V. V. SERAFIMOV

PERSONAL TESTIMONIES ABOUT THE RESCUE OF GRAND DUKE MICHAEL ALEKSANDROVICH (1918) IN LIGHT OF NEWLY DISCOVERED ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS

Belgrade 2026

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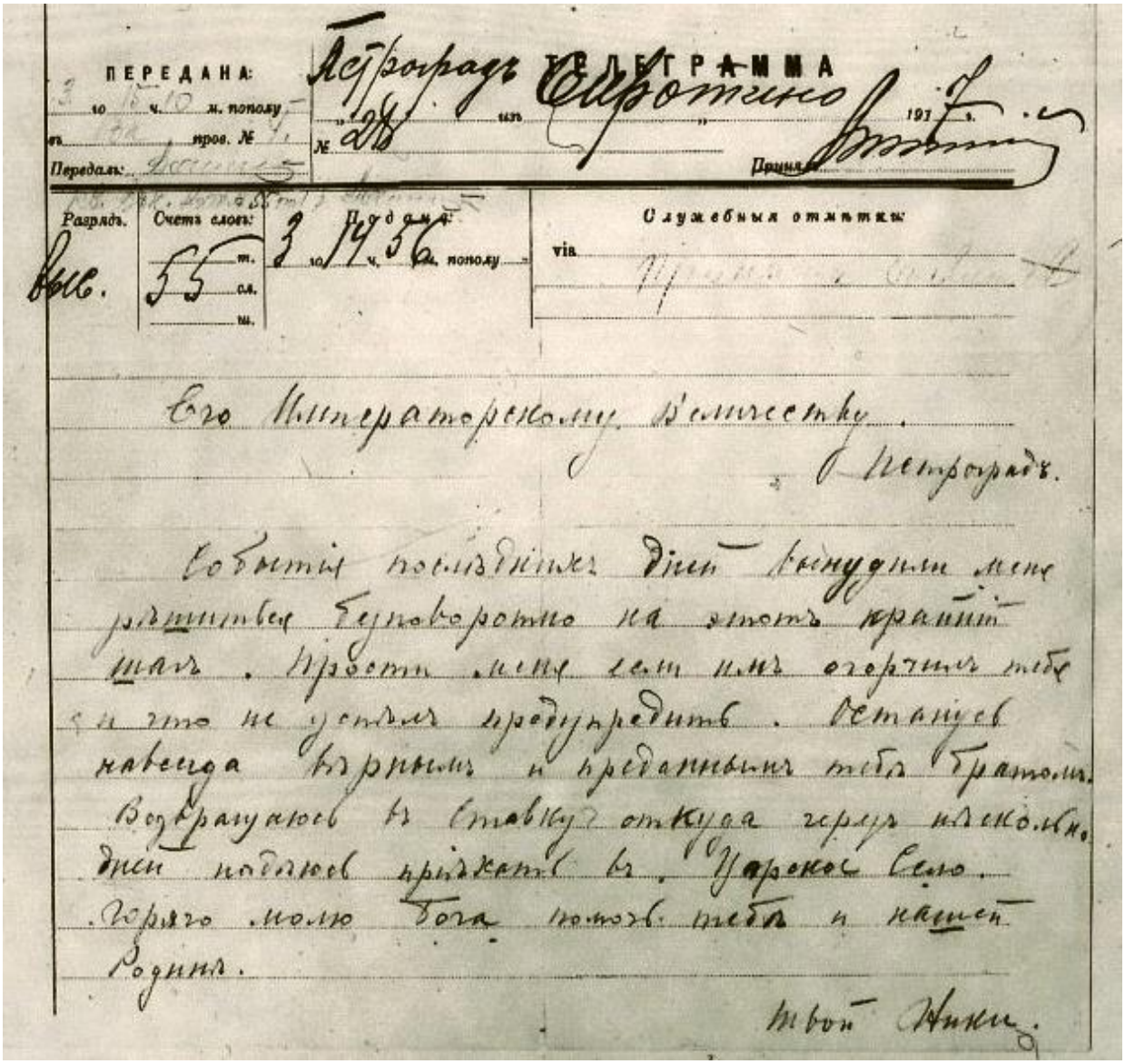
INTRODUCTION



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Служебныя отмѣтки

Его Императорскому Величеству.

Петроградъ.

Событія послѣднихъ дней вынудили меня рѣшиться бесповоротно на этотъ крайній шагъ. Прости меня если имъ огорчишь тебя и что не успѣлъ предупредить. Оставшись навсегда вѣрнымъ и преданнымъ тебѣ братомъ. Возвращаюсь въ Ставку откуда черезъ нѣсколько дней надѣюсь пріѣхать въ Царское Село. Горячо молю Бога помочь тебѣ и нашей Родинѣ.

Твой Ники.

DOCUMENT No. 1. Copy of Telegram from Nicholas II to his Brother Michael, after Tsar's Abdication. - *Hoover. Romanov Family Papers,* box 31, folder 6 (microfilm, reel 39, image 693).[1]

"To His Imperial Majesty.[2]

Petrograd.

The events of recent days have forced me to take this final and irreversible step. Please, forgive me if it caused you pain, and for not being able to warn you beforehand. I will forever remain your faithful and devoted brother.

I am returning to the Headquarters, from where I hope to come to Tsarskoye Selo within the next few days.

I fervently pray to God to help you and our Motherland.

Your Nicky."[3]

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[1] This copy from the Hoover archive collection is published for the first time.

[2] Capital and lowercase letters in the text of the article are used in accordance with the monarchical tradition; in quotations from 20th-century sources, they are used as in the sources.

[3] All translations in the text are by A. Papazyan.

Thus Emperor Nicholas Aleksandrovich, who had abdicated the Throne the day before, wrote to his younger brother from Sirotino railway station[4] at 2:55 p.m. on March 3, 1917.

The telegram was never received by the addressee. That same evening Michael signed his famous act of rejection of power and postponement of his acceptance of the Throne until the All-Russian Constituent Assembly's decision.[5]

Countess L.N. Vorontsova-Dashkova recalls:[6] "I remember our last meeting with Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich. It was in Gatchina on April 4, 1917.[7] My husband and I arrived there and stayed with the Grand Duke all day. During this last meeting, Michael Aleksandrovich told me that, it turns out, after his abdication, Nicholas II sent Michael Aleksandrovich a telegram addressed to 'Emperor Michael II'[8] [...] But Michael Aleksandrovich never received this telegram. It never reached the Grand Duke. The Grand Duke learned of it from Nicholas II at the meeting in Tsarskoye Selo, which took place with A.F. Kerensky's permission, at the time when the abdicated Tsar was under arrest. I asked Michael Aleksandrovich whether the telegram, if it had been received in time, could have changed the Grand Duke's decision? *'It could'*, he replied."[9]

"What's new from Michael Aleksandrovich? It's a terrible pity that he refused [to accept power] – b[e]c[ause] [...] everyone agreed on Michael Aleksandrovich and that this is a mistake,[10] b[e]c[ause] at this moment (in the Duma)[11] the question of the monarchy has fallen away, b[e]c[ause] there is no one to agree on. Couldn't he still agree?"[12] This is what Anna Saburova, a lady-in-waiting, wrote to Grand Duchess Xenia Aleksandrovna, Michael's elder sister, in early March 1917,[13] citing State Duma member L.A. Zinoviev.[14] This testimony introduces a correction of the widespread version that Michael, as the newly proclaimed Emperor, had no supporters at all in political circles at the time of the February tragedy.[15]

When considering the various assessments of Michael's act, one should bear in mind the opinion of one of the most sincere, consistent and active monarchists of the epoch – Lieutenant General Baron

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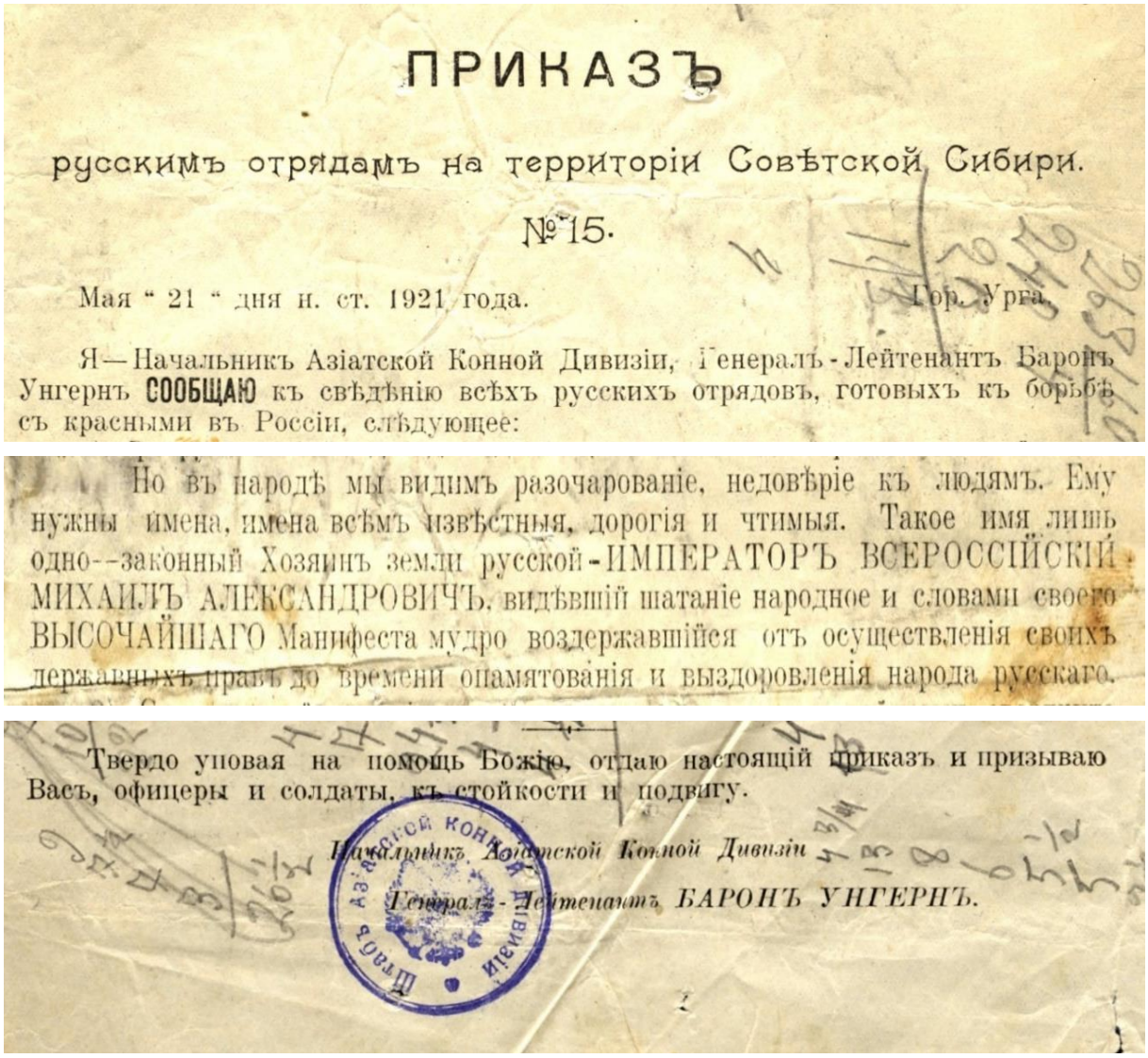
[4] Located in the Vitebsk Region of modern Belarus, within the boundaries of the present-day village of Shumilino.
[5] *Khutarev-Garnishevsky 2021*, 110-136.
[6] Lyudmila Nikolaevna Vorontsova-Dashkova (1885–1943, London) – countess, secondly married to Count I.I. Vorontsov-Dashkov. Author of memoirs about Michael Aleksandrovich *The Man Who Abdicated the Throne*.
[7] This way in the text. However, judging by the content of the conversation, the meeting took place after July 31, 1917, when the august brothers had their last meeting in Tsarskoye Selo.
[8] This way in the text. In the telegram, Nicholas II addressed his brother as "His Imperial Majesty". Modern studies, as a rule, give inaccurate quotation of the text of the document, the facsimile cited above.
[9] *Gul 2019*, 224–225. The telegram was received in Petrograd one hour before Michael Aleksandrovich signed his supreme power rejection act (which did not contain abdication), but was not transmitted to him. Italics mine.
[10] American-Russian historian V.G. Krasnov, on the contrary, believes that "the Manifesto signed by Michael was the last serious attempt to halt the collapse of Tsarist Russia. For nine months, it breathed life into the country before the Bolsheviks seized power in October 1917. [...] This is precisely why Michael should be recognized as the last legitimate ruler of Russia from the House of Romanov." – *Krasnov 2018*, 105.
[11] The words*in the Duma* are written at the top.
[12] *GARF,* f. 662, op. 1, d. 554, l. 2, 2ob. (State Archive of the Russian Federation, fond (collection) 662, opis (inventory) 1, delo (file) 554, list (sheet) 2, 2 oborot (reverse side)). Published for the first time.
[13] Anna Sergeyevna Saburova (née Countess Sheremeteva; 1873–1943, Vladimir, in exile) was a lady-in-waiting to Empress Maria Feodorovna and Grand Duchess Xenia Alexandrovna's close acquaintance. She was the wife of the last governor of Petrograd, Alexander Petrovich Saburov.
[14] Lev Alexandrovich Zinoviev (1880–1958, United Kingdom) – State Councilor, Gentleman of the Bedchamber, member of the Fourth State Duma representing St. Petersburg Governorate (1912–1917). He was member of the "Union of October 17" faction, which held moderate constitutional and anti-revolutionary views. He was married to Olga Petrovna, née Baranova, a lady-in-waiting to Empress Aleksandra Feodorovna.
[15] Compare also State Duma Chairman M.V. Rodzianko's opinion: "Undoubtedly, there were also Grand Duke Michael's supporters, and his accession to the throne would have meant beginning of a civil war in the capital." - *February Revolution 1925*, 44.

R.F. Ungern-Sternberg (1886-1921), who, believing in the survival of the last Sovereign of Russia,[16] by the publication of his "Order to Russian Detachments on the Territory of Soviet Siberia on May 21 (New Style) No. 15 (on the Attack on Siberia) (Urga)" confirmed in his troops, that on March 3, 1917, His Majesty Emperor Michael II *"wisely refrained from exercising his rights of conscience – until the time of coming to senses and recovery of the Russian people."*[17]



ПРИКАЗЪ

русскимъ отрядамъ на территоріи Совѣтской Сибири.

№ 15.

Мая " 21 " дня н. ст. 1921 года. Гор. Урга.

Я — Начальникъ Азіатской Конной Дивизіи, Генералъ-Лейтенантъ Баронъ Унгернъ СООБЩАЮ къ свѣдѣнію всѣхъ русскихъ отрядовъ, готовыхъ къ борьбѣ съ красными въ Россіи, слѣдующее:

Но въ народѣ мы видимъ разочарованіе, недовѣріе къ людямъ. Ему нужны имена, имена всѣмъ извѣстныя, дорогія и чтимыя. Такое имя лишь одно--законный Хозяинъ земли русской-ИМПЕРАТОРЪ ВСЕРОССІЙСКІЙ МИХАИЛЪ АЛЕКСАНДРОВИЧЪ, видѣвшій шатаніе народное и словами своего ВЫСОЧАЙШАГО Манифеста мудро воздержавшійся отъ осуществленія своихъ державныхъ правъ до времени опамятованія и выздоровленія народа русскаго.

Твердо уповая на помощь Божію, отдаю настоящій приказъ и призываю Васъ, офицеры и солдаты, къ стойкости и подвигу.

Начальникъ Азіатской Конной Дивизіи

Генералъ-Лейтенантъ БАРОНЪ УНГЕРНЪ.

DOCUMENT No. 2. - *RGVA,* f. 39972, op. 1, d. 3, l. 6a, 6bob.[18] (cuttings), print; genuine seal.

Ungern's opinion finds a parallel in Michael Aleksandrovich's remarks, who, according to journalist N.N. Breshko-Breshkovsky's personal testimony, shortly before the Bolshevik seizure of power in October 1917 said: "Perhaps all this will change? The people will come to their senses, and everything will be fine? I personally believe in our people."[19]

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[16] Ungern bequeathed through his biographer F. A. Ossendowski: "I will die, but [...] The work has already begun and will not die! [...] a victorious leader will be born, stronger than Genghis Khan and Ögedei." – *Ossendowski 1925.* Quoted from*: Kuzmin 2004a,* 557.Thus in terms of fulfillment of eschatological prophecies. And in terms of Russia specifically, - there is the real, already formally proclaimed Emperor Michael. See also *Appendix 1*.

[17] *Kuzmin 2004a,* 169–173. Italics mine.

[18] *The Russian State Military Archive,* fond (collection) 39972, opis (inventory) 1, delo (file) 3, list (sheets) 6a, 6b oborot (reverse side).

[19] *Breshko-Breshkovsky 1931,* 72.

Candidate of historical sciences V.V. Khutarev-Garnishevsky asserts: "[Michael's] act did not consist of renunciation of the Throne or the right of succession to the Throne, but only of a temporary postponement of the acceptance of supreme power, that is, a suspension of the actual entry into performance of the duties of the Sovereign Leader of the army and navy, head of legislative, executive, judicial and ecclesiastical authorities – until the people's will was expressed."[20]

In my opinion, Michael Aleksandrovich's act of March 3 is a manifesto of a proclaimed legitimate Emperor, who has not yet begun to rule, who, in the course of the revolutionary campaign to overthrow him, having conditionally accepted the Throne, retires from affairs, temporarily transferring power to the usurpers, and, while remaining Emperor de jure,[21] expresses hope that under certain favorable circumstances in the future, representatives of the people will again invite him to the same Throne as its rightful possessor.

In the Conclusion section of the monograph (2023), I come to the following conclusions: "Documentary and personal evidence has proven that after the tragic events of March 1917 and up until 1921 (and partially later, until the mid-1920s), some government, political and public figures - supporters of the restoration of the monarchical system in the European and Asian parts of Russia - wanted to see Michael II on the Throne of the Russian State, and most of them made some efforts to implement such plans. Among them were the right-wing Cadets and Socialist Revolutionaries in Western Siberia in the spring and summer of 1918, as well as the National Center inter-party all-Russian bloc in Moscow and Petrograd in the summer of 1918, with the support of the Entente allies, the highest authorities of Kaiser Germany and Kiev monarchists under Hetman Skoropadsky in the spring and autumn of 1918, Ataman Semenov's entourage in Transbaikalia in the summer of 1918 – spring of 1919, and, following them, some of the rebels of the West Siberian anti-Bolshevik uprising of 1920–1921, as well as Baron Ungern's troops in Mongolia in 1921. This included, in addition, a certain part of the Russian emigration who did not recognize Grand Duke Kirill Vladimirovich's claims to the throne in the first half of 1920s. The name of Michael Aleksandrovich was consistently associated with aspirations for restoration of constitutional (less often autocratic) monarchical system after expected imminent fall of Bolshevik power. The minds of monarchist legitimists regarding the mystery of Grand Duke Michael's fate were ambivalent: some hoped for his return to political life from Siberia (or Siam), where they believed he was hiding, while others believed his death should be formally confirmed—paving the way for legitimate heirs to the Russian throne, who were openly living in exile. It can be concluded that, despite the Grand Duke's obscure absence from 1918 to 1921 his name usually stood first among potential contenders. Michael Aleksandrovich, in the opinion of many, was in demand by the very era of global change. The Bolshevik leaders in Moscow, Petrograd and the Urals were greatly apprehensive about the coming of legitimate Emperor Michael to supreme power in the country as the gatherer of disparate monarchist forces in 1918. […] According to the almost completely documented evidence of the era collected in the book, mostly independent, hypothetical milestones in Michael Aleksandrovich's life after June 13, 1918 inclusively up to 1921 are substantiated here […]."[22]

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[20] *Khutarev-Garnishevsky 2021,* 114.

[21] Michael Aleksandrovich's imperial status is affirmed by many of his contemporaries and some modern researchers - see: *Serafimov 2023,* 31–34. For a recent scholarly work on the topic see: *Lykova, Moshchansky 2023*.The co-authors summarize their legal research: "The act became lawful only upon the signatory's accession to the throne. The conspirators, blinded by their 'easy victory', by their actions legally elevated Emperor Michael II to the throne!"

[22] *Serafimov 2023,* 63, 64.

* * *

In 2023, in the introduction to the book, it was necessary to declare to the scientific community and the public, firstly, that the remains had not been found, despite many years of searching, and secondly, that all the persons who testified about Michael Aleksandrovich's murder "are interested parties in this case; most of them, very likely, conspired in their testimonies."[23]

The second chapter demonstrated that "while the execution event itself is unanimously attested to in all known sources, the details vary more or less: the execution location, the perpetrators' names, the distribution of roles, and especially the final part of the execution and subsequent manipulation of the bodies."[24] And it was impossible to avoid harsh conclusions: "Through the organs of official scientific discourse, as well as through various media outlets, both in domestic historical science and among wider Russian and international public, the idea is persistently being promoted that Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich, to whom the God-crowned Orthodox Tsar Nicholas II transferred the hereditary All-Russian Throne and supreme power in the state and the Dynasty, absolutely definitely died at the hands of Perm Chekists on the night of June 12-13, 1918. I consider such assertions to be insufficiently substantiated, and therefore unlawful. I maintain that they are not strictly scientific and legal, but primarily psychological or political in their nature."[25]

Three years have passed. On March 21 and 22, 2026 Channel One premiered the documentary film *Okaiannye Dni* (Cursed Days) (Episode 1)[26] produced by the Investigative Committee (IC) of the Russian Federation, which is dedicated to the murder of representatives of the Royal Family in the Urals; it was filmed in Perm, Yekaterinburg and Alapayevsk. Colonel of Justice A.I. Bezmaternykh, senior criminal investigator of the Main Directorate of Criminalistics of the Investigative Committee of Russia, repeats the well-known fact: "There are not many sources [about Michael's murder under investigation] […] and these are primary recollections of Michael Aleksandrovich's killers, they were the starting point, so to speak, […] for the place of search [for the remains]" (minute 51 of the video); "so far there is nothing: no artifacts indicating the presence of [the Grand Duke's, his friend and secretary N.N. Johnson's] the bodies" (minute 31). S.V. Mironenko, Scientific Director of the State Archive of the Russian Federation, summarizes: "There are no documents about Michael […] and how will you find this [bodies]?" (minute 32), i.e., he is speaking about futility of further search.

A.I. Bezmaternykh cites a recent (2024) testimony by N.A. Pashkova, an elderly Perm resident, passed on from her late mother, then from Pashkova's grandfather, and finally from a certain man with a surname starting with "Tr...", as retold by journalist Vyacheslav Degtyarenko (now deceased), saying that "this is the first time we have information about the bodies' whereabouts" (minutes 51-52). The essence of the aforementioned personal testimony of the 4th (5th) order, little different in its nature from one of the numerous rumors which have circulated for over 100 years in this case, is that the "Tr...", whom the investigators identified as "Trutnev", recognized the Grand Duke in one of the two corpses brought by "armed men". Michael's dismembered body was packed in a "bubble" - a large jar which was buried in

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[23] Count A. N. Kamensky was the first to express a well-reasoned distrust of the Red investigators' testimony in his book: *Kamensky, Count 2006*, p. 72. He also cites the expert opinion of lawyer and judicial official N. D. Ledentsova: "Baron Ungern, a distant relative of my grandmother Maria Albertovna (von Güne) and my grandfather Sergei Nikolaevich Gavrilov's fellow soldier in the White movement, maintained until his death (shot by the Bolsheviks) that Michael Aleksandrovich was alive and considered him to be the Emperor. He said that he met him in the East much later than his notorious disappearance […] Legally, the Grand Duke should be declared 'missing,' which entails completely different legal consequences than those desired by the Bolshevik bandits […] There is no statute of limitations for these cases. As a lawyer, I believe that it is possible to return to this issue." - *Kamensky, Count 2006,* 141.

[24] *Serafimov 2023,* 476.

[25] *Serafimov 2023,* 58, 59.

[26] *Okaiannye Dni, 2026,* Episode 1.

the designated area. Excavations conducted by the Investigative Committee in September 2024 uncovered only a large metal pipe, a remnant of the old city utility lines in the supposed burial site (minute 56).

Thus, it is clear that since 2023 the IC-initiated search for remains has not progressed beyond investigation of an unconfirmed fresh personal testimony, which is merely a rumor. According to Major General of Justice M.V. Molodtsova, senior investigator for particularly important cases under the IC chairperson, the IC's investigation is approaching a certain point: "We have done everything we could" (minute 58).

This article continues the research announced in 2023, in the direction of searching for reliable evidence. "Theoretically, for a mere formal confirmation of the event of the Grand Duke's survival after his disappearance from Perm on the night of June 12-13, 1918[27], it would be enough for a researcher to scientifically substantiate with irrefutable data one of the […] hypothetical facts […] Firm testimony of several clearly established [sufficiently independent, disinterested] informants that they saw Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich after June 13, 1918 – him precisely – and, moreover, the kind of persons, whose testimonies can be trusted with a high degree of probability."[28] For the present purposes, the necessary sources from among those obtained in the course of the ongoing archival search were used. These are written materials originating from 1921, some articles from periodicals of the era. The eyewitness accounts which they describe contain information about 1918-1919. Alongside with new materials, previously published materials are presented, while their historical and political context is clarified, as well as the witnesses' biographical data in order to establish a clearly defined circle of proofs of the last Emperor of Russia's survival after his disappearance from the city of Perm in the specific time period: June 13 - December 1918.[29]

A BRIEF REVIEW OF PERSONAL TESTIMONIES ABOUT MICHAEL ALEKSANDROVICH'S RESCUE FROM PERM (Summer 1918)[30]

Omitting the retelling of numerous rumors about Michael Aleksandrovich's survival and his stay in Siberia,[31] let us consider personal documented evidence.

"Lieutenant Sossionkin's" and Lieutenant Serdyukov's Testimonies

In N.A. Sokolov's investigation materials there is a document attached to the case: an extract from *Sovremennaya Perm* newspaper dated May 26, 1919 - a copy of the original printed article "Information about Grand Duke Michael Romanov".[32] In this press organ of the White movement (Czechoslavak Corps), according to the words of an informant, repeatedly named in the article as "Lieutenant Sossionkin",[33] it is reported about an informational preparation by "Sossionkin" of the Grand Duke's escape from Perm, about "simulation of [his] arrest" on the night of June 12-13, about Michael Aleksandrovich's successful

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[27] Dates after February 1, 1918 are given in the article using the Gregorian (New) style, or the dual style: Old (Julian) **/** New (Gregorian). In the quotations borrowed from Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich's handwritten diary, the order is reversed: New (Gregorian) **/** Old (Julian).

[28] *Serafimov 2023,* 364.

[29] Additional evidence from subsequent periods is currently being collected and investigated, and is hoped to be published later.

[30] This section is a brief summary of the monograph pages: *Serafimov 2023,* 268–306.

[31] *Serafimov 2023,* 245–363. Some similar materials were nevertheless used for the research needs.

[32] *State Archive of the Russian Federation* (*GARF),* f. 1837, op. 2., d. 2, l. 7-7 ob. Certified copy. Typescript. Publ.: *Permskaya Golgofa Mihaila II 2018-2* (The Perm Golgotha of Michael II), 88-89.

[33] This strange surname is almost certainly fictitious - there is no such name among the known participants of the White movement. - *Serafimov 2023,* 269-270. – See also this subsection below.

journey"a few days later" "in a motorboat" "up the Kama", about his safe arrival in Irkutsk, "from where Lieutenant Sossionkin received the last message from the Grand Duke".

Sokolov also has in his file a well-known official testimony by R.M. Nakhtman,[34] a railway employee, about escape plans made by Michael's personal bodyguard in Perm, Gendarme Colonel P.L. Znamerovsky.[35]

[Nakhtman, according to Znamerovsky:] "[…] *'We ourselves are planning to leave for the north along the Kama.'* Znamerovsky took out a map. We examined it together. *The map showed distant monasteries along the Kama to the north. Znamerovsky, pointing them out, expressed hopes of receiving these monasteries' help in escaping."*[36]

The similarities between "Sossionkin's" escape route and Znamerovsky's plan are striking: "up the Kama" is the same as "to the North", as well as mentioning of the monasteries as places of supposed refuge. The informants, in this case, are completely independent of each other, and Znamerovsky was executed by the Bolsheviks in prison in the Autumn of 1918.

On January 10, 1922 N.A. Sokolov received a "letter dated December 8/21, 1921 from the Chairman of the Supreme Monarchist Council N.E. Markov[37] with a copy of Lieutenant Serdyukov's statement about his rescuing of Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich".[38]

In this case, it is difficult to suspect N.E. Markov of forgery, since six months earlier, in the summer of 1921, he had officially submitted to Sokolov's investigation the forgery of "Bystrykh"[39] and another

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[34] Roman (Robert) Mikhailovich Nakhtman (1867/68–?) – a railway employee, Catholic. Father M. Nakhtman – Czech, lived in Gatchina, being an inspector of the Warsaw railway. In those days (before June 1918) he lived in Gatchina: apt. 5, 46 Lyutserskaya St. On December 10, 1919 in Chita Prince V.A. Vyazemsky (1875–1945), Michael Aleksandrovich's orderly, introduced R.M. Nakhtman to judicial investigator N.A. Sokolov, who possessed "valuable information on the case of the August Family murder and of Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich's disappearrance from the city of Perm'. Sokolov did not publish V.A. Vyazemsky's and R.M. Nakhtman's testimonies in his book [*Sokolov 1925*], since they differed from the Grand Duke's murder version which the investigator defended.

[35] Petr Lyudvigovich Znamerovsky (1872 - 1918), gendarme colonel, Michael Aleksandrovich's personal bodyguard during the Perm period. In 1917 he served in a separate gendarme corps, later as head of Gatchina railway gendarmerie department. On March 7, 1918 he was arrested in Gatchina together with the Grand Duke and taken to Petrograd. He was expelled from Petrograd together with him, as well as with "citizen Nikolai Nikolaevich Johnson" and "clerk of the Gatchina Palace Alexander Mikhailovich Vlasov" by order No.28 of the Petrograd Soviet (Revolutionary Defense Committee, Petrograd Smolny Institute) dated March 10, 1918. On June 14, 1918 he was arrested in Perm "on suspicion of organizing an escape". In September he was killed during a walk in the prison yard "under unclear circumstances". *TSGIA SPb (Central State Historical Archive of Saint-Petersburg),* f. 2421, op. 1, d. 3, l. 30-31. Printed copy. Seal of the Revolutionary Committee. [Previously see l. 24 (sheet 24)] Original signature: "committee member Uritsky"; *GARF,* f. R-9440, op. 1, d. 1, l. 200 - 203 ob. Manuscript. Autograph.

[36] Minutes of R.M. Nakhtman's interview by judicial investigator N.A. Sokolov in Chita on December 11, 1919. *GARF*, f. 1837, op. 4, d. 4, l. 19-23 ob. Certified copy. Typescript. Publ.: *Gibel' Chlenov Doma Romanovyh na Urale Letom 1918 goda* (Death of the members of the house of Romanov in the Urals in the summer of 1918) *2017,* 378-385.

[37] Nikolai Evgenievich Markov (1866–1945) – one of the leaders of the Russian Black Hundreds, a radical anti- -Semite. From 1910, he was chairman of the main council of the Union of the Russian People. In the summer of 1917, he took part in the creation of the underground organization "Great United Russia" with the goal of saving the Tsar's Family. In the spring of 1920, he emigrated to Berlin, where he soon founded the "Russian Public Assembly" to unite right-wing monarchists. At the end of that year, he founded the Berlin Monarchist Association, which united a considerable number of émigré monarchist groups.

[38] Judicial investigator N.A. Sokolov's incoming paper log, No. 543, January 10. – *State Archives of the Russian Federation*, f. 1837, op. 1, d. 18, p. 1-21. The letter and copy of the statement mentioned here are unknown. The document was not attached to Case No. 23 – concerning the murder of Michael Aleksandrovich – likely because it diverged from Sokolov's main version, and was assigned "To the File." However, the document undoubtedly existed – and should be considered personal, officially documented evidence.

[39] *GARF*, f. 1837, op. 4, d. 4, l. 38. Certified copy. Signature. – Published: *Permskaya Golgofa Mihaila II* (Perm Golgotha of Mikhail II) *2018-2,* 170.

journalistic testimony[40] - both containing information about the Grand Duke's death. *Hence*, Markov sought to assist the investigation impartially.

The Volkov Database *2016 (letter S)*, contains several profiles of the White movement soldiers with this surname. The most likely author of this testimony, according to my investigation,[41] is Lieutenant Georgy (Yuri) Georgievich Serdyukov (1897–1938), who very likely signed the aforementioned article in May 1919 with his initials 'Yu. S.' He is also the alleged author of the statement claiming to have saved Michael Aleksandrovich.

Thus, both the article by "Yu. S." (which, however, contains, among other things, not entirely accurate information) and the statement by Lieutenant Serdyukov are speaking about the same event: Michael Aleksandrovich's rescue in Perm from the hands of the Bolsheviks with the participation of 'Sossionkin' - aka Yu. S., aka Yuri Serdyukov.[42]

The Monarchist Plans of 'The National Center'[43] Inter-party Group

The enthronement of Michael Aleksandrovich in the summer of 1918 was part of the monarchist plans of the National Center (NC), which united representatives of all non-socialist parties except the extreme right, which, however, collaborated with it. On July 6/19, 1918, 36 days after the Grand Duke's disappearance from Perm, the NC leadership sent an official letter to the leader of the Volunteer Army, General M.V. Alekseev (1857 – October 8, 1918), affirming important monarchist tenets.

[Leaders of the NC:] "[…] the glorious Volunteer Army must be withdrawn to the Volga and there become the commanding unit of the new front. In connection with this movement of your army, we hope to see you at the head of the general command of the military forces, under the cover of which Russian national power must be formed. We think that historical Russia must have a monarch for its restoration and reunification. […] We are ready to accept […] the form of a 'Directory' with an authoritative military figure at its head. For us, you, Mikhail Vasilyevich, appear in this capacity as well. This Directory must clear the territory, establish order, prepare the population and give it a new basis for elections to the people's assembly, which must establish the final form of government. *Gr[and] D[uke] Michael Aleksandrovich is in safe hands and in a safe place. He will fulfill his duty when the time comes* […]."[44] The letter has personal signatures of 14 fairly authoritative persons, including D.N. Shipov, M.M. Fedorov, A.V. Kartashev, P.B. Struve.

The same NC leaders (with a smaller number of signatures) sent a second letter to Alekseev 16 days later, on July 22 / August 4, where they generally confirmed the contents of the first one.[45]

On July 3, 1922 investigator N.A. Sokolov interviewed Lieutenant General A.S. Lukomsky (1868 - 1939) in Paris, who was at Alekseev's headquarters in the summer of 1918.

[Lukomsky:] "[…] General Alekseyev, during the Volunteer Army's existence, viewed himself as subordinate to 'The National Center', maintaining contacts with it. I myself read a document from this Center addressed to Alekseyev from Moscow. In it, the Center, communicating its political platform on matters of supreme power to Alekseyev, expressed its view on the need to restore the Eastern Front on the Volga. The Center indicated a constitutional monarchy as the form of government for the future. It

[40] Article "The Murder of Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich". – *Vremya*, 1920, No. 114, September 6.
[41] *Serafimov 2023,* 275-291.
[42] However, this investigation that I have carried out should be kept in mind in the genre of historical reconstruction, but not as a fundamentally proven fact.
[43] For more details see: *Serafimov 2023,* 291–306.
[44] *GARF, f. 446, op. 2, d. 51, l. 21-23*. Publ.: *Vserossiiskii Natsional'nyi Tsentr 2001,* 471-475. Italics mine.
[45] *Vserossiiskii Natsional'nyi Tsentr 2001,* 475–477.

placed Alekseyev at the helm of the fight against the Bolsheviks. In the same document, the Center reported that Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich had been rescued and was in a safe place. The document bore the signatures of Kartashev, Fedorov, and others. […] The idea behind the Center's message was that it conceived of future Russia as monarchical and saw the monarch in the person of Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich."[46]

Of course, such a collective statement about the Grand Duke's survival in July 1918 could be explained by abundant rumors and poor information communications between the regions engulfed by the Civil War. At that time, a wide variety of information circulated in both the European and Asian parts of Russia, spread after Michael Aleksandrovich's disappearance from Perm, including at the instigation of the Bolsheviks themselves. The latter built[47] an entire system of repressive measures against all members of the Imperial Family (12 individuals) languishing in the Urals on the theory of 'Michael's abduction by the Whites' - and had just then (July 17 and 18) been secretly exterminated along with their families and loved ones - with dissemination of further stories about their abduction by their associates. However, one must consider the serious military-strategic significance of this message addressed to the main leader of the White movement, who was offered dictatorial powers. Furthermore, during that final period of his life and work, Alekseyev harbored neither strong restorationist aspirations nor any attachment to Michael Aleksandrovich. Neither did the letter's authors have such a commitment, whose claimed information could also have been gleaned, among other things, from some reliable source reflecting the current state of affairs.[48]

Therefore, it is necessary to consider the information stated in the NC leaders' letter about Michael Aleksandrovich's survival as documented collective evidence, based on noteworthy sources, which, however, have not been discovered to date

COLONEL FREYBERG'S AND HIS INFORMANTS' TESTIMONIES ABOUT MEETINGS WITH MICHAEL ALEKSANDROVICH (Autumn 1918)[49]

The following was recorded in N.A. Sokolov's investigation materials: "Minutes of witness E.G. Freyberg's interview made by Captain P.P. Bulygin, attached to judicial investigator for especially important cases N.A. Sokolov, on the case of Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich's murder" (April 7, 1921).[50]

Colonel Freyberg's Personal Testimony

[Freyberg:] [About three weeks after Freyberg's arrival in Chita to serve in the Special Manchurian Detachment, that is, around October 5/18, 1918], "An express train was assigned from Chita to the East,

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[46] *Rossiiskii Arkhiv, vol. 8, 1998*, 351–352.

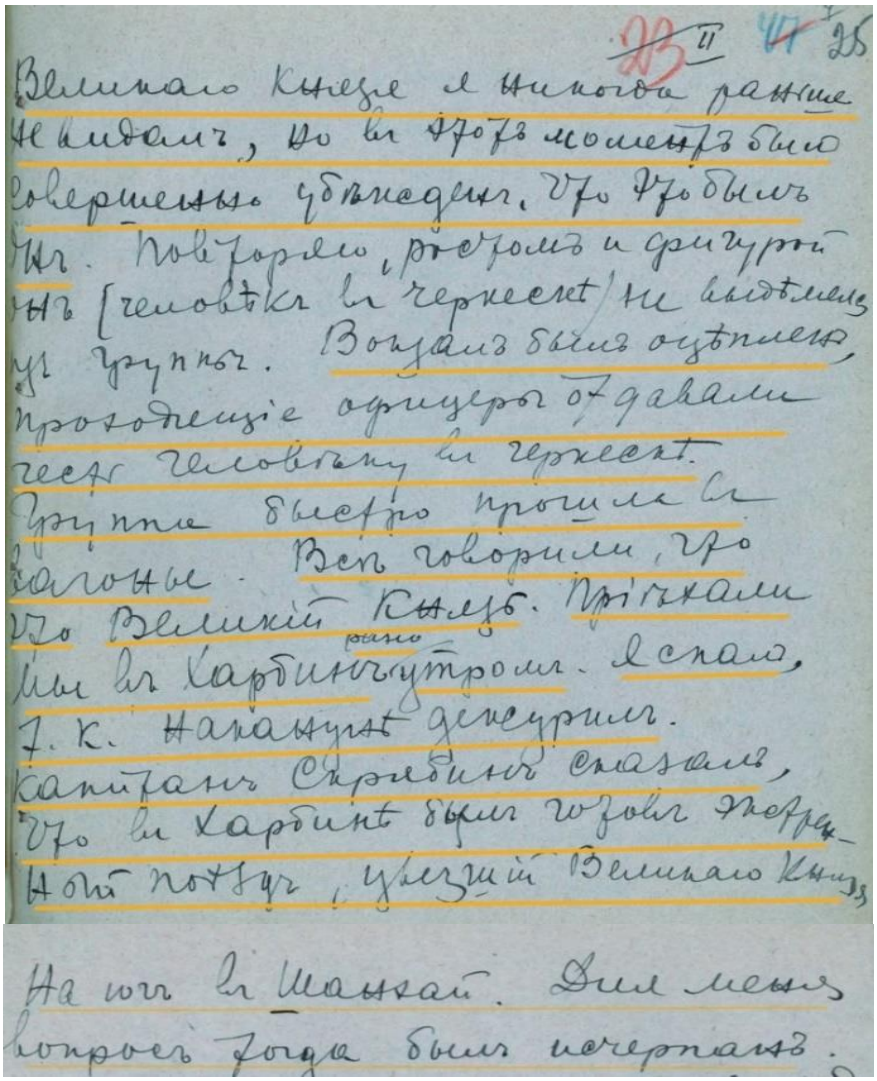
[47] The book (2023) defends the version of Michael Aleksandrovich and his friend and secretary N.N. Johnson's execution, which, however, did not achieve its goal in relation to the Grand Duke – he, having been wounded, managed to escape. – *Serafimov 2023,* 153-244.

[48] See subsection "Lieutenant Sossionkin's" and Lieutenant Serdyukov's Testimonies" and the document: *Freyberg 1921*, 6 (Appendix 2), which speaks about the rumors that Michael "made his way from Irkutsk to Chita."

[49] This section, the key one in this article, contains analysis of already known facsimiles of archival evidence published by me (*Serafimov 2023,* Colour Insert, Appendix 10), as well as periodical data, which I have reproduced in light of newly discovered materials.

[50] *GARF, f. 601, op. 2, d. 53, l. 5-14, original*. Published by me in facsimile: *Serafimov 2023,* Appendix 10, 5-14. Previously published in the collection: *Permskaya Golgofa Mihaila II* (Perm Golgotha of Mikhail II) *2018-2,* 149-153.

and two armored cars were assigned to escort it. […] They said that Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich was traveling on the train to Shanghai […]" *(6)*.[51]



DOCUMENT No.3. *Freyberg, 1921*, p. 7 – 7 ob. (cuttings).

"I had never seen the Grand Duke before, but at that moment I was absolutely convinced it was he. […] The station was cordoned off, and passing officers saluted the man in the Circassian coat. The group quickly filed into the carriages. Everyone said it was the Grand Duke. We arrived in Harbin early in the morning. I was asleep, having been on duty the night before. Captain Skryabin[52] said that an express train was ready in Harbin to take the Grand Duke south, to Shanghai. For me, the matter was then settled."

Freyberg says that, around October 4/17, 1918, he, being in the rank of captain and being appointed junior officer of one of the two armored trains escorting the special train traveling from Chita to Harbin (and further to Vladivostok), supposedly saw the Grand Duke from afar (at dusk) on the platform in Chita, of which he was sure, as was everyone else.

Thus, there is a direct personal testimony from an eyewitness who in October 1918 was convinced that he himself saw Michael Aleksandrovich.

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[51] From here on, quotations from the document: Freyberg 1921, and its paraphrase may be given with the manuscript sheet number indicated in the main text *(in parentheses).* See *Appendix 2* for the text.

[52] Captain Skryabin was commander of the 'Avenger' train, where Captain Freyberg was serving as a junior officer in October 1918. The 'Avenger' was one of two trains in the special train's convoy, in which, according to Freyberg, Michael Aleksandrovich was travelling. - *Freyberg 1921,* p. 6 - 6 ob.

Colonel Freyberg: Biography Milestones

Eric (Erich) Georgievich Freyberg (1890, Pernov, Livonia Governorate – 1944, Allenstein, Germany, now Olsztyn, Poland). Erich Anthon Freyberg – according to the entry in the birth register. Lutheran. Participant of the Great and Civil Wars. On August 25, 1918 – captain of the 14th Uhlan Regiment, observer pilot, adjutant of the 5th Fighter Squadron. From September 1918 – in Ataman Semyonov's Special Manchurian Detachment, junior armored train officer. From December 14, 1918 – head of the Armored Train Directorate of Ataman Semyonov's Combined Manchurian Rifle Division, in May 1919 – chief of staff of the division. For distinguished service, by Army Order dated June 18, 1919, conditionally, pending Government approval, promoted to colonel, with seniority from July 17, 1919, member of the inspection commission (November19, 1919), Ataman Semenov's representative in Germany, where he arrived no later than May 1920. Monarchist, who acted, among other things, on behalf of Dowager Empress Maria Feodorovna, member of the Russian Monarchist Union in Berlin, participant and speaker[53] at the First Monarchist Congress in Bad Reichenhall (Bavaria, May 29 - June 5, 1921),[54]then participant of the Munich Congress - the Founding Conference of the Russian People's Monarchist Union (constitutional monarchists, Munich, March 25 - April 5, 1922), Captain P.P. Bulygin's (investigator N.A. Sokolov's assistant and bodyguard) employee and friend. Freyberg provided a variety of practical assistance to investigator Sokolov in France and Germany in investigating the circumstances of the murder of Tsar's Family members and clarifying Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich's fate. He offered his apartment in Berlin (19 Gervinusstrasse, Charlotenburg) for Sokolov and Bulygin to live in. Freyberg's activities as Ataman Semyonov's representative were the subject of concern expressed in a letter from RSFSR representative in Germany V. Kopp to the German Minister of Foreign Affairs F. Rosen on July 18, 1921.[55]In the Summary of the Foreign Department of RSFSR All-Russian Extraordinary Commission 'On Russian Monarchist Movement Abroad', we read the following: 'Since the Winter of 1920, there has been an increase of monarchist organizations activities, the center of which is Harbin. Communication with Berlin [the monarchist center] is maintained through Ataman Semenov's representative, Colonel Freyberg.'[56]

Freyberg, as the ataman's representative, delivered a welcoming address to Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich during his visit to the Russian Public Assembly in Berlin on March 2, 1921. Dmitri Pavlovich personally received the colonel on March 3.[57] At that time, Dmitri Pavlovich was considered by Berlin Russian monarchists as a candidate to lead the legitimist monarchist movement of the Russian émigré community and even as a legitimate candidate for the throne.[58]

On July 10/23, 1921, three months after Freyberg testified about Michael Aleksandrovich's fate, his Berlin apartment was robbed by secret Bolshevik collaborators, and many of Sokolov's investigative materials stored there were stolen. The case had significant repercussions, including in the courts.[59]

Freyberg remained a figure of the right-wing monarchist persuasion, attempting with German-style precision to send information about the situation in Europe to Ataman Semyonov in the Far East throughout 1921–1922. However, Semyonov's chief of staff, Major General P.F. Ryabikov, who adhered

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[53] Freyberg's report is mentioned in the journal: *Dvuglavyj Orel* 1921, issue 11, July 1/14, p. 4.

[54] Fearing a schism, the congress delegates postponed discussion of specific candidates for the throne until Russia was liberated or reliable information was received about the fate of Nicholas II family and of Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich's.

[55] The following materials were used: *Timofeev 2010,* 56–59.

[56] Stamp: in. Dep. VChK No. 2644/ nr from our resident in Germany received on 15.12.1921. – *Central Archives of the FSB RF,* f. 2, op. 2, d. 153, l. 108–116. Published: *Russkaia Voennaia Emigratsiia 20–40-kh gg. 1998,* 309–310.

[57] *Diaries and Personal Notes of Dmitry Pavlovich, 1921,*36, 38. See subsection "Dmitri Pavlovich's Meeting with Freyberg in Berlin."

[58] *Diaries and Personal Notes of Dmitry Pavlovich 1921*, 65–76. See subsection "Interview in Paris."

[59] *Petrenko 2023*.

to a more liberal approach, completely ignored this information and imposed administrative restrictions on Freyberg's practical activities.[60]

Thus, the biographical data present Freyberg as a right-wing monarchist, a sincere assistant to investigator Sokolov and a staunch opponent of the Bolsheviks, consistent in all of this.

Lieutenant Colonel Popov's Testimony

The most direct evidence of the Grand Duke's survival is contained in the following testimony by Freyberg, who recalls that he arrived in Chita, to Ataman G.M. Semenov's Special Manchurian detachment on September 13/27, 1918, from the words of this detachment's officer.

[Freyberg:] "Later [in January - February 1919] I met Lieutenant Colonel Popov,[61] who often told me that during the Grand Duke's passage [in October 1918] he was appointed senior officer of 9-11 officers (from the Special Manchurian Detachment) in the Grand Duke's convoy and during the journey he had the honor of sitting in the Grand Duke's compartment, and the Grand Duke told him how difficult it was for him to escape across Siberia, how he crossed the river in a boat (or went down the river), traveled for a long time in carts, avoiding railways, and hid in a monastery near Irkutsk" *(7 ob. - 8).*

The official data that Popov served under Semenov in the position of a chief officer for assignments is entirely consistent with his mission to directly accompany Michael Aleksandrovich in the compartment, probably alternating with the ataman himself, who, according to Freyberg, was traveling on the same train. *(12 ob. - 13 ob.)*

Popov's version of the Grand Duke's stay immediately after the rescue or later in a monastery near Irkutsk is consistent with Freyberg's report about the rumor that in the autumn of 1918 Michael Aleksandrovich "made his way from Irkutsk to Chita to Ataman Semenov" *(6).* This version is also completely consistent with Znamerovsky's plans for the Grand Duke's rescue from Perm in the spring of 1918 and with "Lieutenant Sossionkin's" testimony.[62]

Thus, Lieutenant Colonel Popov's message (via Freyberg) should be considered as valuable personal evidence of Popov's communication with Michael Aleksandrovich after his disappearance from Perm.

Officers' Testimonies about Michael Aleksandrovich's Stay in Shanghai

During the same interview, Freyberg, from Captain Scriabin's words,[63] says that after Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich's departure from Harbin by train heading to Shanghai, the Grand Duke (according to time calculation, at the end of October – beginning of November 1918) arrived in Shanghai.

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[60] Freyberg's reports from Berlin on international political events (begun August 21, 1921 – completed July 6, 1922). – *GARF,* f. 5793 (P. F. Ryabikov), op. 1, d. 110.

[61] Popov, Lieutenant Colonel. – In the White troops of the Eastern Front. 1918 – in [Ataman Semenov's] Special Manchurian Detachment. Senior officer for assignments under G.M. Semenov. - *Volkov Database 2016. Letter P.* Not to be confused with Colonel Popov, commander of armored trains, executed by Semenov on charges of looting and violence.

[62] See subsection "'Lieutenant Sossionkin's' and Lieutenant Serdyukov's Testimonies."

[63] Skryabin was a lieutenant in the White forces of the Eastern Front, in 1918 in the Special Manchurian Detachment as part of armored train division. – *Volkov Database 2016. Letter S.* An officer close to Ataman Semyonov.

Freyberg testifies, from the words of officers with surnames Meyer,[64] Lesnikov,[65] Gruzinsky - (Ataman Semenov's adjutant), Pogadayev,[66] who in November or later arrived in Russian Transbaikalia from Shanghai, that the latter saw Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich in Shanghai in November 1918; that he was living freely in a hotel, walking around the city, playing tennis *(pp. 8 ob. – 9.)*

[Freyberg:] "[…] The ataman sent Lieutenant Kuntz Hans Ganzovich (an Austrian German) to my disposal here [in Berlin], the 'Tilli' now living in Karlsbad, who had been with the ataman from the very beginning. He told me that he had met an acquaintance in Shanghai who told him that the G[rand] D[uke] lived in Shanghai, and named the hotel and even the room number […]" *(11).*

[Freyberg:] "[…] The actual state councilor [Rudolf Evaldovich] von Witte [1861 - ?], who was formerly (before the revolution) Yakutsk governor, and under Kolchak[67] was Simbirsk vice-governor, also told me about Grand Duke's stay in Shanghai and about his disappearance from there. Now he is in Riga" *(11 ob.)*

Counterintelligence officer Captain Richard Karlovich Kuntz, a Russian who, according to Freyberg, "constantly traveled with the ataman" and in 1921 lived in Yuryev (Estonia), "also said that the G[rand] D[uke] was in Shanghai […]" *(13 ob.)*

In Semenov's newspaper *Russkij Vostok* on January 5, 1919 Captain Kyuns (this is the same Kyunz) is mentioned as an assistant to Colonel Malts for military control in Ataman Semenov's Special Manchurian Detachment.[68]

The Volkov Database 2016 (letter M) lists "Malts - captain. In the White troops of the Eastern Front. [In] 1918 - in the Special Manchurian Detachment, head of counterintelligence section of the legal department."

[Freyberg:] "[…] Captain Sotnikov (who in Chita was Colonel Mungalov's adjutant, quartermaster of the army headquarters)[69] also spoke about this [the Grand Duke's stay in Shanghai]. Sotnikov now lives in Germany ("Deutchland Wahmbeck")" *(13 ob. – 14)*.

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[64] Meyer, Lieutenant Colonel in the White forces of the Eastern Front. In exile in China he served as a senior officer in Zhang Zuolin's troops in an armored train detachment. Killed in 1925 near Xuzhu (near Kuchen Station). – *Volkov Database 2016. Letter M.*

[65] Lesnikov, troop foreman. Possibly: Veniamin Lesnikov, b. 1883. Ensign in the White troops of the Eastern Front until Primorye evacuation as part of the 1st Transbaikal Cossack Squad. In late 1922 – spring 1923 with the command group in Genzan (Korea). – *Volkov Database 2016. Letter L*.

[66] Pogadayev, yesaul. – correct: Konstantin Pogadeyev. In the White troops of the Eastern Front until Primorye evacuation. From November 1922 in Genzan (Korea), on February 26, 1923 he left for China. – *Volkov Database 2016. Letter P.*

[67] See data confirmation: *Address Calendar', 1916*.

[68] *Russkij Vostok,* 1919, No. 4, January 5, 4.

[69] Silvestr Aleksandrovich Mungalov (1864-1926). In the White troops of the Eastern Front; in 1918, chairman of the military field court in Blagoveshchensk, on September 3, 1918, assistant to the chief quartermaster of Ataman Semenov's Special Manchurian Detachment. On May 1919 he was a general for assignments to the commander of the Native Cavalry Corps, then commander of the Buryat Cavalry Brigade. From June 17, 1921, at the disposal of the chief of logistics of the Grodekovo group of troops (Ataman Semenov) of the Far Eastern Army. In exile in China. He died in Harbin. - *Volkov Database 2016. Letter M.*

Freyberg as a Personal Reliable Witness

Freyberg's entire biography[70] and testimony[71] demonstrate that he was a straightforward, sincere man, precise in his definitions, and never asserting anything he doubted. Freyberg could not have had any personal or political gain in mind[72] in promoting the version of Michael Aleksandrovich's rescue, and he could not, from the standpoint of noble man's and officer's honor, allow himself to bear any dishonest testimony. At the time of his testimony during the interview, Freyberg was not certain that he had personally seen Michael Aleksandrovich before, prior to the train's departure from Chita: he was far away, it was getting dark, and he had never met the Grand Duke in person before *(7)*.

Freyberg, judging by some phrases from his interview *(11 rev. – 13 ob.)*, obviously experienced pressure from Bulygin, who, following Sokolov, actively defended the version of Michael Aleksandrovich's death in 1921.

[Bulygin (circa 1921)]: "I am […] absolutely certain that […] Sokolov's investigation has established with absolute certainty that Grand Duke Michael died a martyr's death in Perm."[73]

[Freyberg:] "I want to emphasize that I previously accepted all of this [testimonies about the Grand Duke's rescue] at face value; if I had doubted it, I would have taken measures to clarify all of this on the spot [during my stay in Siberia and Transbaikalia]. And only here in Europe have I heard a multitude of versions, I do not know where the truth lies, and I am giving this testimony, wishing to help the investigation find out the truth" *(11 ob.).*

Freyberg and Bulygin were on friendly terms during this period, and the lonely captain even lived in the Freyberg family's apartment in Berlin.[74]

Thus, the special opinion, which is read in Freyberg's detailed listing of personal testimonies about the Grand Duke's rescue during his testimony, appears to be entirely conscientious, independent, self-sufficient, and softened in terms of peremptory nature of the statements about the Grand Duke's rescue.

Captain Sotnikov as an Informant, but not a Witness

Twelve days later, at Captain Bulygin's request Sotnikov wrote about the Grand Duke's fate specifically to Freyberg, the man he knew well from his time of serving Ataman Semyonov. This letter, dated by its author "Wahmbeck 19 19/IV 21y.," i.e., April 19, 1921, was appended by P.P. Bulygin to Freyberg's report, who had interviewed Freyberg about the versions of Michael Aleksandrovich's rescue, and the originals of the two documents exist in the archival volume of Sokolov's investigation as a single document.[75]

I have found documentary evidence in the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF) that Sotnikov was indeed, during that period, among Russian emigrants and refugees after the Civil War (including White Army officers and their families), in the Wahmbeck village camp on the Weser River (Lower Saxony/North Rhine-Westphalia).

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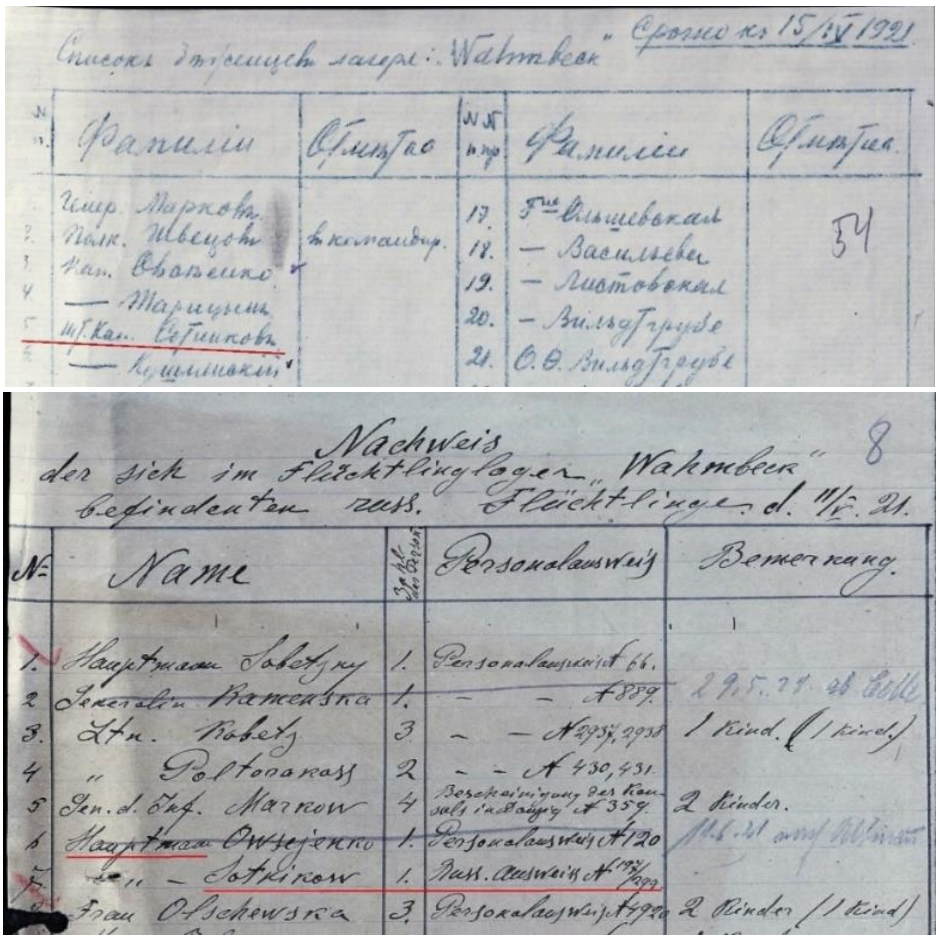
[70] See the subsection "Colonel Freyberg, Biography Milestones".
[71] *Appendix 2*.
[72] His superior, Ataman Semenov, now looked to Grand Dukes Nikolai Nikolaevich and Dmitri Pavlovich. – See also subsection "On the Question of Ataman Semenov's Monarchist Plans."
[73] *Bulygin 2000*, 123.
[74] Attack on the apartment of Ataman Semyonov's representative in Germany, Colonel Freyberg. -*Dvuglavyj Orel,* August 15 (28), 1921, Issue XIV.
[75] *GARF,* f. 601, op. 2, d. 53, l. 1 – 14.Publ.: *Permskaya Golgofa Mihaila II 2018-2,* 149 – 156.



DOCUMENT No. 4. *GARF,* f. R-6004 (Russian refugee camp. Wahmbeck), op. 1. d. 12: Information and Lists of White Emigrés at the Wahmbeck Camp. 1921, p. 54, 8 (cuttings).

On April 15, in the Russian-language list, he is listed under No.5 as “St. Capt. Sotnikov”,[76] on May 11, in the German-language list, under No.7 - as “Hauptman Sotnikow, Russ. Ausweis N 197/299” (Captain Sotnikov, Russian identity card No. 197/299),[77] without family members.

In *The Volkov Database 2016 (Letter C)* it is also noted that in 1923 Alexander Evgenievich Sotnikov, born in 1893, lived in the Stanitsa hostel in Berlin.

It should be noted that Sotnikov consistently maintained that both Emperor Nicholas Aleksandrovich's family and Michael Aleksandrovich were saved from destruction in the Urals. Moreover, as an active supporter of the restoration of the dynasty, he was primarily interested in Nicholas II's fate, leaving Michael's survival version, which he, however, did not doubt, in the background:

[Sotnikov:] “Knowing for certain about the Sovereign Emperor's fate, I, being also firmly convinced that Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich was alive, could not attach any particular importance to his temporary residence, and was entirely preoccupied with the question of the Sovereign Emperor's whereabouts.”[78]

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[76] White officers in exile could (and often did) list only their pre-revolutionary ranks in various forms, completely ignoring ranks obtained during the Civil War. When applying for civil documents, residence permits, or "Nansen passports" in European countries, officers often listed their last rank from the Russian Empire (for example, "Staff Captain of the Imperial Army"). Foreign officials recognized only the legitimacy of the fallen Russian Empire, whose allies they had been in World War I. The self-proclaimed ranks of the Civil War "local" governments (the Armed Forces of South Russia, the Kolchak government) had no legal force for European ministries. - *Osborn 2026*.

[77] From here on the translation from German and French is mine.

[78] *Sotnikov 1921*, 2 ob. (*Appendix 3*).

P.P. Bulygin was confident in Sokolov's investigation results, i.e. in the August brothers Nicholas and Michael's death in the Urals in 1918, but in the person of Sotnikov he met his conviction's opponent.

[Bulygin:] "A number of Sokolov's sworn enemies appeared in Chita soon after our arrival […]. The story that Sokolov was a former revolutionary and was deliberately concealing the fact that the Tsar was still alive became widespread. The investigator's persecution began (…) one day [December 1919] Sokolov, who was staying at the Dauria Hotel [in Chita], overheard Captain Sotnikov and his colleagues in the intelligence service talking too loudly about himself, and was forced to knock on the door and warn: 'Gentlemen, please, don't be so loud. You know, my door just happens to be nearby.'"[79]

Sotnikov, from Malts's words, whom he calls in his letter "chief of counterintelligence Lieutenant Colonel Malts," says that Michael Aleksandrovich's journey from Chita to Harbin took place in the beginning of January 1919.[80] Malts was named a lieutenant colonel,[81] but on January 5, 1919, in Ataman Semenov's official organ, the *Russkij Vostok* newspaper *(No. 4, January 5, 4)* Malts is mentioned in the position of Head of Military Control Department and is referred to as a colonel. In the *Volkov Database 2016 (Letter M)* in 1918 Malts is listed as head of the counterintelligence section of the legal department.

The Legal Department in Semyonov's forces was a military judicial body. Its task was to conduct official investigations, prepare the ataman's legal acts and orders, and formalize court verdicts. The Military Control Department was the agency for military counterintelligence, secret political investigation, and punitive expeditions.

No information has been found about Sotnikov's contacts with Malts in Berlin in 1921. And in this case, of course, the captain would not have referred to Malts as "lieutenant colonel" in his letter.

Therefore, Sotnikov is obviously recalling his conversations with Malts from the period when Malts held the rank of lieutenant colonel and was still in the legal department, although he headed its counterintelligence section. The information was obtained from Malts by Sotnikov, who was then in Chita, apparently while the trail was still fresh: no later than December 1918.

However, according to information from *Russkij Vostok* official article *(No. 4, January 5, 1919)*, according to the content of the refuting press in relation to Kolchak, Colonel Malts already occupied the position of the head of military control at the time when the "guests from Omsk", otherwise "Omsk sentries" arrived in Chita: this was a special commission from Supreme Ruler Kolchak, headed by Cossack Colonel A.V. Katanaev (1890-1930), which was with the ataman from December 11 to 13, 1918. Its goal, which was not achieved, was to convince Semenov to make peace with the Kolchak government and accept command of one of the front-line corps.

Consequently, most likely, Sotnikov, in fact, spoke with Malts even earlier than mid-December 1918, when he was still in the legal department with the rank of lieutenant colonel.[82]

It should also be taken into account that if the Grand Duke had traveled in January 1919 or if there had been rumors of such a travel, then at least Freyberg would have recorded those rumors during the interview, as he did in the later period *(pp. 9 ob. - 10).*

[Freyberg:] "Around May or June 1919, when we were stationed in Adrianovka, a rumor again spread that the Grand Duke had come from Shanghai to Chita to see the Ataman […]" *(9 ob.).*

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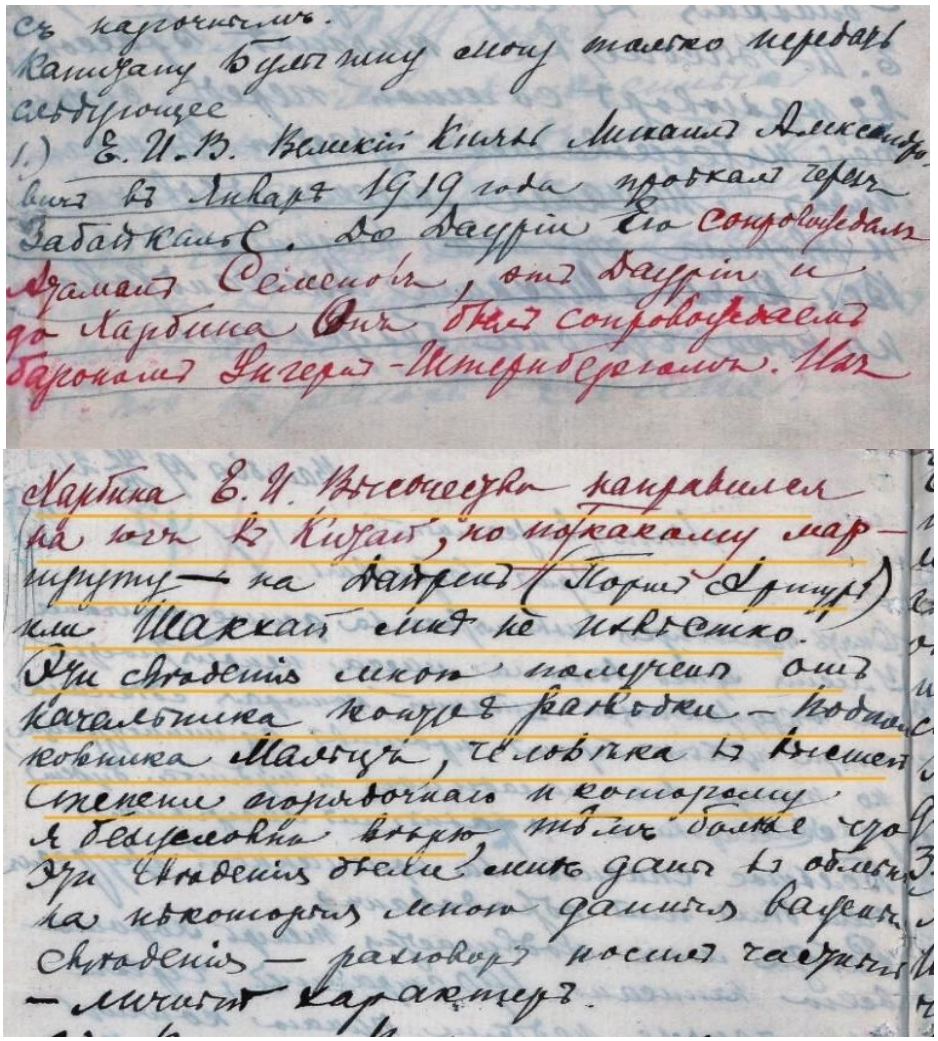
[79] *Bulygin 2000*, 109.
[80] *Sotnikov 1921*, 1, 2.
[81] *Sotnikov 1921*, 1 ob.
[82] Semenov began making numerous appointments to positions and promotions to military ranks immediately after Admiral A.V. Kolchak's decision to remove him from the post of corps commander (December 1, 1918), which Semenov did not recognize and independently began to form the Separate East Siberian Army.

Thus , Sotnikov's testimony as an officer who was only transmitting information that the head of the intelligence department had, and who was not an eyewitness to the event itself, should be classified as not entirely accurate, and an error in memory should be noted here regarding the time of the Grand Duke's passage, especially since Sotnikov himself did not attach any particular importance to his whereabouts, being entirely occupied with the search for the abdicated Emperor Nicholas Aleksandrovich.

Sotnikov-Malts's Testimony

Testimony in an official letter from Captain A.E. Sotnikov to Colonel E.G. Freyberg dated April 19, 1921 with information for Captain Bulygin as assistant to investigator Sokolov.



DOCUMENT No. 5. Letter from Captain A.E. Sotnikov to E.G. Freyberg,
April 19, 1921 – *Sotnikov, 1921,* 1 – 1 rev. (cuttings).

"[…] His Imperial Highness Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich passed through Transbaikalia in January 1919. He was accompanied to Dauria by Ataman Semenov, and from Dauria[83] to Harbin by Baron Ungern-Sternberg. From Harbin, His Imperial Highness headed south to China, but by what route – to Dairen (Port Arthur) or Shanghai – I do not know. I received this information from the head of counterintelligence, Lieutenant Colonel Maltz , a highly respectable man whom I trust implicitly […]."[84]

[83] A junction station on the CER, located in the village near Dauria station, 438 km from the city of Chita.
[84] *Sotnikov, 1921*, 1–1 ob. Regarding Malts, see subsection "Officers' Testimonies about Michael Aleksandrovich's Stay in Shanghai."

Thus, Maltz, according to Sotnikov, reports on Ataman Semenov's and Baron Ungern-Sternberg's participation in Michael Aleksandrovich's passage through Transbaikalia by rail through Dauria station to the city of Harbin.

Baron R.F. Ungern-Sternberg as a Probable Witness

In the absence of direct data confirming Malts's report that Lieutenant General Baron Roman Fedorovich Ungern-Sternberg (1886–1921)[85] would have accompanied Michael Aleksandrovich on such a trip, the information is examined here analytically in order to determine the degree of hypothetical reliability.

It is this famous Semenov's military comrade that the following several factors point to in Malts's report:

1. Geography of events: at the end of 1918, Dauria station was Ungern's stronghold and, in fact, his headquarters;
2. The absence of military rank indication, which is only possible in relation to a fairly well-known commander, which Ungern undoubtedly was by the spring of 1921, when Sotnikov wrote his testimony;
3. The baron was an apologist of Emperor Michael Aleksandrovich, who, according to Ungern, was alive in 1921 - this research statement is sufficiently determined by published sources analysis.[86]

In October 1918, Baron R.F. Ungern-Sternberg, holding the Cossack rank of Yesaul (equivalent to captain in the Imperial Army), was engaged in the formation and command of the Foreign Cavalry Division (formed in September in Dauria), as well as separate national formations , which were subsequently expanded into the famous Native (later Asiatic) Cavalry Corps. Ungern was promoted to the rank of Yesaul on September 4, 1916. In October 1918, Ataman Grigory Semyonov also officially retained the rank of Yesaul, which he had held since the beginning of 1917. In fact, at that time (since September 1918) he commanded the 5th Primorsky Army Corps. At the end of October 1918, at a meeting of Cossack military circles, Semyonov was elected military ataman of Transbaikal, Amur, and Ussuri Cossacks. Later, on November 28, 1918 Semyonov issued an order declaring that, due to the current political situation, he was assuming full authority, both military and civil, in the Transbaikal Region. A little earlier (October 23/November 5), the ataman, as self-proclaimed supreme commander of the troops, promoted Ungern to major general, although he himself did not hold that rank yet. This act—promoting him directly from

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[85] The book (2023) doesn't focus on "Baron Ungern-Sternberg's" identity in this official statement. Now, however, I consider it important. A special documentary investigation dedicated to Ataman Semenov's activities was conducted using *GARF* and *Columbia University* archival materials, to determine if there could be another military man - member of the extensive Baltic noble family of Ungern-Sternberg - in Transbaikalia at that time. The conclusion was negative: *no, there could not*.
Acc. to *Volkov Database 2016 (Letter U)*, none of the barons Ungern-Sternberg, except for the famous baron Lieutenant General Roman Fedorovich served in Transbaikalia during the Civil War.
The following additional information was revealed about two individuals:
~ Baron E.R. Ungern-Sternberg, captain of the Semenovsky Regiment, personal adjutant of Grand Duke Boris Vladimirovich, served in the White units of the Armed Forces of the South of Russia: chief of executive office of the Department of Relations with Allied Armies. - *GARF,* f. R-5942 (Department of the delegation in charge of the interests of the Russian emigration in Yugoslavia. Belgrade), op. 3, d. 2004 (Eduard Rudolfovich Ungern-Sternberg), p. 1. Manuscript (carbon copy), certified original. In Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich's diary under March 5, 1921, a meeting with him in Berlin is mentioned. - *Diaries and Personal Notes of Dmitry Pavlovich, 1921,* 43.
~ Staff Captain Baron Ungern-Sternberg served under General Yudenich in the Northwestern Army. – *Rutych 2002,* 377.
[86] See *Appendix 1*.

esaul to major general (skipping two ranks: lieutenant colonel and colonel)—may testify to Semyonov's high regard for Ungern.

Dauria, although subordinate to Chita, and although Ungern formed foreign units there on Semenov's orders, one can speak of a mutual relationship between Semenov and Ungern as comrades-in-arms. Ungern was Semenov's senior in military rank, meaning he enjoyed a certain primacy of honor over the ataman. Furthermore, Ungern, having spent his entire life in the Russian imperial military service, was also a representative of an ancient Baltic knightly and noble family. Therefore, it is entirely possible that Semenov, himself of humble origin, officially appointed the baron, as a natural aristocrat, to accompany His Imperial Highness. This could have been due both to Ungern's deliberate request and to Semenov's political calculations, who likely hoped at this point to win the Grand Duke's favor. Considering Ungern's seniority in promotion, with equal military rank, Semenov should not have seen such an appointment as humiliation for himself.

Thus, having officially handed over the Grand Duke to Ungern's supreme escort, Semyonov himself could continue on the same train from Dauria to Harbin and on to Vladivostok.[87] Ungern, meanwhile, would have had the opportunity to freely converse with his august passenger along the way, and then accompany him for some time, according to Malts, "south, to China."

ATAMAN G. M. SEMENOV AND MICHAEL ALEKSANDROVICH: ON SIBERIAN MEETING VERSION[88] (Autumn 1918)

The only evidence discovered to date from Semenov himself, and it is indirect and not entirely obvious, that he met with Michael Aleksandrovich, also belongs to Freyberg, who, being the ataman's official representative in Germany, maintained respect and trust for his superior in the spring of 1921.

[Freyberg:] "When the ataman blessed me for my journey here [to Berlin, no later than March 1920], he said, among other things: 'Beware of the French, and especially the English. These dear "allies" are our enemies in every respect, and have now gone so far as to speculate on individual members of our Imperial Family. *I cannot get in touch with Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich* . - There are rumors that the English took him out of Shanghai on a cruiser'" *(10 rev. - 11).*[89]

The term "get in touch" definitely indicates Semenov's confidence that such a contact was possible, i.e. he really did consider Michael Aleksandrovich to be alive in 1920.

Perhaps, according to the context, Semenov did have a similar contact with Michael Aleksandrovich earlier.

If Semenov did have such a contact, then when exactly did it occur? There is evidence that, most likely, no such face-to-face contact existed between Semenov and Michael Aleksandrovich in the spring of 1919. This is the transcript of M.G. Solovyeva's (née Rasputina, 1898-1977) interview by investigator N.A. Sokolov in Chita, late December 1919.

[Solovyeva:] "In April [1919] we […] went to Vladivostok. Soon after my arrival in Vladivostok, Ataman Semenov arrived there. He invited my husband [B.N. Solovyov] and me to dine with him […] The

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[87] See subsection "Comparison of three Versions: Freyberg's, 'Colonel's' and Malts's".
[88] This section is a continuation of the study: "Vostochno-Sibirskij i Dal'nevostochnyj Sled, Svyaz' s Atamanom Semenovym [?]" - *Serafimov 2023*, 327 - 342 (Chapter 3, Section 11).
[89] Italics mine.

Ataman was interested in the fate of Michael Aleksandrovich and invited Borya to find out something about it from him, but Borya knows nothing about Michael Aleksandrovich's fate."[90]

"Being interested in the fate" of a person you barely know, who is in an unknown location and with whom contact has been lost, is more natural some time after receiving the last reliable information about them or after the last meeting. In late 1918 and early 1919, B.N. Solovyov (1893-1926) lived secretly in Tyumen, using forged documents, and led the monarchist "Brotherhood of St. John of Tobolsk," founded by Empress Alexandra Feodorovna during her exile in Tobolsk. Semenov likely wanted to verify through Solovyov, as a monarchist close to the Imperial Family, the numerous rumors about Michael Aleksandrovich's stay in Western Siberia at that time.[91]

Consequently, Malts's evidence (through Sotnikov) and Freyberg about a personal contact between Semenov and the Grand Duke, which, in the context of the analysis carried out above, could have taken place in October 1918, is consistent with Solovieva's testimony: by April 1919 Semenov could have had no satisfactory information about Michael Aleksandrovich for six months, which is a sufficient period to intensify search for further information about him.[92]

It should be noted that Freyberg mentions Ataman Semenov more than once in his testimony, and mentions him as a passenger on the same special train in which Michael Aleksandrovich supposedly traveled in October 1918. An attempt was made on the special train en route near the Manchuria station, as a result of which the armored train that was travelling in front of the convoy had to be replaced by another one *(12 rev.).* Freyberg also notes the extraordinary measures used to protect the special train in October 1918, which were not used when Ataman Semenov was traveling alone *(13).*

[Freyberg:] "I'll correct myself that I don't remember whether the ataman from Chita was traveling with us" *(13 – 13 rev.)*.

By that time, several assassination attempts had already been made on Semenov, and he had reasons to travel on trains quite covertly. Freyberg subsequently "often accompanied the ataman, and he always traveled with two armored trains [of the convoy]." According to Malts, Semenov accompanied the Grand Duke from somewhere "in Transbaikalia" (not necessarily from Chita—the ataman could have boarded the train later) to Dauria station. Freyberg, however, specifically claims that Semenov traveled on the same train, with the ataman's final destination being Vladivostok, where he "arrived on October 27, 1918" *(12 rev.).*

Newspaper Editorials by Editor Kozheurov

The conclusion about probable personal contacts between Semenov and Michael Aleksandrovich in the autumn of 1918 is consistent with the journalistic evidence by Luka Pavlovich Kozheurov (1865–?), editor-in-chief of Ataman Semenov's official organ, newspaper *Russkij Vostok* (Chita), a consistent monarchist. The evidence was discovered in 2022.

On November 14/27, 1918, i.e., approximately 40 days after the Grand Duke's supposed passage by rail, the editor in his editorial calls for establishment of a dictatorship in the White Siberia – with abolition of the established Admiral Kolchak's dictatorship – namely, transfer of temporary supreme power to Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich.

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[90] Publ.: *Skorbnyj Put' Mihaila Romanova 1996*, 179 - 187.
[91] See: *Serafimov 2023*, 315 - 320.
[92] Over the next period of approximately one year, Semenov still received no reliable information about the Grand Duke's stay. – *Freyberg 1921,* 11.

РУССКІЙ ВОСТОКЪ

№ 49. ЧИТА, СРЕДА, 27 (14) НОЯБРЯ 1918 г. № 49.

Чита, 27 ноября.

Гордіевъ узелъ. Въ предыдущихъ нашихъ статьяхъ мы привѣтствовали осуществленіе идеи единой государственной власти, выразившееся въ назначеніи адмирала Колчака Верховнымъ Правителемъ

[…]

Такимъ образомъ, вопросъ о диктатурѣ лишь осложняется при наличной его постановкѣ и уподобляется гордіеву узлу, разрубить который надо именемъ, обладающимъ наибольшею, сравнительно, полнотою данныхъ, обезпечивающихъ ему широкую авторитетность.

Такое имя есть.

Имя это—имя Великаго Князя Михаила Александровича.

Полтора года тому назадъ, В ликій Князь отказался принять г сударственную власть безъ санкц Учредительнаго Собранія, не взира на широкую популярность своеі имени въ народныхъ массахъ. Е популярность зиждилась, главным образомъ, на такихъ чертахъ е характера, которыя являются драг цѣнными для лица, облекаемаго все полнотою верховной власти,— энергіи, рѣшительности, на сильно уравновѣшенной волѣ. Война да ему возможность обнаружить и др

гія особенности его натуры: личное мужество, самообладаніе и находчивость, то есть, способность повелѣвать обстановкой, примѣняясь къ ней. Всѣ эти высокія достоинства вождя пріобрѣтаютъ особое значеніе въ ореолѣ трехсотлѣтней династіи Романовыхъ, выведшей Русь изъ хаоса смуты и выковавшей изъ русской земли могущественное европейское государство. Въ русскомъ народѣ не угасла еще идея царской власти, она лишь омрачена событіями послѣдняго времени, и своевременное сочетаніе этой власти съ нормальными основами народоправства, быть можетъ, спасло бы страну отъ ужасовъ пережитаго и переживаемаго. Передача временной верховной власти Великому Князю объединила бы всѣ умѣренные элементы русскаго общества въ сильную армію возрожденія русской государственности и помогла бы довести страну въ кратчайшій срокъ до Учредительнаго Собранія.

Повторяемъ: именемъ Великаго Князя Михаила Александровича разрубается гордіевъ узелъ нашей тяжелой дѣйствительности.

Л. Кожеуровъ.

DOCUMENT No.6. L. Kozheurov . The Gordian Knot. – *Russkij Vostok,* 1918, No. 49, November 14/27, 1-2 (cuttings)**.**

"[…] Thus, the question of dictatorship […] becomes complicated and resembles a Gordian knot, since it must be cut in the name of […] this name is Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich […] His popularity was based mainly on those traits of his character that are precious for a person vested with the fullness of supreme power - on energy, determination, on a strong, balanced will. […] The transfer of temporary supreme power to the Grand Duke would unite all moderate elements of the Russian society into a strong army for a revival of Russian statehood and would help bring the country to the Constituent Assembly in the shortest possible time […]".

On January 4, 1919, in the *Russkij Vostok*, Kozheurov's second call for establishment of the sole power of a "true dictator" in the person of Michael Aleksandrovich was heard, but in a more subdued tone (according to calculations, at this point about two and a half months had passed since the Grand

Duke's visit to Chita), and now only in Transbaikalia, since in Western Siberia the dictatorship of Kolchak, to whom Semenov categorically did not submit, had already been established.[93]

Thus, it is suggested to note the temporal correspondence between the appearance of Semenov's editor Kozheurov's calls to place the Grand Duke in power and the evidence of Michael Aleksandrovich's recent passage through Chita and his meetings with Semenov. It was also important to point out two fairly reliable testimonies that later than the autumn of 1918 (namely, in April 1919 and spring 1920), the ataman made serious inquiries about him and then complained about lack of communication. Such evidence rebuts the theoretical assumption that in the autumn of 1918, the articles by editor Kozheurov, apologetic in relation to Michael Aleksandrovich as a living member of the Dynasty, and, at the same time, the confidence that existed in Semenov's troops in his escape could have been the fruit of some kind of false propaganda on Semenov's part, and instead of the Grand Duke there could have been some kind of double of him, who was passed off by the ataman to his entourage as the real one - in order to acquire political weight for the ataman himself (until the moment of inevitable exposure!). Moreover, in terms of establishing identities, 1918 was very different from the era of impostors of the Time of Troubles: it was precisely in the officer circles that the Great War hero, Lieutenant General, Adjutant General and Inspector General of Cavalry, the Tsar's brother, Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich, was known well enough, at least from his circulated portraits, to allow such a collective delusion in the ataman's troops. In particular, we cannot allow such blindness in the episode with Lieutenant Colonel Popov, who had a long conversation with the Highest passenger face to face in the train compartment.

On the Question of Ataman Semenov's Monarchical Plans

As for Ataman Semenov's monarchical plans, the "Brief Political Review of the Mood in Transbaikalia under Ataman Semenov," compiled on May 12, 1919 in the Special Department of State Security (Militia Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs) of the Omsk Provisional Siberian Government by the head of Irkutsk Directorate of State Security (classified as "top secret"), states the following:

"In political terms, the mood [sic!] of the higher and lower ranks of Semenov's organization is clearly monarchical, and they are all confident in the imminent restoration of the House of Romanov."[94]

During that period, the ataman had rather broad plans for restoration of monarchies in the Far East. Thus, in 1919 Semenov visited Marshal Zhang Zuolin (1875-1928) in Mukden. In early March 1919, Omsk government extraordinary investigative commission chaired by G.E. Katanaev (1848-1921) began an investigation. The commission soon discovered that Semenov had participated in plans to create an independent Mongolian state .[95] According to "Intelligence Report No. 3" (September 1919), quoted in the "Historical Essay on Ataman Semenov's Activities in Connection with Japan's Aggressive Policy in the Russian Far East"[96] which I discovered in the State Archive of the Russian Federation , "Semenov will defend plans […] to declare Outer Mongolia an independent monarchy, with granting of a crown to General Zhang Zuolin [sic!].[97]

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[93] Of course, opposing researchers have the right to argue that editor Kozheurov's appeals could only have been a propaganda ploy to undermine Admiral Kolchak's authority, who was elected to the post of Supreme Ruler in November 1918.
[94] *GARF*, f. R-147, op. 8, no. 17, l. 70.
[95] *Savchenko 2011*.
[96] This is the archive collection location mark of a series of intelligence reports from 1919, the author is unknown. *GARF*, f. R-5881 (Collection of Emigrants' Individual Documents and Memoirs), op. 1, d. 596. Typescript (23 sheets with reversos).
[97] *GARF*, f. R-5881, op. 1, d. 596, l. 11.

I will cite a document found in Columbia University archives, undoubtedly drawn up with the knowledge of the ataman.

КОПІЯ.

ПРОТОКОЛЪ СОБРАНІЯ ОБЩЕСТВЕННО-ПОЛИТИЧЕСКИХЪ ДѢЯТЕЛЕЙ, ВЪ ЧИСЛѢ 218 ЧЕЛОВѢКЪ, ЖИВУЩИХЪ ВЪ ГОРОДѢ ХАРБИНѢ-центрѣ единственно уцѣлѣвшаго отъ большевитской власти уголка Россіи, и входящихъ, въ качествѣ дѣятельныхъ работниковъ, въ слѣдующія несоціалистическія организаціи: Дальневосточный Комитетъ Защиты Родины, Общество Возсозданія Россіи, Русское Обновленное Общество, Партія Конституціоналитсовъ-Монархистовъ, Русское Патріотическое Общество, Славянское Братство, Союзъ домо и землевладѣльцевъ г. Харбина, Биржевый Комитетъ, Всероссійскій крестьянскій Союзъ, Союзъ Православныхъ христіанъ, Союзъ Инженеровъ, Мусульманскій Кружекъ, Кружокъ Литераторовъ, Общество помощи бѣженцамъ, Учительскій Союзъ и др.,

Собраніе состоялось 16 Января 1921 года въ городѣ Харбинѣ, Чаянъ-хэ д. № 145, подъ Предсѣдательствомъ Ильи Яковлевича ВЕДЕРНИКОВА.

Г. Предсѣдатель предложилъ на обсужденіе вопросъ о современномъ политическомъ положеніи. По всестороннемъ обсужденіи, единогласно постановлено:

1/Большевизмъ является величайшимъ зломъ общечеловѣческой культуры и благосостоянія Русскаго народа. Онъ нетѣрпимъ и долженъ быть уничтоженъ

2/Принимая во вниманіе минувшій опытъ борьбы съ большевизмомъ, необходимо признать, что вог главѣ возстанія противъ большевиковъ должно встать высокоавторитетное лицо, призывы котораго были бы святы и непрерѣкаемы для всей Россіи. Такимъ лицомъ настоящее собраніе признаетъ исключительно ЕГО ИМПЕРАТОРСКОЕ ВЫСОЧЕСТВО ВЕЛИКАГО КНЯЗЯ НИКОЛАЯ НИКОЛАЕВИЧА, съ присвоеннымъ ЕМУ абсолютныхъ диктаторскихъ правъ.

3/Въ моментъ диктатуры, во имя общаго великаго дѣла, необходимо признать, что для всей нераздѣльной Сибири должна быть своя диктаторская власть, съ подчиненіемъ Всероссійской.

Такимъ Сибирскимъ диктаторомъ, съ наименованіемъ НАМѢСТНИКА СИБИРИ, по условіямъ Сибирской политической обстановки, етсественно является Атаманъ Семеновъ, въ силу его историческихъ заслугъ по борьбѣ съ большевизмомъ, въ силу симпатій къ нему могущественной Японіи и крестьянскаго, казачьяго и инородческаго населенія Сибири, на что имѣются соотвѣтствующія документы

4/По сверженіи большевитской власти, по повѣленію Диктатора, въ согласіи съ народной волей, долженъ быть установленъ въ Россіи образъ правле-

нія,во главѣ съ единнымъ хозяиномъ земли Русской.

Собраніе считаетъ долгомъ совѣсти сказать,что только МОНАРХІЯ можетъ спасти несчастную Россію отъ окончательной погибели и проложить путь къ возсозданію славы и величію ея.

5/Собраніе признаетъ необходимымъ нынѣ-же делегировать къ ЕГО ИМПЕРАТОРСКОМУ ВЫСОЧЕСТВУ ВЕЛИКОМУ КНЯЗЮ НИКОЛАЮ НИКОЛАЕВИЧУ дѣйствительнаго Статскаго Совѣтника Александра Ивановича ЛИНЬКОВА,бывшаго Директора Иркутскаго Учительскаго Института и Редактора-Издателя научнаго журнала "Сибирская Лѣтопись",для представленія ЕГО ИМПЕРАТОРСКОМУ ВЫСОЧЕСТВУ настоящаго протокола и для информаціи о современномъ политическомъ положеніи въ Сибири.

Подписали:По уполномочію Собранія,

Предсѣдатель И.ВЕДЕРНИКОВЪ.

Секретарь Собранія

А.ЛИНЬКОВЪ.

Съ подлиннымъ вѣрно:

Личный Адъютантъ

Хорунжій

DOCUMENT No. 7. Minutes of the Meeting of Public and Political Figures on January 16, 1921 in the City of Harbin. - *Columbia,* Aleksandr Pavlovich KUTEPOV Papers, Ms.Coll/Kutepov, box 3. Copy.

"MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF PUBLIC AND POLITICAL FIGURES, INCLUDING 218 PEOPLE, LIVING IN THE CITY OF HARBIN – center of the only corner of Russia that survived the Bolshevik regime and who are members, as active workers, of the following non-socialist organizations […].

The meeting took place on January 16, 1921 in the city of Harbin, Chayan-he, house No. 145, under the chairmanship of Ilya Yakovlevich Vedernikov.[98]

Mr. Chairman proposed for discussion the question of the current political situation. After a thorough discussion, it was unanimously decided: […].

A highly authoritative figure must lead an uprising against the Bolsheviks. […] This assembly recognizes His Imperial Highness Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich as such a figure, granting him absolute dictatorial powers. […] All of undivided Siberia must have its own dictatorial authority, subordinate to the All-Russian one.

Such a Siberian dictator with the title of Viceroy of Siberia […] is naturally Ataman Semenov […].

[98] The surname "Vedernikov" appears in the list of those buried in the cemetery in Harbin. *Okorokov, 2023,* 415.

The Assembly considers it necessary to immediately delegate to His Imperial Highness Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich the actual state councilor Alexander Ivanovich Linkov[99][…] to present these minutes to His Imperial Highness […].

Chairman I. VEDERNIKOV. Secretary of the meeting A. LINKOV."

Consequently, by the spring of 1921, when his officers' testimonies regarding the Grand Duke's survival were recorded, Ataman Semenov himself, in any case, no longer viewed Michael Aleksandrovich as a possible absolute dictator of all Russia. Semenov now saw Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich as such.

Three days after the reception with Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich,[100] on February 20 / March 6, Colonel Freyberg delivered a speech at the Russian Public Assembly's premises in Berlin as Lieutenant General Ataman Semenov's representative addressing the August guest visiting the Assembly.

[Freyberg:] "[…] I have the honor to report to Your Highness that Ataman Semenov and his army have fought, are fighting, and will fight for the restoration of a great Russia under the scepter of the legitimate Emperor and Autocrat. All of us, together with our Ataman […] are ready to serve the sacred cause and the beloved Royal House."[101]

Thus, Semenov's orientation towards Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich as a probable dictator at the beginning of 1921, as well as his instruction to his representative in Berlin, Freyberg, to officially greet Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich in March of the same year, recorded here, should be considered as a factor in Semenov's people's (Freyberg, Sotnikov) lack of interest, for political reasons or contrary to the existing versions of his death, in specifically promoting at that time the Michael Aleksandrovich's survival version.[102]

GRAND DUKE DMITRI PAVLOVICH'S INTERVIEW (1921) IN THE POLITICAL CONTEXT[103]

In the newspaper *Poslednie Novosti* (Paris, 1921, No. 275, March 13, p. 3), an article entitled "Conversation with Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich" was published under the signature of a liberal journalist M.P. Mironov (1890-1935). Here he reports on his trip to Berlin, which, according to his personal diary, took place from March 1 to 7, 1921.[104] During the trip, he met "a certain colonel", who was not named.

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[99] Since 1911 the historical journal *Siberian Archive* has been published in Irkutsk. The publisher and editor of this journal was A.I. Linkov (1877 - 1922). He taught biblical and church history at the Arkhangelsk Theological Seminary. From August 1916 to September 1917 he was director of Irkutsk Teachers' Institute. On September 18, 1917 by resolution of the general meeting of students of the institute, Linkov was dismissed from the institute for his monarchist views and "for the good of the free school". A.I. Linkov was Ataman Semenov's "close person". In 1921 Linkov emigrated to Harbin. - *OGKU GAIO,* f. 65, op. 5, d. 14, l. 142, 181*; F. NB ISU. Head.* No. 299, 614. – Publ.: *Obzor Lichnogo Arhivnogo Fonda Nita Stepanovicha Romanova, 2012,* 58–59.

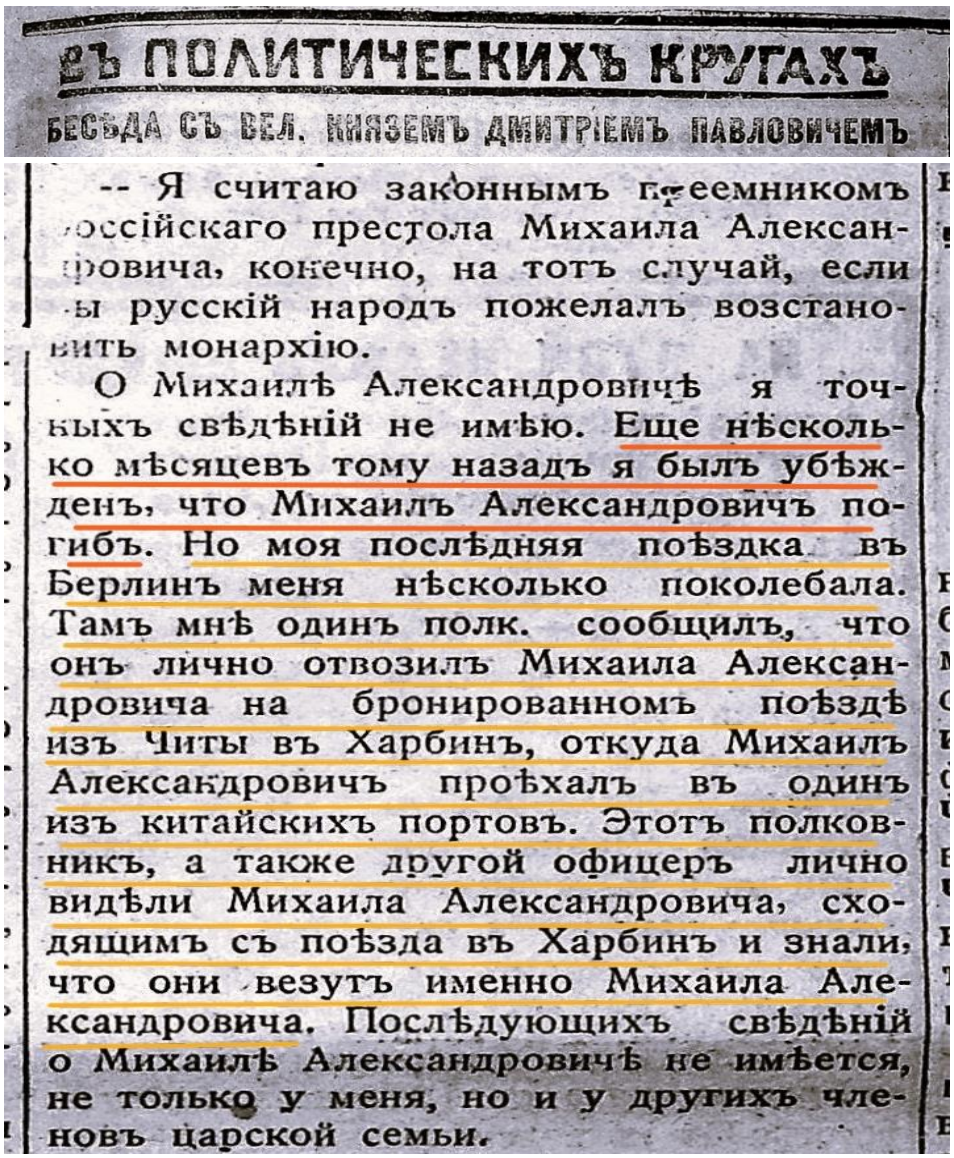
[100] See subsection "Dmitri Pavlovich's Meeting with Freyberg in Berlin".

[101] Magazine *Dvuglavyj Orel*1921, issue 4, March 15/28, p. 47.

[102] One should take into account the generally uneven nature of Semenov's activities, which frequently changed his political orientation. Thus, in 1925 he was no longer "willing to recognize" Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich as the supreme military leader of the Russian émigré community. – Newspaper editorial: *Rossiya (Shanghai)*, 1925, July 14, 1.

[103] This section is devoted to a detailed examination of the circumstances of the appearance of Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich's (1891 - 1942) newspaper interview in the Parisian liberal newspaper Poslednie Novosti, partially introduced into scientific circulation, as if in the article: *Fomin, 2021*. However, the State Archives of the Russian Federation has a copy of this interview available for mechanical search: *State Archives of the Russian Federation*, f. 10207 (Collection of Documents on the History of the Union of Young Russian, Collected by V.A. Krasinsky), op. 1, d. 46 (2 p.). Typewritten copy.

[104] *Diaries and Personal Notes of Dmitry Pavlovich*, *1921*, 46.



ВЪ ПОЛИТИЧЕСКИХЪ КРУГАХЪ

БЕСѢДА СЪ ВЕЛ. КНЯЗЕМЪ ДМИТРІЕМЪ ПАВЛОВИЧЕМЪ

-- Я считаю законнымъ преемникомъ россійскаго престола Михаила Александровича, конечно, на тотъ случай, если бы русскій народъ пожелалъ возстановить монархію.

О Михаилѣ Александровичѣ я точныхъ свѣдѣній не имѣю. Еще нѣсколько мѣсяцевъ тому назадъ я былъ убѣжденъ, что Михаилъ Александровичъ погибъ. Но моя послѣдняя поѣздка въ Берлинъ меня нѣсколько поколебала. Тамъ мнѣ одинъ полк. сообщилъ, что онъ лично отвозилъ Михаила Александровича на бронированномъ поѣздѣ изъ Читы въ Харбинъ, откуда Михаилъ Александровичъ проѣхалъ въ одинъ изъ китайскихъ портовъ. Этотъ полковникъ, а также другой офицеръ лично видѣли Михаила Александровича, сходящимъ съ поѣзда въ Харбинъ и знали, что они везутъ именно Михаила Александровича. Послѣдующихъ свѣдѣній о Михаилѣ Александровичѣ не имѣется, не только у меня, но и у другихъ членовъ царской семьи.

DOCUMENT No. 8. M. Mironov. Conversation with Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich (excerpt). *Poslednie Novosti,* 1921, No. 275, March 13, p. 3.

[Dmitri Pavlovich:] "[…] Just a few months ago, I was convinced that Michael Aleksandrovich had perished. But my last trip to Berlin somewhat shook me. There, a regiment [officer] informed me that he personally transported Michael Aleksandrovich on an armored train from Chita to Harbin, from where Michael Aleksandrovich traveled to a Chinese port. This colonel, as well as another officer, personally saw Michael Aleksandrovich disembark the train in Harbin and knew that they were transporting Michael Aleksandrovich […]"

The Houghton Library, the main repository of rare books, manuscripts, and historical archives at Harvard University (Cambridge, Massachusetts), houses Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich's extensive diaries,[105]now partially published.[106]

Unpublished diary entries for 1921 were separately examined to determine the degree of reliability of the information published by the journalist Mironov in the article "Conversation with the Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich," as well as to identify the individuals who visited Dmitri Pavlovich during his visit to Berlin and to determine the historical and political context of the moment.

[105] Diaries and Personal Notes of Dmitry Pavlovich.- *Houghton Library, Harvard University*. MS Russ 92.
[106] *Dmitri Pavlovich 2025*.

Interview in Paris

It has been established that, indeed, upon returning from Berlin, in Paris, on the eve of Mironov's article's publication, Dmitri Pavlovich received "a certain clean-shaven young man", a reporter for the newspaper *Poslednie Novosti*, which P.N. Milyukov had just recently (since March 1) headed, and "[on March 12] I had [with reporter Mironov] a long conversation […] And the next day this article appeared. […] And I said in this interview what I thought, and, of course, it turned out to be not at all 'extreme-right' […]"[107](entry from March 31/18, 1921, Thursday, Riviera Palace, no. 66, Monte - Carlo[108]).

The Grand Duke explained in detail the reasons for his appeal to this leftist newspaper.

[Dmitri Pavlovich:] "Two newspapers are published in Paris. Both are soc[ial]-rev[olutionary]. But one is *Obshchee Delo* (*The Common Cause*), edited by Burtsev, and the other is *Poslednie Novosti* (*The Latest News*) (*Poslednie Podlosti* (*The Latest Backstabbings*), as many call it), serves as the organ of former members of the R[ed] govern[ments] and is edited by [P.N.] Milyukov […] these newspapers criticized the rightists, terribly afraid that they would be able to make something out of this supposed [Russian][109] national anti-Bolshevik movement.[110] Both newspapers erupted in the most vulgar articles on this matter, ridiculing the hopes and desires of right-wing circles. This campaign, unfortunately, coincided with my trip to Berlin, and received a completely wrong colouring. The receptions I received at the Russian Society of Berlin were interpreted politically —as preparation for some kind of movement. They[111] even wrote in the French newspapers about certain honor guards meeting me at the station, saying that I was planning to leave for Russia […] I found this terribly unpleasant. This noise […] only contributed to the negative and spoiled the monarchist cause itself. They began to promote me as a candidate, and they unambiguously hinted that I was forcing this candidacy on myself and on others. Both Parisian newspapers spared neither words nor paper to portray me, as well as the monarchists, as worse and more stupid.

It all ended with me receiving a certain clean-shaven young man – a reporter […] [But even after the interview] my moral state was disgusting, because I know very well that above all else one must sit calmly and quietly, and so that the public en large[112] would talk about me as little as possible.

"But since my Berlin trip was being talked about so much, so persistently and so tendentiously, I had to, as a direct result of this noise, emerge from the shadows and give the newspaper this conversation. And indeed, at that point all this writing about me ceased […] I reached such a state of nervousness and moral exhaustion that I firmly decided to leave Paris and thereby put an end to all talk of any political plans [and left for Monte Carlo]."[113]

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[107] *Diaries and Personal Notes of Dmitry Pavlovich, 1921,* 71.

[108] Monte Carlo is the most famous and luxurious administrative district of the microstate of the Principality of Monaco, located on the Mediterranean coast.

~ Riviera Palace Monaco - elite residence.

[109] The word in the manuscript is crossed out.

[110] We are talking about the newspapers' support of the Kronstadt rebellion (February 28 – March 18, 1921), with socialist slogans and demands: "Power to the Soviets, not to the parties!" The leader of the Socialist Revolutionaries, Viktor Chernov, arrived in Reval during the rebellion and sent his representative to Kronstadt. - *Soviet Military Encyclopedia*, vol. 4, 1979, 479.

[111] Cf.: "In general, the monarchist gentlemen have become quite active […] In recent days they have been noisily holding prayer services, noisily greeting and seeing off the pretenders to the Russian throne." - Editorial "Kronstadt and the Monarchists" in the Parisian socialist newspaper *Poslednie Novosti* (1921, No. 272, March 10, p. 1).

[112] Wide – fr.

[113] *Diaries and Personal Notes of Dmitry Pavlovich, 1921*, 68 - 75.

All of Dmitri Pavlovich's emotional grumbling quoted above can be easily explained by his reluctance to come under attack from the left-wing press, despite his obvious desire, in fact, to lead the foreign monarchist movement - as he himself testifies to in his diary.[114]

And indeed, the "lightning rod" effect was achieved: the democratic press took the bait. At least, this is clear from the note in the Cadet newspaper *Rul*.

Заявленіе вел. князя Дмитрія Павловича.

(Отъ собственнаго корреспондента.)

Парижъ, 13 III.

Великій князь Дмитрій Павловичъ заявилъ сотруднику «Послѣднихъ Новостей», что онъ, лично, монархистъ по традиціи, но не позволитъ никому говорить объ его кандидатурѣ на тронъ, не только потому, что считаетъ великаго князя Михаила Александровича живымъ, но еще и по той причинѣ, что теперь не время для подобныхъ разговоровъ. Дмитрій Павловичъ думаетъ, что сначала нужно освободить Россію, а потомъ предоставить ей возможность выразить свою волю съ помощью всеобщаго голосованія. Россія выскажется не считаясь съ русской эмиграціей. Я, повторилъ Дмитрій Павловичъ, — монархистъ, но если народъ пожелаетъ ввести республику, то я подчинюсь.

STATEMENT OF GRAND DUKE DMITRI PAVLOVICH
(From our own correspondent)
PARIS, 13/ III

Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich told a reporter from *Poslednie Novosti* that he, personally, is a monarchist by tradition, but will not allow anyone to talk about his candidacy for the throne, not only because he believes Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich is still alive,[115] but also because now is not the time for such talk. Dmitri Pavlovich believes that Russia must first be liberated, and then given the opportunity to express its will through universal suffrage. Russia will speak out, regardless of the Russian emigration. "I," Dmitri Pavlovich repeated, "am a monarchist, but if the people wish to establish a republic, I will submit."

DOCUMENT No. 9. Statement of Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich. - Rul, 1921, No. 99, March 2/15, p. 3.

In fact, at that moment, 30-year-old Dmitri Pavlovich was considered by many to be a possible contender for the throne. The Supreme Monarchist Council (SMC) and the Constitutional People's - Monarchist Union hastened to invite Dmitri Pavlovich to lead the monarchist movement and become a contender for the throne. His fellow soldier from the Life Guards Cavalry Regiment, General V.V. Biskupsky, was sent to negotiate with the Grand Duke. He was then head of the military department of the SMC and simultaneously collaborated with constitutional monarchist activists Senator A.V. Belgard and A.A. Rimsky-Korsakov. [116]The Grand Duke rejected this proposal and replied that "until the fate of the senior members of the Dynasty by primogeniture is clarified, he will not declare himself head."[117]

[Dmitri Pavlovich]: “In the afternoon, Markov II, Biskupsky, [Baron] Taube, [Prince] Shirinsky-Shikhmatov, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Baranovsky came to me. They came to ask me to head the monarchist parties working in Germany. Baron Taube read an appeal written on paper to me. I, of course, accepted this role […] and in response said that I would bring these organizations to the rightful Tsar, thereby parrying unnecessary hints about personalities […] it was a viewing – Goleevsky showed me around, or rather, led me out […]”[118] (March 7 / February 22, Berlin).[119]

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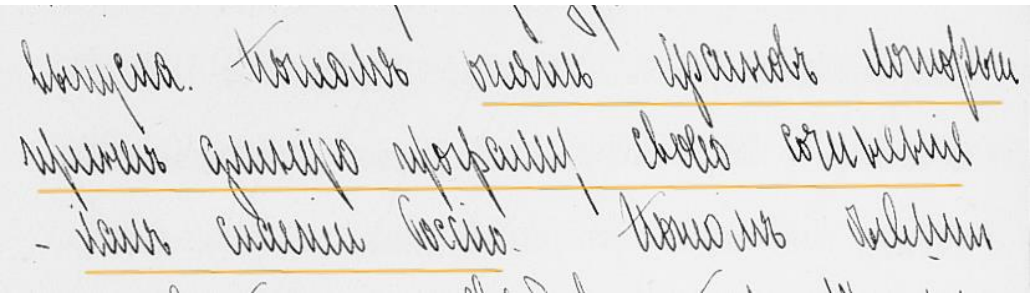
[114] *Diaries and Personal Notes of Dmitry Pavlovich, 1921*, 28.
[115] In fact, Dmitri Pavlovich points out in an interview that his conviction in Michael Aleksandrovich’s death “Has somewhat wavered.”
[116] *Graf 2004*, 49.
[117] *Mankov 2011*, 66.
[118] *Diaries and Personal Notes of Dmitry Pavlovich, 1921*, 47 – 48, 50.
[119] Nikolai Lavrentievich Goleevsky (1878-1958) was a military and public figure, a colonel in the General Staff, writer, historian, and one of the prominent figures of Russian Freemasonry in France. He was involved in preparing the meeting with Dmitri Pavlovich in Berlin and accompanied him.

In fact, in this context, the future "legitimate Tsar" could well have been understood as the candidacy of Dmitri Pavlovich himself, as a legitimate agnate[120] who did not enter into a morganatic marriage.[121]

Dmitri Pavlovich describes in his diary another visit to him by Berlin monarchists in a context that is significant for this study.



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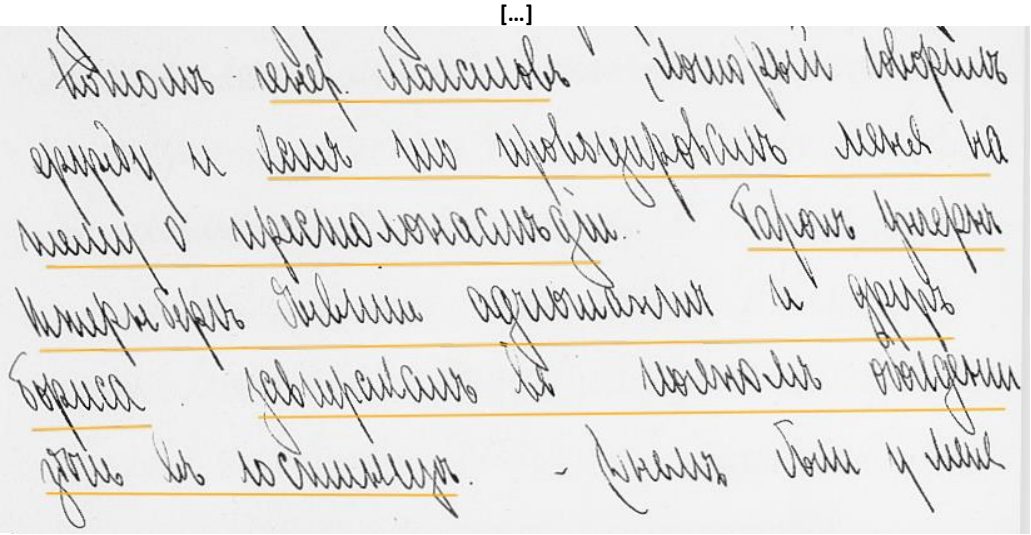


DOCUMENT No. 10. *Diaries and Personal Notes of Dmitry Pavlovich, 1921,* 43 (cutting).

[Dmitri Pavlovich]: "[March 5 / February 20, 1921, Saturday, Berlin. Hotel Excelsior. In the morning I had] […] again [Cavalry General P.N.] Krasnov, who brought a long program of his composition – how to save Russia […] Then General [A.A.] Mosolov, who talked nonsense and somehow provoked me on the topic of succession to the throne […] I had breakfast in complete stupefaction here in the hotel" (p. 43).

In 1921 Pyotr Nikolaevich Krasnov's (1869 - 1947) long, utopian science fiction novel *Beyond the Thistle* was completed (published in 1922). The main, though largely hidden, hero is Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich, who escaped death in Tibet, while his young son, Vsevolod, liberates Siberia at the head of the White Army and ascends to the All-Russian Throne. Michael II's heir, Georgiy Mikhailovich Brasov (1910 - 1931),[122] is portrayed under the name of Prince Vsevolod. Essentially, this is less fiction than a plan, disguised as a novel, for creation of an ideal state, an Orthodox Empire. Krasnov himself considered it his magnum opus. In it he offers a sociopolitical alternative, demonstrating that it is possible to build a state without relying on socialist, nihilistic, and other similarly atheistic Western ideas. National repentance will save Russia from the brutal famine and endless mutual hostility of the Bolshevik era. The Tsar's absolute power is established, with no democracy. Over time, Russia embarks on its own path, distinct from all other countries, cut off from the rest of the world by dense thickets of thistles. The Emperor persistently begins to introduce old Russian, pre-Petrine, customs into education.

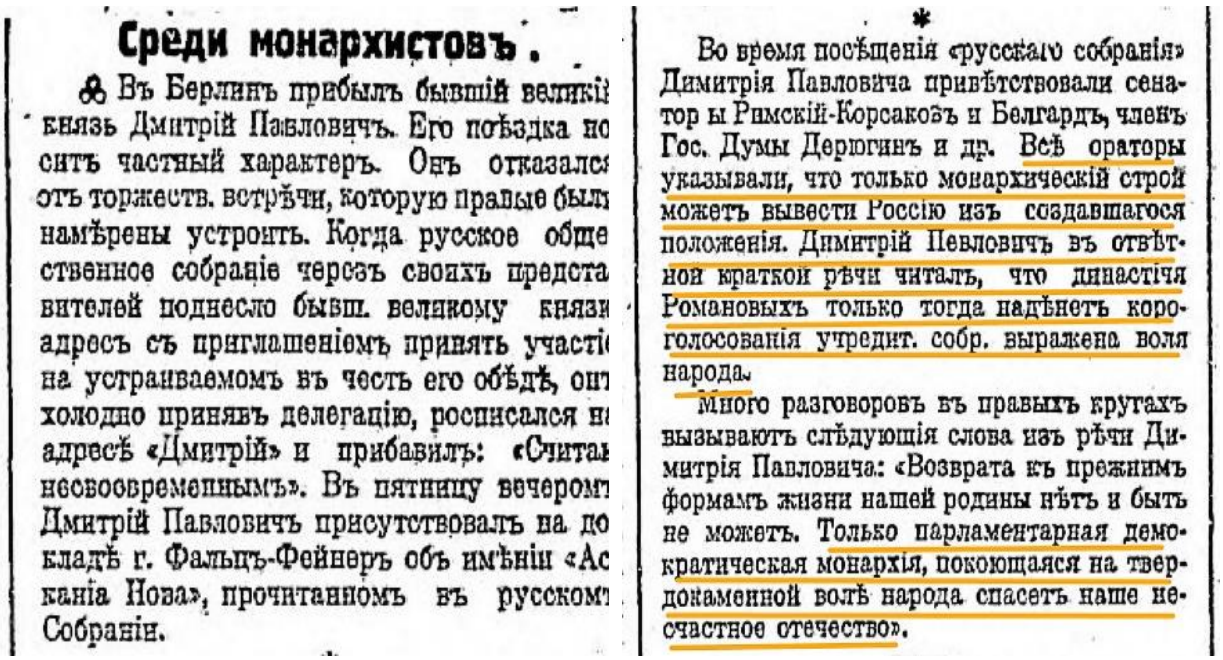
[120] Agnates are relatives exclusively in the male line. In the context of a monarchy, agnates are heirs to the throne if the so-called Salic law or agnatic primogeniture is in effect.
[121] Dmitri Pavlovich entered into a similar marriage – with an American heiress A. Audrey Emery – in 1926.
[122] On Count Georgiy Brasov as a candidate for the Throne, see *Document No. 14* below.

Just two and a half months later, in May 1921, Lieutenant General A.A. Mosolov became one of the main organizers and participants of the All-Russian Monarchist Congress in the Bavarian Reichenhall. The goal of this congress was to unite disparate monarchist forces. As a former chief of staff of the Ministry of Imperial Court, Mosolov advocated strict adherence to the laws of succession. One of Mosolov's key objectives was to preserve the idea of autocratic power, loyalty to the dynasty, and rejection of republican ideas, which was later reflected in his famous book *At the Emperor's Court*.

Thus, from the context it is clear that on the morning of March 5, Dmitri Pavlovich withstood some kind of assault from active monarchist-statists.

Dmitri Pavlovich, according to his diary entries and recorded statements, was at that time very far from the ideas of autocracy, and believed that "the future regime depends solely on the wishes of Russia itself, and not on decisions of the Russian emigration,"[123] in other words, that the question of the form of government would have to be decided "by the people themselves," in the internal territory of Russia liberated from the Bolsheviks: "It is necessary, first of all, to free exhausted Russia from Bolshevism and give the opportunity to the suffering people to express their will [...] on the basis of universal suffrage [...] I am a monarchist, but if the Russian people wished to establish a republican form of government, I would be the first to consider it my duty to submit to the people's wishes" *(interview dated March 12)*.[124]

Dmitri Pavlovich's position is clarified in the newspaper report on his visit to Berлin. Moreover, later participants of the Russian Public Assembly meeting described in the article "Among the Monarchists" would ask their august guest for a refutation, which he refused to provide.[125]



Среди монархистовъ.

Въ Берлинъ прибылъ бывшій великій князь Дмитрій Павловичъ. Его поѣздка носитъ частный характеръ. Онъ отказался отъ торжеств. встрѣчи, которую правые были намѣрены устроить. Когда русское общественное собраніе черезъ своихъ представителей поднесло бывш. великому князю адресъ съ приглашеніемъ принять участіе на устраиваемомъ въ честь его обѣдѣ, онъ холодно принявъ делегацію, росписался на адресѣ «Дмитрій» и прибавилъ: «Считаю несвоевременнымъ». Въ пятницу вечеромъ Дмитрій Павловичъ присутствовалъ на докладѣ г. Фальцъ-Фейнеръ объ имѣніи «Асканіа Нова», прочитанномъ въ русскомъ Собраніи.

*

Во время посѣщенія «русскаго собранія» Димитрія Павловича привѣтствовали сенаторы Римскій-Корсаковъ и Белгардъ, членъ Гос. Думы Дерюгинъ и др. Всѣ ораторы указывали, что только монархическій строй можетъ вывести Россію изъ создавшагося положенія. Димитрій Павловичъ въ отвѣтной краткой рѣчи читалъ, что династія Романовыхъ только тогда надѣнетъ корону голосованія учредит. собр. выражена воля народа.

Много разговоровъ въ правыхъ кругахъ вызываютъ слѣдующія слова изъ рѣчи Димитрія Павловича: «Возврата къ прежнимъ формамъ жизни нашей родины нѣтъ и быть не можетъ. Только парламентарная демократическая монархія, покоющаяся на твердокаменной волѣ народа спасетъ наше несчастное отечество».

DOCUMENT No.11. Among the Monarchists. - *Rul,* 1921, March 6 (February 21), 6.

"[...] All the speakers pointed out that only a monarchical system could lead Russia out of the current situation. Dmitri Pavlovich, in a short response speech, read that the Romanov dynasty would only don the crown when it was convinced that the will of the people was expressed in a vote to restore the monarchy. [...] 'Only a parliamentary democratic[126] monarchy, based on the rock-solid people's will, will save our unfortunate fatherland.'"

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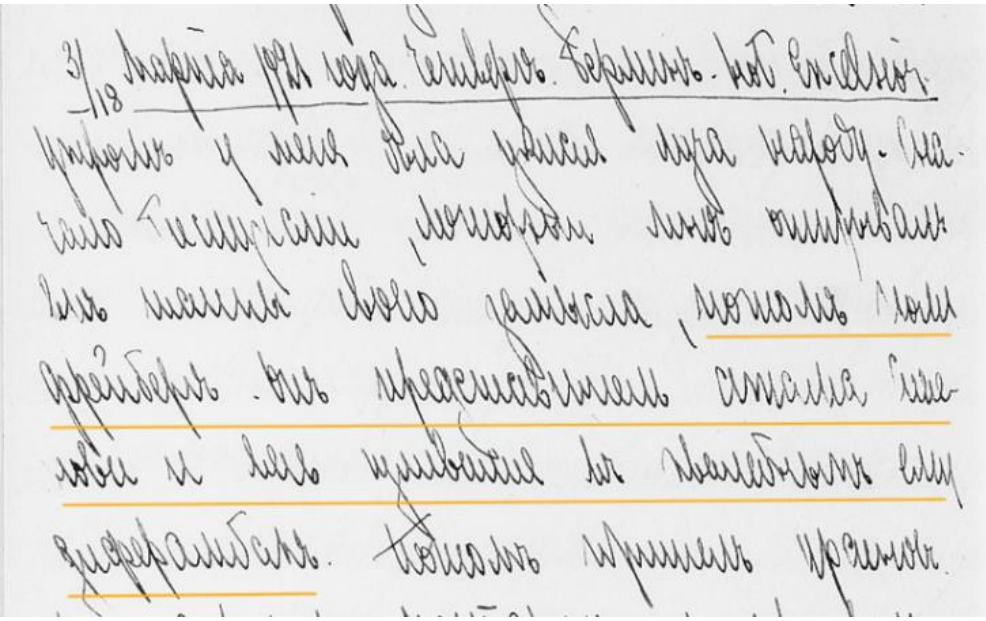
[123] *Diaries and Personal Notes of Dmitry Pavlovich, 1921*, 72.
[124] *Appendix 4*.
[125] *Diaries and Personal Notes of Dmitry Pavlovich*, *1921*, 48.
[126] The article is missing 1 line, which is reconstructed here according to its meaning.

N.E. Markov, with a generally positive assessment, also “surprised” Dmitri Pavlovich with the “terrible narrowness of the monarchical doctrine.”[127]

Thus, from the information provided and Dmitri Pavlovich’s own statements, it is clear why General Mosolov’s thoughts at their meeting in Berlin were perceived by him as “nonsense” and the Grand Duke himself was in a state of “stupefaction” after the conversation: the Grand Duke wanted, as they say, to please both ours and yours: both the right and the left, but most importantly, not to give rise to “ultra-right associations”[128] at his expense.

Dmitri Pavlovich's Meeting with Freyberg in Berlin

Two days before Generals Krasnov and Mosolov, Dmitri Pavlovich was visited by Freyberg.



DOCUMENT No. 12. *Diaries and Personal Notes of Dmitry Pavlovich, 1921,* 38 (cutting).

[Dmitri Pavlovich:] “[March] 3 / [February] 18, 1921. Thursday. Berlin […] In the morning I had a terrible crowd of people. […] then Col[onel] [E.G.] Freyberg. He is Atam[an] Semenov's representative and is pouring out his praises.”[129]

In his interview (Paris, March 12), immediately after the republican statement in the reputed liberal, even socialist newspaper *Poslednie Novosti*, which shocked the Berlin monarchists, Dmitri Pavlovich moves on to the question of the legitimate heir to the throne - and declares Michael Aleksandrovich to be such, in the event that "the Russian people wished to restore monarchy",[130] while simultaneously citing the "colonel's" testimony about his survival, received in Berlin.[131]

Thus, it can be confidently stated that this colonel, who visited the Grand Duke in Berlin on March 3, is Colonel Freyberg, perhaps the only person named with his military rank in Dmitri Pavlovich's diary entries from the period of this Berlin trip. The account of traveling together with Michael Aleksandrovich on an armored train from Chita to Harbin belongs to Freyberg.

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[127] *Diaries and Personal Notes of Dmitry Pavlovich*, *1921*, 18.
[128] *Diaries and Personal Notes of Dmitry Pavlovich, 1921,* 61.
[129] *Diaries and Personal Notes of Dmitry Pavlovich, 1921*, 38.
[130] Dmitri Pavlovich would later join the "Mladorossy" movement, which held similar "non-predeterministic" views. – *Mankov, 2011,* 72.
[131] See *Appendix 4*.

On Dmitri Pavlovich's Attitude to Succession to the Russian Throne Issue

From analysis of Dmitri Pavlovich's mood during his trip to Berlin and then in the immediate future, it is already clear that he regretted the great attention that the Berlin monarchists paid to his person, was worried about the assumptions expressed in left-wing newspapers regarding his claims to lead the monarchist movement in exile and even to the Throne,[132] trying in every way to divert suspicions of this kind from himself.

Whether Dmitri Pavlovich had actually had claims to the throne earlier, at least in 1918, can be concluded from an analysis of his published diary entries.[133]

[Dmitri Pavlovich:] "April 24 / [May 7], 1918. The English mission. Tehran. Scriabin[134] spoke a lot about the political picture. He pointed out that the moment for a coup or restoration of monarchy is near […] there is a huge movement in Petrograd in favor of restoring firm power. The main player there is General Schwartz,[135] who officially commands the Red Army under the flag of Bolshevism. But in reality, this army is destined for his destruction […] There is also a strong movement in favor of monarchy in Moscow […] The movement in Petrograd is certainly supported by the English, who help with money as much as they can. About four days ago, some guys from Russia arrived to see Staroselsky.[136] They confirmed the words of the young Scriabin almost verbatim.[137] But regarding the Throne, they said […] that it will be offered to me, and due to my absence from Russia, the Pope has[138]been appointed regent. But these rumors are also untrue. Scriabin said this, too. But he added that before offering the crown to me, the monarchists decided to offer it to Alexei.[139] This was done because a large number of right-wingers call themselves legitimists and do not recognize any options regarding succession to the throne" *(238)*.

In other words, in fact, it would be more correct, from Dmitri Pavlovich's point of view, to offer the crown directly to him, bypassing the living Tsarevich Alexei, who was in prison, even in defiance of the strict laws of succession to the throne (!)

[Dmitri Pavlovich:] "8 / [21] December 1918 Saturday. London Burlington hotel, Corc street. Nothing definitive can be found out[140] about Nicky. According to some sources, he was definitely killed; according to others, he is alive and hidden. Alas, this last version seems incredible to me.[141] I don't know anything about Alix, either. In Paris, they reported the most terrible things. That they were thrown into a pit, after being shot earlier […] There are rumors, most importantly among the Americans, that Alix and the children are safe […] But I somehow don't believe in places where Alix or Nicky could be hiding, and that gentlemen maximalists would not find them" *(520)*.

Consequently, Dmitri Pavlovich had almost no doubt already at the end of 1918 about the death of the Tsar's Family.

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[132] See subsections "Interview in Paris" and "Dmitri Pavlovich's Meeting with Freyberg in Berlin".
[133] *Dmitri Pavlovich 2025.* Further in the main text *(in brackets)* pages of this edition are cited.
[134] This officer's identity could not be determined.
[135] Alexey Vladimirovich Schwartz (von Schwartz, 1874 - 1953) - lieutenant general, author of valuable memoirs.
[136] Vsevolod Dmitrievich Staroselsky (1875 - 1935) - Commander of the Kabardian Cavalry Regiment and the Persian Cossack Division (1919 - until December 1920), colonel. - *Volkov Database 2016. Letter S.*
[137] Identity not established.
[138] Grand Duke Pavel Alexandrovich (1860 - 1919).
[139] Tsarevich Alexei Nikolaevich.
[140] Empress Alexandra Feodorovna.
[141] Emperor Nicholas II.

[Dmitri Pavlovich:] “December 31, 1918 / [January 13, 1919] London, Monday. Ritz, No. 608. […] The conversation with Shebeko[142] at Thorby’s[143] gave me great pleasure […] he spent the entire revolution period in Russia and can judge it correctly […] He is deeply convinced that even without the intervention of the allies we will overcome Bolshevism with our own forces […] it will take a year […] Shebeko is also deeply convinced that things will inevitably come to a monarchy and that this time is not so far away. To my question about who would be chosen as Tsar, Shebeko told me that the principle of legitimacy should play the first role. In other words, the one who comes according to the law after Nicky and little Alexei should sit on the Throne […] Personally, I completely agree with him, but I do not know who can be Tsar. Misha, being married to the sweetest Natasha, will be unsuitable, and, of course, the poor Vladimiroviches are completely unsuitable for this role."[144]*(574–575)*.

Consequently, at the end of 1918, Dmitri Pavlovich most likely believed that Michael Aleksandrovich was alive and had not died in Perm.

At the same time, at the end of December 1918, Dmitri Pavlovich believed that neither Michael Aleksandrovich, nor Kirill, Boris, or Andrei Vladimirovich had any claim to the throne.[145] The next agnate was Dmitri Pavlovich himself (he was not married at the time), and he considered himself a perfectly suitable candidate for the throne, as can be easily read between the lines of his diary entry on December 31, 1918 / January 13, 1919.

Even earlier, in 1912, Dmitri Pavlovich could allow himself provocative liberties on this matter in a letter to Emperor Nicholas II: “Your capital, that is, to put it quite precisely, My capital, does not spoil us with weather […].”[146]

One should also not forget Dmitri’s participation in the “grand-ducal opposition” to the Family of Emperor Nicholas II on the eve of the February coup, nor his ardent criminal interference in the personal life of the Family through his direct participation in the murder of G.E. Rasputin.

Thus, in 1918 Dmitri Pavlovich was eagerly considering the possibility of his accession to the Russian throne, provided the Bolsheviks were expelled. There is no convincing evidence to deny that such thoughts persisted in his mind later.

As for the nomination of Michael Aleksandrovich as a candidate, many people, not only Dmitri Pavlovich, believed that he was alive, but at the same time, it was unknown where he was - a position convenient in relation to the use of Michael's name as a legitimate contender for the Throne.

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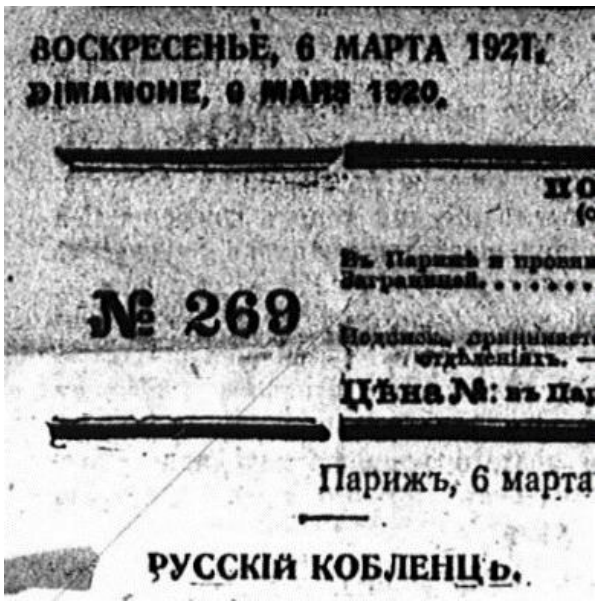
[142] Nikolai Nikolaevich Shebeko (1863-1953) – Russian diplomat, ambassador to Austria-Hungary. From 1920 he was in exile in France. From March 1922 he was member of the Central Committee of the Russian People's Monarchist Union. He was chairman of the "Union of Pages" and member of the "Icon Society".

[143] Sofia Nikolaevna Merenberg, married Countess de Torby (1868 - 1927) - Grand Duke Michael Mikhailovich's morganatic wife.

[144] By 1921, all three Vladimirovich brothers had already entered into morganatic marriages. Of these, only Kirill's was recognized, but he had already been deprived of his right of succession.

[145] Dmitri's father, Grand Duke Pavel Alexandrovich, who was also married morganatically, also had no right to the Throne.

[146] *GARF*, f. 601, op. 1, d. 1248, l. 17.



ВОСКРЕСЕНЬЕ, 6 МАРТА 1921.
DIMANCHE, 6 MARS 1920.

№ 269

Цѣна №: въ Па

Парижъ, 6 марта

РУССКІЙ КОБЛЕНЦЪ.

/.../

именемъ. Какъ «легитимисты», они имѣютъ уже своего кандидата. Общеизвѣстно, что въ послѣднее время ген. Врангеля въ офицерскихъ кругахъ Крыма и среди духовенства велась открытая агитація въ пользу великаго князя Михаила Александровича. Даже обѣщался пріѣздъ его и назначался опредѣленный день для пріѣзда.

Конечно, болѣе освѣдомленные изъ «легитимистовъ» должны знать, что въ данномъ случаѣ они играютъ легендой. Обстоятельства, при которыхъ великій князь былъ увезенъ изъ Перми, таковы, что оставляютъ слишкомъ мало надежды на то, чтобы онъ остался въ живыхъ. Если бы, что мало вѣроятно, это случилось, то, конечно, при условіи, что великій князь давно выбрался въ безопасное мѣсто. Скрывать его пребываніе въ такомъ случаѣ было бы безсмысленно. Такимъ образомъ, самая тайна, которою «монархисты» обставляютъ мнимое мѣстопребываніе великаго князя, характеризуетъ ихъ методы дѣйствій. Задняя мысль этой тактики ясна: она указана въ печатаемомъ сегодня сообщеніи нашего сотрудника. Надо сохранить мѣсто, чтобы занять его впослѣдствіи другимъ претендентомъ.

DOCUMENT No. 13. Russian Koblenz.[147] – *Poslednie Novosti,* 1921, No. 269, March 6, p. 1 (cuttings).

"THE RUSSIAN KOBLENZ.

[...] The "Legitimists" already have their candidate. It is common knowledge that General Wrangel has recently been openly campaigning in favor of Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich among officers in Crimea and among the clergy.[148] His arrival was even promised and a specific day appointed for his arrival. [...]

"The circumstances under which the Grand Duke was taken from Perm are such as to leave little hope of his survival [...] Concealing [...] his whereabouts would be pointless [...] the secrecy with which the "monarchists" surround the Grand Duke's supposed whereabouts characterizes their methods of action. The underlying idea behind this tactic is clear [...] The position must be preserved so that another claimant can occupy it later [...]."

The quoted editorial, apparently from the pen of political chameleon P.N. Milyukov - who had just taken over as the newspaper's editor-in-chief - mentions another, lengthier article, published later in the same issue of *Poslednie Novosti*.

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[147] The German city of Koblenz (at the confluence of the Rhine and Moselle) became the main center of the first wave of French counterrevolutionary emigration. In 1791–1792, the elite fleeing the revolution gathered there. This period went down in history as the "Koblenz Emigration".

[148] Indeed, such a movement is reflected, for example, in V.L. Burtsev's Parisian newspaper: "[...] The rumor is spreading rapidly about upcoming proclamation of monarchy in Crimea and expected arrival of Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich." - *Obshchee Delo,* 1920, October 17, 3.

~ Burtsev himself believed in Michael's survival in the summer of 1920. – *Serafimov 2023,* 106.

3

РУССКІЕ МОНАРХИСТЫ ВЪ ПАРИЖѢ

Парижъ -- одинъ изъ центровъ русскихъ монархистовъ. Три года, прошедшіе со времени октябрьскаго переворота, научили ихъ пріемамъ политической борьбы. Это уже не отдѣльные заговорщики изъ армейскихъ офицеровъ, старательно скрывающіе свои мечтанія, -- а политическая группа--по крайней мѣрѣ претендующая на такое званіе, -- отбросившая тотъ флеръ тайны, которымъ обычно прикрываютъ свою работу русскіе монархисты.

Практическая же сторона дѣятельности лежитъ на стоящей нѣсколько особнякомъ группѣ аристократическаго гвардейскаго офицерства, состоящаго, -- главнымъ образомъ, -- изъ участниковъ похода «дикой дивизіи», которой командовалъ въ минувшую войну великій князь Михаилъ Александровичъ.

Сюда входятъ графъ Воронцовъ-Дашковъ (сынъ бывшаго намѣстника на Кавказѣ), полк. князь Амилахвари, ротмистръ Вериго-Даревскій. Возглавляется эта группа бывшимъ командиромъ Смолекскаго уланскаго полка, шефомъ котораго была императрица Марія Федоровна, полк. Д. В. Фуссъ.

Участники организаціи подчеркиваютъ, что монархическое движеніе находитъ сторонниковъ не только среди людей, которые были тѣсно связаны своимъ положеніемъ съ монархіей, но и среди средней буржуазіи.

***

*

Чье же имя выставляютъ на своемъ знамени русскіе монархисты?

Для того, чтобы осуществить реставрацію, для того, чтобы вернуться въ Зимній Дворецъ -- говорятъ монархисты -- нашей идеологіи необходимо историческое и юридическое основаніе.

Единственнымъ законнымъ претендентомъ на россійскій престолъ является великій князь Михаилъ Александровичъ. Вопреки правдоподобію, монархисты утверждаютъ, что онъ живъ. Въ его лицѣ сторонники реставраціи видятъ монарха новой формаціи, европейской складки, вполнѣ пріемлемаго,--какъ полагаютъ монархисты, - -для новой Россіи. Именно Михаилъ Александровичъ, - говорятъ они -- является демократомъ въ лучшемъ смыслѣ этого слова.

Вспоминаютъ его жизнь--жизнь скромнаго гвардейскаго офицера, рѣшившагося, вопреки предразсудкамъ Двора, на бракъ съ г-жей Брасовой, въ сотый разъ разсказываютъ эпизоды изъ его походной жизни, его отказъ отъ престола...

Съ Михаиломъ Александровичемъ будто бы сносятся, но мѣстопребываніе его отъ легковѣрныхъ держатъ въ тайнѣ.

Вокругъ его фигуры объединяются почти всѣ монархисты, за исключеніемъ небольшой группы, поддерживающей находящагося въ Парижѣ князя Дмитрія Павловича.

На случай, если бы великій князь Михаилъ Александровичъ почему либо не принялъ бы или не могъ бы принять престола, (очевидно, для этого и поддерживается легенда, что онъ живъ), его законнымъ наслѣдникомъ въ монархической организаціи считаютъ сына его отъ графини Брасовой. Возникающій въ данномъ случаѣ вопросъ о правѣ наслѣдованія для дѣтей отъ морганатическаго брака разрѣшается слѣдующимъ образомъ: единственнымъ лицомъ, говорятъ они, въ царской семьѣ, которое не отказалось и не низложено, является вдовствующая императрица Марія Феодоровна, и ея авторитетное рѣшеніе въ данномъ случаѣ очень важно для насъ. А намъ извѣстно, что она не только признала бракъ Михаила Александровича, но и сына его отъ этого брака.

***

Всѣ нити русскихъ монархическихъ организацій Европы тянутся въ Копенгагенъ. Вмѣстѣ съ Маріей Феодоровной сейчасъ проживаетъ въ Копенгагенѣ великая княгиня Ольга Александровна и ея мужъ, полковникъ Ахтырскаго полка Куликовскій.

Отсюда исходятъ руководящія указанія отдѣльнымъ организаціямъ.

На дняхъ бывшій командиръ шефскаго Маріи Феодоровны полка полк. Д. В. Фуссъ выѣзжаетъ въ Копенгагенъ.

П. Лонскій.

DOCUMENT No. 14. P. Lonsky. Russian Monarchists in Paris. – *Poslednie Novosti,* 1921, No. 269, March 6, p. 3.

"RUSSIAN MONARCHISTS IN PARIS.

Paris is one of the centers of Russian monarchists [...] These are no longer individual conspirators [...] but a political group [...] that has cast off [...] the veil of secrecy. [...] The practical side of the activity lies with a somewhat separate group of aristocratic guard officers, consisting mainly of participants of the "Savage Division" campaign, which was commanded in the last war by Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich.

It includes Count Vorontsov-Dashkov[149] (son of the former viceroy of the Caucasus), regiment commander Prince Amilakhvari[150], and captain Verigo-Darevsky.[151] This group is headed by the former commander of Smolensk Uhlan Regiment, whose chief was Empress Maria Feodorovna, regiment commander D.V. Fuss[152]. [...] Whose name do the Russian monarchists display on their banner? [...]

The only legitimate claimant to the Russian throne is Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich. Contrary to all likelihood, monarchists maintain that he is alive. In him, supporters of the restoration see a monarch of a new generation, a European type, entirely acceptable, they believe, for the new Russia. Michael Aleksandrovich, they claim, is a democrat in the best sense of the word.

They allegedly communicate with Michael Aleksandrovich, but his whereabouts are kept secret from the gullible.

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[149] Count Illarion Illarionovich Vorontsov-Dashkov (1877, Tsarskoye Selo - 1932) - Colonel of Life Guards Hussar Regiment of His Majesty, hero of the First World War, Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich's adjutant.

[150] Prince Givi Ivanovich Amilakhvari (Amilokhvarov, Amilakhori) (1874 - 1943) - major general, hero of the First World War, adjutant to viceroy of the Caucasus, cavalry general Count Illarion Ivanovich Vorontsov-Dashkov.

[151] As can be seen, Freyberg and Sotnikov (Ataman Semenov's people), who lived in Germany, had no connection with this Parisian organization of Michael Aleksandrovich's supporters.

[152] Dmitry Vladimirovich Fuss (January 27, 1866 – February 6, 1944, Berlin). In service since 1887, an officer since 1889. Colonel of the 3rd Uhlan Regiment. Major general (retired in 1917). In exile in Germany. – *Volkov Database 2016. Letter F.*

Almost all monarchists unite around his figure, with the exception of a small group supporting Prince Dmitri Pavlovich, who is in Paris.

In case Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich for some reason did not accept or could not accept the throne (obviously, this is why the legend is maintained that he is alive), his son from Countess Brasova is considered his legal heir in the monarchical organization. […] The Dowager Empress Maria Feodorovna […] not only recognized Michael Aleksandrovich's marriage, but also his son from this marriage.[153]

All the threads of Russian monarchical organizations in Europe lead to Copenhagen […] From here come the guidelines for individual organizations.

In a few days, the former commander of Maria Feodorovna's regiment, Col[onel] D.V. Fuss, will be leaving for Copenhagen.[154][signature:] P. LONSKY."

Thus, Dmitri Pavlovich's nomination of Michael Aleksandrovich as successor was intended to be, and indeed was, an integral part of the "cover operation" he carried out through publication of his interview in the newspaper *Poslednie Novosti*. Desiring to take the lead in Russian monarchist organizations and possessing the most unambiguous aspirations to occupy the throne in the event of victory over the Bolsheviks, he attempted to conceal these aspirations by hiding behind Michael Aleksandrovich's figure, popular among émigrés, including not only the right-wing monarchists. Given that Michael's whereabouts had been unknown for almost three years, and given the serious doubts that he would agree to assume the throne even if he emerged from the shadows, one can see how Dmitri Pavlovich took advantage of Milyukov's fresh idea: promoting Michael's name, with the aim of "preserving the place [from the advances of other claimants to the throne], so that another contender [himself] could subsequently occupy it." This observation does not in any way contradict the assumption that Dmitri Pavlovich himself could have believed in his cousin's survival.

Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich's Meeting with Grand Duchess Victoria Feodorovna

In fact, in 1921, with Michael Aleksandrovich virtually unknown, Dmitri Pavlovich, who by late 1920 was already "convinced that Michael Aleksandrovich had perished" *(interview, March 12)*, believed[155] there were two other serious contenders for the throne. One of them was Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, but he was below Dmitri in the line of succession. However, Kirill Vladimirovich stood above both.

In an unpublished diary for March 10/February 25, Dmitri Pavlovich describes his meeting in Paris with Grand Duchess Victoria Feodorovna ("Ducky")[156], his cousin Kirill's wife.

[Dmitri Pavlovich:] "Paris […] I went on a date with Ducky, which turned out *to* be very interesting. At first she was so nervous that she could hardly speak. *Of course, Ducky began* to *accuse me of working against [Grand Duke] Kirill, and said that if Misha had been killed, don't you understand that you go against your Emperor, that you are a traitor and will have to be shot*. Here I noted that I am not working against Kirill, that I have no party, and that the people, of whom there are many, finding Kirill's behavior in March [19]17 reprehensible,[157] of course, are coming to me, and not to him. In general, as was to be

[153] Indeed, on July 16, 1919 Maria Feodorovna's first (and last) meeting with N.S. Brasova (1880 - 1952) and her son Count Georgiy Mikhailovich Brasov took place in London. - *Serafimov 2023*, 74.
[154] This information needs to be further verified, but this task is outside the scope of the topic stated here.
[155] *Appendix 4.*
[156] Grand Duchess Victoria Feodorovna (Grand Duchess Kirill, née Princess Victoria Melita of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, 1876 - 1936) was affectionately called "Ducky" in her Family.
[157]~ The sailors of the Guards Crew Battalion […] gathered for a meeting on the morning of March 1st, to which they invited their commander, Grand Duke Kirill Vladimirovich. The Grand Duke explained to the sailors the significance of the events that had taken place. The result of this explanation was […] a decision to replace the

expected, the conversation ended in absolutely nothing. Only "Ducky insisted that in public we should pretend to be together, but in private we could talk about anything [Dmitri Pavlovich was forced to agree to this]. […] March 11 / February 26 (Paris) I had breakfast […] with Ducky. She did not hide the fact that she was doing this only for decorum and without much pleasure. So, in general, it was rather strained and not good […] [March 13 / February 28 Dmitri Pavlovich again visited Ducky, and there were members of the Family there, specially invited by her, as well as those who claimed to look like her retinue] […] I was in a terrible mood, I felt morally disgusting […]"[158]

From the above diary entry it is clear that already in 1921 Grand Duke Kirill's aspirations to occupy the Russian Throne, at least in his wife's interpretation, were quite vivid, to the point of accusing the Dynasty's dissenting members of treason.

In 1905, without the reigning Emperor Nicholas II's blessing, Kirill married his first cousin (which violated the Orthodox Church rules), who was also Empress Alexandra Feodorovna's brother's divorced wife. For that reason alone, the royal couple's relationship with Victoria was not warm. All the Vladimirovich brothers - Kirill, Boris, and Andrei - had entered into morganatic marriages by early 1921, and that, according to the Russian Empire laws, barred them from ascending the Russian throne.[159]

Children of Alexander II's youngest son, Grand Duke Pavel Alexandrovich, were on the Royal Family's side in this case, and Dmitri Pavlovich in particular, as Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna's, reigning Empress Alexandra's sister's, ward.[160]

Later, among the opponents of "emperor in exile Kirill I" as he declared himself in August 1924, the following satirical pamphlet (in its initial excerpt) circulated.

Imperially bestowed banner with a red rag, with which the Guards Crew followed with its commander to the State Duma. [This was] the procession of the Grand Duke under the shadow of the red banner through the streets of Petrograd […] Grand Duke Kirill Vladimirovich, with the Tsar's monograms on his shoulder straps and a red bow on his shoulder, appeared at 4:15 p.m. on March 1 at the State Duma, where he reported to the Duma's Chairman M.V. Rodzianko: "I have the honor to appear before Your Excellency. I am at your disposal, as are all the people. I wish the well of Russia," and declared that the Guards Crew was at the State Duma's complete disposal. […] A few hours before Kirill Vladimirovich's arrival at the Tauride Palace, the palace commandant's office was notified of the Guards Crew's defection to the State Duma from a copy of the following note, which had been sent by Kirill Vladimirovich to the commanders of the units stationed, like the Guards Crew, in Tsarskoye Selo: "I and the Guards Crew entrusted to me have fully joined the new government. I am confident that you and the entire unit entrusted to you will also join us. Commander of the Guards Crew of His Majesty's Retinue, Rear Admiral Kirill." - *Voeikov 1995*, 269 - 270.

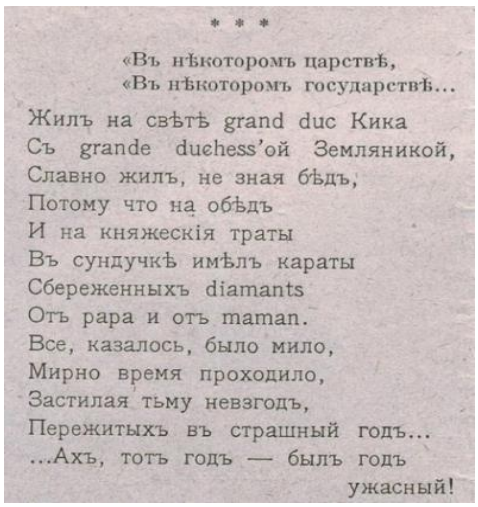
~ Empress Alexandra Feodorovna wrote in her letters to Nicholas II dated March 2/15 and March 3/16, 1917: "Kirill has gone crazy, I think: he went to the Duma with the Cr[ew] and is standing up for them…", "…he behaves disgustingly, although he pretends that he is trying for the Monarch and the Motherland." – *Correspondence of Nicholas and Alexandra Romanov. 1916–1917, 1927*, 230.

[158] *Diaries and Personal Notes of Dmitry Pavlovich, 1921*, 55 - 59. Italic mine.

[159] Emperor Nicholas II's resolution: "I cannot recognize Grand Duke Kirill Vladimirovich's marriage. The Grand Duke and any offspring that may issue from him are deprived of their rights to succession to the throne" - on the document: "Memorial of the Supremely instituted Special Conference to discuss issues related to removal of His Imperial Highness Grand Duke Kirill Vladimirovich from succession to the throne. January 29, 1907" - *State Archive of the Russian Federation*, f. 601, op. 1, d. 2139, 119-127 ob. The Emperor's resolution on depriving Kirill and his offspring from his marriage to Victoria Feodorovna of the right of succession to the throne was never revoked.

[160] Dmitri Pavlovich lost his mother in infancy and was given to be raised in Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich's childless family.

THE TALE OF KIKA AND THE STRAWBERRY
(For Monarchical Younger Children)



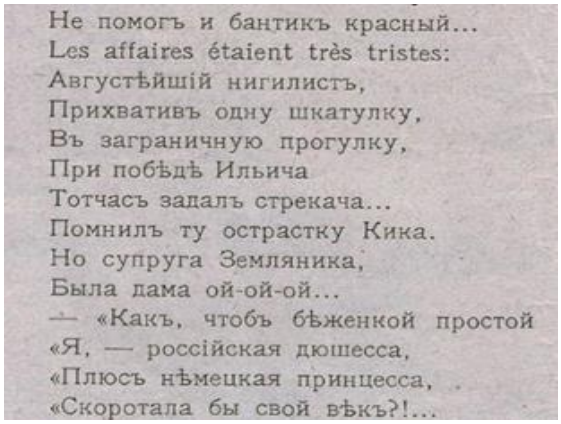
* * *

«Въ нѣкоторомъ царствѣ,
«Въ нѣкоторомъ государствѣ...
Жилъ на свѣтѣ grand duc Кика
Съ grande duchess'ой Земляникой,
Славно жилъ, не зная бѣдъ,
Потому что на обѣдъ
И на княжескія траты
Въ сундучкѣ имѣлъ караты
Сбереженныхъ diamants
Отъ papa и отъ maman.
Все, казалось, было мило,
Мирно время проходило,
Застилая тьму невзгодъ,
Пережитыхъ въ страшный годъ...
...Ахъ, тотъ годъ — былъ годъ
ужасный!

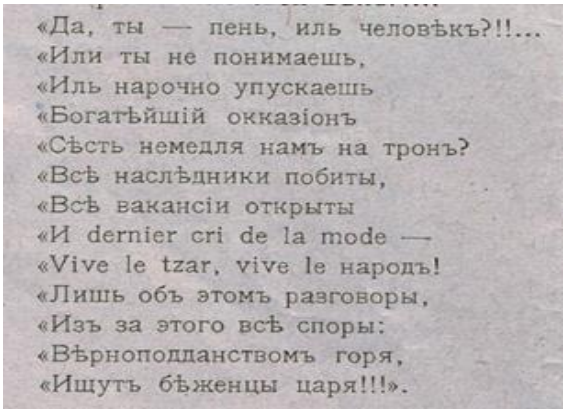
"In a certain kingdom,
In a certain state ...»

There lived a grand duc[161]
Kika
With grande duchess[162]
Strawberry,

[...] Time passed peacefully,
Covering the darkness of adversity,
Survived in a terrible year...
...Ah, that year – it was a terrible year!



Не помогъ и бантикъ красный...
Les affaires étaient très tristes:
Августѣйшій нигилистъ,
Прихвативъ одну шкатулку,
Въ заграничную прогулку,
При побѣдѣ Ильича
Тотчасъ задалъ стрекача...
Помнилъ ту острастку Кика.
Но супруга Земляника,
Была дама ой-ой-ой...
— «Какъ, чтобъ бѣженкой простой
«Я, — россійская дюшесса,
«Плюсъ нѣмецкая принцесса,
«Скоротала бы свой вѣкъ?!...



«Да, ты — пень, иль человѣкъ?!!...
«Или ты не понимаешь,
«Иль нарочно упускаешь
«Богатѣйшій окказіонъ
«Сѣсть немедля намъ на тронъ?
«Всѣ наслѣдники побиты,
«Всѣ вакансіи открыты
«И dernier cri de la mode —
«Vive le tzar, vive le народъ!
«Лишь объ этомъ разговоры,
«Изъ за этого всѣ споры:
«Вѣрноподданствомъ горя,
«Ищутъ бѣженцы царя!!!».

Even the red bow didn't help...
Les affaires étaient très tristes:[163]
The august nihilist,
Taking one jewelry box,
On a trip abroad,
With the victory of Ilyich
He immediately took off running...

Kicka remembered that intimidation.
But his wife Strawberry
Was an oh-oh-oh kind of lady...
- "How could I be a simple refugee?
I am a Russian duchess,
Plus, a German princess,
I would while away my life?!..

Are you a stump or a human being?!..
Or you don't understand,
Or are you deliberately missing out
The richest occasion[164]
Of our taking our seat on the throne immediately?
All the heirs have been beaten,

All the vacancies are open,
Et dernier cri de la mode[165]- Vive le tzar, vive the people![166]
This is all they talk about,
This is the reason for all the controversy:
Burning with loyalty,
The refugees are looking for a Tsar!!!"

DOCUMENT No. 15. The Tale of Kika and Strawberry (initial fragment). – *GARF*, f. R-9145, op. 1, d. 570, l. 131 – 131 ob.

[161] Grand Duke - Fr.
[162] Grand Duchess - Fr.
[163] Things were very sad - Fr.
[164] From French: occasion - occasion.
[165] The latest fashion trend. - Fr.
[166] Long live the Tsar, long live the people! - Fr.

Thus, it is logical to conclude that Dmitri Pavlovich was highly displeased by Kirill Vladimirovich and his wife's desire to lead the Imperial Family and present themselves as practically holders of the Throne to which they had no right. He also secretly did not consider Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich a suitable candidate due to his morganatic marriage. Therefore, the inclusion of the latter's name in an interview to *Poslednie Novosti* reporter during the aforementioned "cover operation" should also be seen as a kind of "refutation" of the information just published in the same newspaper, which indicated that there were two parties among Parisian monarchists: Michael Aleksandrovich and Dmitri Pavlovich. The political move was subtly calculated—to convince everyone that Dmitri Pavlovich considered Michael Aleksandrovich a legitimate candidate for the throne, while he himself had no claims; and that he hoped for Michael Aleksandrovich's survival (but was not certain). And at the same time, this newspaper announcement weakened Kirill Vladimirovich's position.[167]

This conclusion in no way contradicts the principle of good faith (which does not, however, exclude some distortion) exercised by Dmitri Pavlovich in conveying the "colonel's" information about Michael Aleksandrovich's rescue. However, it does reveal the motives for publishing this information, which was most likely unpleasant to Dmitri Pavlovich, [168]so much so that he did not even record it in his diary entries. However, upon analysis of the latter, it is quite obvious that it was received from Freyberg.[169] The information was in demand just nine days later, after a left-wing newspaper campaign against right-wing monarchists and Dmitri Pavlovich as their guest in Berlin[170], and after Dmitri's humiliating meeting with Grand Duchess Victoria Feodorovna, who accused him of betraying her husband, "Emperor" Kirill.[171]

COMPARISON OF VERSIONS
Sotnikov - Malts's vs Dmitri Pavlovich - "Colonel's" Versions

As can be seen, the information received by Sotnikov from Malts and by Dmitri Pavlovich from the "colonel" in Berlin are very similar in their main content, but also differ somewhat in details. What both reports have in common is that during the period when Chita was in the Whites' hands (from September 14, 1918 to October 22, 1920), Michael Aleksandrovich travelled by rail (in Sotnikov's account the mode of travel is determined by the context) from Chita (according to the location of the railway stations) through Dauria station to Harbin, and then to one of Chinese ports on the Pacific Ocean, and he was accompanied along the way by several officers, some of whom are named. The difference lies in Malts's mention of Dauria station as an intermediate point where the senior escort was replaced (Baron Ungern replaced Ataman Semenov) and the absence of these details from the "colonel".

However, the "colonel's" information (although brief and completely lacking any indication of the time of the event) appears more immediate than Malts's, which could well have been intelligence data for his department, and Malts himself was most likely not present at the event (otherwise Sotnikov would

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[167] A hint about the circumstances of the meeting with Victoria Feodorovna is contained in a phrase from the interview on March 12: "If we deviate from this legitimist path and begin to examine the question of other contenders, we could end up in such a thicket of palace coups that it's better not to even talk about them." – *Appendix 4*.

[168] ~ In addition to the succession situation, the relationship between Dmitri Pavlovich and Michael Aleksandrovich became strained with the beginning of Dmitri's platonic (?) affair with Natalia Brasova, which developed from the end of 1914 and throughout 1915-1916. – See: *Michael Aleksandrovich*, *Dnevnik i perepiska*, *2012*.
~ There are also two letters from Dmitri to Natalia, dated January 16 and February 6, 1917 (old style), addressed as "Dear" and "Dear Friend." - *Dmitri Pavlovich 2025*, 600–603.

[169] See subsection "Dmitri Pavlovich's Meeting with Freyberg in Berlin".

[170] See subsection "Interview in Paris".

[171] As can be seen, the term "emperor" in this family could be used among members of the Imperial House long before Kirill Vladimirovich's official declaration of himself first as "Locum Tenens of the Throne" (1922), and then as "Emperor in Exile" (1924).

have specifically mentioned it). The "colonel," citing another unnamed convoy officer, testifies that they both personally saw the Grand Duke disembarking the train in Harbin, and throughout his journey with the Grand Duke, he knew that he was accompanying him.

Thus, due to the commonality of the main content and the differences in details, it is clear that the two testimonies appear independent of each other, but do not contain inexplicable contradictions that would cast doubt on the events themselves being attested to.

Comparison of three Versions: Freyberg's, the "Colonel's" and Malts's

Let us now turn again to Freyberg's testimony to Sokolov's investigation, which also took place in Berlin and was recorded by Captain Bulygin on April 7, 1921, 34 days after Freyberg's meeting with Dmitri Pavlovich.

In Freyberg's testimony there is no evidence of Michael Aleksandrovich's another passage from Chita through Harbin to Shanghai after October 1918 and before May 1919. However, there are numerous personal testimonies about the Grand Duke's stay in Shanghai from the beginning of November 1918 *(8 rev.)*[172]

As for Lieutenant Colonel Popov, who, according to his testimony, traveled in the same compartment with Michael Aleksandrovich during the October journey and conversed with him,[173]Freyberg says that he met him and conversed with him on various topics "later", namely, no later than January or February 1919 *(8).* From the context, it is clear that Popov spoke and then often repeated about the event in his life that had made such an impression on him earlier than the beginning of 1919.

Consequently, Popov could not have been the Grand Duke's companion "in January", during his next passage, as assumed by Sotnikov, which, in fact, could not have happened, as has already been established earlier.[174]

Freyberg, as a witness, is an eyewitness to Michael Aleksandrovich's alleged journey on a train from Chita to Harbin in October 1918, and Freyberg's informants testify to having personally seen the Grand Duke. Moreover, as has been established, the same event of the journey is described in three currently known sources, dating from March to April 1921:

1. in Freyberg's conversation with Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich in Berlin on March 3 (Freyberg's alleged informants were Captain Skryabin and Lieutenant Colonel Popov);
2. in Freyberg's testimony to Sokolov's investigation, recorded and certified by Captain Buliginin Berlin on April 7 (Freyberg's numerous informants, of whom the identities of the same Skryabin and Popov were established);
3. in a handwritten letter from Captain Sotnikov to Freyberg from Wahmbeck to Berlin on April 19 (Sotnikov's informant, Lieutenant Colonel Maltz).[175]

In determining the level of independence of the testimonies, Sotnikov's influence on Freyberg's testimony must be immediately ruled out, as Sotnikov's letter is the latest in the cited series of sources. Sotnikov is not an eyewitness, but a source of information, and, most likely, not from an eyewitness, but from an official "of the highest integrity" (such as Lieutenant Colonel Maltz, according to Sotnikov) who had both the opportunity and the responsibility to possess information that was generally reliable, but not necessarily accurate in detail. It is unknown whether Maltz's information is entirely independent of

[172] See also subsection "Officers' Testimonies about Michael Aleksandrovich's Stay in Shanghai".
[173] See subsection "Lieutenant Colonel Popov's Testimony".
[174] See subsection "Captain Sotnikov as an Informant, but not a Witness".
[175] Maltz is not among Freyberg's informants.

any of Freyberg's informants. Freyberg himself does not mention Maltz among the more than a dozen individuals who had information about Michael Aleksandrovich's whereabouts.

Thus, if there remains a possibility that Malts's and Freyberg's informants' personalities coincide, then on the scale of reliability of the evidence itself, not only do we not accept a downgrade, but, on the contrary, an upgrade follows - since Malts, by virtue of his position as head of the intelligence department, is an official person and communicating knowingly false information to such a person would be ideological sabotage in wartime and would be subject to the most severe punishments in the Semenov troops.

As for Freyberg's statement to Dmitri Pavlovich that the convoy officers "knew that they were transporting Michael Aleksandrovich", it is entirely consistent with his own testimony during the interview on April 7.

[Freyberg:] "I want to emphasize that I previously took all of this at face value; if I had doubted it, I would have taken measures to clarify all of this on the spot" *(11 rev. - 12).*

Yes, Freyberg obviously knew this for himself, and in October 1918 he had no doubt that, as a junior officer of the guard train, he was accompanying the Grand Duke. Colonel Freyberg apparently retained this same conviction at the time of his conversation with Dmitri Pavlovich on March 3, 1921. By April 7 of that year, it had only wavered slightly - under the influence of studying Sokolov's investigative materials[176] and conversations with Captain Bulygin. From the reservations and answers to Bulygin's hidden questions during the interview[177], it is clear that Freyberg's uncertainty arose directly from close contact with these proponents of Michael's death's arguments.

Freyberg, as is clear from his interview, had no reason not to trust two direct, in their words, witnesses - his fellow Semenov's officers: Lieutenant Colonel Popov and Captain Skryabin.

Therefore, in a conversation with Dmitri Pavlovich, more than a month before the interview, Freyberg could well have sincerely stated that he himself had seen Michael Aleksandrovich. In Dmitri Pavlovich's perception, this testimony could have overlapped with Freyberg's account of eyewitnesses to getting off the train in Harbin - and as a result, an unintentional inaccuracy emerged in the published interview, suggesting that Freyberg himself ("a certain colonel") had witnessed the detraining.

Popov "later" (but no later than January - February 1919, i.e., approximately three months later) told Freyberg in detail, that he had travelled in the same compartment with the Grand Duke and had spoken with him about his rescue from Perm - and, consequently, Popov became not only a direct witness in Harbin but also a possible participant in Michael Aleksandrovich's disembarkation from the train. Skryabin, being the commander of one of the two convoy trains,[178] by the very nature of his position, was, of course, obliged to oversee the safety of his Imperial escort as he disembarked from the platform. And Skryabin recounted this event to Freyberg that same morning *(7 - 7 rev.)*, after Freyberg had awakened from his legal rest, and the Grand Duke had already departed on another special train in the direction of Shanghai.

Freyberg and his co-eyewitness are not named in the interview. However, it is likely that the colonel had in mind the two eyewitness officers, Popov and Skryabin, in his conversation with Dmitri Pavlovich. Moreover, as a German meticulous in all details, the intelligence officer and loyal subject likely also

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[176] By 1921, N.A. Sokolov had already made up his mind on this issue: in favor of the Grand Duke's death version, and therefore did not use Freyberg's information in drawing up his official findings and conclusions, and did not include it in his 1924 book.

[177] See *Appendix 2*.

[178] The commander of the other train was Captain Vasyutinsky (see *Appendix 2*) – also a possible witness to Michael Aleksandrovich's exit from the train in Harbin.

mentioned their names. Did Freyberg's possible refusal to have his name disclosed prompt Dmitri Pavlovich to make this omission?

Most likely, the reason was deeper. There were specific political goals behind this particular publication:

1. To deflect suspicion of his ambitions for the throne;
2. At the same time, avoid speaking directly in favor of Michael Aleksandrovich's survival (i.e., to unobtrusively assert his rights as the first-priority agnate)[179]: anonymity (keeping the informant's name silent), a statement about the lack of information about the missing person from Dmitri and the entire Romanov Family in exile - all this corresponded to this goal;
3. Weaken the Kirillists' position, at the same time taking revenge for the humiliation during the meeting with Victoria Feodorovna.

These, in short, are the reasons for the publication of this information, which is unpleasant for Dmitri Pavlovich.[180]

Thus, the "colonel," according to Dmitri Pavlovich, Malts, according to Sotnikov, Freyberg, according to his personal testimony, as well as Popov and Skryabin, all point to Michael Aleksandrovich's same journey from Chita to Harbin on the Chinese Eastern Railway - and this supposed event should be dated to October 1918. Dmitri Pavlovich, Sotnikov, and, probably, Malts were not eyewitnesses. There are three reliably identified personal witnesses, whom there is no reason to suspect of dishonesty: Freyberg, Popov, and Skryabin.[181] Whether Malts had other eyewitness informants or possessed documents related to his position (reports, accounts, orders) is unknown. Moreover, Malts's information, according to the nuances analyzed above, also has sources independent of the named witnesses.

[179] In an interview on March 17, we read: "Not only I, but also other members of the royal family have no subsequent information about Michael Aleksandrovich." – *Appendix 4*.

[180] For more details, see the conclusions in subsections "On Dmitri Pavlovich's Attitude to Succession to the Russian Throne Issue" and "Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich's Meeting with Grand Duchess Victoria Feodorovna".

[181] The strength of the conclusion is somewhat weakened by lack of detailed information on Popov's and Skryabin's personalities, who, however, are clearly identified as officers who were actually serving at that time in the Special Manchurian Detachment: Popov as an officer on assignment with Semenov, and Skryabin as the commander of the armored train.

CONCLUSIONS

In 2023, the book devoted to research into the version of Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich's rescue from exile in Perm from the Bolsheviks' hands concluded with the following announcement: "Further research dwells on the assumption of the Grand Duke's survival after execution and his 'second' life, but under a different name or names."[182]

This article further substantiates this hypothesis through a more detailed analysis of sources mentioning meetings with Michael Aleksandrovich after September 1918, both previously collected in the book and newly drawn upon, as well as previously unknown sources. A special examination is made of the personal testimonies of meetings with the Grand Duke, including those of Colonel E.G. Freyberg, a supposed eyewitness, and of secondary witnesses and informants. The creation and publication history of a well-known 1921 newspaper article is reconstructed,[183] containing a report on behalf of Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich, citing an anonymous eyewitness about Michael Aleksandrovich's appearance in Harbin. The information, disclosed in the article through the newspaper reporter, is clearly attributed as actually originating from Dmitri Pavlovich, who gave precisely this interview to the newspaper. The latter's motives for publishing this information about Michael Aleksandrovich's survival are substantiated; Dmitri Pavlovich's lack of interest in confirming the survival news is clarified. It is also established that Freyberg himself acted as Dmitri Pavlovich's direct informant and, simultaneously, personal witness. Consistent reconciliations of all available personal testimonies are made, and, ultimately, the event of the Grand Duke's journey from Chita to Harbin on the Chinese Eastern Railway in October 1918 is hypothetically reconstructed.

To refute all the personal testimonies examined in this article, it would be necessary to convincingly discredit the integrity or competence of the witnesses identified here as deserving sufficient credibility - both professionally and personally. Together with the materials on the survival theory collected in the book (2023), this new interpretation of personal testimonies of 1918 from a scholarly perspective significantly weakens the position of proponents of the hitherto prevailing version of Emperor Michael II of Russia's death in the Urals on June 13, 1918.

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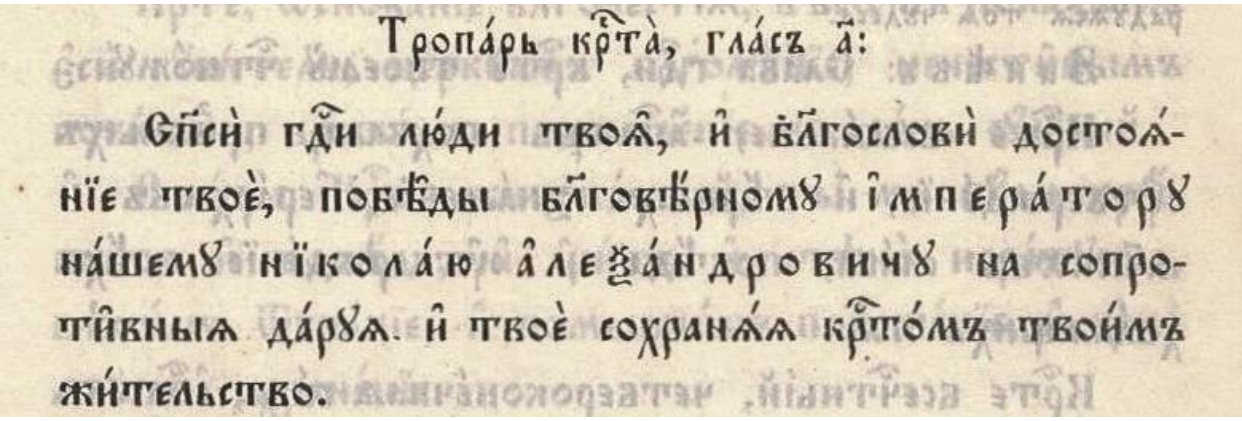
[182] *Serafimov 2023*, 365.
[183] *Appendix 4*.

APPENDIX 1

BARON R.F. UNGERN-STERNBERG AS EMPEROR MICHAEL II'S APOLOGIST[184]

Proof of the *Autocrat of the Desert's*[185] great faith in Emperor Michael's survival is contained in a Red intelligence report that Ungern's division, too, sang "Save, O Lord," with Michael's name mentioned, and "God Save the Tsar" at evening roll call.[186] This refers to a choral rendition of the troparion to the Holy Life-Giving Cross of the Lord in Church Slavonic: "Save, O Lord, Thy people and bless Thy inheritance, granting victories to our faithful Emperor Michael Aleksandrovich over the enemy, and preserving Thy life with Thy Cross."[187] It should be noted that such a naming in this troparion (or similar ones) was only possible during the lifetime of a living Tsar - the bearer of the name.


Тропа́рь кр҃та̀, гла́съ а҃:
Сп҃сѝ гдⷭ҇и лю́ди твоѧ̑, и҆ бл҃гословѝ достоѧ́-
нїе твоѐ, побѣ́ды бл҃говѣ́рномꙋ і҆мпера́торꙋ
на́шемꙋ нїкола́ю а҆лекса́ндровичꙋ на сопро-
тивныѧ̑ да́рꙋѧ. и҆ твоѐ сохраня́ѧ кр҃то́мъ твои́мъ
жи́тельство.

DOCUMENT No. 16. Troparion of the Cross. - *Priestly Prayer Book, 1900,* p. 121 (excerpt).

The use of such a liturgical formula is absolutely impossible in relation to an emperor who is known to be dead, or it is unknown whether he is alive.

In Lieutenant N.N. Knyazev's (1891 – after 1938) memoirs about the Easter Bright Matins of 1921, we find additional details about the liturgical practice in Ungern's troops.

"[Easter Matins]. In front, the always dapper and smart figure of General [Ungern] – Matins ended with a broad-band longevity service for the Autocrat of All Russia[188], Emperor Michael Aleksandrovich."[189]

During an interregnum, when the Tsar has died and a new one, for whatever reason, has not ascended the Throne, the clergy have alternative formulas at their disposal: "The Righteous Tsars" or "The Entire Royal House." The hieromonk who led the Easter service in Ungern's army, a very zealous man,

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[184] Within the scope of this study, I am asking that this Appendix be considered in the genre of an expanded commentary, since it uses later materials and evidence: of 1921. The materials cited, which are somewhat supplemented here, are analyzed by me in the book: *Serafimov 2023*, 353-361.

[185] The author of the term is the modern writer-historian L.A. Yuzefovich - see his novel with the same name: *Yuzefovich 1993*.

[186] Operational Directorate of the Headquarters of the 5th Army and the East Siberian Military District. Periodic summary No. 7/r as of April 15, 1921. Map 40 versts to an inch. - *Russian State Military Archive (RGVA)*, f. 185, op. 3, d. 537, l. 23-24. Published: *Kuzmin 2011*, 448.

[187] Translation into Russian: "Save, O Lord, Thy people and bless Thy inheritance (belonging to Thee), granting victories over the enemies to the Blessed Emperor of All Russia Michael Aleksandrovich and preserving Thy people with Thy Cross."

[188] The option: "To the Autocrat of All Russia" is quite acceptable in the everyday life of church singing.

[189] Part of Knyazev's memoirs were published in Harbin journal *Ray of Asia* in 1934 - 1937. A completely revised and expanded version was published as a separate book in Harbin in 1942. It differs significantly from what was published in the articles. Republication: *Kuzmin, 2004b,* 12–167. The quotation I provided: *Kuzmin, 2004b,* 94–95.

according to published memoirs, would never have committed such a violation, bordering on blasphemy, had he not been absolutely certain of Emperor Michael II's well-being at the time.[190]

Officer Golubev, as an eyewitness, testifies: "To act against the USSR, it was necessary to have a slogan in the name of which the 'White' movement was carried out, so that it would not have the character of an isolated uprising […] Ungern decided to declare a struggle in the name of Tsar Michael Aleksandrovich. Apparently, Ungern himself was deeply convinced that M[ichael] A[leksandrovich] was not killed in Perm and had actually been taken to the East by people loyal to him. The division also devoutly believed in the existence of the Grand Duke. […] Ungern assured the division that Michael Aleksandrovich must arrive in Mongolia to assume overall command of the offensive against the USSR. Nothing would make them abandon such a conviction."[191]

We will also cite the report of an eyewitness, the Cossack colonel K.I. Lavrentyev – in his memoirs – about his conversations with Baron Ungern.

Firstly, soon after the capture of Urga in early February 1921 [Lavrentiev:] “He [Ungern] informed me that the persons remaining in his detachment must completely submit to his tasks, namely: restoration of Monarchy in the person of Michael Aleksandrovich. […]”

Secondly, at a later time. [Lavrentyev:] "This order [No. 15 of May 21, 1921] made a certain impression on the masses: Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich is alive, the baron points this out, and we are fighting for him. For example, our detachment's banner bore the letter "M", while in Uryankhai, Cornet Shmakov's special detachment was called "Detachment Named after Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich."[192]

In 1921, Ungern's Asian Cavalry Division, as is widely known, marched under the banner with Emperor Michael II's monogram.

DOCUMENT No. 17. Banner of the Asian Cavalry Division (M.Yu. Blinov's Collection).[193]

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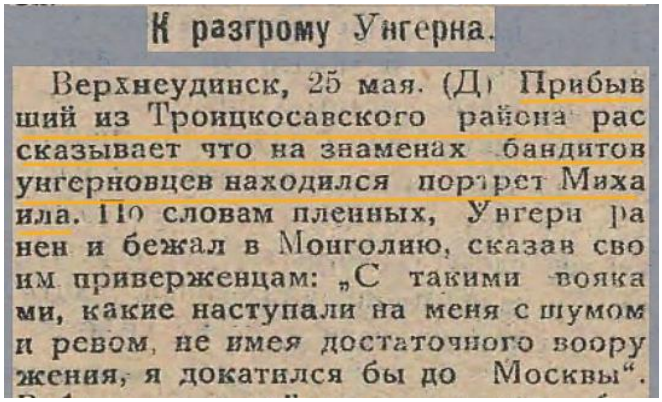
[190] Thus, the great Saint John of Shanghai and San Francisco (Maximovich, 1896-1966), being a convinced monarchist, in the 1940s - 1960s, when all Orthodox monarchies had already officially fallen, "was fundamentally against replacing the prayer for the Blessed Tsars with the words 'Orthodox Christians' in church services. In particular, in the troparion 'Save, O Lord, Thy people', he demanded that 'victories for the Blessed Tsars...' be sung." - *Peter (Lukyanov), Ieromonah (Hieromonk), 1991*.

[191] Golubev. Memories. Manuscript. Beijing. 1926. – *Hoover, DK 254/U7G 662, 1–354*. Published: Kuzmin 2004a, 542.

[192] K.*I. Lavrentiev. The Capture of Urga by Baron Ungern in 1921*. Manuscript. Harbin. 1925 (from Baroness M.D. Wrangel's Archive, No. 57, folder No. 8). *Hoover, Maria Wrangel* Coll. Foller 16. Box 14/ 1-43. Published: *Kuzmin 2004a*, 329.

[193] Published: *Kuzmin 2011*, Appendix (Colour Insert).

According to newly discovered evidence, a portrait of Michael Aleksandrovich may also have been in possession of the troops. In the article "On Ungern's Defeat" in the newspaper *Rossiya*, published by supporters of the Red Far Eastern Republic, a correspondent from Verkhneudinsk reported on such a portrait.



К разгрому Унгерна.

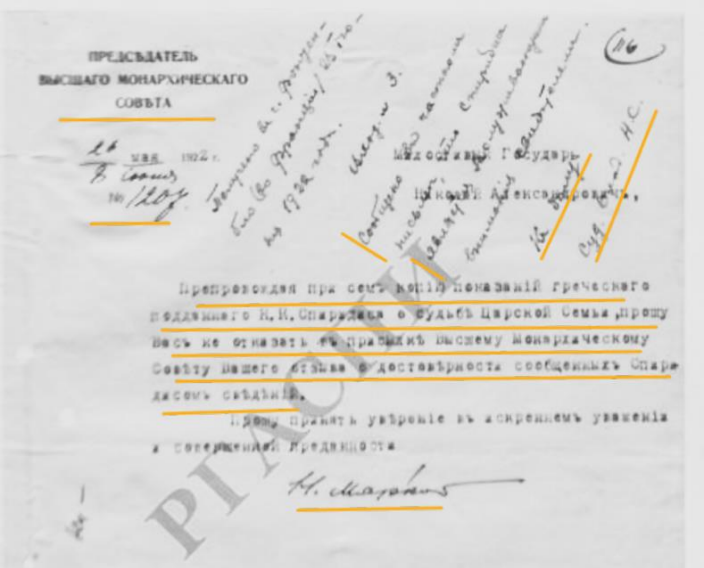
Верхнеудинск, 25 мая. (Д) Прибывший из Троицкосавского района рассказывает что на знаменах бандитов унгерновцев находился портрет Михаила. По словам пленных, Унгерн ранен и бежал в Монголию, сказав своим приверженцам: „С такими вояками, какие наступали на меня с шумом и ревом, не имея достаточного вооружения, я докатился бы до Москвы".

DOCUMENT No. 18. "On Ungern's Defeat". - *Russia (Harbin),* 1921, No. 15, July 1, p. 3 (cutting).

"A man who arrived from the Troitskosavsky District says that Ungern bandits' banners there was Michael's portrait […]"

At the same time, Ungern's division chief of staff, Colonel M.G. Tornovsky, unequivocally noted in his memoirs: "Ungern could not have failed to know that Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich was no longer alive."[194]

It is necessary, however, to counter the proponents of the "political" version of Ungern's glorification of Michael, claiming that thousands of people "did not know" of Michael's death at the time. Let us compare N.K. Spiridis's testimony, which has already been extensively corroborated.[195]



ПРЕДСѢДАТЕЛЬ
ВЫСШАГО МОНАРХИЧЕСКАГО
СОВѢТА

Милостивый Государь
Николай Александрович,

Препровождая при сем копію показаній греческаго подданнаго Н.К. Спиридиса о судьбѣ Царской Семьи, прошу Васъ не отказать въ правдивомъ высшему Монархическому Совѣту Вашего отзыва о достовѣрности сообщенныхъ Спиридисомъ свѣдѣній.

Прошу принять увѣреніе въ искреннемъ уваженіи и совершенной преданности

Н. Маркъ

DOCUMENT No. 19. [Covering letter from N.E. Markov to N.A. Sokolov regarding N.K. Spiridis's testimony]. - *Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (RGASPI),* f. 588, op. 3, d. 5, l. 116.[196]

[194] *Kuzmin 2004b*, 248.
[195] *Serafimov 2023*, 245 – 342.
[196] Unfortunately, I only have access to a low-resolution electronic version of these RGASPI documents, presented on The State Archive of the Russian Federation's website: https://statearchive.ru/assets/images/docs/r05/ (accessed 19.06.1026).

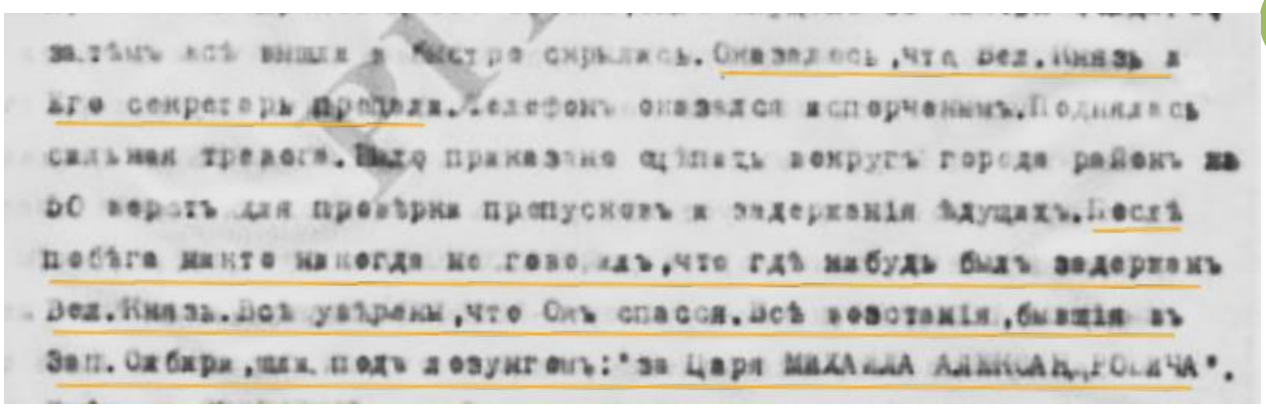
[Stamp] Chairman of the Supreme Monarchist Council.

[Date, outgoing No.] May 26 / June 8, 1922 No. 1207.

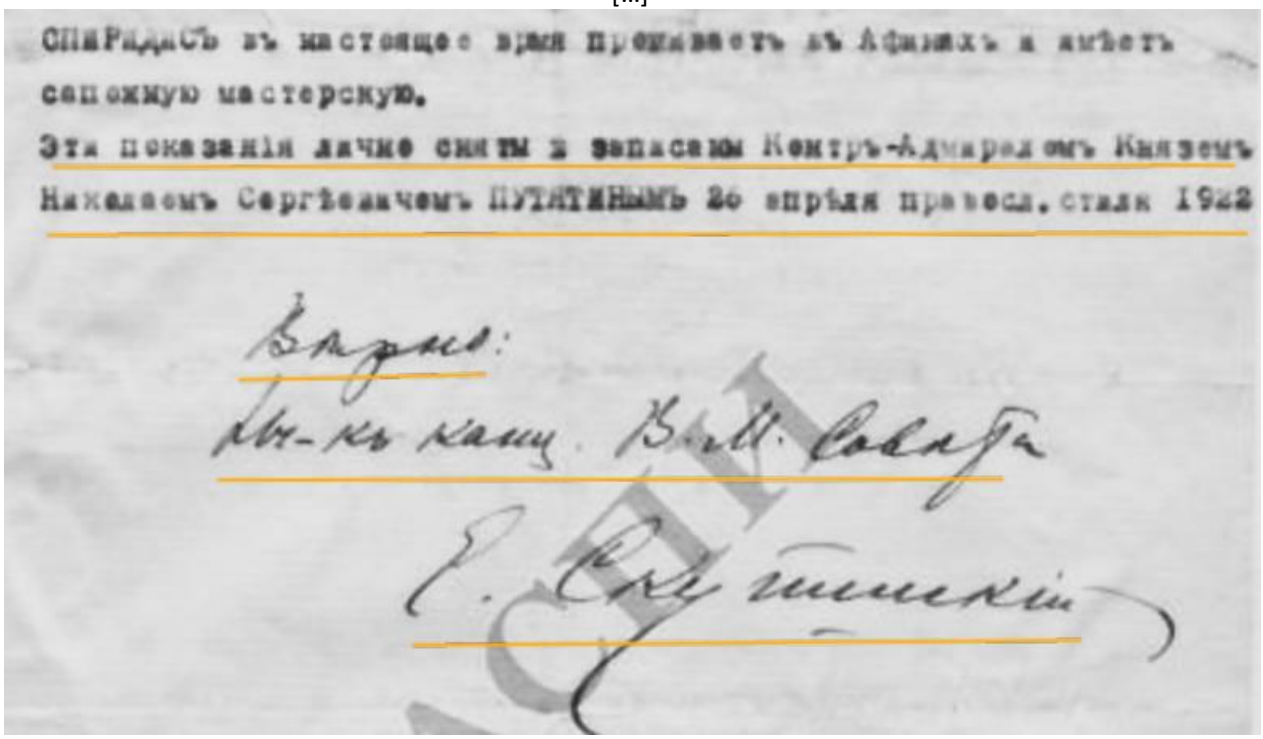
“I am enclosing a copy of Greek citizen N.K. Spiridis's testimony about the fate of the Royal Family, and I ask you not to refuse to send the Supreme Monarchist Council your opinion on the veracity of information provided by Spiridis […]

[Signature:] N. Markov."

[Resolution] “It was reported in a private letter that Spiridis is a noteworthy witness. To the case. Jud[icial] invest[igator] N. S[okolov].”



[…]



DOCUMENT No. 20. [Copy of N.K. Spiridis's Interview]. - *RGASPI,* f. 588, op. 3, d. 5, l. 117–118 (cuttings).

[Spiridis:] "[…] It turned out that the Grand Duke and His secretary had disappeared […] After the escape, no one ever said that the Grand Duke was detained anywhere. Everyone is sure that He escaped. All the uprisings that took place in Western Siberia were carried out under the slogan: "For Tsar Michael Aleksandrovich" […] This testimony was personally taken and recorded by Rear Admiral Prince Nikolai Sergeyevich Putyatin on April 26, Orthodox style, 1922.

Correct: Head of the Chancellery of the Supreme Monarchical Council E. Skupinsky[197]"

It's also important to note how Ungern's case was presented by the Red judges after his arrest in August 1921 and his public trial in September. The baron, in particular, is accused of "[…] gathering, with the assistance of Ataman Semyonov, Chinese, Mongolian, and Japanese monarchists with the aim of overthrowing Soviet power in Russia, particularly in Siberia, and restoring the monarchy there, with the enthronement of Michael Romanov […] leading an offensive against Russia and the Far Eastern Republic."[198]

Count A.N. Kamensky was the first to draw attention to Ungern's undoubted awareness that Michael had survived:

"Michael II's name was woven on his battle banner. In 1921, when, according to the Bolsheviks' official version, Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich suddenly turned from "disappeared" to "murdered", Ungern issued an order to the army, where he called to fight for his rights to the Throne. There is no reason to believe that Ungern was uninformed. On the contrary, he knew what others did not. In addition, the honor of weaving the Tsar's name on the banner and fighting under it cannot be awarded by an officer without permission - this honor is granted by the Monarch himself. And it must be earned."[199]

Thus, I agree with the conclusions of the candidate of historical sciences A.V. Zhukov, who rightly concludes: "But the very name of Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich was not simply a symbol for Baron Ungern, with the help of which it was possible to resolve purely political issues. Michael Aleksandrovich truly was for Baron Ungern the 'legitimate master of the Russian land' and 'Emperor Michael II of Russia'."[200]

[197] Evgeniy Gasparovich Skupinsky (1872-1951), graduated from the Tver Cavalry School, served as senior adjutant to the commandant of Peterhof, held the rank of colonel of the 4th Uhlan Regiment. Participant in the Reichenhall Monarchist Congress of 1921. - *RIA Officers, 2026*.
[198] *Sovetskaya Sibir,* No. 202 (562), 1921, September 20, p. 4.
[199] *Kamensky, Count, 2006*, 43.
[200] *Zhukov 2013*.

APPENDIX 2

RECORDS OF WITNESS E.G. FREYBERG'S INTERVIEW BY CAPTAIN P.P. BULYGIN, ATTACHED TO JUDICIAL INVESTIGATOR FOR PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT CASES N.A. SOKOLOV, ON THE CASE OF GRAND DUKE MICHAEL ALEKSANDROVICH'S MURDER

(*GARF*. F. 601. Op. 2. D. 53. L. 5 – 14.)

April 7, 1921

MINUTES

/l. 5/ On April 7, 1921, N[ew]/s[tyle], Guards Captain Pavel Bulygin, who is attached to judicial investigator for especially important cases N.A. Sokolov, in the city of Berlin (Germany), interviewed Ataman Semenov's representative in Germany, Colonel Ern Georgievich Freyberg, 31 years old, of Lutheran faith, as a witness on the case of Gr[and] D[uke] Michael Aleksandrovich's murder, and he testified the following:

/l. 6/ All I know is this: I arrived at the Special Manchurian Detachment in Chita on September 13, 1918, boarded the armored train "Mstitel'" ("Avenger") as a junior officer (the train was commanded by Captain Skryabin), and at first knew almost no one.

About two weeks after my arrival, a rumor spread through the Detachment that Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich had made his way from Irkutsk to Chita to see Ataman Semenov. A week later, an express train was dispatched from Chita to the East, along with two armored trains to escort it. One of them was our "Mstitel'", and the other was "Grozny" ("Fearsome"), (l. 6 rev.) under the command of Captain Vasyutinsky. They had no common commander, and they travelled independently. Word was that Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich was travelling by train to Shanghai. The armored trains were one in front, the other behind the train. "Mstitel'" was in front. As I stood on the platform before boarding (it was around 6 p.m.), I saw a group of officers about 70-80 steps away from me. In the center of the group stood a man of medium height (above average) wearing a green Circassian coat and a black papakha, resembling photographs of Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich. /l. 7/ I had never seen the Grand Duke before, but at that moment I was absolutely convinced that it was he. I repeat, he (the man in the Circassian coat) did not stand out from the group in height or figure. The station was cordoned off, and passing officers saluted the man in the Circassian coat. The group quickly filed into the carriages. Everyone said it was the Grand Duke. We arrived in Harbin early in the morning. I was asleep, as I had been on duty the day before. Captain Skryabin said that an express train was ready in Harbin to take the Grand Duke /l. 7 rev./ south to Shanghai. For me the question was then settled.

Later I met Lieutenant Colonel Popov, who often told me that during the Grand Duke's passage, he was appointed senior officer of 9 - 11 officers (from the Special Manchurian Detachment) in the Grand Duke's convoy and had the honor of sitting in the Grand Duke's compartment during the journey; and the Grand Duke told him how difficult it was for him to escape across Siberia, how he crossed a river in a boat (or went down the river), /l. 8/ travelled for a long time in carts, avoiding railways, and hid in a monastery near Irkutsk. Popov mentioned some Englishman, the Grand Duke's secretary, yes, it seems, Johnson.

I heard about Prince Vyazemsky in January - February 1918, perhaps also from Popov. They said that the Grand Duke for some reason did not want to see Vyazemsky and asked not to tell him about Him and His whereabouts. My impression is that the Grand Duke saw Prince Vyazemsky already in Siberia, but parted with him. /l. 8 rev./ They said that Prince Vyazemsky (the Grand Duke's former adjutant during the German War) was looking for the Grand Duke and lived in Krasnoyarsk for some time. I lived in

Krasnoyarsk from December 1917 and lived there until the end of March 1918 - and did not hear anything about Vyazemsky.

About 2 weeks after the Grand Duke's passage through Chita, they began to say that officers who had arrived from business trips in Shanghai had seen the Grand Duke there.

They said that the Grand Duke was living freely in a hotel, strolling around the city and even playing tennis. I think they were: Lieutenant Colonel Meyer (armored trains), Troop Sergeant Major Lesnikov (the Ataman's representative under Kalmakov), Troop Sergeant Major Gruzinsky (the Ataman's adjutant), and Yesaul Pogadayev. It was probably actor Gordon (who serves in the Ataman's counterintelligence) who said this – an unreliable man, a speculator, a dirty character. He said that he saw the Grand Duke /l. 9 rev./ himself in Shanghai on the street in civilian clothes and named the hotel where the Grand Duke was staying.

Around May or June 1919, when we were stationed in Adrianovka, a rumor again spread that the Grand Duke had come from Shanghai to Chita to see the Ataman. This was said very secretly, and three or four days later the chief of Adrianovka station came to me (I was the chief of divisional staff) and showed me a telegram he had received from Chita stating that an emergency train was being scheduled from Chita to pass through Adrianovka. (In Adrianovka, there is usually a change of locomotives and coupling of a pusher); station masters were ordered to be at the station duty officers' quarters, and the station duty officers were to be at the switches. At the same time, a rumor spread that the Gr[and] D[uke] was leaving again for Shanghai. No train passed by until midnight that day, but in the morning I learned from the station master that an emergency train with one locomotive had arrived in the early morning (due to the lifting conditions, this locomotive /l. 10 rev/ can tow 3-4 cars). This time I don't recall a[ny]o[ne] saying they saw the Gr[and] D[uke]. They also didn't talk about the reason for the Grand Duke 's arrival. They also soon stopped talking about it because military actions had begun, uprisings on the Amur road, fighting near Adrianovka, armored cars were ordered to get ready, there was much to do. The Cossack congress had begun in Chita, etc.

When the ataman blessed me for my journey here, by the way, he said:

"Beware of the French /l. 11/ and especially the British. These charming 'allies' are our enemies in every respect and have now even gone so far as to speculate on individual members of our Imperial Family. I cannot get in touch with Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich. Rumor has it the British smuggled him out of Shanghai on a cruiser."

The Ataman sent Lieutenant Hans Hansovich Kunz (an Austrian German), now residing in Karlsbad, the "Tilli", who had been with the Ataman from the very beginning, to my disposal here. He told me that he [was] in Shanghai, he met [there] an acquaintance who told him that the Gr[and] D[uke] lived in Shanghai /l. 11 rev./ and named the hotel and even the room number.

Ever since they started saying that the Gr[and] D[uke] was in Shanghai, rumors have been circulating that the Ataman is financially supporting the Gr[and] D[uke]. Actual State Councilor von Witte, who had previously been Yakutsk Governor (before the revolution) and Simbirsk Vice-Governor under Kolchak, also told me about the Gr[and] D[uke]'s stay in Shanghai and his disappearance from there. He is now in Riga.

I want to emphasize that I took all of this at face value; /l. 12/ if I had any doubts, I would have taken steps to clarify all of this on the spot. And only here in Europe have I heard a multitude of versions, I don't know where the truth lies, and I am giving this testimony, wishing to help the investigation find out the truth. I will make a correction: from Chita to Harbin , the special train was accompanied by the armored trains "Mstitel'" and not "Grozny", but "Ataman", but "Ataman" crashed en route (not far from Manchuria station) and then "Grozny" was called in. Up to Manchuria station "Mstitel'" went in front of

the train, and then "Ataman", /l. 12 rev./ until the crash. The cause of the crash was an attempt on the special train, which was known on the line.

It occurs to me that if the man in cherkesska on Chita station platform was not the Grand Duke, then it could have been the Ataman, who was travelling with us on the special train to Vladivostok , where we arrived on October 27, 1918. I never saw the Ataman in a cherkesska, but I have a photo of him in one. I often accompanied the Ataman, and he always rode /l. 13/ with two armored trains, but it never happened that there was an officer on duty on the front platform of the front armored train, as was the case this time on the "Ataman," where Lieutenant Gurulev was killed in the collision with a freight train sent in the opposite direction by railroad workers. The road was quiet, and this precaution was unusual. The lead armored train was ordered to take its time and maintain a visible distance from the special train. I'll correct myself (l. 13 rev.) that I don't remember whether Ataman travelled with us from Chita or only boarded in Harbin. In reply to your question, the fourth armored train (there were only four at the time), "Semenovets," was on Sretenskaya line, but the Ataman could have been in Harbin without an armored train, as the times were calm.

The counterintelligence officer Captain Richard Karlovich Kuntz (Russian) constantly travelled with the Ataman. He is now in Yuryev (Estonia); he also said that the Grand Duke is in Shanghai. Captain Sotnikov (who was Colonel Mungalov's adjutant in Chita, quartermaster of the Army headquarters) also said this. Sotnikov now lives /l. 14/ in Germany (Deutschland Wahmbeck bei Bodenfelde Gothaus).

My testimony, based on my words, has been written down correctly and read to me.

Ataman Semenov's representative in Germany

COLONEL FREYBERG.

Elers (a lawyer), who was travelling through Berlin to Riga, also spoke about the Gr[and] Duke's survival, but I don’t remember what exactly.

COLONEL FREYBERG.

Correct: GUAR. CAPTAIN BULYGIN.

APPENDIX 3

LETTER FROM CAPTAIN A.E. SOTNIKOV, A PARTICIPANT IN THE WHITE MOVEMENT IN TRANSBAIKALIA, TO E.G. FREYBERG ABOUT A POSSIBLE GRAND DUKE MICHAEL ALEKSANDROVICH'S STAY IN THE FAR EAST IN 1919 - 1920. APRIL 19, 1921, WAMBEEK, [GERMANY]

(*GARF*. F. 601. Op. 2. D. 53. L. 1 – 3 ob.)

/l. 1/ Dear Eric Georgievich!

I have to apologize again for the long silence. I had a lot of trouble here with the surrounding thugs, who almost started a full-blown rebellion against the administration, but now everything has settled down, and the public will be sorted into different camps.

Thank you very much for the magazine you sent me - I was very pleased with it.

My work is progressing well now, 190 pages have been written in total, in three or four weeks I think I will finish it completely and then I will send it to you by courier.

I can only convey the following to Captain Bulygin:

1) His Imperial Majesty Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich travelled through Transbaikalia in January 1919. He was accompanied to Dauria by Ataman Semenov, and from Dauria to Harbin by Baron Ungern-Sternberg. From /l. 1 ob./ Harbin, His Imperial Majesty headed south to China, but I do not know by which route - to Dairen (Port Arthur) or Shanghai.

   I received this information from the head of counterintelligence, Lieutenant Colonel Maltz, a highly decent man whom I certainly trust, especially since this information was given to me in exchange for some important information I had given – the conversation was private and personal.

2) Princess Vyazemskaya, who was very close to His Imperial Highness's morganatic wife, Princess Brasova, in a conversation with me before my departure expressed great interest in the fate of Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich and said that she was conducting a search for Gr[and] Duke Michael Aleksandrovich, but that so far it had been unsuccessful. /l. 2/ She gave me a letter addressed to Princess Brasova, which I had dropped in Italy. The letter was addressed to England, and, fearing a search while passing through Austria and Germany, I was forced, on advice of certain people, to do this, although I wanted to personally deliver it to its destination.
3) From private conversations with Japanese officers of the General Staff, I heard that Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich visited Japan after his passage through Harbin in early 1919.
4) Before leaving, I heard from numerous different sources that Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich was living in one of the English South Asian colonies, somewhere in the region of Siam. /l. 2 ob./

I have no more definitive information; knowing for certain the fate of the Emperor, I, being also firmly convinced that Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich is alive, could not attach any particular importance to his temporary whereabouts and was entirely preoccupied with the question of the Emperor's whereabouts. My information about His Highness Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich is so outdated that I am not writing it on a separate sheet or as a testimony , since it cannot shed much light at this time due to its great age.

I wonder if Princess Brasova received the letter dated early June 1920 from Princess Vyazemskaya or not? Perhaps Captain Bulygin is able to make these inquiries.

Princess Vyazemskaya was viewed rather critically in Chita, believing that she was the English party's representative /l. 3/ and worker, and was very hostile toward Baron Ungern, whose regiment her husband commanded. Subsequently, the Vyazemskys received 5,000 gold coins from Ataman Semenov, which did not prevent them from practically agitating against Semenov in Harbin.

That's all the information I can give you.

Now, I apologize for bothering you with personal matters and requests.

1) Would you mind being sokind as to assign someone to flog 50,000 or 100,000 Kerenkas? Russian money, no matter what it is, is bought at a very high price by a certain slick operator living at 11 Französische Strasse, 2nd floor, № 1. They give up to 39%. This slick operator works on behalf of the German police and is well known to them. /3 ob./

2) If it is not too much trouble for you, please, send me 300–350 marks by urgent transfer, so that I can live on them for the next m[on]th.

I am asking for 300-350 due to the upcoming holidays and some expenses not included in the usual estimate of 200 marks.

About a week ago I managed to get a separate room, but it seems that I will soon have to be in uncomfortable conditions again in this regard.

What's the news from the East? Has anyone arrived from Transbaikalia? How are you and your situation? How are your adjutants?

My sincere greetings and best wishes to Varvara Vladimirovna.

I sincerely wish you continued success, and with a feeling of great satisfaction I read your greeting to Grand Duke Dmitri Pavlovich.

Yours sincerely, A. SOTNIKOV.

P.S. If it is not too much trouble, please, do not delay sending the requested money.

APPENDIX 4

M. MIRONOV. CONVERSATION WITH GR[AND] DUKE DMITRI PAVLOVICH

(*Poslednie Novosti*. 1921. No. 275. March 13. P. 3.)

Telegrams from various European centers report on meetings of monarchists and candidates for future emperors. The telegrams mention the names of Michael Aleksandrovich and Dmitri Pavlovich. Dmitri Pavlovich is currently in Paris.

Yesterday I had the opportunity to speak with Dmitri Pavlovich. Our conversation touched on the monarchist meeting.

"Newspaper reports," said Dmitri Pavlovich, "exaggerate a lot. What is true is that I was indeed in Berlin and attended the Russian Public Assembly meeting. The members of this Assembly are overwhelmingly monarchists, but the nature of its activities was more charitable than political. Speeches were delivered at the meeting that were monarchical in nature, but did not, however, contain any specific plans for restoring the monarchy in Russia. Since the greetings were addressed to me as a representative of the royal family, after the speeches, I considered it my duty to respond with gratitude for the sentiments expressed.

"I," continued Dmitri Pavlovich, "am, of course, a monarchist, if I may say so, a monarchist by atavism. Russians who consider themselves monarchists have come to me and continue coming to me. And here I must emphasize: when the conversation turns to me personally, I stop it immediately and without any beating around the bush. When they talk about the idea of restoring monarchy in general, I declare to them:

"Leave it, now is not the time for such talk. It is necessary first to liberate exhausted Russia from Bolshevism and give the suffering people the opportunity to express their will. I don't care how the people's will is expressed, through the Zemsky Sobor or the Constituent Assembly. You ask on what basis the elections should be held: of course, on the basis that would allow the people's aspirations to be most fully expressed, that is, on the basis of universal suffrage.

I must admit that some segments of the Russian society amaze me with their view of the events currently unfolding in Russia. They believe that the four-year Russian revolution could pass without leaving a trace for Russia and its people. They believe: Russia has been in revolution for four years. Let's restore the monarchy, and everything will be peaceful and smooth again.

It is, of course, impossible to approach the issue from such a perspective. The Russian Revolution did not, and could not, pass without leaving a mark on the broad masses of people. Now the main question is to determine their wishes. And to do this, we must first liberate Russia from the Bolsheviks. At the present moment, this is the primary task, before which all other issues must yield. The Russian people themselves will declare their wishes, and in doing so, of course, they will least of all consider the sentiments and aspirations of the Russian émigré masses abroad. As the people wish, so shall it be. I have already said: I am a monarchist, but if the Russian people wished to establish a republican form of government, I would be the first to consider it my duty to submit to their decision.

Next, the conversation turned to the contenders for the Russian throne.

I consider Michael Aleksandrovich to be the legitimate successor to the Russian throne, of course, in case the Russian people wish to restore monarchy.

I have no precise information about Michael Aleksandrovich. Just a few months ago, I was convinced that Michael Aleksandrovich had died. But my last trip to Berlin somewhat shook me. There, a colonel told me that he had personally transported Michael Aleksandrovich on an armored train from

Chita to Harbin, from where Michael Aleksandrovich traveled to a Chinese port. This colonel, along with another officer, personally saw Michael Aleksandrovich disembark the train in Harbin and knew that they were transporting Michael Aleksandrovich. Neither I nor any other members of the royal family have any further information about Michael Aleksandrovich.

Empress Maria Feodorovna, however, still doesn't believe in Michael Aleksandrovich's death, just as she doesn't believe in the death of the rest of the royal family. Michael Aleksandrovich is the only legitimate heir to the Russian throne. If we stray from this legitimist path and begin to consider the question of other claimants, we could end up in a maze of palace coups that are best left unmentioned.

As we said goodbye, the conversation again turned to the latest events in Russia.

"I have always believed," said Dmitri Pavlovich, "that the Russian people would throw off the Bolshevik yoke with their own strength. History teaches us that intervention in such cases has never been successful. And even more so now, when not only the French and the English, but even the Russians themselves, find it difficult to determine what the broad masses of the Russian people are fighting for and what they want."

M. MIRONOV.

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Houghton – Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

F. NB IGU – Rare Books and Manuscripts Fund of the Scientific Library of Irkutsk State University, Irkutsk.

OGKU GAIO – State Archive of Irkutsk Region, Irkutsk.

RGASPI – Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History, Moscow.

RGIA - Russian State Historical Archive, St. Petersburg

RGVA – Russian State Military Archive, Moscow.

TsA FSB RF – Central Archive of Federal Security Service (FSB) of the Russian Federation, Moscow.

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Personal Testimonies about Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich's Survival (1918) in Light of Newly Discovered Archival Documents. / V. V. Serafimov - Belgrade, Center of the Russian Geographical Society in Serbia, 2026. – 64 p. / il.

The article continues the author's research *Velikii Kniaz' Mikhail Aleksandrovich, Poslednii Imperator. Taina Uchasti. Opyt Istoricheskoi Rekonstruktsii* [Grand Duke Michael Aleksandrovich, the Last Emperor. The Mystery of his Fate. A Historical Reconstruction Experiment]. (St. Petersburg: Aleteya, 2023, 504, illus.). The de jure Emperor, to whom his abdicated elder brother, Nicholas II, transferred the Throne and supreme power in his famous act of March 02, 1917, a relative or in-law of many European Royal Houses, including the Serbian Karađorđević and the Montenegrin Petrović, Michael was beloved and sought after in aristocratic and political circles during the Second Russian Time of Troubles. The historical and political context of personal testimonies about Michael's rescue from the hands of the Reds after his disappearance from exile in Perm on June 13, 1918 (New Style (N.S.)) is significantly expanded. A new analysis of the informants' testimonies about their meetings with the Grand Duke in the autumn of 1918 was carried out with the use of newly discovered archival documentary and diary sources, periodicals from the Civil War era and the period of preparation for the monarchist congress in Bad Reichenhall (1921, Bavaria), which made it possible to clarify and detail the data in support of the survival version.

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