

ETERNAL MEMORY TO
HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS

THE GRAND DUKE
WLADIMIR KYRILLOVICH OF RUSSIA



1917 - 1992

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EDITOR PETER KOLTYPIN

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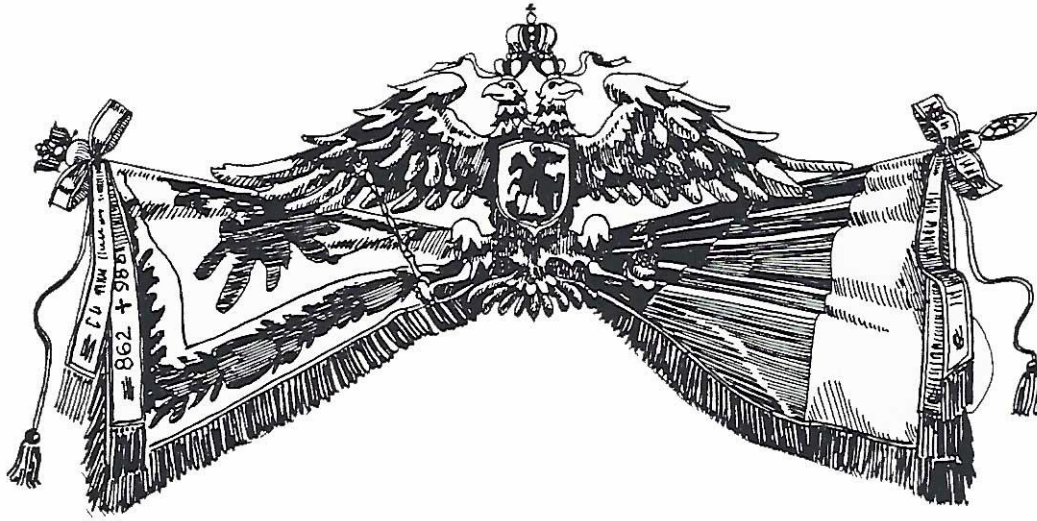
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Queen of All Skete
445 Longshot Ln.
Rochelle, VA 22738

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Peter Koltypin



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INTRODUCTION

by

Peter N. Koltypin, Commander (1972-1994)



Peter Nikolaevich
Koltypin-Wallovskoy

On the 21st of April in the year of our Lord 1992 at the age of 74, still full of life and energy, His Imperial Highness Grand Duke Wladimir Kyrillovich, legal Heir to the Russian Imperial Throne, suddenly and before his time, departed from us into eternal life, a Knight of unblemished Russian dignity and honor.

Having inherited abroad the Throne of the Russian Empire by Fundamental Law, he humbly preferred the title of Grand Duke until such time as the Homeland political situation changed and would allow, once again with the help of God and the Russian people, the restoration and fulfillment of the Fundamental Laws of the Russian Empire.

Meanwhile, living outside of Russia as the unquestioned head of the Dynasty for 54 years, the Grand Duke uncompromisingly and unwaveringly carried high the banner of Russian honor and dignity. He was ready at all times everywhere or wherever it was needed throughout the entire free world. His Imperial Highness appeared as an August spokesman defending and protecting Russia's genuine interests and monarchist beliefs and principles. At the same time, he called to all throughout the free world for an uncompromising struggle against Communism. Not once had he entertained the idea of a compromise or negotiation with that cancer of humanity, as he called the Communists. It is interesting to point out that during the same period of time, many leaders of Western countries often helped and made arrangements with the persecutors of the people of Russia and the world Red menace. Simultaneously, he completely accepted the sacrificial task of carrying out the heavy duties and responsibilities of representation, and even more: the leadership of the thousand-year-old Dynasty of the Russian Imperial House, who are the historical descendants of the Byzantine Empire: the founders of Christian culture.

In all his appearances with diplomatic contacts or in meetings – whether with crowned heads of state, other heads of state, scholars, diplomats, military officers of various ranks, the news media, or with just ordinary people – the Grand Duke radiated the aura of charisma associated

with royalty. All who met him were fascinated and enchanted and left with a special feeling of warmth and joy that would stay with them for the rest of their lives. Very often one could hear delighted exclamations of "Yes, this man is indeed of royal blood – he is a Knight of his people." Yes, we can say with complete confidence that for the 75 years of the existence of the Russian political emigration, no other person brought more positive information and influence in the free world in promoting the Russian liberation idea, as did His Imperial Highness, the Grand Duke Wladimir Kyrillovich of Russia.

Everything that was said above is expressed in a very humble and abbreviated manner: because for a complete description of the Grand Duke's deeds, works and sacrifices for the benefit of His Motherland and the fulfillment of His royal obligations would require voluminous pages, which we believe will be done in a separate publication. We can say with certainty that the Grand Duke's entire life was the embodiment of love and devotion for Russia and His people. For us, the Russian monarchists, the demise of the Grand Duke is indescribable and a heavy loss. However, what is even more important is that for Russia and the Russian people, it is a tragedy of enormous proportions.

In the course of my 45 years of service for the cause of His Imperial Highness, I have been an eyewitness to numerous appearances by the Grand Duke in His difficult and responsible post – both in Europe and in the United States. In America, our organization, the Order of the Imperial Union of Russia had been on so many occasions given the special honor of organizing numerous banquets, conventions, invitations to and brought to the United States, the entire August Family. All of these events were organized by us for the benefit of the appearance of the Grand Duke Wladimir Kyrillovich with the purpose of his developing a closer relationship with the Russians living abroad, and also affording us the opportunity to introduce him to American society and the free world; and through him, to gain knowledge of the Russian Freedom Fighters and the Russian Liberation movement. These appearances by the Grand Duke always had a special meaning: his authority and experience in diplomatic circles, and his relationship with foreign intellectual circles in the world which were acquiring a special importance for the Russian Anti-Communist liberation movements.

In the process of the organization, preparation and realization of many such appearances of His Imperial Highness, the members of our Order, including myself, had the rare honor to be in close personal contact for days while accompanying the August Family throughout the entire eastern part of the United States. Through these trips and associations, we were honored to be engaged in many meetings – in many cases prolonged for hours in personal discussions with the Grand Duke, who, for us, personified a Knight of Russian honor.

At almost all such meetings and discussions with us, the Grand Duke amazed us so many times with his common sense and his detailed and keen knowledge of events which were then occurring in Russia, and so also in the rest of the world: and most importantly, the fact that in all cases the Grand Duke came to a "correct political diagnosis" – always with the interests of free Russia his first priority. At the same time, he did not forget the need of all mankind, and felt the necessity for peace for all countries as a priority ahead of this own political wishes and aspirations. The Grand Duke was a man with a true statesman's mind in a worldwide spectrum.

For Russia he could have been the wanted and needed "Renaissance Tsar" and an outstanding statesman: but the ways of Our Lord are inscrutable.

However, for the Russians – just liberated from the Communist madness in Russia, in like manner for those of us living abroad – the Grand Duke can be and must be an example: a guiding star towards accomplishing our cherished goal, namely the revival of Russia's great heritage through the restoration of Her historic destiny. By Herculean Russian spirit and Christian love, our ancestors of more than a thousand years initiated a way, a course, which is clear and fundamental – "For Faith, Tsar, and Motherland". The restoration of Monarchy in Russia must become a priority – for which will come through the revival of Russian statehood, the truth of history and political stabilization. Towards these goals the Grand Duke always strived.

The advantages of Monarchy, as distinguished from other political regimes in the world, are numerous. However, in this case the pronouncement is very short and very clear: "THE KING IS DEAD – LONG LIVE THE KING". This law established many centuries ago, eliminates the struggle for power: and the state stability is undisturbed, as also the progress of the people in all stages of its development.

For us Russians, the Laws of Succession authored by Emperor Paul I, which were strictly adhered to by all successive Emperors, clarify this question clearly and simply. The successor by Law, of His Imperial Highness Grand Duke Wladimir Kyrillovich of Russia, is his August Daughter, Her Imperial Highness Grand Duchess Maria Wladimirovna. As in our Christian Orthodox Church there are church Canons which are strictly adhered to and carried out by all our clergy, so also the Law of Succession handed down to us by Paul I, is similar to the Canon Laws of the Church. It is the duty of all the Russian people, and of our like-minded friends, to unite around Her Imperial Highness the Grand Duchess Maria and Her son, the Grand Duke George, in order to help them.

In April of this year, for the first time in the last 75 years of Russian history, extraordinary events happened, just as for us living abroad, so also, for the Russian people and for all people throughout the world who cherish the ideals of monarchy ... these events being the mourning of the death, and burial in Russia of the head of the Russian Imperial House, the Grand Duke Wladimir Kyrillovich. Despite all of her trials, and through superhuman efforts, Her Imperial Highness Grand Duchess Leonida Georgevna surmounted all of her difficulties – fulfilling the Grand Duke's will; and she obtained the consent and the support of the Russian government and the government of the city of Saint Petersburg, and of the Patriarch, to bury the Grand Duke in the Romanov's royal tomb in the Fortress of Saints Peter and Paul in Saint Petersburg.

On the 28th of April 1992, the coffin containing the Grand Duke's August body was flown from Paris to Saint Petersburg and brought to Saint Isaac's Cathedral accompanied by the August Family and its entourage. Associates of the Grand Duke, members of the entourage, and monarchist friends of His Imperial Highness stayed all night by the casket and prayed and read the King David Psalms.

The memorial services were scheduled for 10 a.m. on Wednesday the 29th of April: but already early in the morning, a multitude of people from all over Russia gathered at Saint Isaac's

Cathedral to bid farewell and to pray by the Royal coffin for the soul of the newly departed Head of the House of Romanov. On the 4th day of Pascha¹ at the special Paschal liturgy, the number in attendance at the memorial service approximated 10,000 to 15,000 people, and some say even more – and all taking place on a weekday.

Both services, the Liturgy and Memorial Service, were extraordinarily solemn with prayer and spirituality. The Grand Duke's casket was surrounded by many clergy headed by the Patriarch. The famous choir from the Alexander Nevsky Lavra sang for the services. The services were held with great solemnity and religious strictness in an atmosphere of royal décor; and there was a real feeling of confirmation that this was indeed an Emperor's funeral. The services were also attended by the Imperial Family and representatives and dignitaries of the Russian government, and from the Order of the Imperial Union of Russia arriving from different cities throughout Russia, as well as: representatives from various monarchist, military and Cossack organizations, representatives of the Russian Nobility Assembly of Russia and Nobility from throughout the world. It is gratifying to point out that there were in attendance delegations from different diplomatic corps and an extraordinarily large number of Russian and foreign media.

It was with deep grief and enduring sorrow that, neither I nor other members of our Order from America were for many reasons of great inconvenience unable to attend the memorial service on the 29th of April. However, 40 days after the passing of the Grand Duke – that is on the 29th of May 1992 – I flew to Saint Petersburg and attended the burial services of the Grand Duke accompanied by Professor Constantine (Richard) Desrosiers², Senior Member of our Order. We were attached to the Royal Family entourage; and in close proximity, we attended all of the solemn services and receptions attendant upon this historical and tragic event.

As we returned from Russia, Senior Member Constantine Desrosiers and I immediately drew up detailed notes of all the events related to the official burial in Russia of our lamented Grand Duke. Based on these detailed notes, this entire train of events came into publication.



¹ The Feast of the Resurrection of the Lord; Easter (a term generally not used in Orthodox Christianity)

² Later ordained to the priesthood by His Eminence, the Most Reverend Metropolitan Hilarion, First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, and is now known as Father Constantine

THE LAST DAYS OF HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS THE GRAND DUKE WLADIMIR

In January 1992, the secretariat of His Imperial Highness The Grand Duke Wladimir, Head of the Russian Imperial House, received an invitation requesting that the Grand Duke deliver a speech in Miami, Florida, the following April. On the day the invitation was received, Brien P. Horan, who was a friend of the Grand Duke and who had acted as his lawyer for several years, dined with the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess Wladimir at their Paris residence. Mr. Horan is American, and the Grand Duke therefore sought his counsel as to whether to accept the Miami invitation. Both agreed that, due to other demands, the invitation should be declined. Commenting on the strenuous nature of a transatlantic journey, the Grand Duke stated to his friend, "I feel that I should hold myself in reserve for Russia."

In making this remark, His Imperial Highness was certainly referring to the need to shepherd his strength to be of service to his country at a time of cataclysmic change. His life had begun in the same year that Communism's domination of his country had begun. Communism had held his country in its brutal grip for 74 years, and at the time of its collapse he thus was 74 years of age. As such, he was subject to the ailments and physical frailties that are typical of septuagenarians. As head of the Dynasty, he had been, since the institution of Glasnost, inundated with requests and communications from his country: requests for meetings from visiting dignitaries of the Russian government, church, diplomatic service and military services; constant requests from the Russian media for press and television interviews; and a torrent of mail from across the breadth of the former Soviet Union. His trip to Russia two months previously in November 1991, his first and last trip to his homeland, had deeply moved him, but had taken place at a strenuous pace.

Despite his reluctance in January to undertake a trip to North America, the Grand Duke subsequently decided to accept the invitation to deliver a speech. The invitation was from the Northern Trust Bank of Florida located in Miami. The speech would be delivered before a breakfast attended by some 1500 leaders of business, industry and finance in Florida. The Northern Trust Bank asked him to speak on the subject of "The Imperial Family and the Future of All the Russias". His Imperial Highness felt most strongly that it was essential for the United States and the European Community to invest in and provide substantial economic assistance to the states of the former Soviet Union to ensure their transition from Communism. Presented with an opportunity to deliver this message in forceful terms to a prominent business audience in America, he felt that, despite the strain of a transatlantic voyage, it was his particular duty as a Russian to accept the invitation.

The speech was scheduled for delivery in the Main Ballroom of the Omni International Hotel in Miami on the morning of April 22, 1992. The Grand Duke Wladimir and the Grand Duchess Leonida arrived in Miami late in the afternoon of April 20. They were accompanied on their trip from Paris by Prince Nicholas Ouroussoff, the Grand Duke's aide, and his wife, Princess Nelly Ouroussoff, who acted as lady-in-waiting to the Grand Duchess. They stayed at the Omni International Hotel.



This photo, taken at the press conference, is perhaps the last photograph taken of the Grand Duke Wladimir, moments before his passing. Sitting next to him during the press conference is Brien Purcell Horan, his lawyer

The Grand Duke's attorney, Brien P. Horan, arrived in Miami from Connecticut late in the evening of April 20. At 8 o'clock on the morning of Tuesday, April 21, Mr. Horan joined the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess for breakfast in their suite. They were joined shortly afterwards by Prince and Princess Ouroussoff. The meal was a "working breakfast", and the morning was spent discussing the agenda for the following days and catching up on each other's news.

At 10:15 a.m., the Grand Duke and the Grand Duchess, accompanied by the Ouroussoffs and Mr. Horan, travelled by limousine to the Northern Trust Bank in Miami, where a press conference was scheduled. They arrived at about 10:40, and the Grand Duke was interviewed by two journalists from The Miami Herald and Miami Today. Shortly after 11:00 a.m., the Grand Duke and his party moved to an adjoining conference room for a press conference with other journalists.

During the press conference, the Grand Duke was seated at a table on a platform, with a microphone in front of him. The Northern Trust Bank had placed a Russian flag behind the table, and on the wall behind him was a massive double-headed eagle. He asked for Brien Horan to sit beside him, in the event he was unable to hear any questions that might be posed from the audience.

The first two or three questions were posed to him in Spanish, one of the five languages which he spoke perfectly. Some five minutes into the press conference, he completed an eloquent answer to a question, describing the large volume of mail he received from young people in Russia and observing that the future of Russia lay in the hands of its youth. Seconds after completing his answer, the Grand Duke's head slumped gently to the right, almost as if he had simply fallen asleep. It was approximately 11:20 a.m.

His Imperial Highness was quickly removed from his chair and placed on the floor. Mouth-to-mouth resuscitation was administered, and a team of paramedics arrived minutes later. He was transported by ambulance to nearby Mercy Hospital, a medical institution run by an order of Roman Catholic nuns. One of the hospital's top surgeons, Dr. Centurion, spent nearly two hours struggling valiantly but unsuccessfully to revive the Grand Duke. During this time, Sister Elizabeth

Worley, chairman of the hospital's board of trustees, protected the Grand Duchess from the journalists who had arrived at the scene, and an Orthodox priest was summoned to administer the last rites. His Imperial Highness was officially pronounced dead at about 1:54 p.m.

Since her husband had travelled to the United States of America, to deliver an important message about Russia, Grand Duchess Leonida felt that he would definitely have wished his speech to be delivered as scheduled. She asked Prince Ouroussoff if he would read it. On the following morning at 8:00 a.m., dressed in black, the Grand Duchess, accompanied by the Ouroussoffs and Brien Horan, arrived at the breakfast meeting. The crowd of 1500 people stood for a moment of silence in the Grand Duke's honor. Mr. Horan then introduced Prince Ouroussoff, who read the Grand Duke's eloquent speech. The crowd was obviously deeply moved by the speech and rose in standing ovation at its conclusion. The Grand Duchess and her party left at the conclusion of the speech.



Prince Nikolai Nikolaevich Ouroussoff read the Grand Duke's eloquent speech, moving the crowd to a standing ovation at its conclusion

Later in the morning of April 23, George Fedoroff, friend of the August Family and secretary-general of the Order of Imperial Union of Russia, a well-known monarchist organization, arrived to assist the Grand Duchess with the many details that had to be attended to. Peter Koltypin, the Grand Duke's friend and the commander of the Order of Imperial Union of Russia (who had served as the Grand Duke's aide during his previous visits to the United States over many years), had been unable to join the Grand Duke on his April 20 arrival in Miami due to Mr. Koltypin's

attendance, at the Grand Duke's request, at a legal hearing in New York that had been scheduled long in advance. Hearing the news of the Grand Duke's passing, he remained in contact with the Grand Duchess by telephone. On the evening of April 22, a memorial service was held at the Russian Orthodox Church of Saint Wladimir in Miami.

In the next two days, as the story of His Imperial Highness' death was carried in newspapers throughout the world, messages of condolence flowed in from the mighty and the humble throughout the world: from the Government of Russia, from the Russian Orthodox Church, from the King and Queen of Spain, from the Prime Minister of France, from the American Ambassador in Paris and from many other heads of state, diplomats, and just ordinary people.

As required by Florida law, an autopsy was performed on His Imperial Highness. It was performed by the highly respected Miami medical examiner, Joseph H. David, M.D., who, because of the Grand Duke's international prominence, conducted a thorough analysis. Although a heart attack was at first suspected, the cause of death was determined to be due to an abdominal aneurism.

On the morning of Thursday, April 23, an Orthodox priest conducted a private memorial service attended by the Grand Duchess and her immediate entourage. This was the first viewing of the Grand Duke's remains since his death two days earlier. Unfortunately, the undertaker had not been informed that the arms of a deceased of the Orthodox faith are normally crossed, and it was too late to correct this omission.

The deepest aspiration of the Grand Duchess was to realize her late husband's profound wish to be buried in Russia. She fully expected that, due to the complications of bureaucracy and red tape, it might take months or even years to achieve this goal. She was therefore deeply moved to receive a telephone call from Moscow during the afternoon of April 23 informing her that President Yeltsin and the President of the Russian Presidium had just signed a decree granting permission for the late Head of the Russian Imperial House to be buried in Russia.

On the evening of Friday, April 24, which was Good Friday, the Grand Duchess and the Ouroussoffs accompanied the Grand Duke's remains on a flight to Paris, where they were met on arrival the following morning by the Grand Duchess Maria of Russia, the Grand Duke's only child and the new Head of the Russian Imperial House.

Two days later, the two Grand Duchesses and the 11-year-old Grand Duke George accompanied the Grand Duke's remains on an Aeroflot flight to Saint Petersburg. On April 29, a three-and-a-half-hour funeral Mass was sung by Patriarch Alexei II of the Russian Orthodox Church and a host of bishops and priests in Saint Isaac's Cathedral. It was attended by some 15,000 mourners. The Patriarch, who had met the Grand Duke during his November 1991 visit to Saint Petersburg, eulogized him as follows: "I was very impressed by his deep faith, his love for Russia and her people, whom he wished to help ... His whole life outside, all his feelings and efforts, Grand Duke Wladimir Kyrillovich dedicated to a country he considered his own... His faith and long patience were not in vain. On the eve of his passage to the other world, he stepped on his native soil... On his return from Russia, he never ceased to dedicate all his strength to assist

his country, and, despite his fragile health, he went to the United States to persuade various American business circles to help Russia and to have faith in his country. He died during this trip."

May his soul rest in peace.



MEMORIES OF THE GRAND DUKE

by

Ivan Ivanovich Bilibin
Chief of the Imperial Chancellery



Ivan Ivanovich Bilibin
1908-1993

I first met the Grand Duke Wladimir at the end of 1934, when he came to London with his parents and sister, the Grand Duchess Kira, to attend the wedding of his cousin, Princess Marina of Greece and the Duke of Kent, youngest son of King George V. By that time, I had already had five years of work in the Russian monarchist movement and had already heard a great deal from my fellow monarchists about the person and character of the young heir, his Russian spirit and his determination to do his duty.

When I met him, my hopes were fully justified. What struck me most was his excellent Russian: not a trace of foreign accent and with a good command of style and phrase, and that in a young man living not in Paris with its numerous Russian colony, but in a Breton seaside town. The reason for this I learned later, and it is worth reporting. The Grand Duke Cyril was approached by the Headmaster of College with a proposal to take his son as a pupil on favorable terms at his college, one of the best public schools in England. This was opposed by the Grand duchess Victoria on the grounds that, however excellent an education Wladimir might get there, there was nevertheless the danger that, living in this English boarding school, he might lose his Russian identity. Instead, the young heir was educated at home in Russian and took his matriculation examination at the Russian Gymnasium in Paris.

It is interesting to note the part played in this decision by the Grand Duchess Victoria, and especially to note it today, when foes in the emigration and, following in their footsteps, foes in Russia have again taken up arms against our Imperial Family. There is nothing new in this. At the time about which I am writing it was precisely the Grand Duchess Victoria who was the main target of similar outbursts of hostility. It was said that she hated Russians and did not know a word of Russian. And yet when I first visited Saint-Briac in the autumn of 1935, I heard her speaking Russian to the late Prince Serge Obolensky.

In March 1936, the Grand Duchess Victoria died. The time had come for the Grand Duke Wladimir to begin his higher education, and it was decided to send him to the London School of Economics, a branch of the University of London. In connection with this, the Grand Duke Cyril with his son and the Grand Duchess Kira spent some time at Kew Cottage, a residence in the London suburb of Kew at the disposal of guests of the British Royal Family coming from abroad. This gave me the opportunity to have closer contact with the Grand Duke Cyril and his heir.

The Grand Duke Cyril died on the 12th of October, 1938. In the spring of 1939, at the initiative of King George VI, the Grand Duke Wladimir, in order to widen his knowledge of the working of industry and the conditions of industrial workers, was placed in a works at Stamford where, following the example of his great ancestor Peter the Great, he used the pseudonym Vladimir Mikhailov. Nobody in Stamford except the management of the works, not even his landlady, knew that the young man living in their midst was the successor to the Russian throne. He spent Saturdays and Sundays in London, dropping the pseudonym, and I called every Saturday to get my instructions. In August he went on leave to Saint-Briac, where he was overtaken by the outbreak of the second world war and did not return to England.

Let us return to the position of the Russian legitimist monarchist movement in the years immediately preceding the beginning of the second world war. During his stay in England in 1934 the Grand Duke Cyril took special interest in Prince Vsevolode, who lived in London. After the Grand Duke Wladimir and his possible descendants, Prince Vsevolode was next in line of succession. He had been educated at Eton and Oxford and was not yet married. Unfortunately, he did not speak Russian. The Grand Duke Cyril decided to get him involved in Russian affairs, to which he readily agreed. At the insistence of the Grand Duke, he started to learn Russian, but unfortunately did not bring his studies to a successful end. In June 1937 he was invited to the coronation of King George VI. It was decided to appoint him August Representative of the Head of the Imperial House of Russia in Great Britain.

After the demise of the Grand Duke Cyril the Grand Duke Wladimir issued a Manifesto on the 31st of October 1938 in which he declared: "Following the example of my father, profoundly aware of the sacred duty incumbent on me, I accept by inheritance, by the supreme right of Head of the Imperial House of Russia to which I have succeeded, all the rights and duties which belong to me by virtue of the Fundamental Laws of the Russian Empire and the Statute on the Imperial Family." At the same time his chancellery issued two circulars, in the one stating that the Head of the Imperial House would continue using the title of Grand Duke, and in the other that some people had sworn an oath of allegiance to him as Emperor and that he accepted their oath. From this it was clear that among the rights and duties inherited by him from his imperial ancestors was the title of Emperor, and that this enabled his descendants to bear the title of Grand Duke in the order established by the Statute on the Imperial Family of 1886.

In many émigré circles the desire arose at that time to try once again to unite as many organizations as possible, this time around the new Head of the Imperial House. These efforts were approved by the Grand Duke Wladimir and by the majority of the Members of the Imperial House, mainly by the Grand Dukes Andrew and Dmitry and by Prince Gabriel. Members of the

Imperial House resident in Paris met at a conference on the 24th of October at which a statement was issued containing the order of succession of all living members of the dynasty. The Grand Duke Wladimir let it be known that he was ready to welcome all organizations seeking to struggle for the cause of the liberation of Russia under his patronage but would not establish any special relations with any one of them. He instructed the Grand Duke Andrew to look after organizations of the older generation and the Grand Duke Dmitry to look after organizations of the younger generation.

The Representation of the Head of the Imperial House in Great Britain, headed by Prince Vsevolode, was broadened. I was appointed head of the press department. In this connection I especially remember one event. *The London Daily Express* published a report that the Germans allegedly offered the Grand Duke Wladimir help to become Head of an independent Ukrainian State. The French radio gave the Grand Duke the opportunity to broadcast a statement denying that he would ever accept such a proposal I was instructed to send a denial to the *Daily Express*. It published rather an acid report of my denial, suggesting that other sources supported their original report.

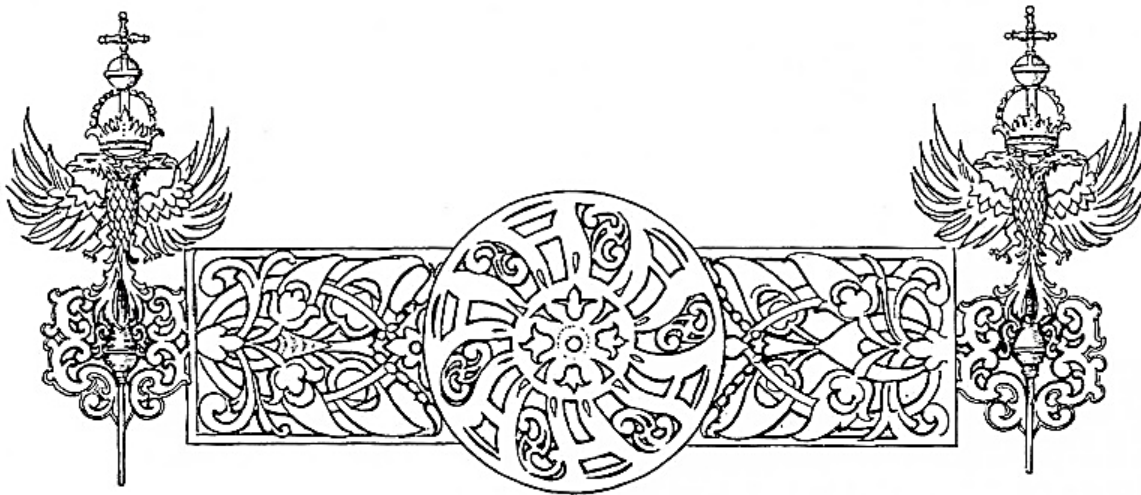
In the beginning of the war, before the fall of France, it was possible, with some limitations, to maintain connections with Saint-Briac. The Soviet-Finnish War presented special interest. It looked as though, with the Great Powers involved with operations in the West, it had become possible, with the help of the Finns, to launch a new White offensive without any threat to the integrity of Russian territory. Hopes were centered on Finland's president, Marshal Mannerheim, as an old Russian guards officer. Steps were taken to get to know his reaction. He let it to be known that this was a risk which he was not prepared to face.

In this short article I decided to limit myself to reporting on affairs with which I was in one way or another connected, and for this reason I shall not dwell on what the Grand Duke had to experience under German occupation in France and on his wanderings and troubles during and after the defeat of Germany. Towards the end of the forties, I learned of his residence in Madrid and renewed contact. I did not meet him again until April 1961. Since then, I resumed my active service, first as a loyal subject, then as private secretary in Great Britain, and after the death of N.E. Wouytch as chancellor. I shall now try to say a few words about his approach to the problems that faced him.

Many people have dwelt on his physical resemblance to the Emperor Alexander III. I would say that he had not only a physical resemblance to this outstanding monarch. Alexander III became known as Tsar-Peacemaker. The Grand Duke Wladimir always said (and expressed this view in his messages) that the main advantage of hereditary monarchy consists in the fact that such a monarch is not indebted for his power to any group – national, party, social, religious or economic – that forms part of his State and can therefore always act as arbiter in case of conflict between any of these groups. He often gave practical illustrations of his peacemaking approach. On one occasion Russian workers employed at the French Creuzot works invited him to visit them. On arrival, he asked them if there were any Russians in the works' sick bay. He was told that the only patients there were Ukrainian separatists, hostile to everything Russian. He insisted on visiting them and the separatists were delighted. When a Georgian ballet company was on a

tour in Bradford, the Grand Duke and his Consort attended one of the performances and invited the dancers to dinner. The Grand Duchess Leonida heard one ballerina address another in Georgian: "Here is the future Russian Tsar". In international sporting events there were never any "Soviet" sportsmen for him. They were always his own sort – Russians, Ukrainians, Georgians, Lithuanians and so on. As for the latest events in Russia, up to his visit to Saint Petersburg a year ago and his demise at the end of April this year, he always emphasized that many efforts were required to restore the prosperity of Russia and that squabbles could only delay it.

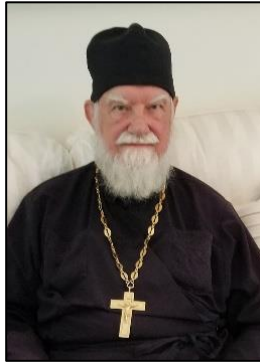
It was in this spirit that the Grand Duke Wladimir and his Consort brought up their daughter, the Grand Duchess Maria, now Head of the Imperial House of Russia. In her message to the Russian people in May this year she stated that the great historic merit of her Father was that, during the many decades of his headship of the Imperial House, "following the behest made by Simeon, Grand Duke of Moscow, during the Tartar yoke, he 'never let the candle go out'. Keeping this candle unextinguished up to the present day, my father handed it to me. And now, faithful to my oath, I shall go on carrying it". The Grand Duchess declared that she had brought up her son "fully aware of his rights and duties and ready to do his duty to his great fatherland" and that in the present troubled days she would "in every way encourage the creative aspirations of our countrymen and decisively reject all endeavors and actions detrimental to the country".



ETERNAL MEMORY TO
HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS

THE GRAND DUKE WLADIMIR KYRILLOVICH
OF RUSSIA

by
Dr. Constantine (Richard) Desrosiers



Professor Constantine (Richard) Desrosiers
(AKA Father Constantine)

**"DIC, HOSPES, SPARTAE NOS TE HIC VIDISSE IACENTIS,
DUM SANCTIS PATRIAE LEGIBUS OBSEQUIMUR."**

**"TELL IT, O STRANGER, IN SPARTA, THAT YOU HAVE SEEN
US LYING HERE,
WHILE WE REMAIN FAITHFUL TO THE SACRED LAWS OF OUR
FATHERLAND."³**

The ranks, not only of Russian monarchists but also of supporters of the ideal of monarchy throughout the world were shocked and saddened by the sudden death on April 8/21, 1992⁴ in Miami, Florida, of His Imperial Highness, the Grand Duke Wladimir Kyrillovich of Russia. What made the sudden death of His Imperial Highness even more tragic in the eyes of many was the fact that it occurred at the very time of increasing interest and growing promise for the cause of restoration in Russia. To be sure, trust in the ever-loving Will of God offers immediate and absolute consolation. Added to this is the realization that of all the forms of government, the monarchy, because of its essential foundation upon natural law and the ideal of the family, provides the consolation of governmental continuity. The issue of continuity, in fact, was paramount in the mind of the Blessed Emperor Paul I when, in 1797, as Imperial lawgiver and codifier, he proclaimed the fundamental law governing succession to the throne and stipulated as the first and primary rule that the Throne never be vacant, that there always be a Tsar *de iure*⁵,

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tusculanae_Disputationes

⁴ Throughout this paper, all dates will be given, first, according to the Old or Julian Calendar as used to this day by the Russian Orthodox Church and, secondly, according to the New or Gregorian Calendar, used commonly today throughout the world.

⁵ The legal and legitimate government of a nation or state recognized by other nations or states

that upon the death of the incumbent his legitimate successor at once assume the position of Emperor.

This very prudent and practical requirement, in the light of the history of the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 and its bloody aftermath imposed a terrible and well-nigh insupportable burden of responsibility upon the shoulders of His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Wladimir since He came to the throne in 1938. As a true knight He never faltered in all circumstances and against every impediment in carrying out His royal duty.

Over two thousand years ago the great Roman orator and statesman, Marcus Tullius Cicero, himself also destined in 43 B.C. to die a martyr's death in the defense of the collapsing Roman Republic, in his *Tusculan Disputations* (1.42.101) thus translates with the Latin elegiac couplet quoted at the outset of the original Greek epitaph written over four centuries earlier by the Poet Simonides for the heroic Spartans who stood their ground at the Battle of Thermopylae⁶ in 480 B.C. and to the death defended their country against the crushing hordes of Asiatic invaders. There is no more fitting tribute for patriots than the acknowledgment by all, even their foes, that, as the great Apostle Paul puts it, they fought the good fight (II Timothy 4.7) and did their duty, even unto death, so that death took them unrelenting, in their loyalty undaunted.

Like the Spartan Heroes at Thermopylae, the Grand Duke Wladimir met death doing His August duty, struggling for the cause of Holy Russia, not with violence and arms but rather with words and logic in the forum of ideas and ideals. His Imperial Highness succumbed in the process of addressing the Spanish-speaking press of Latin America, lecturing and educating, as He had unstintingly done for most of His 74 years, about the history of Russia, her cruel enslavement to the Communist tyrants and the possible paths of tranquility and true peace that with God's blessing would attend her longed-for liberation.

As the Grand Duke so often put it with that exceedingly rare humility which characterized the true Christian King, He was always ready and prepared to serve in the fulfillment of the task He alone could accomplish for His beloved Russia. It was the August conviction of His Imperial Highness, a conviction neither



Saint Isaacs Cathedral in Saint Petersburg which was recently restored and rededicated

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Thermopylae

years of trying exile nor the seemingly endless horror of Communism could shake, that the glorious Russian monarchical traditions have within themselves essentially those constitutional advantages which especially today promise both the order and the freedom the Russian nation so urgently needs and has every right to have.



H.I.H. Grand Duke Wladimir's coffin inside Saint Nicholas Chapel in the monastic Lavra of Saint Alexander Nevsky in Saint Petersburg. Dr. Constantine Desrosiers, a representative of the Order of Imperial Union of Russia, paying his last respects

Within a few days of hearing the first sad tidings from Miami, the faithful followers of His Imperial Highness had their feelings of understandable grief compounded by genuine amazement and expectancy, as the body of the Grand Duke was removed first to France and then directly to the newly re-named capital of Saint Petersburg, so that by the ninth day of His Imperial Highness' passing, April 16/29, Bright Wednesday, His funeral formally took place in the massive and recently restored Cathedral of Saint Isaac⁷, conducted by Patriarch Alexei II along with a multitude of clergy of the Russian Orthodox church and attended by many officials of the Russian state, including Mayor Anatoly Sobchak of Saint Petersburg. In addition, according to different estimates between ten and fifteen thousand Russians and others attended the Grand Duke's funeral in the Cathedral of Saint Isaac.

Due to the fact that the Imperial burial of the Grand Duke was to be in the ancient fortress of Saints Peter and Paul⁸, a full forty days were required for the Russian government of President Yeltsin to prepare the grave. This, in turn, allowed

for the gathering of Russian monarchists from all over the world. A chartered plane brought people from France while others traveled not only from Belgium, Germany and other areas of Europe but also from as far away as H. America and Australia. For the thirty days that had elapsed between the funeral in Saint Isaac Cathedral and the burial in the Fortress of Saints Peter and Paul, the August remains of the Grand Duke Wladimir lay in state within the Chapel of Saint Nicholas in the great monastic Lavra of Saint Alexander Nevsky, located at some significant distance in the City from the above-mentioned edifices.

⁷ [https://orthodoxwiki.org/St._Isaac%E2%80%99s_Cathedral_\(St._Petersburg\)](https://orthodoxwiki.org/St._Isaac%E2%80%99s_Cathedral_(St._Petersburg))

⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_and_Paul_Fortress

From all parts of the Russian Motherland there gathered in Saint Petersburg large numbers of people of widely differing ethnic and religious backgrounds determined with one heart to honor the passing of His Imperial Highness. Due to the years of silence violently imposed by the atheistic Communist regime many of these people had only recently, since the celebration in 1988 of the great Millennium of Holy Russia's Baptism, heard of the existence in exile of the Grand Duke Wladimir. With an in-born zeal, however, for their glorious history, these Russian monarchists had eagerly accepted the man who according to the Pauline Laws governing the succession to the Russian Throne was *de iure* their Tsar in their time.



Closeup of the Honor Guard of representatives from different regiments of Imperial Russia in their uniforms

Completely refuted then stands that conventional wisdom so often and scoffingly repeated over the past seventy years, especially by leftist professors on university campuses, to the effect that, once the generation that had known Imperial Russia had passed away, a new type of soviet man would people the Eurasian landmass who would never look back beyond Lenin's tragic takeover. In point of fact, the great majority of those who were gathering daily in the Chapel of Saint Nicholas for more than four weeks to serve as a Guard of Honor for the Grand Duke's August remains were strikingly young, in their twenties and early thirties for the most part. From 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

they stood guard in military uniforms of various regiments of Imperial Russia. The arrangements for this Guard of Honor were made immediately following the funeral service in the Saint Isaac's Cathedral by the senior officers of the Order of the Imperial Union of Russia. Many of these young men, in fact, were Cossacks, wearing their traditional ethnic uniforms and decorations. A large number of them were also members of the Order of the Imperial Union of Russia as well as other paramilitary organizations inspired, to be sure by a less than historically exact memory of what had been, but above all such details reflecting a touchingly sincere and genuine devotion to the reality and spirit of Russia's monarchist past.

Two flags always were draped over the Grand Duke's coffin, one, the last official flag of Imperial Russia, designed by the Emperor-Martyr Nicholas II, to wit: the gold and black double-headed eagle of the Byzantine Roman Empire set into the white, blue and red tricolor of the Emperor Peter the Great, the other, the ancestral white, gold and black banner of the



The Russian Imperial flag, with the icon of Saint George in the shield



At the foot of the casket stood an official portrait of H.I.H. Grand Duke Wladimir and wreath, all prepared by the Order of the Imperial Union of Russia in Saint Petersburg

been sung since the royal funeral on April 16/29, was commissioned by the large group of Russian exiles who had in the previous three days gathered in Saint Petersburg. For this fact alone, the occasion was especially solemn marked by the weeping and intense singing of the ancient prayers of those with fresh memories of the Grand Duke still vigorous in their midst, an essential factor in the meshing of increasingly hopeful developments auguring the restoration of Russia's ancient and August Throne.

Romanov Dynasty. His Imperial Highness lay directly facing the Royal Doors of the Altar. A great and official portrait of Him prepared also by the Order of the Imperial Union of Russia, stood at His head, facing the nave of the Chapel, adorned with flowers and a basket of brightly colored eggs, the tokens of the triumphant Paschal Season⁹ that this year so inspiringly coincided with the forty days of the Grand Duke's passing.

On Thursday, May 15/28, 1992, a *Panikhida*¹⁰ or memorial service was celebrated by two senior priests for the Grand Duke Wladimir. In its very abbreviated form, this service again recalled to all present the striking coincidence this year of His Imperial Highness' passing in the season of Pascha (or Easter, as the Great Feast is known to Western Christians). This memorial service (*Panikhida*), as distinct from the many others which had



Inside the Saint Nicholas Chapel, the coffin was draped in the national flag: white, blue and red. On the right-hand side, uniformed Honor Guards stood for forty days, organized by the Order of Imperial Union of Russia

⁹ The 40 days between the Feast of the Resurrection of the Lord (Pascha/Easter) and the Feast of the Ascension of the Lord

¹⁰ Special Orthodox Christian prayer services for those souls departed from this life into eternity, from Greek meaning for "all the dead"

On Friday, May 16/29, 1992, the official day of the burial of the Grand Duke Wladimir Kyrillovich, the Imperial Family, now headed by His thirty-eight-year-old daughter, Her Imperial Highness, the Grand Duchess Maria Wladimirovna, together with Her August, eleven-year-old son, His Imperial Highness, the Grand Duke Georgi Michailovich, Her mother, Her Imperial Highness the Grand Duchess Dowager Leonida Georgevna, Their immediate attendants and aides arrived at the great Lavra or Monastery of Saint Alexander Nevsky where in the Chapel of Saint Nicholas, the August body of the Grand Duke Wladimir awaited formal



General view of the entrance to the Saint Nicholas Chapel located at the famous Saint Alexander Nevsky Lavra. Volunteers in uniforms of Imperial Russia lined up to form the Honor Guard.

conveyance to His final resting place in the great Fortress of Saints Peter and Paul amid the graves of the Emperors and Grand Dukes of post-Petrine Imperial Russia. Already the many Cossacks and others had marshalled themselves into a solemn and colorful honor guard along the path leading from the Chapel to the Lavra's gates.

At 10:00 a.m. the August Family made Their formal entry into the now crowded Chapel of Saint Nicholas and the last Panikhida was held. Metropolitan Ioann of Saint Petersburg and Ladoga officiated with several priests and deacons. Again, the Paschal (Easter) chants rang out repeatedly their message of undying hope as a consolation for the tears and sighs of those most devoted and thus most poignantly bereft of Him who legitimately would have been their monarch. Immediately, at the end of the memorial service the procession to the hearse began. Banners and flags were raised up, as those closest to the fallen leader, those who had worked so loyally in life, now in a last labor of love took His coffin upon their shoulders. Among these distinguished pallbearers numbered the Commander of the Order of the Imperial Union of Russia, Mr.



(l-r) Professor Constantine Desrosiers (AKA Father Constantine) with H.I.H. Grand Duchess Leonida and H.I.H. Grand Duke Wladimir, who bestowed upon him the honor of Knight of the Order of Saint Michael the Archangel

Peter Nikolaevich Koltypin-Wallovskoy and Prince Nikolai Nikolaevich Ouroussoff, Executive Secretary of the Order of Saint Michael the Archangel. Slowly and solemnly, between the two ranks of uniformed guards, the Imperial Coffin was carried through the famous darkly forested cemetery of the Saint Alexander Nevsky Lavra¹¹ where stand the graves of so many of Russia's



After the Memorial Service at the Saint Nicholas Chapel at the Alexander Nevsky Lavra, the casket had to be removed and carried some distance to the hearse and this special honor fell upon a select number of pallbearers who arrived from all over the world and Russia. Pictured above, some of these individuals are members of the Order of Imperial Union of Russia: 1) Peter N. Koltypin-Wallovskoy (U.S.A.); 2) Victor V. Zaplatin (Russia); 3) Boris S. Turovsky (Russia); 4) Roman V. Dneprovsky (Russia); and 5) Sergei V. Aljamovsky (Russia). Those pictured from other organizations are: 6) Ivan I. Bilibin (England); 7) Prince Nikolai N. Ouroussoff (France); 8) Stanislav V. Dumin (Russia); 9. Yuri Trubnikov (France); 10) Vadim O. Lopukhin (Russia); and 11) Dr. Elisabeth Heresch (Austria)

¹¹ <http://www.saint-petersburg.com/cemeteries/cemetery-and-tombs-of-the-alexander-nevsky-monastery/>

far-famed sons, authors and composers such as, most notably, Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky and Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky.

At the gates of the Lavra, the coffin of the Grand Duke was set upon a hastily prepared and hardly official hearse which was then led through Russia's imperial capital by a police guard. The official limousine containing the Imperial Family followed the hearse and, at the same time, led the cars of dignitaries, both governmental and hierarchical that, in turn, were themselves followed by three buses of the entourage of the Grand Duchess Maria. The funeral cortege stretched the length of three to five city blocks winding its way slowly through the heart of the City between the great Cathedral of the Kazan Mother of God and the newly restored Church "On the Blood" which marks the site of the dastardly assassination of the Emperor Alexander II



General view of Peter and Paul Fortress, the Citadel of Saint Petersburg with Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral in the center of the Fortress, the final resting place of all Emperors and Grand Dukes of the Romanov Dynasty

at the hands of revolutionary terrorists in March of 1881. Along the way, in varying ways and attitudes, the citizenry of Saint Petersburg witnessed for only the second and last time the presence in their midst of Him who might in happier days have been their Tsar. Some disregarded what was happening before them, eager to carry on their work of the day oblivious to anything beyond the desperate search for food and sustenance, the drab drudgery of Lenin's Promethean hubris. Others stopped to watch in curious and inquiring silence. Still more smiled and waved enthusiastically to the Imperial Family, while a smaller number stood at attention solemnly crossing themselves in Orthodox fashion or with military salutes witnessing the deeply planted loyalty and devotion to the monarchy of their Motherland, so long the secret of their hearts.

At length, the Imperial cortege crossed the vast River Neva, the deep and coldly flowing witness from the days of Peter the Great of Russia's changing fortunes, her dark waters shining a cobalt blue against the warm brightness of the northern sun almost at its summer solstice. The gates of the great Peter and Paul Fortress, the citadel of the City, were open and ready to receive the remains of yet another Romanov, one who had outlived the exile and anguish of Bolshevism's

bloody sway. At once the procession of flags and banners came into a spontaneous formation, as the Grand Duke was carried to His final resting place. Unlike the funeral which exactly a month earlier had drawn ten to fifteen thousand mourners to the Cathedral of Saint Isaac, this Imperial burial was by governmental order, for reasons of the limited space, restricted to a few hundred people who crowded the interior of the Fortress-Church.

It cannot be overlooked that even by His death, the Grand Duke Wladimir sealed a small but significant victory for the persecuted Russian Orthodox Church, in that, because of the burial of His Imperial Highness, the Fortress-Church which the Communists had turned into a museum, was returned to the purpose for which it had been originally dedicated as a functioning house of worship. Again, a Panikhida was chanted by Metropolitan Ioann, concelebrated by several priests and deacons.

Once more the interspersed chants of Pascha relieved the grief of the mourners. The newly painted white walls of the Fortress-Church were overwhelmed by two seemingly opposite and mutually contradictory feelings. Everyone felt keenly the loss of this truly royal leader taken suddenly from His people. At the same time, the sense of his amazing triumph in death was all-



Members of the Order of Imperial Union of Russia who arrived from all over Russia, present in the Cathedral of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, are holding the crest of the Order



General view of Saint Peter and Saint Paul Cathedral located inside the Saint Peter and Saint Paul Fortress

pervasive as His Imperial Highness was laid to rest.

Many reporters from around the world and most prominent newspapers and electronic media of Russia, recorded the event for the nation and the world. For all this technical distraction, however, the chanting of the Panikhida proceeded with a depth of feeling and piety, culminating with the Kontakion: *So, Svyatimi oupokoi, Christe ... (with the Saints give rest, O Christ)* and final prayer of *Vyechnaya Pamyat (Memory Eternal)*.

At this point, the coffin of His Imperial Highness, the Grand Duke Wladimir Kyrillovich, was lowered beneath the excavated marble floor of the Fortress-Church. Solemnly and silently, the Imperial Family and the clergy made their way back to their official cars. Whether by design or at the imperative of the moment, the Cossacks and other paramilitary monarchist officers locked hands and in a polite but orderly fashion swept from the church both the disconsolate and the curious.



H.I.H. Grand Duke Wladimir's coffin transferred to the site of the tomb in the Cathedral of Saint Peter and Saint Paul



At the rear of the church, a special platform was built for a large number of media reporters



The coffin placed into the tomb and earth thrown by the August Family over the coffin following the Orthodox tradition



Cossack and other paramilitary volunteers assisting with the orderly conduct of the service within the Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral



General view of the interior burial hall with the marble tomb plate secured in place, in the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul, located within the walls of the Saint Peter and Saint Paul Fortress



The tomb site showing some of the many wreaths from dignitaries throughout the world. In the center can be seen the wreath with the two-headed eagle presented by the Order of the Imperial Union of Russia



The tomb plate inscription reads as follows:

**HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS
PIOUS AND RIGHT BELIEVING GRAND DUKE
WLADIMIR KYRILLOVICH**

**BORN IN BORGIO 1917 ON THE 30TH DAY OF AUGUST
DIED IN MIAMI 1992 ON THE 21ST DAY OF APRIL
BURIED 1992 ON THE 29TH DAY OF MAY**

As the chief émigré entourage of Her Imperial Highness, the Grand Duchess Maria, left the grounds of the Peter and Paul Fortress in their buses, they were waved to and cheered enthusiastically by the many Russians from Saint Petersburg and elsewhere who now joyfully and unabashedly proclaimed their support for both the Grand Duchess Maria and the monarchist cause.

Immediately following the burial of the Grand Duke Wladimir, at about 2:00 p.m., a formal Pominki or memorial meal was hosted in honor of His Imperial Highness in the great palace of the Kamenny Ostrov or the Island of the Rock. Since the Revolution, this palatial villa has been set aside by the government for the reception and housing of heads of state and other important visitors from abroad. President George Bush, in fact, as well as his Secretary of State James Baker were offered official hospitality here during their visits to Russia. When in November of 1991 the Grand Duke Wladimir made his first and only visit to Russia, the Imperial



The Kamenny stone island with a wooden palace was a gift to the 11-year-old Pavel Petrovich (future Emperor Paul I) from his mother, Empress Catherine II, in 1765. The palace in this photo was begun in 1776. It was here, in 1825, that Tsar Nicholas II learned about the Decembrists conspiracy.



The official residence of the August Family during their stay in Saint Petersburg, May 26 through 29, 1992. This palace-like mansion is located on *Kamenny Ostrov* (Rock Island)

Family was recognized by President Boris Yeltsin and Saint Petersburg's Mayor Anatoly Sobchak as worthy to be likewise received in this palace on the Kamenny Ostrov. About two hundred people, including governmental and ecclesiastical officials, as well as the émigré entourage of the Imperial Family, were invited to this bittersweet celebration of the Grand Duke's life and death. These guests filled to capacity the four great tables that stood perpendicular to the head table where the members of the Imperial Family sat, together with the wife of Mayor Sobchak, Metropolitan Ioann and other guests of honor. As the dinner progressed, which was lavish and lasted



Great palace of Kamenny Ostrov where the Memorial Meal was held, hosted by the government in honor of the late Grand Duke Wladimir of Russia

until about 4:30, speeches were given intermittently by representatives of President Yeltsin, Mayor Sobchak and President Eduard Shevardnadze of Georgia, as well as by Prince Andrei Golitsyn Kirillovich, Metropolitan Ioann, Mr. Ivan Ivanovich Bilibin, Chancellor of the Grand Duke, and Commander Peter Nikolaevich Koltypin-Wallovskoy and about seven others. As each concluded with the words: *Vyechnaya Pamyat (Memory Eternal)*, the entire company

came to attention and to the intonation of several of the deacons present repeated in song this hymn with simple Orthodox fervor, evoking once again the mixture of grief for the loss of the Grand Duke and joy at the triumph of His passing.

The arrival of the August Family at the great palace for the Memorial Meal accompanied by honored guests from Saint Petersburg and abroad



View of the head table with the August Family and representatives from the governments of Russia, Georgia and Saint Petersburg



General view of the Memorial reception with the August Family seated at the head table on the far side



Main dining room at Peterhof Palace

Below are excerpts from the Address given by Commander of the Order of the Imperial Union of Russia Peter Nikolaevich Koltypin-Wallovskoy at the Memorial dinner at the Great Palace of Kamenny Ostrov.

"Your Imperial Highness, Your Excellency, Honored Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is indeed an honor and a privilege to be here today on this solemn occasion and to have the opportunity to address you in free-again Saint Petersburg, the ancient imperial capital of Russia.



Commander Peter Nikolaevich Koltypin-Wallovskoy delivering a speech at the Memorial Dinner at the Great Palace on Kamenny Ostrov in Saint Petersburg

I shall not occupy your attention for long, especially since all of the previous speakers have so eloquently covered all of the fine and admirable qualities of His Imperial Highness Grand Duke Wladimir Kyrillovich.

With your permission, I would like to touch upon only one very important quality of the Grand Duke which I had the honor to witness and experience many times in my 45 years of personal and close association with His Imperial Highness. It was evident also to many other members of our Order during our 54-year struggle on His behalf as the one and only lawful heir to the throne of Russia ...

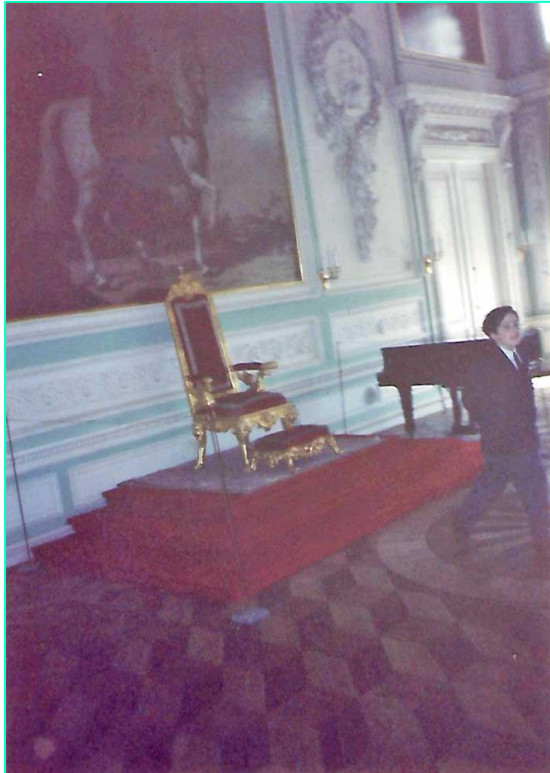
...This unique quality which radiated from His Imperial Highness, was love, which to some extent fulfills the famous prediction of none other than Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky, who in his diary wrote that 'THE WORLD WILL BE SAVED BY BEAUTY'. To us Russians – what is beauty? It is first and foremost love. That kind of love was manifested by the Grand Duke, the all-healing, all-encompassing love, which is taught to all of us by our Savior Jesus Christ: 'Love thy neighbor as thyself'. So, dear friends, we should all follow His example and especially here in our Motherland exhibit in our daily conduct this deep Christian love taught us by His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Wladimir which will serve in gaining the unity and spiritual rebirth of Russia..."

Prior to the burial of His Imperial Highness on May 16/29, 1992, the Grand Duchess Maria and the other members of the Imperial Family were, together with Their entourage, received officially in several historically significant places in the area of Saint Petersburg. These included the great palace of the Blessed Emperor Paul I at Pavlovsk, the summer residence of the Emperors at Tsarskoye Selo and the Castle of Alexandria on the Gulf of Finland, built in Gothic style by the Emperor Nicholas I.

The palace of Peterhof in Saint Petersburg



It should not be forgotten that when Their Imperial Highnesses visited the Palace of Peterhof, to the delight and gratification of all present, the guards in the grand reception hall of the Empress Catherine the Great removed the ornate cordons barring access to these painstakingly restored treasures of Russia's imperial past allowing His Imperial Highness, the Grand Duke Georgi, to assume His legitimate place and be photographed on the Imperial Throne of His great-great-great-great-great grandmother, Empress Catherine the Great.



H.I.H. Grand Duke Georgi Michailovich at the Throne of Catherine the Great in the Peterhof Palace



Throne room at Peterhof Palace



Staircase of the Peterhof Palace

Probably the most triumphant and religiously significant of these receptions took place on Thursday, May 15/28, 1992, in the late afternoon when the Imperial Family and Their guests from abroad visited the Podvorie¹², or daughter-house, in Saint Petersburg of the great northern Monastery of Valaam¹³. Prior to the arrival of Their Imperial Highnesses, the entire brotherhood of monks, including a large, all-male choir and a huge crowd of well-wishers, had already gathered on the sidewalk directly in front of the Monastery. The Abbot, Archimandrite Andranik, in strict accord with ancient ecclesiastical protocol for the receiving of a reigning Emperor, was attired formally in felon or chasuble with epitrachil or stole and cuffs¹⁴, the primary vestments of the priest about to serve the Divine Liturgy.

As the Grand Duchess Maria stepped from the official limousine, Archimandrite Andranik presented Her Imperial Highness with the Holy Cross to kiss. He then offered the Bread and Salt, the ancient and traditional tokens of Slavic fealty and submission which are regularly presented to the bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church when they visit a parish or monastery. During this solemn exchange, furthermore, the great bells of the monastery rang out the joy even unto



28 May 1992 afternoon, the august Family visiting Valaam Monastery in Saint Petersburg is greeted by Abbot Archimandrite Andranik in full vestments and bells ringing as required by the traditional protocol when meeting the Tsar and/or immediate Royal Family

tears felt by all those privileged in post-Communist Russia to witness so beautiful, so sacred and auspicious a moment. The entire company led by the Imperial Family and the Abbot, proceeded then to the Church of the monastery which in its simplicity bore silent yet powerfully eloquent witness to both the mindless devastation of dark Communist days and the courageous optimism that dares now to undertake such a task of restoration of Russia's thousand-year-old religious patrimony.

¹² A church, skete, kellia, or other monastic dwelling that is the holding, or dependency, of a larger monastery (in Greek, metochion)

¹³ https://orthodoxwiki.org/Valaam_Monastery

¹⁴ For a good explanation of the various parts of Orthodox clerical vestments, see <https://www.saintjohnchurch.org/orthodox-liturgical-vestments/>

Again, a Panikhida was sung for the departed Grand Duke Wladimir, followed by a molieben¹⁵ or prayer service for the Grand Duchess Maria, that our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ grant



The August Family, their entourage and guests attending a Panikhida (Memorial service) at the Valaam Church in Saint Petersburg

Her and Her son many years of health and strength to serve the nation and the people. As the monastery choir sang out the great tropar¹⁶ or hymn to the Holy and Life-Giving Cross: *Spasi, Gospodi, Liudi tvoya (O Lord, Save Thy People)*, the custom of pre-revolutionary days prevailed as the August name of the Grand Duchess was inserted into the prayer.

During this prayer service, a rear admiral of Saint Petersburg fleet presented a ceremonial dirk¹⁷ to the young Heir

Presumptive, a token in memory of the Imperial Family's service to the Russian Navy, most notably that of His great grandfather, the Grand Duke Kirill Wladimirovich, grandson of the Emperor Alexander II, who had been an admiral. Later at the dinner in the Monastery trapeznaya¹⁸, this rear admiral spoke of history and military tradition, of duty and abiding loyalty, urging the young Tsarevich (this is the term he used) not to forget His roots and the tradition of His ancestors. No one present failed to grasp the importance of the sentiments of this high-ranking naval officer and the real political significance



After the memorial service at the Valaam Church, H.I.H. Grand Duchess Maria and H.I.H. Grand Duke Georgi in front of the church altar which is being reconstructed after 70 years of Soviet devastation

¹⁵ A supplicatory prayer to our Lord Jesus Christ, the Theotokos, or a particular saint or martyr

¹⁶ <https://orthodoxwiki.org/Troparion>

¹⁷ A long-thrusting dagger formerly used as a boarding tool for ships and in hand-to-hand combat, which is now worn ceremonially by officers

¹⁸ The dining hall of a monastery, or refectory, from the Greek 'trapeza' which means table (In modern Greek, due to nearly 400 years of Turkish occupation, language syncretization has occurred and it can also mean 'bank')

they boded for the future of a collapsed country, reeling and rudderless at the brink of anarchy, yet yearning for both the stability and pride of its historical greatness.

As the religious rite concluded, the Monastery choir and the whole gathering now triumphantly began to sing the Imperial Anthem: *Bozhe Tsariya Kranizh* (*God Save the Tsar*). Again and again, for more than twenty times over, its five simple verses were repeated with growing intensity and heartfelt patriotism, supplicating the Almighty Who hath now in His boundless love for mankind broken the seemingly endless Bolshevik power, to complete the work of Holy Russia's restoration.

During the singing of the Russian Imperial Anthem, the procession of monks and guests made its way to the trapeznaya where a sumptuous Paschal-style meal had been readied by the Brotherhood. Indeed, one could not help but be amazed by how many of these monks and novices were so young in years, for the most part in their late teens and twenties. To be sure, following the strict Orthodox monastic order, no meat was served, nor, indeed, was it missed, so rich and so hospitable was the feast. In the meanwhile, the monastic choir had resumed its singing, offering to the Imperial Family and its supporters a concert of Russian patriotic songs, including the March of the Preobrazhensky guard of the Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich.

During the dinner, several addresses were given, honoring the memory of the Grand Duke Wladimir and offering encouragement to the Grand Duchess Maria and the other members of the Imperial Family. An antique porcelain service of many pieces which in happier days had been given to the Monastery by the Emperor Alexander III now became the Monastery's gift to Her Imperial Highness who at this moment revealed the same depth of humility that had characterized Her late father. As the Grand Duchess thanked the monks, She was unable to contain her feelings of appreciation and satisfaction for this historically significant gift and the many others bestowed not only upon Herself but also upon her recently widowed mother, the Grand Duchess Leonida, as well as Her son and Heir, the Grand Duke Georgi.



Inside the Valaam Monastery's trapeznaya (dining hall), the August Family is served a Pascha dinner and the Abbot is presenting gifts.

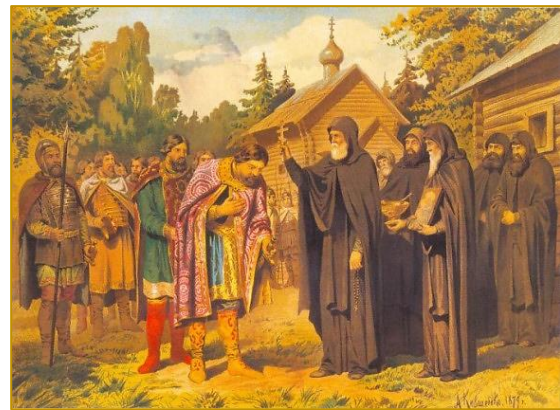
After the burial of the Grand Duke Wladimir in the Fortress of the Apostles Peter and Paul on May 16/29, 1992, the Grand Duchess Maria and the other members of the Imperial Family went directly by plane to Moscow. Those comprising Her entourage either accompanied Her Imperial Highness or traveled overnight to Russia's historical capital by train. By Sunday, May 18/31, 1992, all had gathered to make the hundred and fifty plus kilometer trip to the town of Gorodok at the headwaters of the great River Volga. Though but a small village (the literal meaning of the word

Gorodok), it possesses a great bell tower and historical church, the site and silent witness of the great gathering of the Russian troops on their way to the battlefield of Kulikovo Polye¹⁹ where on



Duel of Peresvet with Chelubey on Kulikovo Field by artist Mikhail Avilov (1943). According to legend, the famous Battle of Kulikovo between the Mongols and Russians was preceded by a duel of the opposing sides' best warriors. Both died in the process.

September 8, 1380, under the command of Grand Prince-Saint Dimitri Donskoi²⁰ and with the blessing of the great ascetic of All the Russias, Saint Sergei of Radonezh²¹, they broke the iron grasp of the Mongol Horde that since the defeat of the Kalka River in 1223 had kept Russia in subjugation and slavery.



St Sergei of Radonezh Blessing Grand-Prince Saint Dmitri Donskoi Before the Battle of Kulikovo

In this same church the Imperial Family and Their entourage assisted at the Divine Liturgy, after which a Panikhida was sung in memory of the newly reposed Grand Duke Wladimir. Afterwards in the bright sunshine of late May, many people wandered down the steep, green slopes to the very water's edge of the Volga. The monuments of history, found in such great numbers in the church and graveyard were examined, as the parish priest led the Grand Duchess and Her supporters on a tour. After about an hour, the buses were again boarded and the progress of Her Imperial Highness continued deeper into the Russian countryside to the City of Tver, which in the same glory-filled days of the struggle against the Mongols had rivaled Moscow itself in religious and political importance. Again, the Grand Duchess Maria and Her entourage were officially greeted by the mayor and dignitaries of Tver who hosted a banquet in Her honor followed by a concert of talented young people of the region.

¹⁹ <http://www.st-sergius.org/Kulikovo.html>

²⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dmitry_Donskoy

²¹ <https://www.pravmir.com/sergei-radonezh-saint-russia/>

The museum of this old and historically significant city was also toured to the delight and instruction of everyone, as they took occasion to deepen and broaden their knowledge of Russian history. In the lobby of the police station, directly adjacent to this museum, is located a small bookstore where one could buy for a very reasonable price several paperbound volumes of Catechism for children and selected writings of the Church Fathers. At the banquet, many people spoke, including the talented and renowned author Vladimir Alexeevich Soloukhin, Prince Zourab Michaelovich Chavchavadze and Prince Nicholai Ouroussoff delivered addresses followed by Prince Constantin Mourouy who spoke in French. The final speaker of the event was Commander Koltypin of the Order of the Imperial Union of Russia. In the meanwhile, His Imperial Highness, the Grand Duke Georgi, played with the youth of Tver, showing them the complicated cameras and television equipment of the many reporters that were present. He also generously treated them to candy and chocolate, an experience the more to be relished in Russia's current situation of food shortages.



The Birth of the Virgin Mary Church (16th century) in the settlement of Gorodok on the River Volga, Reverend Father Alexev Zlobin, Pastor

As the evening drew on, ending this exciting but quite taxing day, the Grand Duchess Maria

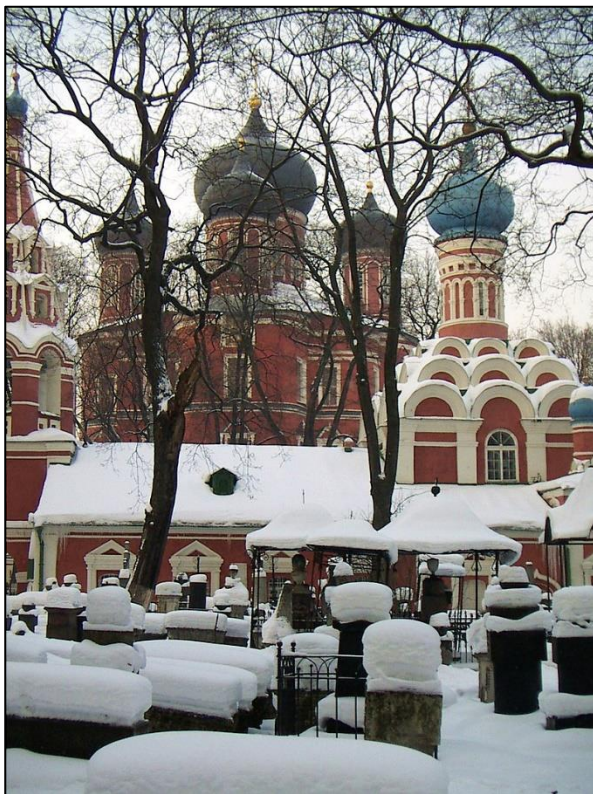


The August Family are guests for tea at the priest's house at the village of Gorodok

and her entire party returned to Gorodok where the parish priest offered what was billed as afternoon tea. In reality, it was a richly laden supper in the large country-style dining room of the priest's house, where the dignitaries of this rich peasant community had gathered to greet the Imperial Family. Again, Her Imperial Highness was overwhelmed by the hospitality and generosity of these simple Russian people

who had never before seen the Grand Duchess but with a deep historical sense of this day's significance recognized in Her Imperial Highness the legitimate successor to the Emperors who for centuries had directed the destiny of Holy Russia. The priest himself, not only because of his position at the head of the local church but also because he had been newly elected by his people to the Russian Parliament, served both as host and chairman of the several dignitaries who sat at the head table with the members of the Imperial Family. It must be noted in particular that this parish priest who stands today as both local political and spiritual leader of this historical town also happens to be in charge of education in Gorodok. By his existence, therefore, he reveals how shallow and forced has been in many respects the influence of atheistic Marxist-Leninist ideology on Russian rural life.

It was late in the night of May 18/31, 1992, when the imperial limousine and the buses returned to Moscow full of very weary but elated monarchists. On the next day, the important



Old and new cathedrals and necropolis at
Donskoy Monastery

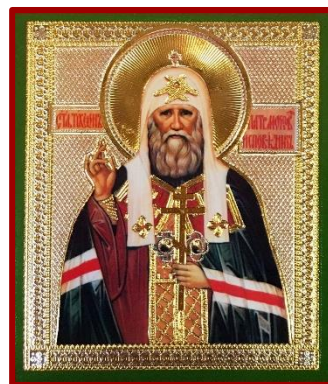
sites of Russia's pre-Petrine capital were visited, including Red Square. A solemn Panikhida was celebrated for the Grand Duke Wladimir in the famous and only recently restored Donskoy Monastery²², where the Holy relics of the Great Martyr of the revolution and Confessor for Christ against Lenin, Saint Tikhon²³, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, are preserved in honor.



The bell tower and the walls of the famous
Donskoy Monastery in Moscow

²² [https://orthodoxwiki.org/Donskoy_Monastery_\(Moscow\)](https://orthodoxwiki.org/Donskoy_Monastery_(Moscow))

²³ <https://www.holynewmartyrs.org/tikhon>



Saint Tikhon the Wonderworker,
Confessor, Patriarch of Moscow and
All Russia and Apostle to America

In the Donskoy Monastery are the relics of
Patriarch Tikhon

May 21/June 3, according to the calendar of the Russian Orthodox Church marks the Feast of Saint Constantine the Great²⁴, the first Christian Roman Emperor, and His Mother Saint Helen, a truly significant day when this year the Grand Duchess Maria, the Grand Duke Georgi, the Grand Duchess-Dowager Leonida, together with a few select members of their party, were officially received in the Kremlin by Mr. Aleksandr Rutskoy, the Vice President of the Russian Republic, a worthy culmination to the auspicious progress of Her Imperial Highness through Russia, the triumphant result of the tragic and untimely passing of the Grand Duke Wladimir.

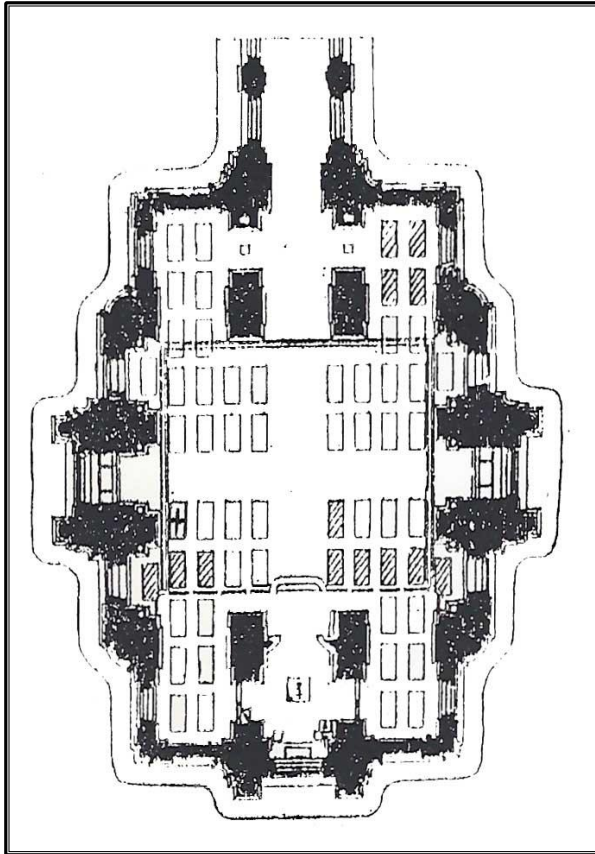


Holy Relics of Saints
Constantine and Helen
and the Cross of Christ at
the Queen of All Skete

And yet when we use such terms as "tragic" and "untimely" we are speaking in a subjective fashion, the way the great events of life and death are commonly judged according to our feelings of unexpected loss and personal grief. The ancient Romans, as Cicero tells us in the introduction to his essay on Friendship, always distinguished between the true meaning of a man's death as opposed to what they termed *desiderium*²⁵, the essentially selfish sense of deprivation felt so intensely and keenly by those nearest and dearest left behind. Indeed, it is unalloyed *desiderium* on our part that would cause us to lament the passing of the Grand Duke Wladimir, for we cannot accept the fact that His Imperial Highness who had guided us through five of the seven decades of the Communist nightmare will no longer be there to lead, to advise and, above all to inspire His followers by His great dignity, His sense of History, His unflinching devotion to His own August calling.

²⁴ <https://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2015/05/synaxarion-of-saints-constantine-and.html>

²⁵ An ardent longing or feeling of grief for something lost

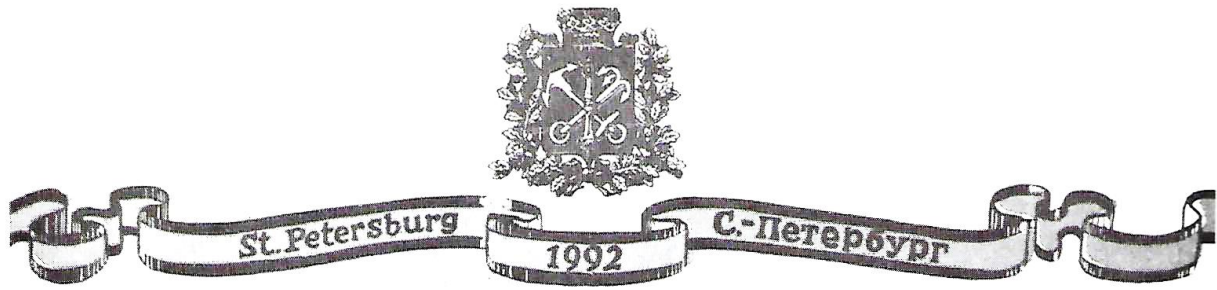


The floor map of the Cathedral of Saint Peter and Saint Paul located in the Saint Peter and Paul Fortress. This section of the Church is designated for the Grand Dukes Romanov. The tomb site for H.I.H. Grand Duke Wladimir is indicated on the map by a cross

While it is true that the Grand Duke Wladimir never reached the Imperial Throne in this life, His courage and self-discipline, His humility and patriotism in the context of God's Providence and the great changes working themselves out today in Russia, have insured not only His burial with the post-Petrine Emperors of Russia but also great advancement toward His life's goal of an eventual Romanov restoration. The very sequence of events from the time of the Grand Duke's death through His interment in the Fortress of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul is striking in its symbolism. It has been noted by almost everyone that His Imperial Highness succumbed during the Great and Holy Week, five days only before the most important feast of the Christian calendar, "the Feast of Feasts and the Triumph of Triumphs" (*Canon of Pascha, Eirmos of Ode VIII*), the celebration of the Bright Resurrection of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ which this year fell on April 13/26. Russian tradition holds that during the Paschaltide the Heavenly Gates stand open, ready to receive those blessed souls who pass from earthly life at this joyful and triumphant season.



30th of May, 1992, at two o'clock in the morning in Saint Petersburg we witnessed the famous White Night



Wednesday the 29th of April, 1922, 10:00 a.m., partial view of the Saint Isaac's Cathedral in Saint Petersburg at the liturgical and memorial services for the Grand Duke

FURTHER REFLECTIONS AND AFTERTHOUGHTS ON THE PASSING OF HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS, THE GRAND DUKE WLADIMIR OF RUSSIA



Saint John III Ducas
Vatatzes, Emperor of
Nicaea, the Merciful

There is also positive meaning and symbolism in the fact that the Grand Duke Wladimir died just before the celebration of Pascha. The last Orthodox Emperor to be proclaimed as a Saint by the Church prior to October 19/November 1, 1981 and the glorification of the Emperor-Martyr Nicholas II, was Saint John III Ducas Vatatzes²⁶, called the Merciful, who ruled the Byzantine Roman Empire from 1222 to 1254. Eighteen years before the Emperor-Saint John III came to the throne, in 1204, the Imperial Capital of Constantinople had been captured and sacked by the Fourth Crusade, sending the upholders of the Orthodox Empire into exile to the Asiatic City of Nicaea²⁷. John III was a very pious ruler but also a very practical, energetic and resourceful one who in the insufficiency of exile rebuilt the morale as well as the economic and military base of the Empire, making possible in 1261 the reconquest of Constantinople. Yet, although the Emperor John's labors bore fruit, as his vision for future restoration was realized, he himself died just seven years short of achieving his goal. May God grant that the prudent and energetic husbandry of the Grand Duke Wladimir's reign-in-exile bear a similar harvest in the future.

May 15/28, 1992, the eve of the burial of His Imperial Highness, the Russian Orthodox Church celebrated the Martyrdom of Tsarevich Dimitri²⁸ in 1591. Like the earlier Princes of Kiev, Saints Boris, Gleb and Igor, Tsarevich Dimitri stands in the ranks of the Holy Passion-Bearers, a type of Martyr perennially and especially dear to the Russian soul by virtue of the fact that, not for what they did, but rather for what they spiritually symbolized, they were struck down by an evil hand without pity or fear of God. In this way Tsarevich Dimitri stands today as a foreshadowing of our own evil times, the prototype of the Emperor-Martyr Nicholas II and His August Family, especially His son, the physically weak but mentally courageous Tsarevich-Martyr Alexei. Much historical research has devolved around the figure of Tsarevich Dimitri, how he was murdered, at whose instigation the crime was perpetrated and, even more significantly, who claimed his Holy Name in the subsequent course of events, as no fewer than four pretenders, each known as False Dimitri, arose to trouble the pathetically shaken Russian state. What made this royal child so important, however was less the grisly details of his murder than the force of patriotic indignation unleashed by his death that



Pious Crown Prince
Dmitry of Uglich

²⁶ http://self.gutenberg.org/articles/eng/John_III_Ducas_Vatatzes?View=embedded%27

²⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empire_of_Nicaea

²⁸ <https://stjohndc.org/en/list-of-relics/demetrius-uglich-moscow-slain-crown-prince>

restored Russia to calm, to stability, to the resumption of her rightful place among the powers of the world.

In this way the death of the Grand Duke Wladimir parallels the Martyrdom of Tsarevich Dimitri, not in its violence and poignancy of violated youth but rather in the message conveyed by the outcome of its aftermath. The memory of Tsarevich Dimitri should move us to consider how defeats are turned to victories, how the Christian mystery of life and death is played out in time, so that what today appears to be the final and fatal result becomes in reality tomorrow's triumph.

On the very day of His Imperial Highness' death in Miami, Florida, as has been indicated earlier, the Grand Duke was in process of addressing the Spanish-speaking press of Latin America. In fact, His last words uttered publicly were in the Spanish language which He loved and spoke so fluently due to His long years of exile in Spain in the wake of the Second World War. On this day, to wit, April 8/21, the Russian Orthodox Church's calendar celebrates the Feast of the Spanish Icon²⁹ of the All-Holy Mother of God. This Icon portrays the blessed Virgin Mary seated with Her Divine Son in Her arms. After Spain had fallen to the Moorish conquest in 711, the kingdom under the national hero Pelayo³⁰ stemmed the Moslem invasion at the Battle of Covadonga in the Asturias. The Mother of God is said to have appeared, assisting the Christian fighters of Pelayo and by Her miraculous Icon brought much needed encouragement at the very beginning of the Reconquista that would require more than 770 years. All of this, of course, might summarily be dismissed as nothing more than coincidence. Further reflection, however, will make us realize how striking is this supposed coincidence, that of all the days of the year and among the many celebrations of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Orthodox ecclesiastical calendar, the only one that has to do with Spain should turn out to be commemorated on the day of the Grand Duke's death as He was, in fact, speaking Spanish. Indeed, for the devout and grieving Orthodox Christian and Russian monarchist, this coincidence, so called, seems to represent a sign of the Heavenly Queen's favor to Him who for so many tedious and disappointing years did not falter in His struggle to maintain the position of Christ's anointed Emperor in a world grown ever more oblivious in its atheistic and cloying materialism to the life-giving message of Christ.

The date of the Grand Duke Wladimir's death also marks one of the singularly most important anniversaries of history, the official celebration of the founding of the Imperial City of Rome. The ancient Romans from the time of the Punic Wars³¹ in the third century B.C., if not much earlier, accepted the tradition that their City had been established by the mythical and eponymous Hero-King Romulus, the descendant of Aeneas, a hero and royal Prince of Homer's Troy who as an exile came to Italy to prepare the ground so to speak, for the foundation of the greatest City and Empire of all western history. This, in fact, is the underlying message of Virgil's *Aeneid*, the most important epic in the whole of Roman classical literature.

The date of the founding of Rome was believed by the ancients to have occurred in the middle of the eighth century B.C. Although until the first century B.C. several differing dates were given,

²⁹ An image of the Theotokos seated in majesty and holding the Infant Christ. The icon perished in a fire in 1777

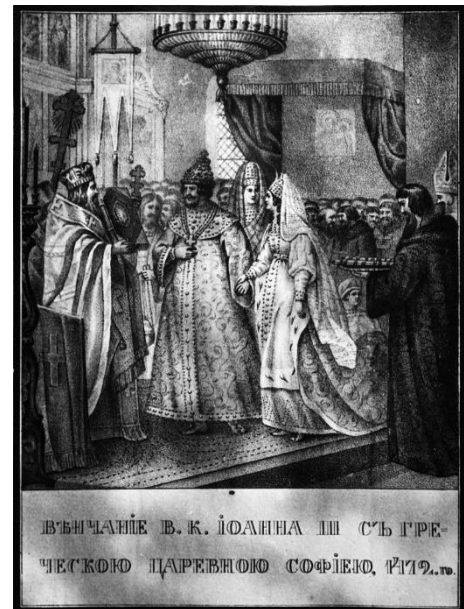
³⁰ <http://dictionary.sensagent.com/Battle%20of%20Covadonga/en-en/>

³¹ <https://sites.psu.edu/hellenisticwarfare/the-punic-wars/>

the one proposed by the "most learned of Romans," Marcus Terentius Varro³² (116-27 B.C.) came to be universally accepted for the last two thousand years. Terentius Varro was probably the most scholarly man of the Golden Age of Roman Literature (106 B.C.-A.D. 17) and is said to have authored as many as 490 books. The Varrine date for Rome's foundation is 753 B.C., so that the Christian date A.D. 1992 stands as the year 2745 of Rome *Ab Urbe Condita*³³.

As for the actual day of Romulus' founding of the City, the ancients believed it to have taken place on the feast of the Parilia³⁴, eleven days before the *Kalendae*³⁵ or first day of May, which by today's reckoning is April 21. The classical source for this dating is the fourth book of the *Fasti*³⁶ (line 806, cf. lines 807-862), the calendar-poem in epic form of the Poet Ovid (43 B.C.-A.D. 17). To be sure, it would be more historically accurate to date the founding of Rome according to the Old Calendar, the reckoning established by the great Dictator Gaius Julius Caesar in 46 B.C., several decades prior to the composition of Ovid's *Fasti*. Accordingly, in 1992 the foundation of Rome would have had to be celebrated on April 21/May 4, the Monday after the Sunday of the Apostle Thomas. Of course, no one today can determine the exact date, or even year, of Rome's founding based on archaeological evidence. All this is hardly to the point. The fact remains that the city government of Rome, the Italian government today, the Vatican as well as the many classical organizations and departments of American and European universities all formally celebrate Rome's birth according to the Gregorian or New Calendar. On April 8/21, 1992, the very day of the Grand Duke's death. In fact, between 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. when His Imperial Highness succumbed, was conveyed to the hospital in Miami and was pronounced dead by his doctors, the official celebration in Rome was being prepared with festivities and fireworks.

Since the fall of Constantinople in 1453 and the subsequent marriage of the last Byzantine Roman Emperor's niece, the Princess Sophia Palaiologina³⁷, to the Grand Prince of Moscow, Ivan III, the Great, in 1472, Holy Russia has considered herself the successor state of the Roman Empire in the East, with Moscow styled "The Third Rome". Again, this might be dismissed by the superficial and disinterested as simple coincidence but with the loss of much historical symbolism and insight, especially when one recalls that the very name of the Imperial House of Romanov derives from an ancestor Roman Yurievich³⁸ who died in 1543 and whose Christian name derived through Greek from the Latin adjective Romanus, meaning, of



Marriage of Ivan III to Princess Sophia Palaiologina, 1472

³² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Terentius_Varro

³³ "From the founding of the city", used by classicists to refer to years in ancient Rome

³⁴ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parilia>

³⁵ From ancient Rome, the calends, or the first day of the month

³⁶ A poem by the Roman poet Ovid on the Calendar: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fasti_\(poem\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fasti_(poem))

³⁷ http://www.jspayne.com/php/SummaryGet.php?FindGo=Zoe_Palaiologina

³⁸ <https://www.geni.com/people/Roman-Zakharyin-Yuriev/6000000002322337031>

course, Roman. Thus, the significance mystically of the death of the incumbent Romanov (*Roma Nova*, incidentally, in Latin translated *New Rome*) heir to the Russian Imperial Throne on the very day when across the world the founding of Rome 2,745 years ago was being celebrated cannot but amaze the objective observer and the student of history humble and pious enough to leave room for the working of Divine Providence in the world.

The traditional dogma of the Russian Orthodox Church emphasizes the continuity of life after death and exhorts all Christians to pray for the dearly departed as a duty of love, in order that their passing might hopefully be facilitated to the Heavenly Kingdom. After the day of death itself of a given Orthodox Christian and that of his funeral, the most important date for him is the fortieth day after his death. According to the fourth-century Church Father, Saint Macarius of Alexandria, prior to the fortieth day, the soul wanders the earth, the heavens and the underworld searching for meaning and solace. On the fortieth day, through the Mercy and at the Command of Christ, the soul finds for itself a suitable place in which it might remain until the Last Day of the Great Judgment. Thus, Russian Orthodox practice insists upon the celebration of the Panikhida (memorial service) on the fortieth day after a man's death.

The fortieth day of the passing of His Imperial Highness, the Grand Duke Wladimir fell on Saturday, May 17/30, 1992. It is significant that on this very date in 1979 human remains were first uncovered in Ekaterinburg which have been claimed to be the relics of the Emperor-Martyr Nicholas II, His August Family and Their murdered retainers³⁹. A delegation of monarchists, moreover, came from the City of Ekaterinburg in the Ural Mountains to Saint Petersburg to participate in the obsequies of the Grand Duke Wladimir. The leader of this group brought a silver box of earth from Ekaterinburg, symbolically "sanctified by the blood of the Imperial Martyrs," to be enclosed in the coffin of His Imperial Highness. He also on May 14/28, 1992, in the Hotel Oktinskaya, delivered a lecture on his lifelong research into the actual details of the assassination of July 4/17, 1918, and the authenticity of the remains first discovered in 1979. He himself in this talk firmly insisted that they are the blessed relics of the Imperial Martyrs, a position which at this writing is gaining ever greater favor. In fact, in the wake of the Grand Duke's burial, the American Secretary of State, Mr. James Baker, announced that a team of forensic medical specialists headed by Dr. William Maples, director of the C.A. Pound Human Identification Laboratory, would be sent from the University of Florida at Gainesville to assist their Russian counterparts in authenticating the genuineness of these bones and other remains.

The fact that the fortieth day of the Grand Duke Wladimir's passing in 1992 occurs exactly on the thirteenth anniversary of the discovery of what, indeed, increasingly appears to be the true relics of the Martyred Imperial Family, can once more be dismissed as simple coincidence. If, however, it is considered seriously, it draws a mystical link between both deaths and between these two heads of the Romanov Dynasty in our century, the Grand Duke Wladimir who has battled faithfully within the confinements of exile to carry forth the bloodied and defiled standard of the Emperor-Martyr Nicholas II.

³⁹ <https://www.searchfoundationinc.org/1978>



Grigory Aleksandrovich
Potemkin-Tauricheski

In fact, this year's celebration, like those of last year and for the next ten years, are being officially held as preparation for the gala Tricentennial which will take place in May of the year 2003. These festivities of Saint Petersburg featured concerts, banquets and displays



Tauride Palace in Saint Petersburg, the former residence of Prince Potemkin. The City is celebrating the upcoming Tricentennial of its founding by Peter the Great

of fireworks in the Tauride Palace and Gardens, the gifts of the Empress Catherine the Great to her favorite General, Prince Grigory Aleksandrovich Potemkin-Tauricheski⁴⁰, the conqueror of the Crimea, after his triumphant entry into the City in 1791. This year, just two centuries and one year later, marked the first time since the fall of Communism in August of 1991 that the liberated and relieved citizens of Peter's City could openly and jubilantly express their love of their City's origins and classical contributions to Russian culture and civilization.

Totally absent were all signs and reminders of the discredited Leninist legacy which had for 67 years blighted the name of Russia's second glorious capital. Instead, everywhere one saw hoisted proudly



the coat of arms of the city, the standard of the Emperor Peter the Great⁴¹, namely, the anchor and the grapple (the former, the symbol of peaceful commerce, the latter, the sign of naval warfare) set over

left: Coat of arms of Saint Petersburg

right: Peter Alekseyevich Romanov I,
Emperor of All Russia



⁴⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grigory_Potemkin

⁴¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_the_Great

each other to form the Cross of Saint Andrew, with the Imperial scepter forming a third bar vertically, crowned by Russia's ancient double-headed eagle.

We have just noted the historical and symbolic significance of the fact (some will insist on saying coincidence) that His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Wladimir died on the very date of the official celebration of the founding of Rome 2745 years ago. His fortieth day, so important theologically in the Russian Orthodox Church's understanding of death and salvation, fell on the anniversary of the founding of Saint Petersburg, so that we are faced with yet one more great "coincidence". In the forty days of His passing from earthly life, the Grand Duke spans symbolically and mystically the foundations of the Empire's first and last capitals. Can there be for us who love His Imperial Highness and following His example of duty, have dedicated ourselves to His sacred cause, the Cause of Holy Russia, a more positive sign of divine favor, a more encouraging reason for optimism about the future? Let us note that it is the origins, the births, the beginnings of these two great Cities that are linked in the Grand Duke's passing, not their defeats or destruction.



The main chandelier located at the great dome of the Tauride Palace



The cadets and servants receiving the guests at the Tauride Palace

Dancers performing in the main ballroom of the Tauride Palace, in costumes of the time of Catherine the Great



Peter N. Koltypin-Wallovskoy, Commander, Order of the Imperial Union of Russia, as a guest in the Tauride Palace

Prof. Constantine Desrosiers as a guest at the Tauride Palace, representing the Order of the Imperial Union of Russia





The left wing of the Tauride Palace prepared for the City's 299th Anniversary dinner



Tauride Palace, closeup of one of the banquet tables

The Roman state spanned in its existence two thousand two hundred and six years from 753 B.C. to A.D. 1453, a history of triumphs and victories as well as decline and fall. English speaking scholars, ever influenced, it seems, by the anti-Christian shadow of Edward Gibbon's monumental masterpiece, have tended to concentrate their historical focus on the fall of Rome rather than on the awesome continuum of her sovereignty and influence, her ability, while remaining the same, to change and adapt to new circumstances, ever holding to her claim of hegemony and anxious to vindicate it against all manner of foes, external and internal. Russia proudly in the fifteenth century proclaimed herself the heir of Rome and the champion of Orthodox Christianity in the world. Today Russia's sacred and divinely sanctioned mission remains as yet unfulfilled, although the horrors of the anti-Christ forces of Communist totalitarianism have collapsed of their own misanthropic rot and endemic incompetence. Today, more than ever, Russia needs the genius of Rome's historical greatness for her renewal and rededication to these goals. The message of His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Wladimir in death, as in His long and trying life, a message highlighted mystically by so many of these remarkable coincidences of time and history, is that the new Russia must at all costs resume her traditional place and don her Christian mantle in a world seemingly so rich in opportunities for genuine peace. May our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ grant this message ring as clearly and unequivocally for us, as it did for His Imperial Highness, the Grand Duke Wladimir Kyrillovich of Russia.





Боже, царя храни,
сильный державный,
царствуй на славу,
на славу нам.

Царствуй на страх врагам
царь православный.
Боже Царя, Царя храни.

God save and shield the Tsar,
Mighty and sovereign,
Rule in glory, rule for our
glory.

Reign to the fear of our foes
Our Orthodox Tsar.
God keep and shield the Tsar.