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125 years anniversary of the coronation of Emperor Nicholas II and Empress Alexandra Feodorovna

125 years ago, the most important event according to the tradition of the Russian Empire took place. On May 14 (26 new style), 1896, the coronation ceremony of Emperor Nicholas II took place in the Assumption Cathedral of the Moscow Kremlin – and was to be the last coronation in Imperial Russia. The program of the coronation celebrations lasted for three weeks, but their apotheosis was precisely the church rite performed in the main cathedral in Moscow.



The event took place a year and a half after Nicholas Alexandrovich's accession to the throne – after the death of his father Emperor Alexander III on 1 November 1894. The date of the coronation was apparently decided by the Emperor and was explained by several reasons. First, a 12-month mourning period was established on the occasion of the untimely death of Emperor Alexander III, so coronation could not take place in 1895. A second factor was the calendar – with regard to weather and church. To hold such a solemn ceremony in the cold and dark pre-winter season is not desirable and the first fine days of spring 1896 fell on the period of Great Lent and then Easter, where all kinds of amusements were not possible. So, the coronation was moved to May 1896.

That year, Trinity was celebrated on May 24 (12), the greatest Christian holiday celebrated on the 50th day after Easter. According to the church calendar, the next day (always Monday) Orthodox Christians celebrate the Day of Spirits. And the first "unoccupied" date after that - May 26 (14), 1896, Tuesday - and was scheduled for the "exclusive" coronation ceremony.

The coronation day itself began noisily. At 7.00, several artillery pieces installed at the Taynitskaya tower of the Kremlin fired 21 volleys. Following this, a long chime of bells rang out in the center of the city. After this "overture" the main events of the holiday to begin.

The newspapers described them in details.

"... A platoon of brave cavalier guards descended from the porch, trumpets and timpani sounded. On the terraces of the palace there are a brilliant mass of courtiers, representatives of volosts, cities, zemstvos, nobility, merchants, professors of Moscow University, behind them are the chief prosecutors of the Senate, senators, secretaries of state, ministers and members of the State Council. Finally, with the deafening enthusiastic shouts of "hurra" of the hundreds of thousands of people and the sounds of "God Save the Tsar" performed by the court orchestra, the Sovereign Emperor and Sovereign Empress appear on the Red Porch. They follow to the cathedral under a golden canopy - the Sovereign in front, the Empress behind. Suddenly, in an instant, everything subsides - the music, the bells, and the cries of the people - and amid the reverential silence at the southern doors of the cathedral, Metropolitan Sergius of Moscow greets Their Majesty with a speech.

The most important church-state ceremony gathered a lot of people. One of the witnesses of the events wrote: "At nine o'clock in the morning near the Kremlin, the entire area between Alexandrovsky Square and the Historical Museum was - without exaggeration - a continuous sea of heads, and only a small space near the Historical Museum, opposite the gates leading to the Kremlin, was left for travel". In addition to the inhabitants of Moscow of different classes and the Russian nobility who had specially come to the Holy heart of Russia, several representatives of the European ruling dynasties were present at the coronation celebrations. Among them are the Queen of Greece Olga Konstantinovna, the Emir of Bukhara, the Princes Ferdinand of Bulgaria and Nicholas of Montenegro, Prince Henry of Prussia - the brother of Emperor William II, the English Duke Arthur of Connaught, the brother of the Shah of Persia, the Japanese prince, the son of the King of Siam, the papal nuncio ...



This is what happened, judging by the descriptions of eyewitnesses, in the Kremlin on May 26 (14), 1896. At the door of the Assumption Cathedral, the Imperial couple were met by Metropolitan Sergius of Moscow. He first blessed Nicholas and Alexandra, and then made a speech-instruction: "... You

enter this ancient sanctuary in order to place the Imperial Crown upon yourself and receive the sacred anointing ... Through the visible anointing, may an invisible power be given to you, acting from above, illuminating your autocratic reign for the good and happiness of your faithful subjects."

After that, the Emperor and Empress entered the cathedral, in the middle of which the historical throne places had been established for them in advance. Nicholas Alexandrovich sat on the throne of Tsar Mikhail Feodorovich (the first Russian Sovereign from the Romanov dynasty), and Alexandra Feodorovna - on the throne of his son, Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich.

This was followed by a formal but mandatory procedure. Metropolitan Pallady of St. Petersburg approached the Sovereign and asked a question about his religion. In response, Nicholas II loudly pronounced the Symbol of the Orthodox Faith: "I believe in one God, the Father, Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth ..."



The apotheosis of the coronation came after the church hierarchs read several sacred texts and prayers prescribed by the charter. The Metropolitan laid his hands folded in a cross-like manner on the Sovereign's head and cried out a petition to God that he "anoint the Tsar with the oil of joy, clothe him with strength from a height, ... give him the sceptre of salvation in his right hand, set on the throne of righteousness ..."

Emperor Nicholas then took the Great Imperial Crown lying on a pillow and placed this symbol of Imperial power on his head. Following this, Nicholas Alexandrovich took the Small Crown from another raised pillow and placed it on the head of the Empress.

Having received the Imperial regalia, the autocrat knelt down, bared his head (he was now holding the crown in his hand) and said a special coronation prayer: "... I confess Thy unsearchable look at me and, thanks to Thy Majesty, I worship, You, my Master and my Lord, instruct me in business, but thou didst not send me, give me understanding and guide me in this great service ... Bury my heart in Thy hand, hedgehog everything for the benefit of the people entrusted to me and for Thy glory ... "

After the end of the prayer, the Emperor got up, and all the others who were present in the cathedral, on the contrary, knelt down. The Metropolitan, on bended knee, recited a pleading prayer: "... Show him victorious to his enemies, fearful to the villains, kind merciful and trustworthy, warm his heart to the favour of the poor, to accept the strange, to intercession of the attacked. The government subordinates to him, ruling on the path of truth and referring from partiality and bribery ...".

After all these ritual actions, the classical church service began - the Divine Liturgy. At the end of it, the metropolitan chrismated the Emperor and Empress. And after that they came to communion (the Emperor received the Holy Mysteries in the altar of the cathedral)."

The Emperor made the following entry in his diary:

"Great, solemn, but difficult day, in the moral sense, for Alix, Mom and me. From 8 o'clock in the morning we were on our feet; and our procession started only at 1/2 10. The weather was fortunately wonderful; The red porch was a radiant sight. All this happened in the Assumption Cathedral, although it seems like a real dream, but I will not forget it all my life !!! We returned to our place at half past one. At 3 o'clock we went again in the same procession to the Faceted Chamber for a meal. At 4 o'clock everything ended quite well; with a soul filled with gratitude to God, I rested completely afterwards. We dined with Mom, who fortunately passed the whole long test perfectly. At 9 o'clock went to the upper balcony, from where Alix lit an electric illumination on Ivan the Great, and then the towers and walls of the Kremlin, as well as the opposite embankment and Zamoskvorechye, were illuminated in succession. We went to bed early."

The historian of the reign of Nicholas II Sergei Oldenburg wrote: "From that moment on, He felt like an anointed of God, the rite of coronation was full of deep meaning for him. Betrothed to Russia since childhood, he kind of got married to her that day."

From the memoirs of V.F. Dzhunkovsky

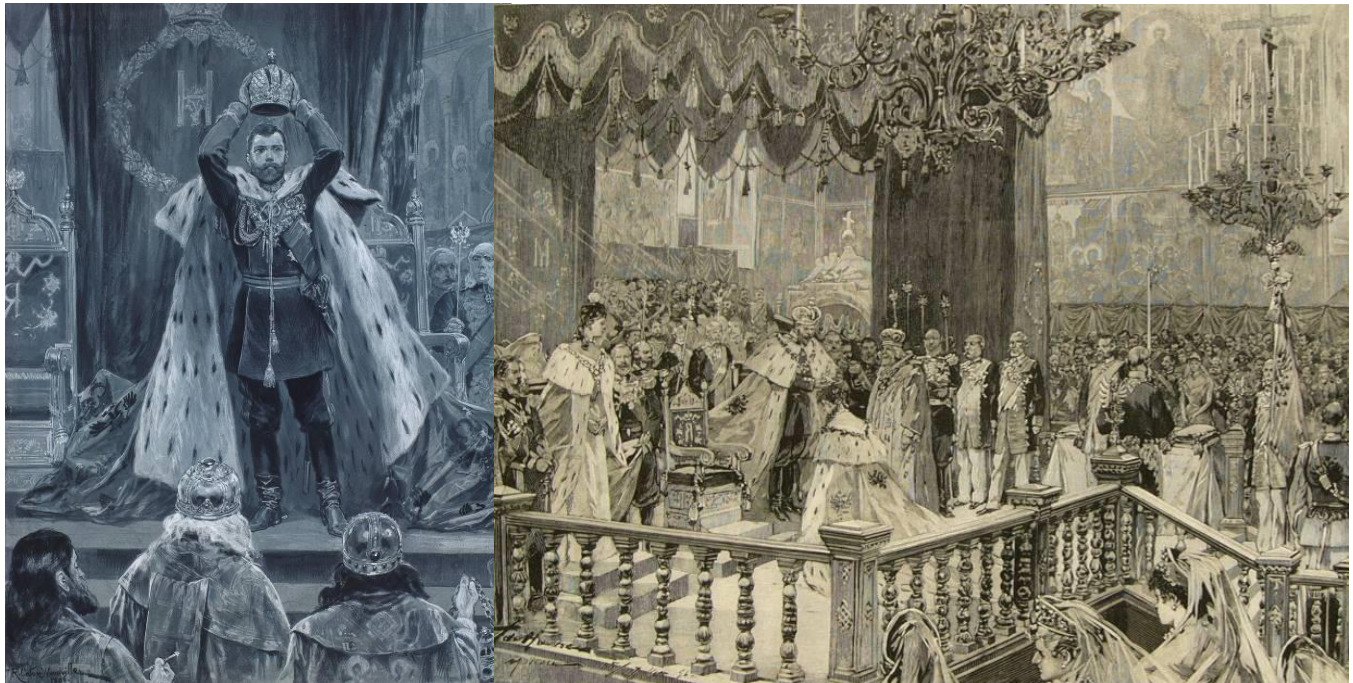
"May 26 (14) 1896, was the great day of the Sacred Coronation of Their Majesties. The program of the day was as follows: 7:00 - 21 bells and cannon shot in the Assumption Cathedral; 7:30 - Congress in the Kremlin Palace and the occupation of seats in the stands; 8:30 - Gathering in the Assumption Cathedral of foreign ambassadors and envoys; 8:45 min. - Procession to the Cathedral of Empress Maria Feodorovna; 9:40 - The beginning of the march of Their Majesties; 10:00 - beginning of coronation ceremony; 10:50 - the beginning of the liturgy; 12:30 - The beginning of the procession from the cathedral; 12:50 - The arrival of Their Majesties to the Red Gate; 1:10 - Transfer of the Thrones to Facet Hall. 3:00 - The solemn beginning of a meal; 4:20 - Dinner for guests of the Supreme Court; 9:00 - illumination...

When at the top of Red Porch appeared Their Imperial Majesties, came a loud "bang" on the Cathedral Square from the crowd of thousands at the Kremlin, Red Square, and both embankments of the Moscow River, by people who came from all over of Great Russia. Among these enthusiastic shouts and powerful sounds of the national anthem from all the military bands, their Majesties were pleased to come down from the Red Porch, bowing to people and start walking under the canopy, which held 32 Adjutant Generals preceded by the clergy, their Majesties deigned to enter the Cathedral. Then deigned to proceed to the middle of the cathedral to sit on the thrones.

Upon reading the second prayer, His Imperial Majesty has deigned to submit to command his crown. The large imperial crown lying on crimson velvet cushion was brought closer. It was all studded with precious diamonds, under the rays of bright shining church fires. Metropolitan took the crown and presented it to his majesty. His Majesty the Emperor, standing in purple before his throne, took the crown and put it on his head, and the Metropolitan proclaimed: "In the name of the Father and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen! Then the Emperor commanded to give him the scepter and orb. Metropolitan submitted to His Majesty the scepter, and in the left the orb with the cry of "In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit! Amen... " His Majesty, with the scepter and orb, sat on the throne.

Soon afterwards the Emperor put these two jewels on the pillows and was pleased to summon to him the Empress. Her Majesty kneeled down before her August Spouse with a knee on a crimson velvet cushion, decorated with gold braid and the Monarch, handing over his crown, and touched it to the head of the Empress and again put it back on him. Then he lifted the small imperial crown, and put it on the head of his August Spouse. When the Empress returned to her throne, the Emperor again took the scepter and orb. Protodeacon proclaimed the full title of the Emperor and shouted long live the Emperor and the Empress.

Singers sang "God Grants Many Years" several times, and at the same time were heard 101 shots of guns and chimes, announces that the Holy coronation was committed. All the Kremlin Square revived, boundless crowd standing still in reverent silence, announced enthusiastic air clicks "cheers". After congratulations when bells and cannon went silent, all those present resumed their former places."



The Sovereign Emperor Nicholas crowned himself, symbolizing that the autocratic power devolved to him directly from God and not from the blessing of the Church. In contrast, Empress Alexandra, as the consort and not the Sovereign in her own right, was crowned directly by her husband, who briefly took off his own imperial crown, touching it to her forehead before crowning her with the smaller consort's imperial crown. This act of the physical crowning of the Russian Empress consort by her sovereign spouse closely follows Byzantine custom for the crowning of the Augusta/Βασίλισσα and has its first example in Russian history with Peter I's 1724 coronation of his consort Catherine, who ultimately succeeded him as Sovereign (r. 1725-27). Catherine I do not seem to have had a coronation as Empress regnant, but at her coronation as consort in 1724 she received the anointing with holy chrism, following her crowning by Peter.

To emphasize Nicholas' role as Monarch, in which he fulfilled a quasi-sacerdotal role as intercessor for his people before God, in keeping with his male and female predecessors the Emperor was anointed during the Divine Liturgy at the Royal Doors by Russia's most senior Metropolitan. Mirroring the anointing performed at one's chrismation, the Monarch was sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit in the eight holy places — on his forehead, his eyes, his ears, his nose, his mouth, his breast, his hands, and his feet.

Reflecting that she was not a Sovereign in her own right, but her husband's helper and consort sharing equally in his imperial dignity and the ultimate spiritual responsibility for governing the empire, Empress Alexandra was also anointed by the metropolitan, but only once, upon her forehead. The key distinction between the Monarch and his consort came not even at the anointing, which was performed immediately before the Holy Gifts were administered, but in the reception of communion itself. Emperor Nicholas II, as the monarch — not, as it has been argued, due to his maleness — received the Lord's Body and Blood directly in the altar itself. He communed directly of the Body and Blood as if he was a priest or a bishop, using his hands to take the bread and the chalice, symbolizing his spiritual equality among Russia's senior bishops and metropolitans just this once in his life. Thus, for all intents and purposes, during the Divine Liturgy on this one occasion the Monarch was regarded by the Church as a mixed person, set apart as part-priest and part-layman. In contrast, the Empress Alexandra, as the imperial consort and therefore not a "mixed person", but nonetheless exalted over all other lay people, was the first of the laity to receive communion, but she received on the solea as did the laity, and from the chalice via the spoon, with the Body and Blood mixed together in the lay manner.



To the birthday of the Passion-bearer Tsar

The miraculous icon of the Tsar-Martyr Nicholas II from Serbia arrived in the Alexander Nevsky Lavra

14 May. Russian National Line - With the blessing of Kronstadt's Bishop Nazariy, a large icon of the Passion-Bearer Tsar Nicholas II, painted in Serbia, was brought to the Holy Trinity Cathedral of the Alexander Nevsky Lavra of St. Petersburg. The shrine will remain in the monastery until June 15.



Serbian brothers in Christ told the history of the icon. In 2018, three large cruciform icons of the Tsar were painted in Serbia. The rector of the Archangel Michael Church in Korenica, Father Nikolai Malobabich and the prior of the Prophet Jeremiah Church, Father Dushan Popovich blessed it, and the painter wished to remain anonymous. The icon of the Passion-Bearer Tsar Nicholas II was consecrated in the ancient church of the Holy Prophet Jeremiah in the town of Verbovets near the town of Smederevo on February 24, 2019. Serbs honour this place - after all, during the First World War in 1916, about three thousand Serbian soldiers died here.

When Father Dushan, co-served by four priests, blessed the icon, it pacified. There were a lot of believers in the church, and they all knelt down with prayer. This was the first miracle of this icon. For two years, the icon was held in many religious processions blessed by His Holiness Patriarch Irenaeus, in Serbia, Montenegro, Republika Srpska, in Kosovo and Metohija. Many people prayed in front of the icon of the Tsar-Martyr Nicholas. In monasteries and churches where the icon was located, people often defended a considerable line in order only to bow down to the Russian Tsar, beloved in Serbia, to venerate his honest icon. There are cases of miraculous help through prayers to the passion-bearer Nicholas.

Thus, nun D. from the monastery of Vasily Ostrozhsky on Mount Rozhai was seriously ill with leukemia. Five years before arriving at the monastery of the Tsar's Icon, she received the schema. The image of the Tsar was in the monastery church for three weeks. Every day after the liturgy, the nuns read the Akathist to the holy Tsar. Then the icon was taken away to visit the holy places of Central Serbia. Two weeks later, the nun felt better and visited the doctor. Her analyses turned out to be as if she had never been sick! The doctor was amazed. And now, thank God, she is healthy.

Almost thirty temples and monasteries in Serbia received the icon of the Emperor, and with it two more royal icons - the holy Tsar Lazar of Serbia and Tsar John the Strong (this is the name of Tsar Ivan the Terrible in Serbia). All of them became famous for their wonderful intercession and help.

For three months the icons were in the monastery of the Annunciation of the Most Holy Theotokos on Mount Rudnik, where many people came, as well as priests and monks from Central Serbia. Here and in other places, the Akathist was incessantly read to Saint Tsar Nicholas or the Royal Martyrs.

There were also icons of the Kings in Belgrade, in the churches of St. Paraskeva Friday and St. Nicholas. Repeatedly they were in the Serbian-Russian Religious processions undertaken for the sake of strengthening the faith and saving the Serbian

and Russian peoples. Many times, a fragrance was felt where the icons were.

The blessing for bringing icons to Russia was given by the confessors revered in Serbia - Elders John (Ilenko) and Seraphim (Milkovich; † 24.12.2020). This mission was carried out by Mrs. Bilyana Rakovich, the spiritual daughter of Father Seraphim, who dearly loved Russia and the Russian people.

The grace of God, resting on icons, showed itself at the airport in Belgrade. While employee, who at first coldly declared himself an unbeliever, was in charge of moving the icons to the gangway - and they were very large in their cases, which created problems - he completely changed, literally transformed. At the end, carefully putting the icons on the moving tape with other employees, he stretched himself out to line and gave the Russian Tsars military honour! Those who helped him did the same. His eyes were shining. And the employees of the airport, seeing off the Kings, cried, one knelt down.

The icons arrived in Russia at the beginning of Holy Week this year. For a week, with the blessing of the rector Archpriest Konstantin Korolev and the honorary abbot Schema-Archimandrite Barsonofy (Kuzmin), the icon of the Passion-bearer Tsar Nicholas stayed in the Church of All Saints Who Shone in St. Petersburg, Kingisepp. Then, with the blessing of Archimandrite Nektariy (Golovkin), the icon was kept in the church of Saints Peter and Fevronia in Peterhof for more than a week. Here the icon, brought into the church, was fragrant.



The icon of Tsar Lazarus

And the other day the Serbian image of Tsar Nicholas arrived at the main monastery of St. Petersburg - the Alexander Nevsky Lavra, where it will stay until June 15. This does not seem to be accidental, because it happened on the eve of the 800th anniversary of the birth of the Holy Blessed Prince Alexander Nevsky. And also, just a few days before the birthday of the most holy Tsar Nikolai Alexandrovich and on the eve of the 300th anniversary of the proclamation of the State of the Russian Empire, which took place on the day of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God. It is written about this event in historical documents: "October 22 (according to Art.) 1721 in the Trinity Cathedral of St. Petersburg mass was held, and then the text of the peace treaty concluded with the Swedes was read out. Feofan Prokopovich delivered a sermon, describing all the famous deeds of the Tsar, for which he deserves to be called Father of the Fatherland, Emperor and Great. Following this, senators approached the Tsar, Chancellor Count G.I. Golovkin turned to Peter with a request to accept the title of Father of the Fatherland, Peter the Great, Emperor of All Russia. Under the volleys of hundreds of guns from the Admiralty, the Peter and Paul Fortress and 125 galleys brought into the Neva, Peter assumed a new title ... So, Russia became an empire. "



The adoption of the imperial title marked important changes in the international status of Russia, securing her position as one of the world leaders. Three years later, the All-Russian Emperor Peter the Great laid the foundation for the Alexander Nevsky Lavra.

On May 19, many of St. Petersburg's believers gathered in the Trinity Cathedral of the Alexander Nevsky Lavra near the miraculous icon brought from Serbia. During the Divine Liturgy in the Byzantine tradition, the youth choir named after St. John of Damascus sang, which created a particularly solemn, sublime and warm prayer atmosphere. Afterwards, a moleben was served with the singing of an Akathist to the Holy Tsar Passion-bearer.

More and more people learn about the miraculous Serbian image of the Holy Sovereign and come to the icon with faith, hope and love. The triumph that those present in the Trinity Cathedral experienced on the day of memory of Job the Long-suffering, left a bright feeling that the Holy Tsar-Martyr Nicholas did not leave his people with prayer intercession.

This image bears an amazing resemblance to the fresco, which was painted with the blessing of St. Nicholas of Serbia in the Zichy monastery even before the glorification of Tsar Nicholas as a sign of the great gratitude of the Serbian people to him.

One of the chapels of the new, already consecrated church of St. Savva in Zhich is dedicated to the Russian Tsar Nicholas II. The artist Baron Mayendorf created a fresco of the Tsar-saint.



A beautiful fresco in our church style gave a very faithful face of the greatest friend of the Serbian people, since the churchwarden, Vladyka Nicholas, wanted to perpetuate the deep gratitude of the Serbs to Russia and honour the Tsar for everything he and Russian people did for the Serbs in the world war.

When Nazi came to the Serbian Land, Vladyka Nikolai gave his blessing to close the fresco with paper in order to preserve it. Only the nuns knew of its existence and strictly kept the secret.

Then came the time of communist rule. Many years later, during the earthquake in Kraljevo in 2010, the paper fell away and this majestic image appeared before the eyes of the nuns. Today this fresco is one of the most revered shrines of the monastery.

On August 11, 1927, a surprising message appeared in Belgrade newspapers under the headline: "The face of Emperor Nicholas II in the Serbian monastery of St. Naum, on Lake Ohrid." It was about the Russian artist and academician of painting Kolesnikov, who was invited to paint a new church in the ancient Serbian monastery of St. Naum. He was given complete creative freedom in decorating the inner dome and walls. Performing this work, the artist decided to write on the walls of the temple the faces of fifteen saints, placed in fifteen ovals. He wrote fourteen faces at once, and the place of the fifteenth remained empty for a long time, since some inexplicable feeling forced Kolesnikov to wait.

One day at dusk, he entered the temple. It was dark below, and only the dome was cut through by the rays of the setting sun. Everything around seemed unearthly and special. At that moment, the artist saw that the oval, which he had left, seemed to come to life: the mournful face of Emperor Nicholas II looked from it, as like from a frame. Struck by the miraculous phenomenon, the artist stood rooted to the spot for some time.

Further, as Kolesnikov describes, under the influence of a prayer impulse, he attached a ladder to the oval and, without drawing the contours of the wonderful face with coal, began laying with only brushes. In the past, the artist saw the Tsar several times, giving him explanations at exhibitions. His image was engraved in the memory. But then the Tsar himself appeared to him - and the artist could paint from life. He worked with inspiration for several hours and when he finished this icon-portrait, he made the inscription below: "All-Russian Emperor Nicholas II, who accepted the martyr's crown for the prosperity and happiness of the Slavs."



Soon the commander of the troops of the Bitolsky military district, General Rostich, arrived at the monastery. The General visited the church, looked for a long time at the face of the late Emperor painted by Kolesnikov, and tears flowed down his cheeks. Then, turning to the artist, he quietly said: "For us Serbs, this is and will be the greatest, most revered of all saints." The feelings of the artist, who painted the face of Nicholas II in a state of enlightenment, passed on to the general. It was a real icon - a window to the upper world through which the saint looks at us from eternal life. It is not a mental image created by the imagination that looks, but a living inhabitant of Paradise. There are many known cases when saints left the icon, and performed miracles in front of amazed spectators.

Festive events in Germany dedicated to the 153rd anniversary of the birth of Emperor Nicholas II

On May 19, 2021, a festive service in Darmstadt, a procession of the cross and a prayer service in Wolfsgarten castle, were held dedicated to the 153rd anniversary of the birth of the Passion-Bearer Emperor Nicholas II.



In Wolfsgarten Park, a procession and a prayer service in honour of the Tsar-Martyr Nicholas took place in a small chapel built by Grand Duke Ernst Ludwig, brother of Alexandra and Elizabeth Feodorovna.

The Chapel of St. Bonifatius was built in 1911 from larch wood in the style of a Norwegian log house.

In childhood, the Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna and Empress Alexandra Feodorovna spent their summer here, in the castle complex. Later they came here with their families when they visited relatives in Darmstadt. A large number of photographs have survived with Emperor Nicholas II, who repeatedly visited this park.



*Above - Grand Duchesses Anastasia, Olga, Princess Elisabeth (daughter of Grand Duke Ernst Ludwig of Hesse, Grand Duchesses Tatiana, and Maria, 1903
Below - Modern view of Princess Elisabeth's playhouse, 2021*



The festival birthday of Tsar-Martyr Nicholas

On May 23, 2021, a festival in honour of the birthday of the Passion-Bearer Tsar Nicholas II was held in the church in honour of the Pochaev Icon of the Mother of God in the Yuzhnoye Chertanovo, in Moscow. The atmosphere of the festival was very warm, and this day for the parish turned out to be a real holiday - with guests, refreshments, a concert and entertainment for children, according to the organizers of the festival.

The event began with a common prayer, after which the rector of the church, priest Mikhail Negrya, addressed the guests. Then, Honorary Member of the John the Wonderworker Foundation, member of the Union of Journalists of Russia, Lyudmila Kirillova talked about Saint Tsar Nicholas II and the books published by the Saint John of Shanghai Foundation. This foundation is one of the organizers of the festival, and has already published many books and icons. Among others, the book "Help Will Come" includes numerous testimonies of people about miraculous help through prayers to St. John in various difficult situations and even in mortal dangers.

For the festive service in the Church of the Pochaev Icon of the Mother of God, the staff of the foundation brought an icon of St. John of Shanghai, on which he is depicted holding an icon of Tsar Nicholas II. Also, nearby on the analogion were the saint's cassock and his bishop's belt.

Later, a concert was held by priest Alexander Starostenko, a famous author and performer of sacred songs, laureate of all-Russian competitions.

The artists of the musical theatre "Lel" of school No. 152 touchingly read selected excerpts from the diaries of Nicholas II about his eastern journey, and the famous gusli (ancient Russian string musical instrument – ed.) performer Lyubov Basurmanova played and sang several pieces.

The head of the Christian public movement "Christian Virtue" Sergei Fedorov spoke to the guests, who with his team, with the blessing of Schema-Archimandrite Iliy (Nozdrina), distributes Orthodox and educational literature at various public events, incl. at transport facilities. Everyone who wished, received books as a gift on this day.

Treats were organized for the children - tea with pies and sweets. Also, they were invited to a master class on making dolls and playing with a ball.

The festival concluded with a prayer service with an Akathist to the Royal Passion-Bearers - Tsar Nicholas II and his family.

ФЕСТИВАЛЬ
День Рождения
Царя-Мученика
Николая
23 мая в Москве

09:00 Божественная Литургия
- Встреча покая Святителя Иованна Шанхайскаго и Сан-Францискаго Чудотворца

12:00 Открытие Фестиваля
- Людмила Кириллова - ведущая Фестиваля, почетный член Фонда Иоанна Чудотворца, член Союза журналистов России (г. Сергиев Посад)

12:30 Праздничный концерт
- О. Александр Старостенко - известный автор и исполнитель духовных песен, лауреат Всероссийских конкурсов

14:30 Встреча с авторами проекта «К 130-летию восточного путешествия будущего императора Николая Второго»

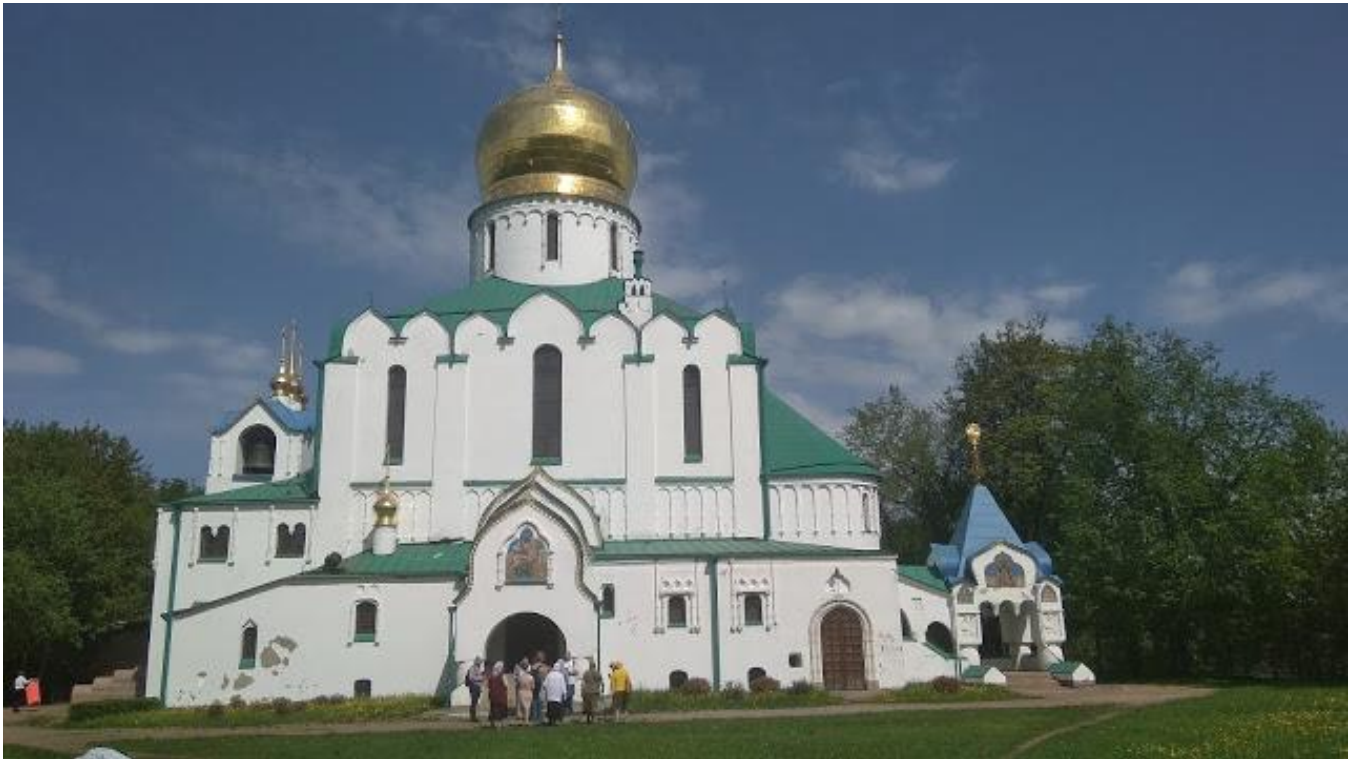
15:00 Молебен с Акафистом Царственным Мученикам

12:00 - 15:30 Забавы для детей

БЕСПЛАТНЫЕ УГОЩЕНИЯ

ХРАМ ПОЧАЕВСКОЙ ИКОНЫ БОЖИЕЙ МАТЕРИ В ЧЕРТАНОВЕ ЮЖНОМ

10 мин. от метро Академика Янгеля, Кировоградская улица владения 21А, вход со стороны Варшавского шоссе



Celebration of the Birthday of the Holy Sovereign in Tsarskoye Selo

May 19 - In the Feodorovsky Sovereign Cathedral of Tsarskoye Selo, Fr. George performed a divine service with the reading of the Akathist to Tsar-Martyr Nicholas. In addition, on the birthday of Nicholas Alexandrovich, they honoured the memory of His parents by serving a requiem for the pious Emperor Alexander Alexandrovich and the pious Empress Maria Feodorovna.



Members of the St. Petersburg branch of the Union of Zealots in Memory of Emperor Nicholas II took part in the service, and laid flowers at the monument to the Tsar-Martyr.



Let us recall that the Tsar was very fond of this Church and took part in its foundation. The Moscow Annunciation Cathedral was taken as a model, which was the favourite church of especially Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich. Emperor Nicholas II and Empress Alexandra Feodorovna donated a lot of money for the construction of the Feodorovsky Cathedral. Exactly three years later, after the laying of the first stone in 1909, the solemn consecration of the Cathedral took place, which was attended by the entire Imperial Family. Subsequently, they often visited it, especially during the Great War.

The birthday of Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich was remembered in Moscow

11 May (29 April) 1857 in Tsarskoye Selo, in the family of Emperor Alexander II, was born the fifth son, Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich.

The 164th birthday anniversary was celebrated in the Novospassky Monastery in Moscow, with a memorial service in the Romanov crypt, where the Grand Duke was buried.



The service was led by the abbot of the monastery, Metropolitan Dionysius. Representatives of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, of which Grand Duke Sergei was chairman, as well as parishioners and guests of the monastery, prayed at the memorial service. Among the guest was Sergei Stepashin, present chairman of Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society.

Sergei Alexandrovich participated in the Russian-Turkish war of 1877-78. For the displayed courage Sergei Alexandrovich was awarded the Order of St. George of IV degree. In 1882 he was appointed commander of the 1st Battalion of the Preobrazhensky Lifeguards Regiment.

Soon after his return to St. Petersburg Sergei Alexandrovich assumed the duties of the chairman of the Orthodox Palestine Society. The Society collected, developed, and spread throughout Russia information about the holy places in the Orient, and assisted the Russian pilgrims. The Grand Duke initiated and funded the excavations in Jerusalem,



at the site of which there was built a church in the name of the Holy Prince Alexander Nevsky, in memory of the Tsar-Liberator Alexander II.

Sergei Alexandrovich was the honorary chairman of the Moscow Society of charity, education and training of blind children, the Society for patronage of homeless and released from juvenile detention, the Moscow department of the Russian society for protection of public health; a patron of Almshouses of Tsarevich Nicholas, the Moscow Society of the mutual promotion of handicraft, the Charitable society for older artists; the patron of all parish schools of the Moscow diocese, shelter of Sergievsky community in St. Petersburg, Pskov real school; president of the Society for care about the children of persons exiled by judicial sentence to Siberia and other public organizations. The Grand Duke also was the patron and honorary chairman of many scientific institutions - the Academy of Sciences, the Academy of Fine Arts, the Society of Artists of historical painting, Moscow and St. Petersburg Universities, Moscow Archaeological Society, the Society of Agriculture, the Society of Natural Sciences, the Russian Musical Society, the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul and Historical Museum in Moscow and the Moscow Theological Academy, the Orthodox Missionary Society, Division of distribution of spiritual and ethical books.



In 1891, the Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich was appointed Governor-General of Moscow, in December 1894 he became a member of the State Council, and after a year and a half - the commander of the Moscow Military District. During his general-governorship, the Grand Duke took an active part in the beautification of the capital.

Sergei Alexandrovich supported pro-government labour organizations and was adamant to the rebels and revolutionaries, believing that it was necessary to take tougher action against terrorists. The Government had not supported the Grand Duke and in January 1905 he voluntarily relinquished the post of governor-general.

17 (4) February 1905 about 3 p. m., Sergei Alexandrovich was assassinated by a bomb, thrown by terrorist Ivan Kalyaev.

A memorial plaque to members of the Imperial Family was unveiled in Orel

On May 25, a memorial plaque was unveiled on the building of the railway station in Orel. It was in memory of the chairmen and honorary members of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, who repeatedly visited the Orel station.

The solemn ceremony was conducted by Doctor of History, Professor, Honorary Citizen of the Orel Region, Member of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation, Deputy Chairman of the Central Council of the All-Russian Society for the Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments Viktor Litvov.

For the opening of the memorial plaque, the IOPS chairman Sergei Stepashin arrived in the region and made a welcoming speech.

The memorial plaque was consecrated by Metropolitan Tikhon of Orel and Bolkhov.



The inscription reads on the plaque:

"In memory of the Chairmen of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich and Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna, Honorary Members of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society Emperor Alexander III, Emperor Nicholas II, Grand Dukes Konstantin Konstantinovich and Mikhail Alexandrovich who visited repeatedly Orel station of Orlovsko-Vitebsky railway."

Representatives of the Romanov family, marked on the memorial plaque, repeatedly visited the city of Orel. At the same time, they all arrived by rail and, during their visits, visited the building of the Orel station of the Orlovsko--Vitebsky railway.

Thus, Emperor Alexander III visited Orel in 1886 and 1888. The Orel cadets solemnly greeted the arriving Alexander III at the station. The Emperor was invariably pleased with their preparation. In 1894 he died tragically far from the capital. The body of the Emperor was transported by train through the Orel. And again, there was a parade, but this time a farewell.

Nicholas II visited Orel twice. For the first time during the bitter days of mourning in the fall of 1894. Representatives of the Imperial family made a significant impact on the social, cultural and political life of the Orel region.

In 1899 the Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich ordered to create the Orel department of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society.

The creation of the Orel IOPS department was a significant step in the development of pilgrimage activities. Bishop Nikanor (Kamensky) (1847-1910) played an important role in this. In 1896-99 he was the Smolensk Archpastor and the chairman of the Smolensk department of the Society. Bishop Nikanor was also elected IOPS honorary member. His appointment to the Orel Episcopal See (1899-1902) did not go unnoticed by the chairman of the central department of the Society.

This is evidenced by the rescript of the first chairman of the IOPS, Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich: "Right Reverend Vladyka! According to the report to Me on your appointment to the See of Bishop of Orlov and Sevsk, I consider it a pleasant duty to express my sincere gratitude to Your Grace for the three-year leadership of the Smolensk Department of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society and at the same time the hope that in the new place of your Holy Office you will be with full sympathy to the goals and activities ... of the Palestinian Society (entrusted) to me and, as far as possible, render your Archpastoral assistance to the implementation, under your intercession, of the local Orel Department of the Society. Asking for your Archpastoral blessing and entrusting Myself to the intercession of your sacred prayers, I remain sincerely disposed Sergei."

The rescript became the basis for the emergence of the Orel department of the IOPS. Bishop Nikanor addressed the flock with Archpastoral proclamations, inviting them to take part in the activities of the Society.

In May 1882, the Grand Duke bought the estate "Dolbenskinskaya" from Prince Nikolai Alekseevich Lobanov-Rostovsky. Sergei Alexandrovich visited Orel province several times with his wife, Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna.

In Orel, the memory of Elizabeth Feodorovna is marked by four memorial plaques, two of which were installed by the Orel regional branch of the IOPS: on the building of the Tikhvin Church of Vvedensky Nunnery in 2012 and on the building of the children's music school No. 2 in Koltsov Lane in 2013.

Two more memorial plaques, are installed on the buildings of the 17th Chernigov regiment headquarters and the former Peter and Paul Cathedral (now the Orel Public Library named after I. A. Bunin).

The connection between the Grand Duke Mikhail Alexandrovich and Orel became apparent after the death of his brother George Alexandrovich in June 1899. George Alexandrovich owned the Brasovo estate, in Orel province (now the village of Brasovo, Brasovo district, Bryansk region). Mikhail Alexandrovich inherited a significant share of his brother's property (as the Tsarevich), including the Brasovo and Deryugino estate in Kursk province.

The Grand Duke made annual donations to 19 churches, a monastery and schools. In 1903, Mikhail Alexandrovich visited Orel for the first time.

Grand Duke Mikhail Alexandrovich became an Honorary Citizen of the city of Orel, which was marked on a memorial plaque on the house where the headquarters of the Chernigov regiment was located on Moskovskaya Street (2005), as well as at a permanent exhibition in the administration of Orel and in the book "Honorary Citizens of the City of Orel".

On August 24, 2016, at the initiative of the Orel branch of the IOPS in Orel, a bust of the Grand Duke by sculptor S.A. Shcherabkov, was placed in front of the building of the 17th Chernigov hussar regiment

headquarters. The Grand Duke was the regiment's commander during his stay in Orel from 1909 to 1911.

Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich played an important role in the activities of the Orel Bakhtin cadet corps. In 1900 he was appointed chief of the military educational institutions of the Russian Empire. His Highness's visits to the corps have always been a real treat. The chief of the military educational institutions visited the Orel Corps in 1901, 1906 and 1914.

Video - <https://youtu.be/qjE9PRtrC98>

The Arsenal Hall in Gatchina Palace opened after restoration

On May 25, 2021, the Arsenal Hall was opened after restoration. This is the most spacious room in the Gatchina Palace. The hall is located on the first floor of the Arsenal square, overlooking the Own Garden and courtyard. The private rooms for the family of Emperor Nicholas I was designed in the middle of the 19th century by the architect Roman Ivanovich Kuzmin.

In the Arsenal Hall, receptions were held with a meal, dancing and a game. There was a lot of interesting things here: a Demidov magnet, an organ, a children's slide for sledding, a swing in the form of a boat, billiards, a small stage for home performances, many stuffed animals and birds, equipped with signs indicating the place and time of shooting, and most importantly - the author of the shot ... The walls were hung with watercolours by Mihai Zichy with hunting plots and other scenes of court life.



In 1941, the occupants set up a garage in the Arsenal Hall, and in the post-war years it housed the production facilities of the Electronstandard Institute. Painstaking scientific restoration began only in 2011 and lasted for 8 years. It took another 2 years to fill the restored Arsenal Hall with an atmosphere corresponding to the era of the reign of Emperor Alexander III.

Three paintings by A.I. Charlemagne, dedicated to the Italian and Swiss campaigns of the Russian Army under the command of A.V. Suvorov, are returning to their historical places.

Thanks to the opening of the Arsenal Hall, the exposition of the Gatchina Palace will display more items from the famous Hunting Service, made by the craftsmen of the Imperial Porcelain Factory during the reign of Catherine II, Alexander II and Alexander III.



The chandeliers and wall lamps of the Arsenal Hall have been recreated from the surviving evacuated original samples. A roller coaster and a swing-boat have been recreated on basis of the pre-war photographs and watercolours by Eduard Hau.



The Tsarskoye Selo Museum-Reserve handed over for temporary storage the famous bronze sculpture by N.I. Liberikh "The Lisinsky Bear", exhibited in the Arsenal Hall until 1941, 2 more sculptural compositions dedicated to hunting in the Gatchina Palace, as well as other items of the household collection.

The Pavlovsk Museum-Reserve donated trophies for the exposition - the heads of an elk and a bison, also exhibited in the Arsenal Hall until 1941. Part of the trophies for the exposition was donated by the Zoological Museum.

76 copies of M. Zichy's watercolours, 6 copies of A. Popov's drawings and one copy of D. Rossov's watercolours were kindly provided by the State Hermitage and the Pavlovsk Museum-Reserve. In addition, scenes from M. Zichy's watercolours from the collection of the Peterhof Museum-Reserve were used for the stand structures.

Glass stand structures with information about the exposition, as well as multimedia support, were designed by specialists of the Museum Design Bureau "Own School".

Video – 1) <http://www.tvc.ru/news/show/id/211702>

2) https://youtu.be/H2O_vpwrjOM

3) <https://www.ntv.ru/novosti/2556465>

The exhibition "Catherine the Great. From the collection of the State Hermitage "

On May 26, the National Museum of the Republic of Buryatia, opened the exhibition "Catherine the Great. From the collection of the State Hermitage." Masterpieces from the permanent exhibition and the Hermitage funds talk about Empress Catherine the Great and her era: three decades of development and prosperity of the state, military triumphs and important transformations. The event took place during the Hermitage Days in Ulan Ude.

Next to the works of art from St. Petersburg, there is a bronze bust of Catherine II, contributed for the exhibition by Aninsky Datsan (Khorinsky District, Republic of Buryatia). In 1764, the Empress presented her marble bust to a delegation of Buryat Buddhists. In 1930s, the datsan was destroyed and the bust was lost. Work on the restoration of the Aninsky Datsan has been going on since the 1980s, and in 2019, St. Petersburg residents Vyacheslav Bukhaev and Matvey Makushkin recreated a bust of Catherine II in bronze.

Alexander Prokhorenko, Deputy Director General of the State Hermitage; Alexey Tsydenov, head of the Republic of Buryatia; Soelma Dagaeva, Minister of Culture of the Republic of Buryatia; Vladimir Pavlov, Chairman of the People's Khural of the Republic of Buryatia; Legtsok Lama, shirete-lama (abbot) of the Aninsky datsan; Tatiana Boronoeva, Director of the National Museum of the Republic of Buryatia attended the opening ceremony.

Mikhail Piotrovsky, State Hermitage Director, made a video message:
"The Hermitage is coming to you with its founder, Catherine the Great, who has done a lot for the Buddhist world. Buddhists of Buryatia even recognized the Empress as the embodiment of White Tara. That is why it is so important for us to talk about the Empress right here."

Lama Lehtsok addressed the guests:
"I remember very well how in 2019 in the Hermitage, in the historic Council Hall, Mikhail Piotrovsky personally handed us the reconstructed bust, and we took it to its native land. Now it stands in the altar of the Aninsky datsan, but for the sake of this exhibition it left its usual place. On behalf of the Buddhist



Portrait of Catherine II. Feodor Stepanovich Rokotov. Russia. 1780s. Oil on canvas. 160.0 x 121.0 cm

communities of Buryatia and all Buddhist believers, I thank the Hermitage for being with us today. It is no coincidence that the exhibition opens today: May 26 this year is a sacred day for us, we celebrate the birth of Buddha, his enlightenment and his departure to nirvana. Buddhists believe that on this day all good deeds and thoughts increase 700 thousand times, which I wish everyone!"

In the ceremonial images created by outstanding Russian and European painters of the second half of the 18th century, Empress Catherine II appears as a majestic ruler. Among them is the portrait on display at the exhibition, which is considered to be the work of Fyodor Stepanovich Rokotov. The Empress is depicted in the picture in full dress. Next to it, the artist places a sculptural bust of Peter the Great to emphasize the continuity of her policy from the acts of the great reformer.

The idea of Catherine II's triumphant continuation of Peter I's undertakings were embodied in numerous artistic monuments. One of them is the painting "Allegorical depiction of Russia's victories in the war with Turkey in 1768-1774" by Heinrich Buchholz, who for many years worked on the orders of the Empress. In the 19th century, this canvas was kept in the memorial collection "Gallery of Peter the Great", which was part of the Imperial Hermitage.



Allegorical depiction of Russia's victories in the war with Turkey in 1768-1774. Heinrich Buchholz. Russia, St. Petersburg. 1777. Oil on canvas. 75.0 x 127.2 cm

Catherine II not only followed in the footsteps of her great predecessor, but realized more ambitious reforms. The Empress did a lot for the peaceful existence and prosperity of the peoples inhabiting Russia. She followed the principles of religious tolerance, took into account the religious and cultural characteristics of the peoples who lived in her vast empire. In 1773, the law "On the tolerance of all religions" was issued. It changed the life of representatives of different denominations. The "Office of New Baptism Affairs", which carried out the forcible baptism of Muslims, was liquidated. With the permission of the Empress in 1767, the construction of stone mosques began.

The Empress carried out many changes aimed at enlightening the nation, bringing up a "new breed" of people - educated, highly moral, respecting the laws. And Catherine herself served as an example to her subjects, showing an example of a hardworking person striving for knowledge. The Empress spent most of her time at her desk. One of her writing instruments can be seen at the exhibition: an elegant silver piece was presented to Catherine by one of the statesmen, Ivan Perfilievich Elagin, as evidenced

by the inscription engraved on the stand. Undoubtedly, this writing device was used more than once by Catherine II in work on state papers, and with its help, fateful decrees for the country were signed, many letters were written, and possibly literary works.

The reign of Catherine II was marked by an important event in the history of Buddhism, which was officially recognized as one of the state religions of Russia. In 1764, the Empress established the post of Bandido Khambo Lama (Pandito Khambo Lama), who was the head of the Buddhist Church of Transbaikalia and Eastern Siberia. The first to be awarded this title was the rector of the oldest Tsongolsky datsan in Buryatia, Damba-Darzha Zayayev (1711–1776).



*Writing device. Russia, 1775. Master Johann Erikson Falke. Silver; embossing
Total size: 14.5 x 32.6 x 26 cm*

During the reign of Catherine, a grandiose architectural ensemble of the Winter Palace and the buildings of the Imperial Hermitage was formed in the very heart of St. Petersburg. How this complex looked at the end of the 18th century is clearly demonstrated by another artefact - the painting by Johann Georg de Mayr "View of the Palace Embankment from the Spit of Vasilyevsky Island in St. Petersburg". These buildings now house the exhibition halls and funds of the State Hermitage, a museum founded by Catherine the Great.



View of the Palace Embankment from the Spit of Vasilievsky Island in St. Petersburg. Johann Georg de Mayr. Russia. 1796. Oil on canvas. 77 x 117 cm

An illustrated brochure has been prepared for the exhibition about the personality and reign of Empress Catherine II and the artefacts presented at the exhibition. The author of the text is Natalia Yurievna Bakhareva. The publication opens with welcoming words of Mikhail B. Piotrovsky, Aleksey S. Tsydenov, Head of the Republic of Buryatia, and Soelma B. Dagaeva, Minister of Culture of the Republic of Buryatia.

The arrival of the Tsarevich to the Amur land

On May 26, Blagoveshchensk Exhibition Hall presented the exposition "City of my life". It includes a new painting showing the arrival of Tsarevich Nicholas Alexandrovich to the Amur land.

The exhibition, dedicated to the anniversary of Blagoveshchensk, presents more than a hundred paintings, including classical painting, watercolour sketches, and pencil drawings, and even a sculpture of Count Muravyov-Amursky made of cardboard by the artist Alexander Kantemirov.

Natalia Drozdova-Ermolaeva introduced the largest canvas of the exhibition - "The Arrival of Tsarevich Nicholas to the Amur Land". The artist confessed that it was the most difficult task to create historical personalities: - There are photographs of the Amur governor, the Tsarevich's retinue, and the rest are missing - they had to be thought out. But the Tsarevich - the future Nicholas II - was made very quickly. Here he is so young, enthusiastic, full of hope and does not know anything about his family's future.

Video -

<https://gtrkamur.ru/news/2021/05/26/162866>



How Italian children see Tsarevich Alexei: An exhibition in Church on Blood

On May 19, an exhibition of drawings "Tsarevich Alexei through the eyes of Italian children" was opened in the Church on the Blood, in Yekaterinburg.

The exhibition is organized with the blessing of Yekaterinburg Metropolitan Eugene in the framework of cultural cooperation between Italy and Russia. It is unique because the main performers, the artists, are children - students of two Italian schools. It presents drawings and essays in Italian and with translation, dedicated to Tsarevich Alexei.



The exhibition shows the attention of Italian children to Tsarevich Alexei as a moral guideline for adolescent children. Children note the combination of his external beauty with spiritual merits. For them, it is significant how the Tsarevich went through his life's journey through a severe illness and serious trials, and reached the end with his father. Through the image of the saint Tsarevich, children pay more attention to the family, since family values are important for any society, regardless of nationality.

The idea to organize an exhibition came to the Orthodox youth group "Nikolin Rodnik" of the parish in honour of the Holy Princess Olga from the village of Patrushi (leader - Matushka Juliania Demidova, confessor - Archpriest Andrei Demidov). The Italian music professor Elvis Fanton and the directors of two schools (Salvartice Farachi and Bettina Santarcangelo) where he works have been cooperating with the collective for two years.

Two years ago, on the birthday of Tsarevich Alexei, "Nikolin Rodnik" attended a concert in one of the churches, where they met Elvis Fanton, an admirer of Tsarevich Alexei. He said that a wonderful incident happened to him - when he found out about Tsarevich Alexei and began to tell his students about him, - they began to change for the better, their parents saw it and were delighted. School principals suggested Elvis to develop further the theme of the Imperial Family.





- Elvis organized an exhibition of children's drawings at Giacomo Zanella school. He told us about it and the idea to hold an exhibition in Russia came up immediately. There are many Orthodox people living in Italy, they are cut off from Russia, they want to go to church, they want to communicate with the Orthodox culture. Among the Italian students there are many children of the Orthodox faith, who also need spiritual support from the Russian Orthodox side," said Matushka Juliania.

About 600 Italian children, pupils of children's art schools, were present at the opening of the exhibition by video link.

"The children were more interested in the Tsarevich as a person, as a peer," said Tatiana Romanyuk, director of the Museum of the Holy Royal Family. - They looked at the photographs of Tsarevich Alexei, how he was in childhood, how he loved his dog, what he did, how he liked to play. The most interesting thing is what colour scale the children choose, what colour conveys the inner state of a person - children mainly used bright or calm colours: yellow, red, blue.



The Exhibition "Faberge. Treasures of Imperial Russia"

From May 29 to September 15, 2021, the Cultural and Historical Foundation "Link of Times" and the Faberge Museum (St. Petersburg) present the exhibition "Faberge. Treasures of Imperial Russia", in the historic building of the Sochi Sea Station. It is a part of the celebration of Sochi City Day and the beginning of the 2021 summer resort season.

The exhibition features jewellery masterpieces of the renowned firm of Carl Faberge from the Museum collection. The main artefacts are six large Faberge Easter eggs. These were created by order of the last Russian Emperors Alexander III and Nicholas II, as well as other famous aristocrats, military leaders, industrialists of the XIX-XX centuries.

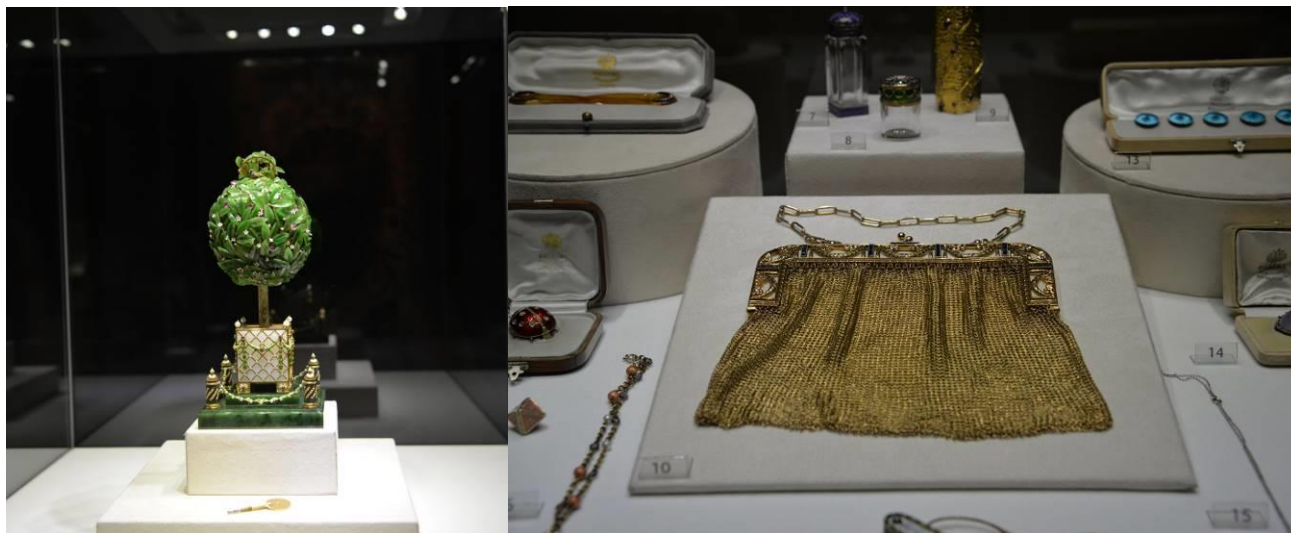
Also, viewers will find out about almost all areas of the Faberge firm work in.

The exposition is supplemented by products by contemporaries and competitors of Fabergé, Moscow and St. Petersburg jewellers who worked at the turn of the XIX-XX centuries.

In total, the exhibition features about 150 works of Russian jewellery art of the era, which is rightly called the "Faberge era".



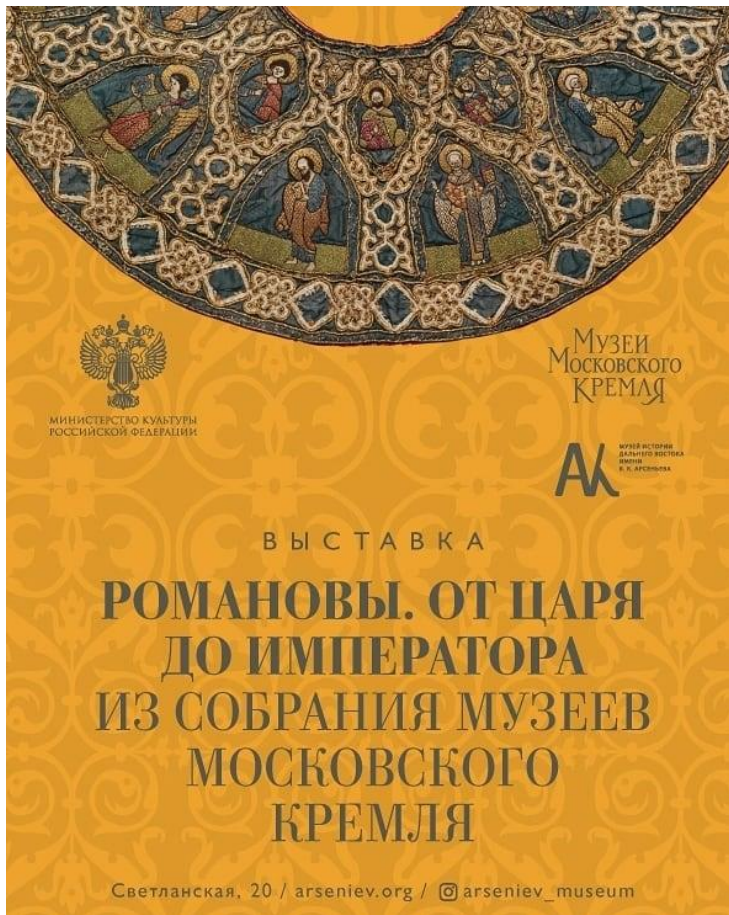
“Today Sochi residents and tourists can appreciate cultural heritage of our country. We will continue to organize events of this level. We have a complete understanding with the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation. We will make our city the cultural capital of the south of Russia,” said Mayor Alexei Kopaigorodsky.



Imperial eggs boggles the imagination – but also inkwells, stamp pads, gold cigarette cases and snuff boxes, ladies' accessories - a theatrical handbag made of gold links, precious hairpins, pins, brooches, buttons, perfume bottles, lipstick cases and even ordinary mouthpieces thermometer, framed with enamel and gems. Candy bowls made of rock crystal inlaid with diamonds also attract attention ...

Archival photos and documents complement the perception and help the viewer to plunge into the heyday of Russian jewellery art.

- Video – 1) <https://youtu.be/Y1ov9ApKq0M>
2) <https://youtu.be/ILX67w0q1Go>
3) <https://youtu.be/-1Tc8cCiJWc>



The exhibition "The Romanovs. From Tsar to Emperor" in Vladivostok

On May 18, the Museum of the Far East History named after V.K. Arsenyev in Vladivostok opened the exhibition "The Romanovs. From Tsar to Emperor"

The exhibition was called the main cultural event of the season. The history of the House of Romanov, from their ascension to the Russian throne to the proclamation of Russia by the empire of Peter I, was presented by the Moscow Kremlin.

"The Romanovs. From Tsar to Emperor" is the third joint project of the Moscow Kremlin Museums and the Arsenyev Museum of the History of the Far East. Thanks to this cooperation, now residents and guests of Vladivostok can see the collections of the country's main museum treasury. 80 exhibits reflect a century - from the accession of the Romanov dynasty to the formation of Russian empire under Peter the Great. Symbols of grandeur and luxury, which rarely leave the Moscow Kremlin.

These things not only belonged to the

Imperial Family, they were witnesses of the most important state ceremonies: military, diplomatic, ambassadorial. These are medieval royal regalia, monuments of icon painting and relics from the Armory treasury, precious elements of ceremonial horse decoration.

A separate section of the exhibition is devoted to the reign of Peter I, and here you can understand how the first Russian Emperor actually looked like.



Irina Gorbatova, leading researcher of the Moscow Kremlin Museums: "These items personally belonged to three great Sovereigns - the founder of the dynasty Mikhail Feodorovich, his son Alexei Mikhailovich and grandson Peter the Great, first a Tsar and then the Emperor."

Sergey Zverev, head of Department of Numismatics and Archeology of the Moscow Kremlin Museums: "Here is an officer's badges which were created under Peter the Great for the Preobrazhensky regiment, this is, by the way, one of the rarest signs of that time."

In the Preobrazhensky regiment, Peter served himself - he began as a simple drummer, rose to the rank of colonel. However, all the Sovereigns and Empresses had the same rank in the court regiment. The legendary founder of St. Petersburg was two meters tall, had narrow shoulders and a small foot, but went down in history as a giant.

Boots of Peter the Great is size 44! Although in fact he had size 38. The Tsar put in them additional fur. Interestingly, they are sewn on one leg, because at that time all shoes were sewn without taking into account the right and left sides. And next to it is the famous cane of Peter the Great, which he measured the future Russian berths and cut through the "window to Europe."



Irina Gorbatoва – "Since Peter was in both Moscow and the Kremlin in the early period of his life, the Kremlin Museum possesses unique exhibits related precisely to his childhood and youth. But the Armory has always had its own peculiarity: as a state treasury, it is a repository of relics, not only works of art, although this is certainly, but also historical relics of our country. Therefore, in our collection there are even later things, including personal ones.

These are his boots, which, according to legend, he sewed himself, as well as a cane, which he also made on his own, since in addition to his main profession of being a Russian Sovereign, he learned 17 handicrafts."

Three museum workers with difficulty hung up "for a fee" - the royal attire for special occasions. Heavy Italian fabric of gold and silver threads. And the collar was once decorated with precious stones.

The earliest thing in the exhibition, the oldest one, is the barmy, a beautiful embroidered collar. Barmas are a kind of state regalia. A very ancient symbol - at first it was a precious necklace, which by the 17th century took on the appearance of a richly decorated collar.

A separate section of the exhibition is devoted to equine decoration. During military parades, meetings and seeing off of foreign ambassadors, the harness on horses sparkled with gold, emeralds, and turquoise.

Historical treasures include such an amazing item as a pocketbook.



Irina Gorbatoва - "A piece of precious decoration that was worn over armour during the Tsar's ceremonial departure of a soldier. From time to time the Tsar appeared before the people as a warrior, as the head of the Russian troops, as a military patron of his country. There is an interesting icon depicting St. Theodore Stratilates next to this pocketbook. Saint Theodore Stratilat is one of the most popular saints in Russia."



Irina Gorbatoва – "The icons presented at the exhibition are icons of the saints of the same name to our Sovereigns, that is, icons of their heavenly patrons, made by the best artists of that time, in particular, the head of the Moscow school, the great icon painter Simon Ushakov."

Anna Shcherbakova, Scientific Secretary of the Museum of the History of the Far East: "This is, what you read in textbooks, saw in fiction or documentary films, in literature - you will get the opportunity to see the things through which this story is embodied. There is not a single subject here that would have any repetition. The Moscow Kremlin is coming to you! You don't have to stand in line at the Armory!"

The exhibition is open until the end of September 2021.

Video – 1) <https://vestiprim.ru/news/ptrnews/107843-romanovy-ot-carja-do-imperatora-vystavka-dragocennyh-relikvij-iz-muzeev-moskovskogo-kremlja.html>
 2) <https://youtu.be/qRgwPHkrUCs>

Exhibition dedicated to the 350th anniversary of the birth of Peter I opened in Tula

On May 20, the Tula State Museum of Weapons, opened an interregional exhibition "By the Decree of Peter the Great ...", dedicated to the 350th anniversary of the birth of Peter the Great. Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Tula Region supported the project.

The exhibition is designed to reveal the scale and significance of Peter the Great's reforms directed to the modernization of weapons production. The Tula Arms Factory, founded by the Sovereign in 1712, became one of the first state-owned defence enterprises in Russia. It played a key role in providing the army and navy with high-quality weapons and exerted a tremendous influence on the domestic military industry. The strategic vector of Russia's development was determined by the reforms of Peter the Great and his efforts to create a technical base that made it possible, were very successful. The example of Peter the Great inspires us today to follow the path of creation and accomplishment for the glory of the Fatherland. This exhibition reveals the history of the creation of the Tula arms factory by Peter the Great and the development of the military-industrial complex in Tula over three centuries.



The central place at the exhibition is occupied by a portrait of Peter the Great in the uniform of a Preobrazhensky regiment's officer, made at the beginning of the 20th century by artist Vasily Fomich Gilbert, from the funds of the Tula State Museum of Weapons. The large-scale canvas is a copy of the painting by the battle painter Nikolai Dmitrievich Dmitriev-Orenburgsky.

The exposition also presents letters of Peter the Great to local gunsmiths, a commemorative plate with an imprint of the Emperor's right palm, as well as samples of army weapons of the 18th - early 20th centuries with factory hallmarks: swords and sabers, pistols and guns, rifles and revolvers. A special place is occupied by the museum sculpture "Private of the Preobrazhensky Regiment of the Early 18th Century" as a symbol of the Russian regular army created by Peter the Great.

The State Historical Museum presents copies of watercolour drawings on the theme of making weapons from the book "Description of the Tula Arms Factory" in 1787.

The State Military-Historical and Natural Museum-Reserve "Kulikovo Pole" demonstrate artifacts found during archaeological excavations on the territory of the historical Kuznetskaya (Blacksmith – ed.) Sloboda in Tula.

The Tula Museum Association provides commemorative medals associated with the reign of Peter the Great and anniversaries of the Tula arms factory, engravings and postcards with views of the pre-revolutionary enterprise, a unique historical document - "Regulations of the Tula arms factory from 1782", as well as a portrait of Emperor Peter the Great, written in 1759 by Evgraf Petrovich Chemesov.

The Tula Regional Universal Scientific Library contributes a number of rare editions of the 19th-20th centuries related to the history of arms production in Tula.

The State Archives of the Tula Region provides photographs of the views and interiors of the Tula Arms Factory of the late 19th - early 20th centuries, as well as group photographs of the company's employees.

The State Archives of the Sverdlovsk Region has on display a copy of the Decree of the Reformer Tsar on the production of military supplies by Nikita Demidov in the Urals in 1703.

"It was by Peter's decree in 1812 that the first state arms factory was founded in Tula. Therefore, it is no coincidence that we are holding this exhibition here in the Museum of Weapons," said Valery Sherin, Chairman of the Tula Region Government.

"This is the first Peter's exhibition dedicated to the weapon theme. Until now the main topic in this large Peter's marathon, which the Ministry of Culture holds in the country, is still mainly "Peter and the sea". But the theme of weapons is a Tula theme, and Tula is absolutely a city of Peter the Great," said Alla Manilova, Deputy Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation.





According to the decree of President Vladimir Putin, next year many cities - from St. Petersburg to Voronezh - will celebrate the 350th anniversary of the birth of the first Russian Emperor on a grand scale. Of course, the celebrations will also take place in Tula.

The exhibition "By the Decree of Peter the Great ...", dedicated to the 350th anniversary of the birth of Peter the Great, will be opened until January 22, 2023.

The project was prepared in collaboration with the State

Historical Museum, the Kulikovo Pole Museum-Reserve, the Tula Museum Association, the Tula Regional Universal Scientific Library, the State Archives of the Tula Region and the State Archives of the Sverdlovsk Region.

Video – 1) https://youtu.be/b_V1SRBpTrY

2) <https://smotrim.ru/article/2564856>

3) https://1tulatv.ru/novosti-reportazhi/157469-tulskie-uchrezhdeniya-kultury-voydut-v-assambleyu-petrovskih-muzeev-kak/?utm_source=yxnews&utm_medium=desktop

An exhibition about the Romanovs opened in Novosibirsk

21 May 2021. NSKnews - The "Imperial Route" exhibition was opened at the Novosibirsk Art Museum. The exposition was dedicated to the Romanov dynasty and their role in the creation of our city.

Novosibirsk residents will see more than a hundred paintings, engravings, icons and household items. Why some exhibits are rarely shown - Novosibirsk News will tell.

The guide started her story with "the election of Mikhail Feodorovich Romanov, the first Tsar of the Romanov dynasty. Here we see Mikhail Feodorovich himself in the center of the composition - he was a relative of the Rurukovichs, the dynasty that ruled before the Romanovs. People said that Michael was not chosen by people, but chosen by God," says the guide.

A tour of the new exhibition begins with the history of this lithography in the Novosibirsk Art Museum. The "Imperial Route" exposition in 20



regions of Russia was dedicated to the history of the Romanov dynasty. In Novosibirsk, they talk about the role of the Imperial family in the creation and development of Novo-Nikolaevsk.

The "Imperial Route" is organically included in the permanent exhibition of the museum. In three halls, you can see more than a hundred items of the new exhibition, including rare ones.

"We see graphics only at exhibitions. Unfortunately, or fortunately, it is not presented in the permanent exhibition because of its preservation. Therefore, residents of Novosibirsk have a unique opportunity to see those items that usually are kept in the funds, behind closed doors," said Yulia Uzhakina, a researcher at the Novosibirsk State Art Museum.

The Museum of Local Lore and the Museum of Novosibirsk helped to collect artefacts. In addition to paintings, prints and icons, visitors will see household items, photographs and newspapers from the beginning of the last century.

"The exhibition will be of interest to everyone who is not indifferent to the history of our city, - and people interested in the history of the country and, of course, in the history of the Romanov family. Well, they also want to see some unique items from our collection", - stressed the acting director of the Novosibirsk Art Museum Yuri Yashkin.

Museum staff recommend to take a guided tour. Then you can not only look at the objects, but also learn more about it. For example, the portrait of Elizaveta Petrovna talks about the creation of the Art Academy in Russia. In the 18th century, artists were just learning to paint - not icons, but pictures of people. Therefore, you can notice the wrong proportions of the portrait.

The Imperial Route exhibition will run until autumn.

Video - https://youtu.be/urAoT5L_izY





The Tsarevich Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria burial-case continues

The Russian Orthodox Church does not predict any time period of the solution of the "Imperial remains" issue

May 25. INTERFAX - The Russian Orthodox Church found it difficult to name the date of the decision on the authenticity of the so-called "Imperial remains", noting that this will happen in the medium term.

"The question is still in the status of research. I hope that it will not take much time to complete this process, but I am not ready to name (...) the time period. I hope that this issue will be resolved in some medium term," said Vladimir Legoyda, the head of the Synodal Department for Church Relations with Society and the Media, on radio "Echo of Moscow".

He assured that the ROC would not hide the decision, and it would be made public immediately. "We will turn to the journalists, we will tell you what decision was made and why," Legoyda said.

The mystery of an old photo: what happened to the investigators in the case of the murder of the Romanovs in Alapaevsk

26 May. *UralkP*. By Danil Svechkov



- One went to the United States and became deputy sheriff in San Francisco, the other was forced to fight on the side of the Reds ...

A snapshot of an investigation team formed by Whites in Alapaevsk.

On the night of July 16-17, 1918, in Yekaterinburg, the Bolsheviks shot the abdicated Emperor Nicholas II Romanov with his family and servants. A day later, a similar thing happened in the city of Alapaevsk, located in 120 kilometers from the capital of the Urals. Here the Bolsheviks killed the Empress's sister Elizaveta Feodorovna, nun Varvara, her cell attendant, as well as five Princes of the Romanovs' House and the secretary of one of them. They were thrown into a mine near the city.

What happened to the people who investigated the death of the Romanovs in Alapaevsk?

Two months later, White occupied Alapaevsk. In order to find out the circumstances of the death of members of the Romanovs' House in the city, an inquiry commission was formed. For many decades, it was unknown who was part of it and what happened to the investigators after the Civil War ended with the defeat of the white movement.

The staff of the Museum Complex were able to shed light on this secret. They studied a unique photograph, which in the 1920s was kept in the Cheka's search book, and then ended up in the funds of one of the museums of Nizhny Tagil. It depicted the investigation team. Only the names of the people in the picture were not known.



Alapaevsk investigation team on the case of the death of the Romanovs. In the top row in the middle - Mikhail Lekhovskiy. In the bottom row, second from the right - Vladimir Parfenov. Bottom row, two on the left, Alexey Suvorov and Vasily Putilin.

- We were contacted by the staff of the museum in Nizhny Tagil, where this photo is kept, with a request to help establish the identity of the people in the picture, - says Ivan Silchenko, a researcher at the museum complex. - This photo was taken as a keepsake in Alapaevsk in the fall of 1918. This is evidenced by the presence of shoulder straps of Admiral Kolchak Army. Most likely, the members of the investigation team had confidence in the future. After all, they did not think that the Bolsheviks would then persecute them using this photo.

It turned out that the fate of all members of the investigation team was different. We tell what historians managed to find out.

Changed surname to Stark

Bottom row. The man who sits on the left. This is Alexei Suvorov. In the picture he is 22 years old. He was born in Alapaevsk. According to preliminary data, his father is the last pre-revolutionary head of the Alapaevsk narrow-gauge railway (for a long time it was considered one of the largest in the world).

- Alexey Suvorov was a participant of the First World War. He served in the white troops. Then he joined the Omsk partisan detachment, - says Ivan Silchenko. - In 1918 he entered the Alapaevsk counterintelligence and the commission of inquiry.

Suvorov, for example, took part in the defeat of the Bolshevik underground in Alapaevsk. According to the recollections of contemporaries, not far from the city, he accidentally discovered a hatch leading to the Bolsheviks' hideout in the Kukaysky spruce forest.

Researcher Ivan Silchenko notes that in order to establish the identity of the people from the photograph, they even had to study foreign archives.

- They went looking for underground workers and at one of the moments Suvorov leaned on a birch tree, and it fell. It turned out that under it was the entrance to the cache, - explains the historian. - For this he received the rank of second lieutenant and quickly was promoted.

True, Suvorov's colleagues were not very fond of him. Some noted that Suvorov had mental problems.

- The chief of the White Kushvin police characterized Suvorov as a man who, for any reason, threatened everyone with execution. In February 1919, he was put on trial. But supposedly to hush up the case, he was sent to the Chinese city Harbin to buy soldiers' underwear, says Ivan Silchenko.

In China, Suvorov received the news of white movement's defeat. It was no longer possible for him to return home. For some time, he lived in Harbin. And in 1923 he boarded the ship *President Maddison* and left for the United States, where he settled in San Francisco. Four years later, he was given citizenship. In the new documents, he changed his last name and place of birth. So, Alexander Suvorov from Alapaevsk became Alexander Stark from Yekaterinburg.

- In San Francisco, he worked as an artist, grocer. In 1939 he became a draftsman, and in the late 1940s, which is interesting, Suvorov suddenly became a deputy sheriff of San Francisco, the historian adds.

Suvorov got married in the USA. His parents also moved to America, from Harbin where they lived for some time after the civil war. Suvorov-Stark died in 1953 from lungs sarcoma. He was 57 years old. He was buried in the Serbian cemetery in San Francisco.

Served in the American Marine Reserve

After the civil war, not only Suvorov, but also Vasily Putilin arrived in the United States. In the picture, he is sitting next to Suvorov (bottom row, second from the left - Ed. Approx.). At the time the photo was taken, he was 23 years old. He is the son of an official. In his youth he studied at the Solikamsk Theological School, but was expelled for academic failure. Then he entered the Peterhof school of warrant officers and graduated from it. During the Civil War, he served in the equestrian reconnaissance of the Alapaevsk partisan detachment. Then he moved to counterintelligence and the military investigation commission. It is also known that he participated in the Great Siberian Ice Campaign - the retreat of the Eastern Front of the Russian Army to the east in the winter of 1920. Subsequently, he ended up in China, and then moved to the United States.

7/11/44 7/11/44 915.D. 11-21-44

CHECK TYPE REQUIRED
(See instructions attached)

☒ UPRIGHT MARBLE HEADSTONE
☐ FLAT MARBLE MARKER
☐ FLAT GRANITE MARKER
☐ BRONZE MARKER

APPLICATION FOR HEADSTONE OR MARKER
(PLEASE MAKE OUT AND RETURN IN DUPLICATE)

Enlistment dates 1-29-1942
Discharge dates 1 July 1944
Pension number 705 24 15
Serial number 705 24 15

CASUALTY SECTION
NOV 16 1944

ORIGINAL

Name POUTILIN, Vasil Mike
Rank McM1c
Company 1st class
U. S. Regiment, State Organization, or Vessel U.S. Naval Reserve
Date of Death 29 July 1944

Name of Cemetery Navy Plot, Woodlawn Cemetery
Located in or near Everett City Mass. State Mass.
If World War Veteran None Division None State None
EMBLEM Christian

To be shipped to Woodlawn Cemetery, Navy Plot, at Everett, Mass.
(Name of consignee) (Give R. R., NAME OF TOWN, county, and State)

Whose post-office address is Everett, Mass.

DO NOT WRITE HERE
For verification 11 NOV 1944
Ordered GREEN MOUNTAIN JUL 1 1944
B/L 5978210
Shipped

This application is for a headstone or marker for the UNMARKED grave of a veteran. It is understood the Government STONE will be furnished and shipped freight prepaid at Government expense to you direct, where "Delivery Service" by the railroad is in effect; otherwise to the nearest railroad station or steamboat landing above indicated. The BRONZE marker will be shipped at Government expense by parcel post to consignee direct. I hereby agree to accept promptly the headstone or marker at destination, remove it, and properly place it at decedent's grave at my expense.

V. P. Putilin, Captain (MC) USN, Applicant.

WAR DEPARTMENT O. Q. M. G. Form No. 623 Approved Aug. 12, 1913; May 13, 1931; Feb. 15, 1937; May 1, 1939; July 1, 1949

Address USNH, Chelsea, Mass. Date 14 October 1944

U.S. Headstone Applications 16-11453 GPO

Information about the tombstone of Vasily Putilin at his place of burial in the United States.

- I managed to find out that in America he lived in the city of Woodlawn. He worked as a locksmith, first on the railway, and then as an automobile locksmith, - explains Ivan Silchenko.
- We did not find information that he received citizenship. But most likely he got it. Vasily Putilin, for example, is mentioned in the results of the census of the 1930s. In it, for some reason, he indicated that he was born in Petrograd.

Historians have not been able to learn much about what Putilin later did in the United States. For example, there is a document in the archives about his tombstone. According to it, Putilin served in the American naval reserve during the Second World War.

- It was a civilian fleet, which, if necessary, could be mobilized, - the historian specifies. - On June 29, 1944, he died. It is not known why. Perhaps he took part in hostilities. We have not received a reply from the American military archives. He was buried in the military cemetery.

In the Red army

In the top row in the middle, you can see 25-year-old Mikhail Lekhovsky. He studied at the Faculty of Law of Moscow University. Graduated from the Alekseevsky Military School in Moscow. Participated in the First World War.

- During the Civil War, he was captured and enlisted in the ranks of the Red Army, - says Ivan Silchenko.

- But later, in 1920, he was shot for his work in the Alapaevsk Investigative Commission.



The identities of the members of the Alapaevsk investigation group were also identified from other photographs found in the archives

Organized the funeral of the Alapayevsk prisoners

In the bottom row, the second from the right, a man with an expressive mustache, is Vladimir Parfenov. Unlike other members of the investigation team, he is a career military, that is, he wore the rank of officer even before the First World War.

- In the photo he is in the rank of lieutenant colonel, but in general he rose to the rank of colonel, - explains the historian. - He was awarded a large number of orders - St. Anne, St. Stanislaus ... By the time the photo was taken, he was married, had two children.

Unfortunately, after the autumn of 1919, traces of it are lost. It is only known that he played one of the key roles in organizing the funeral of the Alapaevsk prisoners in the local cathedral.

The personalities and fates of the rest of the people in the photograph have not yet established by historians.

The Russian Ministry of Defence has revived the badge approved by Emperor Nicholas II for athletes

17 May. Piterets - The Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation has revived the tradition of awarding athletes with the badge of the Main Gymnastics and Fencing School.

This badge was approved by Emperor Nicholas II in 1911. It was awarded to officers who successfully completed the course of the Main Gymnastics and Fencing School, established in May 1909.

"I would like to note that the Russian Ministry of Defence is actively trying to restore the glorious sports and historical traditions. Part of this work has been completed today by the Military Institute of Physical Culture: a memorial sign of the institute was found, restored and made, modelled on the breastplate of the Main Gymnastics and Fencing School, the right to wear of which was granted by the Emperor to officers who graduated from the school and to those who took part in its formation," said Pankov.

The Deputy Minister added that from today, by the decision of the Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation, the tradition of awarding this badge to graduates, veterans and teachers of the institute for special merits in sports and the development of physical culture has been restored.

"It was decided to give the first signs to our graduates, Olympic champions, as well as veterans and officers of the institute who carried out this work. Please announce the presentation," Pankov added.



Sovereign Emperor, on the 16th day of June 1911, the Highest deigned to approve the badge, attached drawing and description, for graduating from the Main Gymnastic - Fencing School with the right to wear this badge:

- a) officers who have completed the course of the named School with a mark "successfully", and
- b) officers and class rank who took part in the formation of this school.

Description of the badge for officers who have completed "successfully" the course of the Main Gymnastic - Fencing School.

The badge consists of a laurel wreath with the State Emblem superimposed on it. On the eagle's chest there is a shield on which the lion's head is placed in a wreath of oak leaves, from under which the

ends of a crossing rifle, espadron and a training rod protrude. The initials "G.G.F.Sh." are placed under the shield. (Main Gymnastic-Fencing School). The state emblem is golden; rod - black, steel; the rest of the mark is silver, oxidized. Dimensions of the sign: 1 vershok high; a width of 7 / 8 inches. When this badge is worn together with the badge for the successful completion of the Military Academies, it is worn below the academic badge.

120 years of the center of Russian Orthodoxy in North America

Russianamericanhistorymonth - In May 2021, Nicholas Cathedral in New York celebrate 120 years since the day when Bishop, the future Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, Tikhon laid the foundation stone for the construction of the Church on 97 Street between Madison and Fifth Avenue.



The first Orthodox Church in New York was established in a private home at 323 Second Avenue in 1895. The Church was even called "consular", since it was mainly visited by employees of the Russian consulate. Five years later, the Church could not accommodate all the parishioners, and its abbot, the future Hieromartyr Archpriest Alexander Hotovitsky, raised the issue of building a large cathedral in New York. With the blessing of the newly appointed Bishop of Aleutian and Alaska Tikhon, later the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, in September 1899 a specially established committee acquired a plot of land of 150 yards on East 97th Street, between Madison and Fifth Avenue, worth 72 thousand roubles. On this site, it was supposed to build a Church that could accommodate 900 people, a building for a Sunday school, a hall for festive meetings, the apartments of the clergy. The construction cost was estimated at 114 thousand roubles or 57 thousand US dollars.

Two months later, the Holy Synod received the Highest permission of the Emperor Nicholas Alexandrovich to collect the necessary funds. To accomplish this, in February 1900, Father Alexander Hotovitsky went to Russia as chairman of the construction committee.

The first installment for the construction - 5 thousand gold roubles - came from the Emperor Nicholas II himself. Invaluable prayer and moral support were provided by the deeply revered Father John of Kronstadt - on the first page of a specially established book for recording donations, he,

having contributed 200 roubles, wrote: "Bless, Lord, this book and the work for which these donations are requested ..."

Many Orthodox Christians followed the example of the Imperial Family and the hierarchs of the Church. In Russia, often after the addresses of Father Alexander Khotovitsky sounded from the pulpits of churches, parishioners donated earrings, rings, necklaces, bracelets that had been removed from themselves. And, nevertheless, the funds raised were not enough. Then, by a special resolution of the Holy Synod, on the day of the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord in 1901, a collection of donations was announced in all the churches of Russia in favor of the construction of an Orthodox church in New York.

The cornerstone at the foundation of the Cathedral was laid on the day of the Transfer of the relics of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker on May 9 (May 22, new style), 1901. Thousands of people gathered at the stone-laying ceremony, including representatives of the Russian embassy who arrived from

Washington, led by Count Cassini, Consul General in New York V. Teplov, officers and sailors of the battleship *Retvizan* under construction in Philadelphia, as well as the mayor of New York Seth Lowe. Bishop Tikhon consecrated the cornerstone.

The construction of the Cathedral was entrusted to the best American construction company of the time, John Downey and Son, under the supervision of the Russian architect I. Bergessen. The first service took place in the still unfinished Cathedral in July 1902. Since the painting on the walls of the Cathedral had not yet been completed, the service was held on the lower floor of a building, which was still larger than the building of a private house on Second Avenue. Many people came to the first service, including the newly appointed Russian Consul General N. Lodyzhensky, who later became the first caretaker and friend of the Cathedral.

In his sermon, addressing all those present, Bishop Tikhon said: "... In this great city a church has been erected, worthy of the Russian nation and corresponding to the greatness of the Orthodox faith." A welcoming telegram on the occasion of the consecration of the first Russian Orthodox cathedral in New York was received from Livadia from the Sovereign Emperor Nikolai Alexandrovich. In 1905, Vladyka Tikhon, elevated to the rank of archbishop, moved his residence and the administration of the diocese from San Francisco to New York. Nicholas Cathedral henceforth becomes a cathedral, taking on the mission of the spiritual centre of Russian Orthodoxy in North America.

Activities in Tsarskoye Selo



The Tissura company has recreated a fabric for Tsarskoye Selo

In the summer of 2021, after many years of reconstruction, the Alexander Palace will open its doors in Tsarskoye Selo. The Tissura Fabric House took part in the restoration of the historical appearance of the State Office of Emperor Nicholas II, the company reports. Painsstaking work with archival documents was carried out to recreate the historical appearance of the spacious, four-window, ceremonial office of Nicholas II. By analogy with the historical model preserved in the museum's collection, the fabric for the window decoration was recreated.

The Tissura company together with the Swiss company Fabric Frontline created and donated to the museum more than 50 meters of the unique fabric, repeating the historical original - purple hyacinths on a green background. The work on the reconstruction of the canvas was carried out for two years. The created fabric was approved by the Scientific Council of the museum as being as close as possible to the original historical model.

Tissura is a federal network of luxury European fabric salons with offices in the largest cities of Russia and Hong Kong. The company has been offering fabrics, and accessories of the highest quality for over 20 years, cooperating with more than 200 manufactories.





L'entente cordiale: President Loubet in Tsarskoye Selo

On May 9 (22), 1902, during a visit to Russia, French President Emile Loubet visited Tsarskoye Selo.

The visit to the Russian Empire was reciprocal - a year earlier, in September 1901, Emperor Nicholas II and his wife visited France. Members of the French government headed by the President of the Republic went to Dunkirk, where the imperial yacht arrived. Then the Tsar visited Compiègne and Reims. On the last day of the visit, a military parade was organized. During the conversations, the most important problems of foreign policy were discussed. Loubet actively supported the idea of strengthening the Franco-British alliance and believed that Russia should join it. This is how the Entente (from the French *l'Entente cordiale* - "cordial accord") began to take shape - a military-political bloc, which during the First World War would oppose the Quadruple Alliance.

The return visit of the President began on May 7 (20), when the French cruiser *Montcalm* arrived at the Kronstadt raid. President Loubet boarded the imperial yacht *Alexandria* and together with Nicholas II arrived in Peterhof. Later, he paid a visit to the French Embassy in St. Petersburg. The next day, the French delegation went to Krasnoe Selo, for the big maneuvers of the Russian army.

"At 11 o'clock. the detour of the troops began. Mom, Alix, Ella and Loubet rode in a chaise. After the ceremony, all the cavalry made a beautiful attack on the march," wrote Nicholas II in his diary.

Tsarskoye Selo, where a ceremonial dinner took place in the Grand Palace, the President visited on May 9 (22). As an eyewitness to the reception, Sergei Nikolayevich Vilchkovsky, wrote, "... in honour of the distinguished guest in the evening, a performance took place at the Chinese Theater. For this evening, the theater was renovated and equipped with electric lighting. The second act of "The Little Humpbacked Horse" was performed with the participation of the Moscow ballerina L. A. Roslavleva and the St. Petersburg dancer Yu. Sedova and the second act of *Swan Lake* with the participation of artists from the Mariinsky Theater O.O. Preobrazhenskaya, P.A. Gerdt, A.D. Bulgakova, N.A. Solyannikov and others".

The President did not come empty-handed - he brought as a gift to the Empress a tapestry depicting Queen Marie Antoinette with her children. The woven portrait was created in 1897-1899 and repeated the composition of the painting by Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, which was painted several years before the events of the Great French



Tapestry "Marie Antoinette with Children". France. 1897–1899 From the collection of Tsarskoye Selo.

Revolution. The gift took its place in the Corner Drawing Room of the Alexander Palace opposite the portrait of Alexandra Feodorovna. Having survived all the twists and turns of the 20th century, it is in the collection of Tsarskoye Selo museum. Before the opening of the palace after restoration, the gift of the French president will take its historical place.

Among the gifts presented to Emile Loubet was also a Faberge samovar in the shape of a hero's head. Residents of Tsarskoye Selo presented a dish made by the masters of Pavel Ovchinnikov's company. On the side - images of flowers and stylized birds, and in the center - the coats of arms of Tsarskoye Selo and the city of Sofia. Now these items are in a private collection.

The next day after visiting the imperial residence, the president gave dinner on the cruiser, and in the evening of the same day the French squadron left Kronstadt. Emile Loubet's visit became one of the stages in the process of strengthening Russian-French relations.



"Wasn't created for a close circle"

On May 10 (21), 1788, Grand Duchess Ekaterina Pavlovna (1788–

1819), the fourth daughter of Tsarevich Pavel Petrovich and his wife Maria Feodorovna, was born in Tsarskoye Selo. Catherine II was personally present at the difficult birth and the next day she told Potemkin: "Dear friend, Prince Grigory Alexandrovich! Yesterday the Grand Duchess gave birth to a daughter, who was named Catherine after me."

Since childhood, Ekaterina Pavlovna was the beloved granddaughter of Catherine II, the favorite of her mother, father and older brother Alexander. She attracted attention with a cheerful and sociable character. At the same time, according to the diplomat and vice-chancellor, Prince Alexander Kurakin, the Grand Duchess "possessed intelligence and spirit, had the strength of will, she was not created for a close circle, she was not at all timid, the courage and perfection with which she rode a horse, were able to arouse envy even in men."

Many contemporaries noted her beautiful appearance and intelligence: "The Grand Duchess Ekaterina Pavlovna is an extraordinary beauty; I have never met such an angelic and at the same time intelligent face in my life; I still see it, so although I have a poor command of a pencil, I can draw it quite willingly," recalled Stepan Zhikharev, the writer, translator and senator in his memoirs.

In 1808, Napoleon Bonaparte, in order to strengthen his dynasty, decided to divorce Josephine and become related to Alexander I, marrying his sister Ekaterina Pavlovna. Having learned about Napoleon's desire, the Dowager Empress Maria Feodorovna hastened in January 1809 to marry her daughter to her cousin, Prince George of Oldenburg, who was appointed governor-general of Tver. The Grand Duchess herself, having learned about Napoleon's secret matchmaking to her, according to the maid of honour Mukhanova, responded with indignation: "I would rather marry the last Russian stoker than this Corsican."

Finding herself instead of Paris in Tver, Ekaterina Pavlovna, active by nature, did not become discouraged, finding a variety of activities: she helped her husband in considering cases and, taking advantage of the proximity of Moscow, began to gather outstanding people of the era: Zhukovsky, Karamzin, Neledinsky-Meletsky, Rostopchin visited her palace.



Portrait of Grand Duchess Ekaterina Pavlovna. Unknown artist. 1809-1812 (?). Oil on canvas.

The inhabitants of Tver fell in love with the dark-haired beauty with dark blue eyes for her courteous disposition. She often gave balls in the palace and “equally warmly received a nobleman, a merchant, and even a young officer; she asked everyone to have fun with her without ranks. ” During the war with Napoleon, Ekaterina Pavlovna gave ardent support to the idea of a people's militia, forming a battalion from her appanage peasants, the Grand Duchess Ekaterina Pavlovna's Jaeger battalion, which participated in almost all major battles.

On December 15 (27), 1812, Prince George of Oldenburg died, leaving Ekaterina Pavlovna with two sons.

After the expulsion of Napoleon from Russia, the Grand Duchess accompanied her brother Alexander I on his campaigns in 1813 and 1814, was a spectator and participant in the Congress of Vienna in 1815, and contributed to the marriage of her sister Anna Pavlovna with the Prince of Orange, later King of the Netherlands Willem II.

In January 1816, Ekaterina Pavlovna remarried her other cousin (maternal) Wilhelm, Crown Prince of Württemberg, who came to the throne in the same year. As the queen consort of Württemberg, Ekaterina Pavlovna devoted herself to the arrangement and creation of charitable, welfare and educational institutions, helped the poor during the famine that began in 1816. The Queen patronized cultural life, maintained close contacts with artists from Württemberg, and regularly attended court theater performances.

Ekaterina Pavlovna's second marriage was also short-lived. The Queen of Württemberg died on January 9, 1819 at the age of 30. Draped in black, Stuttgart said goodbye to his beloved. People in droves went to the main cathedral of the city to bow to her remains. And two years later, according to her will, the Orthodox Church of St. Catherine was built on the top of Mount Rosenberg, and the queen's remains were transferred there.

Proving with all her active life and indifference that it was no coincidence that she received the name of her great grandmother, Queen of Württemberg Ekaterina Pavlovna won great love, trust and grateful memory of the Württemberg people for centuries to come.

Romanov buzz



IX charitable festival "Days of the White Flower" was dedicated to Tsarevich Alexei. In the year of the 110th anniversary of the first White Flower holiday in Yekaterinburg, the organizers decided to dedicate it to Tsarevich Alexei (1904-1918), the only son of the last Russian Tsar Nicholas II, heir to the throne of the Russian Empire. The collected donations will be directed to charity and the creation of a children's hospice on Lake Shartash.

The festival opened on May 16 with White Flower charity events in the churches of Yekaterinburg, where everyone could receive a white flower in gratitude for a donation.

- Since 2013, there has been a festival at the Yekaterinburg diocese. Every year on Easter days, this festival begins, it lasts for several months. We appeal to the residents of Yekaterinburg with a proposal to join this festival to make white flowers using different techniques,” said Archpriest Yevgeny Popichenko, leader and spiritual mentor of the Orthodox Mercy Service.

During the festival, creative workshops on making white flowers was held, accompanied by a story about the Tsar's family, about the traditions of charity in Russia, as well as about the importance of sisters of mercy and volunteers who provide spiritual assistance to those in need of the 21st century.





The conference "The Romanovs and the Crimea. Scientific Readings in Livadia" was held in Livadia. In 1861, the first visit of the family of Emperor Alexander II to the new estate in Crimea took place. Since that time, Livadia has become a favorite vacation spot for three generations of the Imperial family.

"The Romanovs and the Crimea. Scientific Readings in Livadia" is a traditional annual conference, within the framework of which scientists and researchers consider issues related to the activities of the House of Romanov and the history of Crimea. The conference was held with the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Crimea in the White Hall of the Livadia Palace Museum (Yalta, Livadia town) from 20 to 21 May 2021.



The flash mob "The future belongs to us", dedicated to the return of historical names to the map of the country, has come to an end in Russia. The action was attended by representatives of many regions of the Russian Federation - from Novosibirsk to Voronezh, from Kerch to Krasnoyarsk.

"You need to start with the Severnaya Zemlya Archipelago, which was originally named the Land of Emperor Nicholas II. We must return the name of the last Russian Emperor to the map of Russia," said the representative of "Double-Headed Eagle Society", which organized the flash mob. Earlier, the action was supported by the rap artist Roma Zhigan. In an interview he expressed confidence that such mass events "will help draw the attention of Russians to the problem of restoring historical justice."

"A lot of Russian people are in favour of renaming Krasnodar into Yekaterinodar, returning the pre-revolutionary names of cities and streets, and I also, of course, support this," Zhigan said.

Video - <https://www.ridus.ru/news/354810>



Hershey Felder's newest production tells the story of a strange meeting between Rachmaninoff and Anna Anderson, the woman who claimed to be the sole surviving member of the Romanov Dynasty, the Grand Duchess Anastasia – it aired on May 16, 2021, with the world premiere livestream beamed in from Florence, Italy.

While Rachmaninoff's work as a composer was his principal interest - and his legacy of richly romantic symphonies, concertos, nocturnes and the irresistible "Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini" remain among the most beloved works of classical music - Rachmaninoff's post-revolutionary period in Europe, followed by his move to New York, and finally Beverly Hills, was filled with an exhausting schedule of concerts as performer and conductor. They brought him an impressive income and great celebrity (and even an animated cartoon performance of his "Prelude in C-Sharp Minor" played by Mickey Mouse),

but he never lost the emigre's deep sense of displacement, rootlessness and separation from the very world from which his music emanated.

The Rachmaninoff story takes the form of a memory play, beginning with the composer on his deathbed in his Beverly Hills home where he is being tended to by his loving wife, Natalya (Ekaterina Siurina), and his doctor and caretaker, along with the ever-present vision of Tsar Nicholas (J. Anthony Crane). Injected with hallucination-inducing morphine to numb the pain from cancer, the composer reaches back in time, reimagining his childhood and troubled family with its aristocratic roots, his years at conservatories in St. Petersburg and Moscow, his periodic depressions and inability to compose, and above all, the sound of bells in the Russian Orthodox Church that he would carry with him throughout his life for inspiration.



But throughout all those years, until his death in Beverly Hills, he lived with an omnipresent ghost. That ghost came in the form of the aching memory of his Russian homeland and his formative years (troubled as they may have been) during the reign of the Imperial Romanovs, whose centuries long rule came to an end with the Russian Revolution of 1917, and with the execution of Tsar Nicholas II and his family the following year. And it is that ghost who haunts "Nicholas, Anna & Sergei."

Adding to the deathbed memories is the well-known story of Anna Anderson (portrayed by Helen Farrell), the woman who emerged from a Polish mental hospital and, in the late 1920s, arrived in New York claiming she was Anastasia, the youngest daughter of Nicholas II who somehow managed to be the sole survivor in her family, all of whom were murdered by the Bolsheviks. And as yet another indication of Rachmaninoff's enduring desire to hold on to his Russian past, he helped support her (and other emigres) for some time despite a widely held belief that she was an imposter.

Although Felder might have polished his Russian accent a bit more carefully, he fully captures the "history, pride and melancholy of the Russians" with the fervor Rachmaninoff carried with him to the end. And he plays the composer's sweeping music (at one point backed by a chamber orchestra whose masked faces will forever suggest the current pandemic period) to magnificent effect.



On May 18, an exhibition was opened in Armavir, in the Republic of Dagestan. It presents paintings from the Museum Fund, reproductions of portraits of the Emperors Peter I, Alexander II, Nicholas II, artifacts, information posters about the history of Derbent. Dagestan handmade carpets are also exhibited.

The exposition emphasizes the positive role of the Russian Emperors in the fate of the Dagestanis and Derbent people, the importance of preserving the unity and integrity of the Russian state.

The Centre of National-Cultural Associations of Armavir sincerely hopes that the exhibition "Russian Emperors in Derbent" will become a notable event in the cultural life of our city and will allow its residents to discover a new, amazing and beautiful Dagestan.

It is known that Peter the Great visited Derbent in 1722. A dugout was built for him to sleep. Its foundation was subsequently restored and a whole museum complex was created.



"Both Alexander II and Nicholas II, having learned that Peter the Great visited the city, decided to visit this place and get to know the population," said Ibak Ibakov, chairman of the Armavir city public cultural organization "Dagestan".

The exposition will run in the city Palace of Culture until the end of May.

Video - <https://kuban24.tv/item/v-armavire-predstavili-vystavku-rossijskie-imperatory-v-derbente>



A video from the cycle "Great People of Holy Russia" – about Nicholas II and his family - in Moscow House of Music has been published. You can hear and see Archpriest Artemy Vladimirov and the Moscow ensemble of sacred music "Blagovest" (founder and artistic director Galina Koltsova). Conductor Galina Koltsova. Composer and piano part Anton Viskov, 22 February 2021.

Video - <https://youtu.be/CKqC1bRSzxl>

First part;

00:00 Opening remarks by Archpriest Artemy Vladimirov.

03:03 "The Tsar's Testament". On poems by Sergei Bekhteev. Chorus.

05:37 Fr. Artemy about Tsar Nicholas II. The poem "Sovereign" from the book "Sovereign's Crown" (auth. - Archpriest Artemy Vladimirov).

19:38 "Prayer" ("Send us, Lord, patience ..."). On poems by Sergei Bekhteev. Chorus.

22:16 Fr. Artemy about raising children in the Tsar's family and about Tsarevich Alexei. The poem "The Heir" from the book "The Tsar's Crown".

32:50 "Tsarevich Alexei". On poems by Sergei Bekhteev. Chorus. Soloist - Boris Komlev.

36:21 Fr. Artemy about the prayer of our Tsars to the Most Holy Theotokos and the intercession of the Mother of God for the Russian Land. The poem "The Wife Appeared to the Girl Matrona in a Crimson Robe ..." (authored by Archpriest Artemy Vladimirov).

47:12 "Most Holy Theotokos, save us ...". Chorus. Soloist - Ekaterina Alabina.

Second part:

51:37 "The Tsar's Daughters". On poems by Sergei Bekhteev. Chorus. Soloists - Anna Saygina and Polina Polyakova.

55:11 Fr. Artemy about the Tsar's daughters and the ideal of female beauty. The poem "Grand Duchess Olga Nikolaevna Romanova ..." from the book "The Sovereign's Crown".

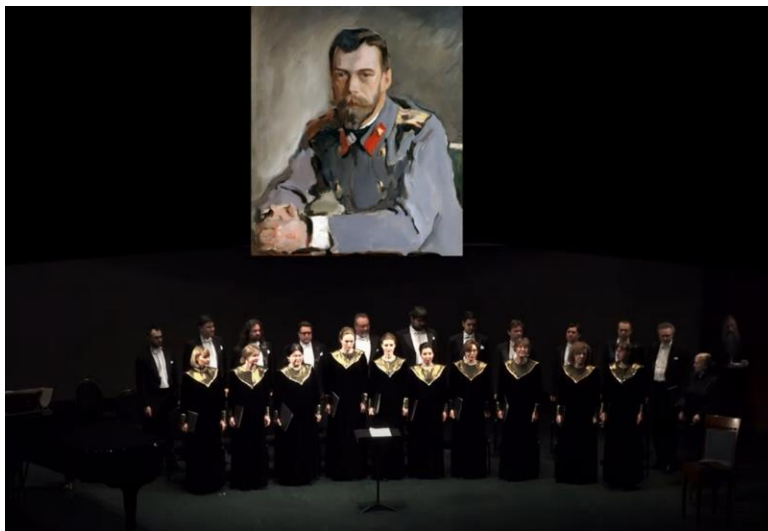
01:10:51 Spiritual verse "Tell me, Lord, my end." Chorus. Soloist - Dmitry Stepanovich.

01:15:57 Fr. Artemy about the Tsarina-Martyr Alexander and her service to the Russian people. The poem "Tsarina Alexandra" from the book "The Tsar's Crown".

01:27:16 "Morning of Russia". On poems by Sergei Bekhteev. Chorus. Soloist - Dmitry Stepanovich.

01:30:37 Fr. Artemy about the great scattering of our people. The poem "The Great Exodus" from the book "The Tsar's Crown".

01:42:02 "Lord have mercy." Communion concert. Chorus. Soloists - Natalia Privalova and Polina Polyakova. 01:45:53 Completion



"Tsarskoye Selo Madonnas". A photo exhibition has opened at the Museum of History and Art in Kaliningrad. The exposition acquaints residents and city guests with photographs of the Imperial family unknown to the general public.

The opening of the exhibition took place in an unusual way. Without a greeting, but with a chant.

The exhibition presents letters and postcards of the Empress and the daughters of Nicholas II, which they sent to their friend, Major General Alexander Vladimirovich Syroboyarsky.

Syroboyarsky carried warm memories of the Imperial family throughout his life. After the revolution, he emigrated. From 1923 he lived abroad. He took with him an archive in which he carefully kept photographs and notes of the Grand Duchesses and Empress.

Andrey Ermak, minister for culture and tourism of the Kaliningrad region - "This is the first exhibition from our large project called "Tsar's Days". Many thanks to the Culture Foundation for supporting us in this endeavour. The exhibition is unique because it contains such materials that you will not be able to see anywhere."

Elena Morozova, representative of the Western Governmental Society – "My great-grandfather studied there and graduated in 1836. I went to the dedication of children to lyceum students, and I see exactly the hospital in which the Imperial family, women, these Madonnas, looked after the wounded."

The exhibition can be seen until July 4th. It was launched as part of the "Tsar's Days" project, which will take place in early June.

Video - <http://vesti-kaliningrad.ru/v-kaliningrade-otkrylas-unikalnaya-vystavka-posvyashhyonnaya-carskoj-seme/>



On June 4, the Kaliningrad Regional Museum of History and Art will open the exhibition of facsimile images of engravings and lithographs, "The 300th Anniversary of the History of the Imperial House of Romanovs in Graphics of the 19th – 20th centuries."

The exposition was prepared by "Elisabeth-Sergius Educational Society" with the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Kaliningrad Region. The event is timed to coincide with a memorable date - the 300th anniversary of the proclamation of Russia as an Empire. In Kaliningrad, the exposition will be presented for the first time as part of the events in memory of the holy royal passion-bearers "Tsar's days in Kaliningrad".

Visitors will see a unique collection of copies of engraved and lithographed portraits of representatives of the Imperial House of Romanovs and famous figures, views of residences, palaces and churches in Moscow and St. Petersburg, created by Russian and foreign masters in the 19th - early 20th centuries.

The collection was in the private collection of a hereditary nobleman, Hero of World War I. In 2015, the prints were donated to the Kaluga Museum of Fine Arts by the daughter of Alexander Sergeevich Gershelman, Marina Alexandrovna Aksakova, in memory of her husband Sergei Sergeevich Aksakov, midshipman of the Russian Imperial Fleet, a native of the Kaluga region.



Video of sculpting a bust of Emperor Nicholas II.

Video - <https://youtu.be/bWoXKSphqmQ>



Non-Russian Russians. The history of service to Russia. Foreign representatives of the Romanov family

Once an outstanding historian Sergei Mikhailovich Soloviev (1820-1879), discussing the degree of "non-Russianness" of the Romanovs, took a glass, the bottom of which was covered with wine, and, referring to the marriage of another monarch from this dynasty with a foreigner, he added an equal portion of water to it ... From the reasoning of the scientist indicated that the Tsar Alexander II was Russian only 1/32. By this logic, the last Emperor Nicholas II - Russian to 1/128.

Soviet historians, retelling this episode, were silent that their venerable colleague and predecessor did not draw any conclusions about the Romanovs' lack of patriotism. Moreover, being a "Westerner", Soloviev only welcomed the processes of Westernization and the expansion of ties with Europe in all directions, including in the dynastic sphere.

But these conclusions, very biased and unfounded, were constantly declared by the opposition, which declared that the Romanovs, as representatives of a non-Russian dynasty, were deeply indifferent to the concerns and aspirations of representatives of the state-forming nation, not to mention the smaller nations that were part of the empire. And what then worried them? According to the logic of the opposition, it turned out that the Tsars and their relatives only dreamed of living for their own pleasure and filling their own pockets. In reality, everyone who came into contact with the Imperial family knew what the load and what responsibility lay on its representatives. And, no matter how surprising this thesis sounds, without any exaggeration, we can say that the Romanovs were, first of all, great workers. This, of course, does not mean that all the Romanovs, without exception, were workers, and that only state concerns consumed their time from morning to night. The well-known proverb "There is a black sheep in a family" is suitable for any family, especially the ruling family, all of whose representatives are in plain sight, under the close and interested attention of the public. So, there were scandals, intrigues, and even murders in the family.

But what was common to almost all the Romanovs was an acutely conscious sense of duty imposed by a high birth. Each of the representatives of the family knew that it was precisely this high origin that not only guarantees him a certain and sufficiently high level of material well-being, but also imposes the obligation to serve the state, of which he is the elite.

Sometimes they tried to shirk these responsibilities, they tried to escape into family life and romance novels, threw themselves into the pools of entertainment and set off on long journeys. But even doing this, the specific Romanovs remembered the sense of duty hanging over them and, realizing their guilt, returned to the service again. We can say that each specific Romanov must withstand the struggle with his own demons, which, unfortunately, did not always end in victory. But among the biographies of the members of this family, first of all, it is not the biographies of frivolous zhairs that prevail, but the stories of serving the country - in the state field, on the battlefields, in the field of charity.

It is about the service of the Romanovs to Russia, service contrary to their own passions, service with victories and mistakes, and is told in this book.

It is called "Non-Russian Russians" and begins not with the founder of the reigning dynasty, Mikhail Fedorovich, but with his grandson Peter I. This approach is explained by the specifics of the task set by the author. This book does not tell about the political and private secrets of the family. Most of these mysteries have long been brought into the light of God. They are described in a huge number of other

scientific studies and popular science works, although most readers know about these secrets mainly from the publications of the "yellow" and "near-yellow" press.

The secrets of the Romanovs will be considered insofar as they will work for the main idea of the book, which is to destroy the popular myth about the alienation of the Tsar's house to the country he ruled - Russia. At the heart of this myth lies precisely the reasoning about the predominance in the blood of representatives of the ruling dynasty of German blood over Russian. Here, of course, one can recall that the first reliably known representative of the boyar dynasty of the time of Ivan Kalita and Simeon the Proud Andrei Kobyla (died in 1347) came "from the Germans", from the "Prussian land", but such information is rather legendary character.

It is indisputable that the first three Tsars of the Romanovs - Mikhail Feodorovich, Alexei Mikhailovich and Fedor Alekseevich - were 100% Russian by blood.

Peter I was also 100% Russian, but an important process is connected with his personality, which changed both the way of life and, if I may say so, the gene pool of the family.

It was under Peter I that Russia began to integrate into Europe and, in fact, became its organic part. This integration took place in different ways: by copying the way of life, borrowing technical innovations, attracting foreign specialists and restructuring the entire state mechanism.

One of the forms of such integration was also interdynastic marriages, which allowed the Romanovs to intermarry with representatives of other ruling houses and become an organic part of the European elite.

The practice, established since the children of Peter I, when Grand Dukes and Princesses from the House of Romanov married Princes and Princesses from small German principalities, was explained by a number of pragmatic factors. A large number of maidens for marriage gave a wide choice, and their desire to intermarry with a dynasty that ruled in one of the strongest powers in Europe turned out to be so strong that they, as a rule, did not put forward any additional conditions at the time of marriage, meekly converting to Orthodoxy.

It is significant what happened to them after their arrival in Russia. The vast, rich and multifaceted country made a strong impression on them, and they became its ardent patriots - one of the most striking examples is the one hundred percent German by blood Catherine II. At the same time, only two monarchs from the House of Romanov publicly demonstrated and constantly declared that the European way of life is closer to them than the Russian one. We are talking about Peter I (Russian by 100%) and Peter III (Russian by 1/8). But these two Sovereigns, with all the difference in the scale of their personalities, also cannot be accused of lack of patriotism.



The book "Non-Russian Russians" includes the biographical sketches, and acquaints readers with a whole gallery of characters. Sometimes people lose and leave the historical stage almost imperceptibly. But most often the "demons" are defeated, and, having paid tribute to their passions and whims, the next Tsar or Tsarina, the Grand Duke or the Grand Duchess, leave life with dignity, leaving behind a strengthened army, a powerful fleet, humane laws, wonderful museums, advanced economy, hospitals for the poor, or monastic cloisters.

The circumstances of a person's death often highlight even the most ambiguous episodes of his life in a new way. And, examining the biographies of the Romanovs, the author constantly remembers their notorious "non-Russianness", which often does not prevent them from showing themselves more ardent patriots of Russia than the most Russian by blood their subjects.

This amazing phenomenon allows us to re-evaluate both the factor of nationality in general and the amazing power of Russian civilization. And if the subjects of the House of Romanov served "Faith, Tsar and Fatherland", then the Romanovs themselves, crowned with a royal crown, served "Faith, Fatherland, People."

Hard cover. Number of pages: 478. ISBN# 978-5-227-09458-2

Under the Hammer...

Romanov related items in Auctions



Doyle, New York, USA, May 19

Group of Loose Photos and Negatives Related to Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna of Russia

Comprising 18 photos of Grand Duchess Olga (1882-1960) and other members of the Russian Imperial family and 45 negatives of members of the Russian Imperial family at Hampton Court and Wilderness House.

Provenance: Prince Andrei Alexandrovich (1897-1981). Then by direct descent.

Estimate: \$800 - \$1,200. Sold for \$1,512 (includes buyer's premium)

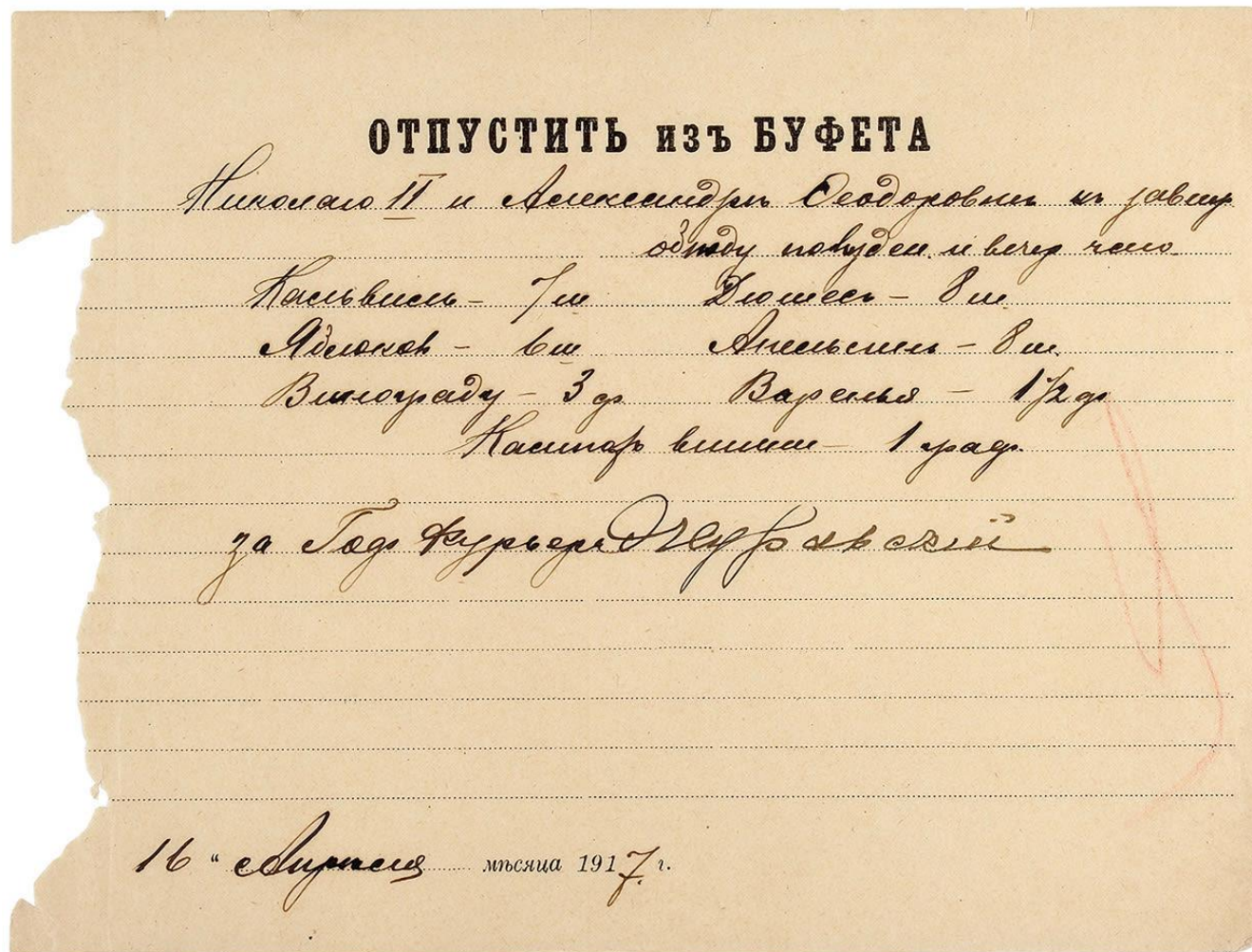


Litfund, Moscow, Russia, May 27

Form for food for the family of the abdicated Emperor Nicholas II. Drawn up and signed by hof-furier F.A. Zhuravsky. April 16, 1917.

Letterhead, nutty ink. 1 l. 13 x 17.3 cm.

"To deliver from the buffet / Nicholas II and Alexandra Feodorovna by tomorrow. / Lunch and tea in the evening. / Pear Duchesse - 8 Apple - 6 Orange - 8 Grapes - 3 Jam - 1 1/2 lbs. / [Nrzb.] Cherries - 1 / hof-furier Zhuravsky / April 16, 1917".



After the abdication of Emperor Nicholas II on March 2 (15), 1917, the hof-furiers continued to write out the necessary foodstuffs for the table of "citizen Nikolai Romanov" on special forms for the Imperial family. A certain number of such forms have survived. For example, a form dated April 17 was published, which, in terms of a set of products, practically does not differ from the form earlier. Later, fruit was excluded from the menu - such a luxury was not allowed for prisoners.

Franz Antonovich Zhuravsky (1865-?) - a lackey of the 1st category, who served at the Court from October 3, 1890. On August 1, 1917, he went into voluntary exile to Tobolsk together with the Imperial family.

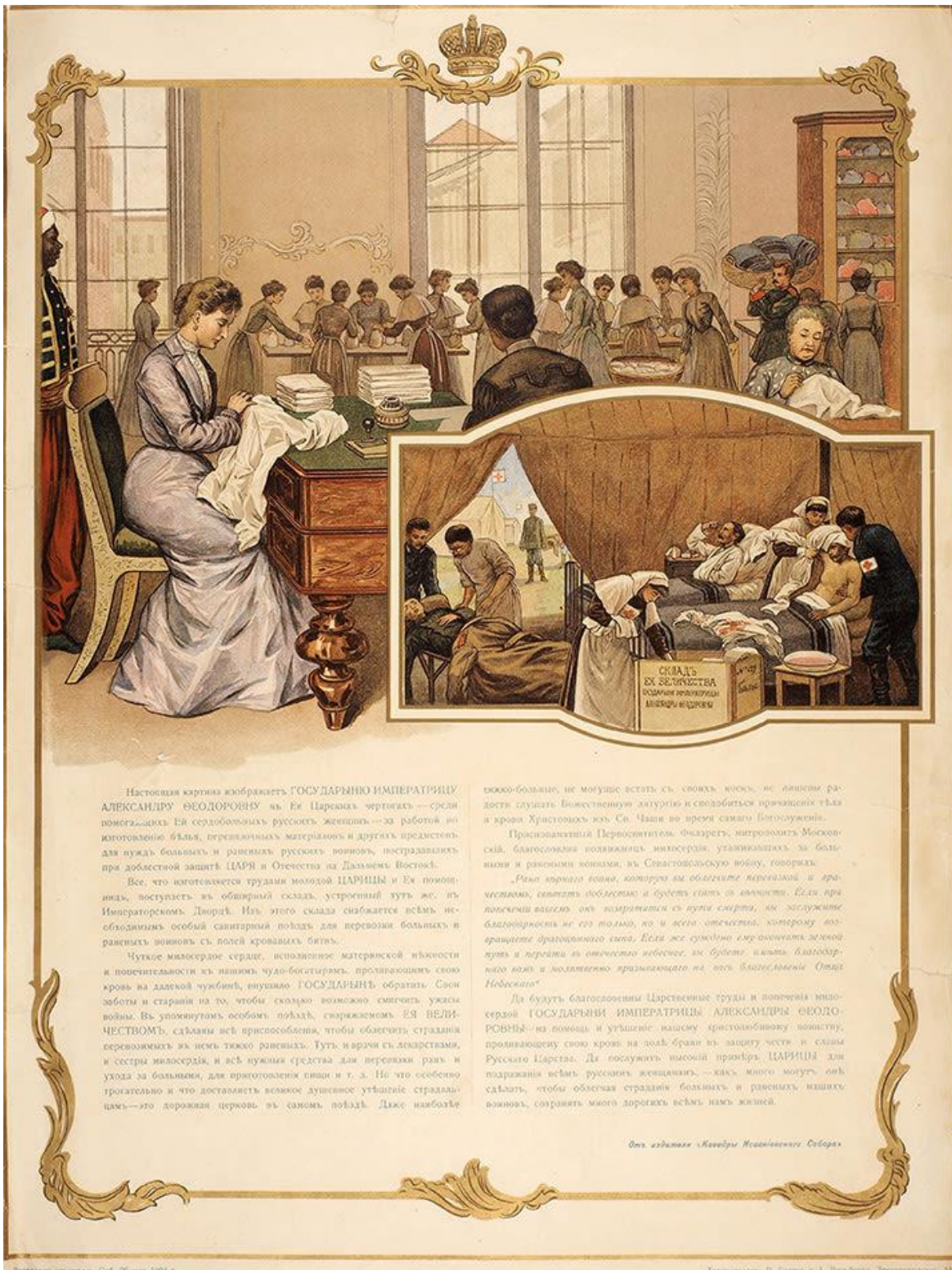
Start price: 15,000 Roubles

A poster from the period of the Russo-Japanese War: Empress Alexandra Feodorovna makes linen for the needs of the wounded.

SPb.: R. Golike and A. Vilborg, 1904. Paper, color printing. 1 l. 45 × 34 cm.

"This picture depicts the Sovereign Empress Alexandra Feodorovna in her palaces - among the compassionate Russian women helping her - making linen, dressings and other items for the needs of sick and wounded Russian soldiers who suffered during the valiant defence of the Tsar and the Fatherland in the Far East."

Start price: 4,000 Roubles



Bruun Rasmussen, Copenhagen, Denmark, June 2

Painting by Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna (b. Peterhof, St. Petersburg 1882, d. Toronto 1960)

Colorful spring flowers on the windowsill at Knudsminde. Sign. Olga. Oil on paint cardboard. 33 x 41.

Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna and her husband, Colonel Nikolai Kulikovskiy, fled the Russian Revolution and the Civil War and arrived in Denmark in 1920. Here they lived with the Grand Duchess' mother, Empress Dagmar, at Hvidøre Castle until her death in 1928. When Hvidøre Castle was sold in 1930, Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna and her husband bought the farm Knudsminde in Ballerup. Here they lived until 1948, when they emigrated to Canada.

Estimate: 20.000–25.000 Dkr.



Painting by Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna (b. Peterhof, St. Petersburg 1882, d. Toronto 1960)

Spring day at Knudsminde in Ballerup, the Grand Duchess' Danish residence in exile. Sign. Olga. Oil on paint. Cardboard. 62 x 52.

Estimate: 20.000–25.000 Dkr.

Bruun Rasmussen, Copenhagen, Denmark, June 7

Painting by Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna (b. Peterhof, St. Petersburg 1882, d. Toronto 1960)

Arrangement with flowers in a window sill. Sign. Olga. Watercolor on paper. Leaf size 19 x 19.

Estimate: 4.000–6.000 Dkr.



Painting by Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna (b. Peterhof, St. Petersburg 1882, d. Toronto 1960)

Christian X on horseback in North Zealand. Sign. Olga. Oil on paint cardboard. 61 x 50. Provenance: Grand Duchess Olga lived on the farm Knudsminde in Ballerup 1930–1948. The present painting was given by Grand Duchess Olga to the father of the Danish seller's father-in-law in exchange for groceries from the grocery store in Ballerup.

Estimate: 8.000–10.000 Dkr.



Painting by Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna (b. Peterhof, St. Petersburg 1882, d. Toronto 1960)

A house at the end of an avenue. Sign. Olga 37. Watercolor on paper. Dimensions 25.5 x 37.5.

Estimate: 8.000–10.000 Dkr.



Fabergé treasures from the Russian Imperial family

20 May. Christies - The British outpost of the celebrated jeweller was a magnet for a royal clientele that included Edward VII and the émigré grandson of Tsar Nicholas I. Now, after decades hidden away, a collection of 18 prized pieces will be offered in London.



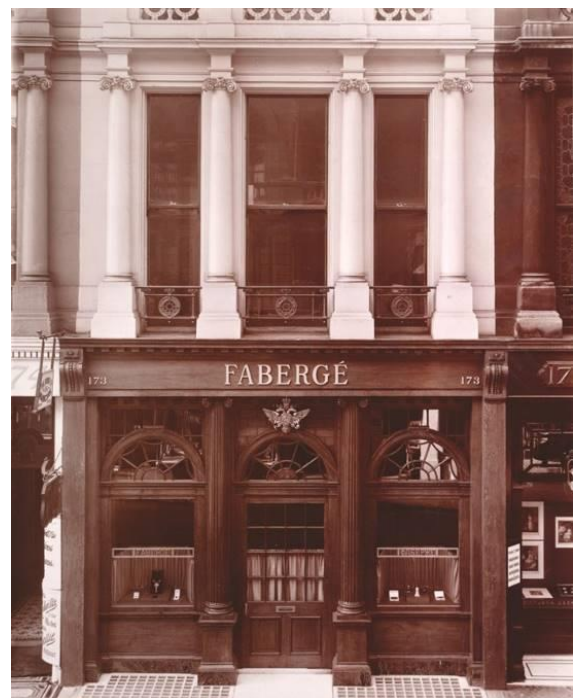
When Carl Fabergé was awarded a gold medal and the Légion d'honneur for the 14 jewel-encrusted eggs he presented at the 1900 Exposition Universelle in Paris, he knew he had a large customer base waiting for him outside Russia.

Despite France being his country's closest ally, however, he decided to expand the business he had inherited from his father to London.

Carl's talent as a goldsmith was matched by his business acumen: the British capital was not only the financial capital of the world, but also the home of avid Fabergé collectors King Edward VII (r. 1901-10) and Queen Alexandra.

The first Fabergé boutique outside Russia opened in London in 1903. Initially operating from the Berners Hotel, it quickly moved to Oxford Street, then Dover Street — and by 1911 Carl had leased a large shop at 173 New Bond Street. Ionic columns flanked a dark, veiled door. Above hung a gold double-headed eagle — the symbol of imperial Russia.

Inside, store manager Henry Bainbridge invited European monarchs, Indian maharajas, English aristocrats and American heiresses to acquire the ultimate status symbols — exquisite ornaments, objects and jewels shipped straight from the Fabergé workshops in St. Petersburg and marked with a London stamp.



Fabergé's London premises at 173 New Bond Street in 1911.

Surviving ledgers outline the purchases, arguably the most impressive of which stems from Bainbridge having convinced Edward VII to commission bejewelled hardstone miniatures of the animals he kept at his beloved Sandringham estate.

The King was so charmed by the tiny model of his fox terrier Caesar that he eventually ordered more than 100 sculptures, among them turkeys, pigeons and sheep — even his pet bear.



Two other names appear in Bainbridge's ledgers with notable frequency: Grand Duke Michael Mikhailovich (1861-1929) and his wife Sophie of Merenberg, Countess de Torby (1868-1927). Grand Duke Michael Mikhailovich and Sophie of Merenberg, Countess de Torby, settled in London after their elopement and became regular clients of Fabergé's London boutique

The Grand Duke was the grandson of Tsar Nicholas I and had been born in the Peterhof Palace in St. Petersburg. He was stripped of his titles, however, and banished from Russia after eloping to Sanremo, Italy, with his bride. Despite being the granddaughter of the poet Alexander Pushkin, she was deemed unworthy of the Grand Duke.

The exiled couple eventually settled in London, renting Kenwood House on Hampstead Heath. They were close friends of the King and Queen, regularly visiting them at Sandringham.

'Fabergé was a kind of social currency for Edwardian high society' — Christie's specialist Margo Oganessian

'They shared the royals' passion for Fabergé and amassed their own huge collection,' explains Margo Oganessian, a specialist in Christie's Russian art department.

'As well as being frequent buyers, the Grand Duke and Countess also received many objects as gifts; Fabergé was a kind of social currency for Edwardian high society.'



Take their beautiful enamel and carnelian sealing wax case (below), whose incised inventory number Oganessian traced to an invoice for 150 roubles sent to the Russian Empress Maria Feodorovna, the wife of Tsar Alexander III (r. 1881-94). 'It was possibly a gift from the Empress to members of her family,' says the specialist.

A two-colour gold-mounted guilloché enamel and carnelian sealing wax case by Fabergé, 1899-1903. 5½ in (14.4 cm) long. Estimate: £8,000-12,000. Offered in Russian Art on 7 June 2021 at Christie's in London

Similarly, two impressive gold, enamel and rock crystal candlesticks (below) were commissioned by Leopold de Rothschild in his horse's racing colours, then most likely given to the couple.

'Whenever [Leopold] wanted to say "Good morning!", "I like you!" or "Don't bother me anymore!" he simply slipped a dark blue and yellow Fabergé object into his friend's pocket,' Henry Bainbridge once wrote.

Bainbridge also recalled how the Countess de Torby 'collected Fabergé elephants; that is the most significant thing I can say about her, because it implies a quiet, undisturbed and jolly humour'.

The obsidian elephant and castle pictured below, with diamond-set eyes and a ruby-encrusted turret, was probably inspired by the Order of the Elephant, the highest chivalric order in Denmark, and may also have been a gift from the Russian Empress Maria, who was Danish.



Above - A pair of rare guilloché enamel, rock crystal and two-colour gold and silver candlesticks marked Fabergé, 1908-1917. 2¾ in (7.2 cm) high. Estimate: £40,000-60,000.

Left - A large jewelled and enamel gold-mounted obsidian model of an elephant and castle, engraved Fabergé, circa 1890. 3 in (7.5 cm) high. Estimate: £70,000-90,000

Below - A gem-set, guilloché enamel and two-colour gold-mounted nephrite bell-push marked Fabergé, circa 1900. 2⅝ in (6.6 cm) long. Estimate: £20,000-30,000.

It is of brilliant quality,' says Oganessian, adding that, in 2013, Christie's sold two almost identical Fabergé elephants from the Duke of Gloucester's collection for £290,500 each — more than 10 times their low estimate.

As well as other miniature animals, including an agate dachshund and an obsidian crow, the Grand Duke and Countess acquired more practical Fabergé items.

A moonstone-set nephrite bell-push (below) was an ornate way to call servants, while a silver-gilt and enamel frame with a portrait of Tsar Nicholas I served to remind the couple of their Russian heritage.

The couple also collected Fabergé jewel-set cane handles, scent bottles, brooches and an ashtray modelled as an oak leaf (below).

In 1917, the Russian Revolution brought more than 300 years of Romanov rule to an end. Tsar Nicholas II abdicated. One year later, he and his family were executed by firing squad.

Fabergé's Russian boutiques and workshops were seized by the Bolsheviks, and Carl fled to Germany.

In London, the shop's remaining stock was sold to the Parisian jeweller Lacloche Frères.





Left - A jewelled and guilloché enamel two-colour gold-mounted aquamarine cane handle marked Fabergé. 3 3/8 in (9 cm) high. Estimate: £10,000-15,000.

Right - A jewelled gold-mounted carnelian and nephrite ashtray by Fabergé, 1903-1904. 6 1/4 in (15.8 cm) long. Estimate: £15,000-25,000.

The Grand Duke and Countess also lost their fortune, which was tied up in Russia. They moved to a more modest house overlooking Regent's Park and relied on the generosity of the British royal family to make ends meet.

The 18 objects coming to Christie's — a small part of the original collection — passed to their eldest daughter, Lady Zia Wernher, then to her granddaughter, Alexandra Anastasia Hamilton, Duchess of Abercorn, in whose family they have remained until now.

'Fabergé collectors initially look for two things,' says Oganessian. 'Quality and provenance. These items are easily of museum quality, and, as for provenance, you can't get better than the direct descendants of the Russian Imperial family.'

'On top of that, the group represents all the main "work masters" that Carl employed to oversee his studios, and many of the objects have been loaned to major exhibitions; some even have their original boxes.'

'But what I love most about the collection is that it tells a wonderfully personal story of Fabergé's special, enduring bond with London — which just happens to be the focus of an exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum opening in November this year.'



A jewelled and enamel gold egg pendant by Fabergé, with the workmaster's mark of Eduard Schramm, St Petersburg, circa 1890

Ovoid, one side enamelled with a violet flower on green and orange ground, the leaves set with rose-cut diamonds, the reverse decorated with Cyrillic initials 'X.B.' for 'Christ is Risen', set with rubies and diamonds, marked on suspension loop. 5/8 in. (1.6 cm.) high, excluding suspension loop

Provenance: Grand Duchess Marie Georgievna of Russia (1876-1940).

Princess Nina Georgievna Chavchavadze (1901-1974).

Estimate GBP 3,000 - GBP 5,000

*Portrait of Emperor Alexander I
(1777-1825)*

Signed and inscribed 'Geo Dawe.
RA/pinxit/St. Petersburg' (lower
right). George Dawe (1781-1829)
Oil on canvas. 35 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 24 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.
(90.9 x 63.1 cm.)

Commissioned as Imperial gift for
Don Juan Miguel Páez de la
Cadena y Seix (1772-1848)
(inscription on the reverse).
Estimate GBP 150,000 - GBP
250,000



A portrait miniature of Emperor Alexander I
Probably by Domenico Bossi, 19th century.
The oval portrait of Emperor Alexander I
(1777-1825), watercolour and gouache on
ivory, mounted in an ormolu square frame,
with a foliate border, the aperture applied with
a laurel wreath surmounted by a
crown, apparently unmarked. The miniature, 2
 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (6.7 cm.) high.
Estimate GBP 8,000 - GBP 12,000

Paintings by Grand Duchess Xenia Alexandrovna (1875-1960)

Twenty-two studies of flowers, mushrooms, landscapes and animals. Four signed with monogram, one signed with Cyrillic initials, six dated between '1926' and '1957'. watercolour on paper, one with ink; two framed. 5 ½ x 3 ½ in. (14.2 x 8.9 cm.); and smaller (22)-

Provenance: Prince Andrei Alexandrovich (1897-1981). By descent to the previous owner.

Estimate GBP 2,000 - GBP 3,000



A jewelled gold tercentenary brooch by Fabergé

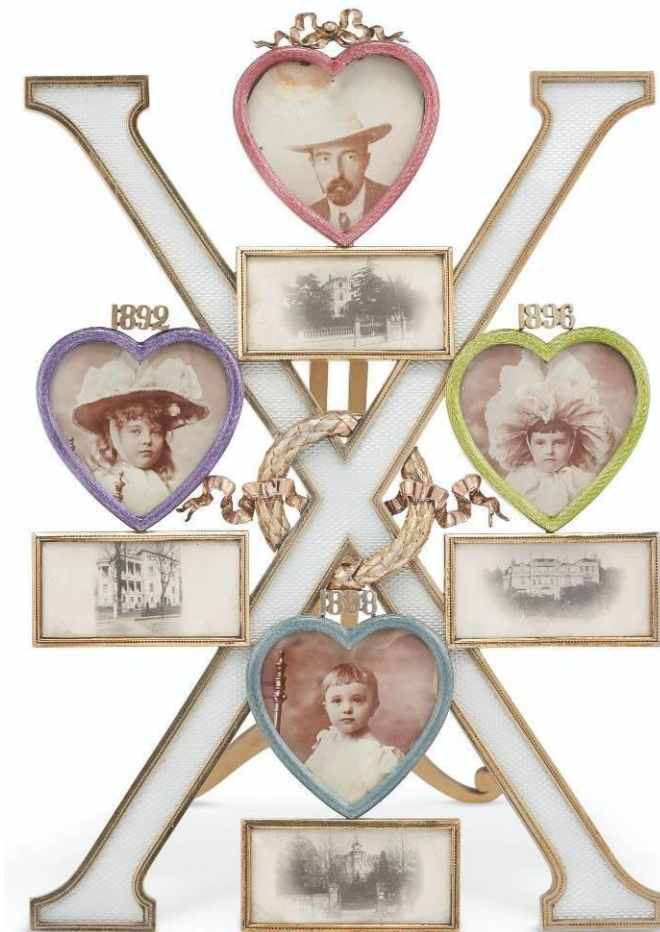
With the workmaster's mark of August Hollming, St Petersburg, circa 1913, scratched inventory number 4705. Of shaped oblong form, centring a Monomakh's Cap set with a sapphire, diamond and ruby, with the dates '1613-1913' below, flanked by two gold reserves decorated with wirework scrolls, marked on pin and loop. 1 7/8 in. (4.6 cm.) wide.

Provenance: Supplied by Fabergé to the Imperial Cabinet on 6 March 1914 for 25 roubles.

Estimate GBP 4,000 - GBP 6,000



A silver-gilt and guilloché enamel frame with portrait miniature of Emperor Nicholas I
 Marked Fabergé, with the workmaster's mark of Michael Perchin, St Petersburg, circa 1890, scratched inventory number 46212. Of shaped triangular form, enamelled overall in translucent red over a sunburst guilloché ground, centring a portrait miniature of Nicholas I by Ivan Winberg, signed on the right edge, within a laurel-chased bezel, decorated with laurel swags, rosettes and ribbon, surmounted by a ribbon crest, on two baluster feet, with an ivory back, strut and suspension loop, marked on lower rim and strut. 3 ¾ in. (9.5 cm.) high.
 Estimate GBP 18,000 - GBP 22,000



An important guilloché enamel silver-gilt photograph frame marked Fabergé
 With the workmaster's mark of Victor Aarne, St Petersburg, 1899-1904.
 Shaped as a Roman numeral 'X', entwined with a laurel wreath in the centre, enamelled in oyster white over a wavy guilloché ground, within a dotted silver-gilt rim, decorated with four heart-shaped photograph frames guilloché enamelled in mauve, purple, green and grey, enclosing original photographs of Grand Duke Michael Mikhailovich and his three children Countess Anastasia de Torby (b. 1892), Countess Nadejda de Torby (b. 1896) and Count Michael de Torby (b. 1898), surmounted by their birth dates, also with four rectangular frames enclosing photographs of most likely family houses, with a silver strut, marked on strut and foot. 7 3/8 in. (18.7 cm.) high.

Provenance: A Tenth Wedding Anniversary gift to Sophie Merenberg, Countess de Torby (1868-1927) from Grand Duke Michael Mikhailovich (1861-1929) in 1901. Her daughter Nadejda, Marchioness of Milford Haven (1896-1963). Her son David Mountbatten, 3d Marquess of Milford Haven (1919-1970).
 His son Lord Ivar Mountbatten (b. 1963).
 Acquired from the above in the 1990s.
 Estimate GBP 80,000 - GBP 120,000



A gift to Count Sergei Witte from Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovich

An important gem-set two-colour gold cigarette case marked Fabergé, with the workmaster's mark of August Hollming, St Petersburg, circa 1902, scratched inventory number 6220.

Rectangular with rounded corners, the hinged cover, sides and base chased with interlocking wavy design in rose and yellow gold, with a cabochon sapphire thumb-piece, with tinder cord and vesta compartment, the inside cover engraved in facsimile handwriting of Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovich in Russian 'In memory of our / useful lessons. / From a grateful / student / To Sergei Yulievich Witte / 1899-1902. / Mikhail', marked inside base and cover. 3 7/8 in. (10 cm.) long.

Provenance: A gift to Count Sergei Witte (1849-1915), the first Prime Minister of the Russian Empire, from Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovich (1878-1918) in 1902.

Estimate GBP 20,000 - GBP 30,000





A silver jardinière marked K. Fabergé

With imperial warrant, Moscow, 1895, scratched inventory number 9832. Of oval form, the body reeded around the base and chased with berried laurel and flowerheads along the rim on a stippled ground, both sides applied with laurel festoons centring medallions surmounted by a ribbon crest, one medallion engraved with a cypher of Grand Duke Paul Alexandrovich, and the other with a crowned Cyrillic monogram 'PA', the angular handles decorated with rams' heads, the four hoof feet with acanthus terminals, with a detachable silver-plate liner, marked under base. 18 ½ in. (47 cm.) wide, across handles. 122 oz. (3,812 gr.)

Estimate GBP 12,000 - GBP 18,000

Grand Duke Paul Alexandrovich (1860-1919) was the youngest child of Alexander II, the brother of Alexander III, and the uncle of Nicholas II. In 1889 he married Princess Alexandra of Greece and Denmark, but their marriage was short lived as Alexandra died in 1891. Grand Duke soon began a relationship with Olga Karnovich, the future Princess Paley, a married woman with three children. Ultimately, Olga divorced her husband and Paul requested permission from his nephew Nicholas II to remarry, a request which was refused by the Emperor who disapproved of Olga's divorced status. Banished from Russia, the couple married in 1902 in Livorno, Italy, had three children together and later settled in France.

It was not until 1912 that Nicholas II recognised Paul and Olga's morganatic marriage, which encouraged the couple to move back to Russia in 1914. After the Revolution, Grand Duke Paul was arrested in 1918 and executed by the Bolsheviks. Princess Paley and her daughters escaped revolutionary Russia and later settled in Paris.

An unusual jewelled and gold-mounted agate box

Marked Fabergé, with the workmaster's mark of Henrik Wigström, St Petersburg, circa 1910, scratched inventory number 18578. Shaped as an oyster, mounted with gold scroll hinge and clasp, set with rose-cut diamonds and cabochon rubies, marked on the interior hinge. 2 7/8 in. (7.3 cm.) wide

Provenance: Grand Duke Paul Alexandrovich of Russia (1860-1919).

Estimate GBP 10,000 - GBP 15,000





*A gift to Tsesarevich Alexei - An important cloisonné enamel silver-gilt triptych icon
mark of Ivan Alekseev, Moscow, circa 1904*

Of ogee arch form, the hinged covers opening to reveal a central panel depicting Christ with children, flanked by St Alexandra and St Nicholas, within varicoloured cloisonné enamel borders with foliate scrolls, the covers and reverse similarly enamelled, surmounted by an enamelled cross, all within ropework borders, inscribed on the mounts in Russian 'God bless the child of the Monarchs / from the abbot and monks of the Trinity Lavra of St Sergius / 30 July 1904', marked throughout. 6 ¼ in. (15.7 cm.) high.

Provenance: A gift to Tsesarevich Alexei (1904-1918) from the Abbot and monks of the Trinity Lavra of St Sergius in 1904.

Estimate GBP 20,000 - GBP 30,000





A porcelain plate from the coronation service of Emperor Nicholas I by the Imperial Porcelain Factory, St Petersburg, circa 1826

Circular, the centre painted with the Imperial double-headed eagle within the chain of the Order of St Andrew on an ermine-lined mantle surmounted by the Imperial crown, the border with gilt ciselé trophies of arms and lion masks on a royal blue ground, apparently unmarked. 9 ½ in. (24.1 cm.) diameter. Estimate GBP 12,000 - GBP 18,000



Sotheby's, London, UK, June 9

An Important Imperial Presentation jewelled gold and guilloché enamel snuffbox, workmaster Nikolai Chernokov, Bolin, St Petersburg, 1908-1917



Of undulated rectangular form, the lid applied with the cypher of Emperor Nicholas II set with rose-cut diamonds, within a laurel wreath, on steel blue translucent enamel over wavy engine-turned ground, flanked by translucent white enamelled sunray panels overlaid with rose-cut diamond-set trelliswork, the sides and base of matte and polished gold, struck with workmaster's mark and Bolin below the Imperial warrant, 56 standard, in original fitted Imperial Cabinet red leather case length 8.1cm, 8 1/4 in.

Presented to Vice Admiral Count Carl August Ehrensvärd (1858-1944) by Emperor Nicholas II during his state visit to Sweden in 1909

Estimate: 200,000 - 300,000 GBP





The collar chain in gold and enamels formed of seventeen medallion links of three alternating types, each individually marked on reverse and including:

- (i) Imperial Eagles each with central shield portraying St George and the Dragon (7), the central medallion horizontally mounted, by J. Keibel, struck to back with maker's mark, 56 standard;
- (ii) Saltire Crosses of St Andrew lettered S A P R (Sanctus Andreas Patronus Russiae) in the angles (6), by A. Keibel, struck to back with maker's initials; and
- (iii) Trophies of Arms bearing the cypher of Peter the Great (4), by J. Keibel, struck to back with maker's mark, 56 standard, each medallion fitted with gold eyelets and joined by oval ribbed links to form the collar.

In a fitted in a gilt tooled red leather case. Collar: length 107cm, breast star, 86mm.

The Order of St Andrew, also known as the Imperial Order of the Apostle St Andrew the First Called, was the highest order or decoration in the age of Imperial Russia. Reserved for those who displayed outstanding civilian or military merit, the order was established by Peter the Great in 1698. Over time, several changes were made concerning awarding regulations. In 1804, under the reign of Emperor Alexander I, knights who received the order of St Andrew, but had not yet received the orders of St Alexander Nevsky and St Anne also became de facto knights of the other two orders.

It seems that Peter I was inspired to create the order following a seventeen-month-long visit to western Europe the previous year during which he encountered the English Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle, which shared the same patron saint. Peter saw this order as a means to shift the award system away from gifts of land and money and towards a less expensive method that would also aid in his efforts to Europeanise Russia, which were at the time being met with strong opposition. Indeed, Peter I's visit to western Europe was cut short because of the Streltsy Uprising in which the Moscow Streltsy regiments rebelled against the Tsar's progressive innovations. Given the order's motto, *За вѣру и вѣрность* ('for faith and loyalty'), it is unsurprising that the first recipients of the prestigious award came from Peter I's inner circle of friends and military men who assisted him in his efforts to modernise Russia.

Aside from individuals who had earned the title, members of the Imperial family were automatically awarded the order at varying stages: Grand Dukes upon their baptism; blood Princes when they came of age; and Empresses at their coronation. Under the reign of Paul I, the consort of the Emperor was added to this list. In 1797, a distinction between earned orders and automatically granted orders was made – Russian Grand Dukes who had been awarded the order at their baptism were instead given diamond-covered insignia.

As with other orders, recipients of the Order of St Andrew were required to give a charitable donation by way of redemption fee and to participate in charitable activities. These included aiding the needy, visiting institutions such as hospitals, prisons and educational institutions, and overseeing the management of the latter. Knights would send their recommendations and suggestions to the Sovereign after conducting such visits.



Insignia and Costume

The Order of St Andrew is the only order which includes a collar chain in its insignia. The badge itself is two-sided and features a black enamelled double-headed eagle. Imposed over the eagle is St Andrew bound to the distinctive X-shaped cross (St Andrew declared himself unfit to be crucified on the same type of Latin cross that Jesus had been). At each of his hands and feet is a letter which collectively read 'SAPR' for Sanctus Andreas Patronus Russiae, 'Saint Andrew, Patron of Russia'. On the verso, it is inscribed with the order's motto.

The badge hangs from a gold and red enamel crown with blue enamelled ribbons which connects it to a collar comprised of seventeen medallions of three alternating designs. Seven of these medallions are a black enamelled double-headed eagle holding an orb and sceptre between its talons with a centrepiece emblazoned with an image of St George mounted on a white horse and plunging his lance into the dragon who lies below him. The figures are surmounted by a red crown and blue ribbons. Six medallions are red enamelled gold radiant suns over which is a blue X-shaped cross for St Andrew at 'SAPR' between each arm of the cross. The remaining four medallions are the gold monogram of Peter the Great over a blue enamel ground which sits centrally in the medallion between green and white enamelled gold flags and beneath a red enamelled crown. The eight-pointed breast star was worn with a light blue sash.

Initially, a knight was entitled to ask the treasurer of the order to embellish his insignia with his own precious stones, though this tradition was ended by Paul I in 1797 after these privately embellished insignia were too often confused with officially diamond-covered sets. A knight could also add the insignia of the order to their family coat-of-arms.

The full costume of the order, which was to be worn at prescribed gatherings, constituted a dark green, velvet mantle with a white taffeta lining and collar tied together with silver tassels, a white brocade tunic bearing a gold cross on its chest, a hat of black velvet with white and red ostrich feathers and a blue X-shaped cross. This was worn with the collar and badge. The blue sash and breast star were worn separately.

Estimate: 80,000 - 120,000 GBP

An Imperial Presentation jewelled, gold and guilloché enamel cigarette case, workmaster Carl Blank for Hahn, St Petersburg, circa 1896

Rectangular, enamelled in translucent cobalt blue over radiating engine-turned ground, applied with a diamond-set Imperial Eagle, diamond thumbpiece, gold interior, engraved under front cover 'Lieut. Co. Arthur Davidson from The Emperor and Empress of Russia / Balmoral / September / 1896', in original red Morocco leather fitted case, struck inside with maker's mark 'C.B.', 56 standard length 8.5cm, 3 1/3in.



Presented to Colonel Sir Arthur Davidson, GCVO, KCB (1856-1922) at Balmoral by Emperor Nicholas II and Empress Alexandra Feodorovna while visiting the United Kingdom in celebration of their coronation in 1896, and thence by descent

Engraved inside with the details of its award, the present cigarette case was awarded to Colonel Sir Arthur Davidson, then Equerry-in-Ordinary to Queen Victoria, by Emperor Nicholas II during his visit to Balmoral in 1896. It is a rare souvenir from this important trip and has been held in the collection of the descendants of Colonel Sir Arthur Davidson ever since.

Colonel Sir Arthur Davidson
Having entered the military as Sub-Lieutenant in the 4th Foot, by the time of his death Davidson held the positions of Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath, Extra Equerry to King George VI and Equerry to Queen Alexandra, and had served in Afghanistan, Bechuanaland, Egypt and South Africa under three monarchs: Victoria, Edward VII and George VI.

The Imperial Visit to Balmoral in 1896

Newly coronated, Emperor Nicholas II arrived by imperial yacht at Leith on 22 September, and then travelled to Balmoral, where he stayed until 3 October. The Emperor's visit to Balmoral with Empress Alexandra Feodorovna, granddaughter of Queen Victoria, and their ten-month-old daughter Olga was intended chiefly as a family reunion following Nicholas's coronation. Its secondary purpose was as an opportunity to discuss Anglo-Russian relations and international politics and economics, specifically the Eastern Question and tensions with the Ottoman Empire.

Estimate: 10,000 - 15,000 GBP



*Gift from Emperor Nicholas II and Dowager Empress Maria Feodorovna -
A rare Fabergé jewelled gold cigarette case, Moscow, 1899-1908*

Rectangular with rounded corners, the hinged cover repoussé and chased with stylised fern fronds, with cabochon moonstone push-piece, struck to the interior with workmaster's initials, K. Fabergé in Cyrillic, 56 standard, scratched inventory number 18946, in a fitted silk and velvet-lined wood box
width 9.1 cm., 3 1/2 in.

Purchased from Fabergé on 30 November 1900 by Emperor Nicholas II (1868-1918) and Dowager Empress Maria Feodorovna (1847-1928)

This cigarette case was presented to Adolphus Cambridge, 1st Marquess of Cambridge, Her Majesty Queen Mary's (1867-1953) brother. When offered in 2013, the present cigarette case was accompanied with a letter dated June 23, 1929 presumably written by the recipient's son, George Cambridge (1895-1981), which reads, 'Libbenham, My mother sorted some of my father's things out about two months before she died and she wanted you to have the enclosed cigarette case in memory of him. Cambridge'. The accompanying envelope is addressed to 'Mr. A. Libbenham The Esplanade Hotel Aldeborough Suffolk'.

Estimate: 18,000 - 25,000 GBP

