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Knyazev, M. A., National Research State University of Nizhni Novgorod, Nizhni Novgorod, Russia

On the Authenticity of the Last Diary Entries of Emperor Nicholas II, June – July 1918

### Abstract

This article examines the debated question in modern historiography of whether the last lifetime diary entries of former Emperor Nicholas II, written in mid- to late June (Old Style) 1918, were later subject to external editing (removal of individual sheets, interpolations by outsiders). The relevance of this issue stems not only from the traditional interest of researchers in the diaries of the last autocrat, but also from the fact that the circumstances of the death of the former emperor and his family on the night of July 16–17, 1918, in Yekaterinburg remain shrouded in mystery. The question of the completeness and authenticity of Nicholas II's last daily entries was first raised in 1988 in an article by I. G. Nepein. The historian noted the absence of diary entries for the last days of the former emperor's life and also identified a discrepancy between the number of sheets indicated and the number of pages in the file, leading to the assumption that individual sheets of the manuscript were subsequently cut off by unknown individuals. This conclusion was uncritically accepted by researcher Yu. A. Grigoryev, who in turn advanced a hypothesis regarding the contents of the confiscated entries, in which the diary's author could have described the circumstances of his final days, including the preparations carried out by the Ural Bolsheviks for the assassination of the royal family. P. V. Multatuli continued his in-depth study of the diary entries from the final period of Nicholas II's life. Focusing on the letters from an anonymous "officer" mentioned in the diary regarding the release of prisoners, the historian questioned the authenticity of this entry and suggested that it was later falsified to prove the former emperor and his family were preparing to escape from prison. The author's source analysis of the former emperor's diary entries, based on their originals, held in the State Archives of the Russian Federation (GARF), has allowed for a significant revision of the established historiographic picture. The absence of entries from the monarch's final years does not support their removal, as similar omissions had occurred previously. The discrepancy between the number of sheets and pages in the file is explained solely by inaccurate page counts, and the entry of June 30 (July 14), 1918, is indeed the last, as there are no other notes or signs of deletion after it. The suggestion that the entry about the family receiving anonymous letters was falsified does not hold water, as the diary's pen was replaced, creating the erroneous impression of erasures, different letterforms, and different font weights. It is concluded that the conspiracy theories about the falsification of individual diary entries are conspiratorial in nature, which in no way refutes the authenticity of Nicholas II's final diary entries.

## Keywords

Historical source, source studies, authenticity, interpolation, diary, former Emperor Nicholas II; death of the august family.

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## About authors

Knyazev Mark Andreevich, PhD in History, N. I. Lobachevsky Nizhny Novgorod State University, Institute of International Relations and World History, Department of Foreign Regional Studies and Local History, Junior Researcher, Nizhny Novgorod, Russia, 8-987-085-48-35, kn.mark.nn@mail.ru

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