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Childhood and Youth of Grand Dukes Sergey Alexandrovich and Paul Alexandrovich of Russia, Livadiya — Petersburg: Diary of Grand Duke Paul Alexandrovich, 1870—1873

Abstract

This is the first publication of the child's diary of Grand Duke Paul Alexandrovich of Russia, youngest son of Emperor Alexander II and Empress Maria Alexandrovna, later general and Commander of the Guards Corps. This document is stored in the State Archive of the Russian Federation in the personal provenance fond of Grand Duke Paul Alexandrovich. The diary vividly describes everyday life of the young members of the Russian Imperial House in the 1870s, that is, the life of the author and his brother, Grand Duke Sergey Alexandrovich (later the Moscow Governor-General), as both were brought up together. The author kept his diary irregularly, mostly during his stay in the Crimea, where the family of Alexander II and many members of the Imperial Family went almost every year. Thus, most diary entries date from autumn 1870, August to November 1871, April 1872, July to September 1872. As the author grew older, the entries became more detailed. In 1873 Grand Duke Paul Alexandrovich clearly lost interest in his diary, making only two entries for the whole year (one in Crimea). The author describes episodes of the life of young Grand Dukes at Livadiya, horse walks and trips to Oreanda, Massandra, Gurzuf, Miskhor, Alupka, and other places of the Southern Coast of Crimea. Grand Duke Paul Alexandrovich mentions his participation in private theatricals based on ancient history, balls, sea bathing, family festivities (birthdays of his mother and sister). The diary occasionally mentions details of education, as the Emperor's children did not have vacations as such, only less classes during their stay in the Crimea. Few entries from St. Petersburg and Tsarskoye Selo (spring 1871, January, June, and October 1872) are about Grand Duke Paul Alexandrovich's participation in church services during the Holy Week, hunting, and taking in the exhibition at the Russian Academy of Arts. One entry, of June 1873, was made while the family stayed in Bad Ems. The diary ends with a quote from a verse by Mikhail Lomonosov.

Keywords

Historical source, Grand Duke Paul Alexandrovich, diary, Grand Duke Sergey Alexandrovich, Russian Imperial House, the Romanovs in the Crimea.

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