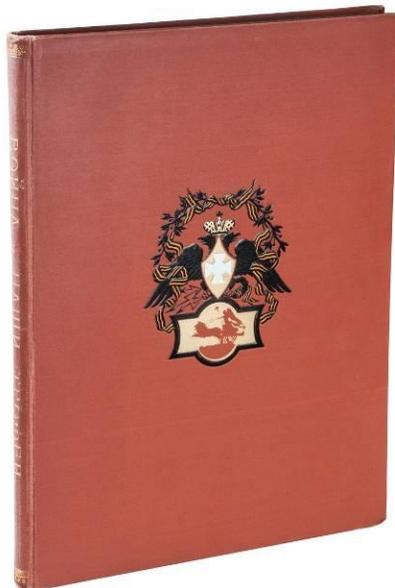


300 years of service of the Russian tsars of the Romanov dynasty. Coloured chromolithography portraits of members of the House of Romanov on separate sheets, lots of black and white illustrations in the text and portraits. On the cover gold lettering and artistic metal plate in the form of the emblem of the Romanov dynasty. In a specially designed jacket with gold lettering and a rich case with suede trim inside.

Luxury album released on the 300th anniversary of the reign of the Romanovs. Each chapter is accompanied by a motto, numerous illustrations and portraits, links to documents.

M.A. Lobashkova, 2008. № 6077.

Estimated Price: 3000-5000 USD



"War and our trophies exhibition arranged with the permission of the Supreme Emperor". Edited by M. Sokolovsky, J. Bozheryanov, L. Dmitriev-Caucasian. Text by MK Sokolovsky and I.N. Bozheryanova. Portrait paints M.V. Rundaltseva. Charity edition for the care for homeless children, [1915].

73 pages. 37h x 28,5 cm. Polychrome relief embossed on the front cover, embossed in gold on the spine of the book's title. Lavishly illustrated album-catalog of the exhibition "War and our trophies", held in St. Petersburg in 1915.

Estimated Price: 400-600 USD





Nicholas II: The experience of personal characteristics mainly based on the diary and correspondence. By Prof. N.N. Firsov. Kazan, Tatizdat, 1929. (Noted the year and that is it published in Russia!) 23h x 15 cm. 3000 copies.

The book examines the role of Nicholas II in Russia's history. The Emperor is compared with his contemporary monarchs in the West. Europe. Nikolay Firsov (1864-1934), a Russian historian and expert on the history of the Russian Trade and Industry of the XVIII century. Estimated Price: 150-300 USD

***Bruun Rasmussen, Aarhus, Denmark, 1 February***

Portraits of Tsar Peter the Great and Catherine I of Russia. Artist unknown. Unsigned. Early 18th century. Oil on canvas. 46 x 38 cm.  
Estimate Dkr 8,000 (€ 1,050)



***Bruun Rasmussen, Copenhagen, Denmark, 5 February***

Gold-plated brass medal with portrait of Emperor Nicholas II. For the Imperial Don-Kuban-Terek Society of Agriculture, (1908-1909). Diameter 51 mm. Weight 70,70 g.  
Estimate Dkr 500 (€ 67)



***Christies', New York, USA, 9-10 February***

An assembled Russian and French porcelain part table service by the Kuznetsov factory, Moscow, and escalier De Cristal, Paris, late 19th/early 20th century.  
Decorated with the gilt cypher of Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich and Grand Duchess Elisabeth beneath an Imperial crown, comprising: Eleven dinner plates, nine soup plates, a bread plate, three dessert plates, a footed compote. 9 ¼ in. (23.5 cm.) diameter of the dinner and soup plates.  
Estimated Price \$5,000 – \$7,000



## Did you know....



... That in Helsinki, Finland, there is a ship called "Nikolai II".

The ship "Nikolai II" was built in 1903 at the shipyard in Hietalahti and is the oldest ship in Helsinki that still operates.

Originally named Nautilus, Nikolai II was built for fishing and marine research. The ship had three large aquariums and an own laboratory where they examined everything from small stickleback to the European sturgeon which could grow to a whopping 300 kg.

When World War I was about to start, Nautilus was painted white with a big red cross and was then serving as a hospital boat for the army of Tsar Nicholas II. After the independence of Finland was proclaimed in 1917 the Nautilus reverted back to its old roots of measuring and mapping out the seas of the Baltic Sea.



During the years the ship has been renovated, its hull strengthened with steel and the engine has been replaced to a more modern version. Unfortunately people didn't appreciate vessels like Nautilus and when newer ships were taking over the old ones were usually sold for scrap. For some reason Nautilus escaped this fate and was sold at an auction to a private investor in the 1980s. The measure equipment was replaced with a kitchen and coffee maker. Since then the ship has been serving as a café and restaurant boat.



You are welcome aboard the "Nikolai II" for a cool drink or a nice bite to eat and hope that you will enjoy your visit aboard this ship and its 110 years of history!

See the ship sailing here - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJMfG-vdXpc>

---