

# NICHOLAS ROMANOFF DESCRIBED FALL OF RUSSIAN IMPERIAL DYNASTY

## Last of Muscovite Emperors Abdicated to Permit Country to Hang Together and Continue War on Behalf of the Allies—Had Intended to go to England and Distrusted Kerensky at First Sight

In presenting to our readers for the first time the diary of the late Tsar during the tragic period of his abdication. The Courier places on record one of the most human and historically interesting documents of the war. It is possible that the Czar may have made other notes and memoirs while a prisoner at Tsarko Selo, before the Imperial Family were subsequently swallowed up in the mists of Siberia, from which they never returned. But, if so, these additional pages of his tragic story have not yet come to light, and probably never will, and the following diary, which is now printed in full for the first time, of the "Little Father's" last days, February 27, the date upon which the diary starts was the actual date upon which the people of Petrograd openly decried and attacked the government. The dates in the diary are according to the old Greek calendar.

Monday, Feb. 27, 1917;  
High Command Headquarters, Mohilen.  
Disorders reign at Petrograd. It grieves me to think that soldiers are participating in these disorders. I am anxious for news from Petrograd. Each day the situation is growing more and more serious. I fear for the future of the Fatherland. It hurts me to be so far from the capital, and every day to hear bad news. And I am so helpless to be of service. I fear that situation is beyond my control. The dinner is over. It was decided that we proceed to Tsarko Selo, and shortly after midnight I am on my way, in

a train. I feel terribly nervous. I have a premonition that it is too late. I feel from the grave faces of my generals that things are worse than they admit to me.  
Tuesday, Feb. 28, 1917.  
I am much worried. My staff finally prevailed upon me to retire. I retired at 5 o'clock, removing only outer garments. I feel that at any moment I must be called for further consultation with General Ivenor, who I have dispatched to Petrograd with troops to establish order. However, I can not sleep. At 6 o'clock I was still awake. I must have had a little sleep for now at 10 o'clock the shrill whistle of the engine turned back. Now we have just passed Likhoslavle. At the station my staff received more news. Each hour things are growing worse. We wished to reach Moscow, but I was told it was hardly possible. I insisted that an attempt must be made. Our attempt to reach Moscow proved futile, and the Imperial train was turned back. Now we are trying to reach General Rouszki's headquarters at Pskoff, Liouban and Tzozne railroad stations have been occupied by the rebels, we are compelled to retrace our journey towards Pskoff. We must spend the night at General Rouszki's headquarters; I am sleepless and tired. I can not touch food. I see the end clearly and wish that it was all over. I can stand it no longer.  
We have reached Pskoff. I sent for General Rouszki. He is sad and he kept secret from me; I told every one around me that I was pre-

pared for the worst. I learned from General Rouszki that Gatchinow and Louga were occupied. We are lost! It is now too late; we can never reach Tsarko Selo. I try hard to think, but am unable to gather my thoughts. Is it a dream? am I awake? I think of my poor wife. Alexandra. I can imagine how she must suffer, seeing everything about her as it is. I wonder where my children are. They must be full of fear for my safety. O great God be our protector and console my poor Alexandra!  
Abdication is Necessary.  
General Rouszki's Headquarters, Pskoff.  
Thursday, March 2, 1917.  
I awoke very early after a sleepless night. How grave, yet unwearied and seemingly undisturbed the generals look. I admire their cool demeanor, but they are soldiers, and to them victory as well as defeat has little effect. I sent for General Rouszki, who came to me this morning. He said that he had a long conversation with Dodiannko by telegraph. He held in his hand a written report of the whole conversation. He hesitated to show it to me. "Rouszki, hand me the report. I will read it myself, for I must know it all." I said as I took it from his hand. As I started to read it I looked at Rouszki, whose head was bent, and he did not wish to meet my eye. The manifesto is as I had expected. The Radlianko informs Rouszki by telegraph that the situation is very grave at Petrograd, and a parliamentary ministry, chosen from the existing duma can-

not save the existing order. The so-called democracy as represented by the labor committee, which is irreconcilable to moderate changes will fight it. Rouszki himself is convinced that the duma is powerless, as the latter will not have any relations with the existing duma. Rouszki tells me that he had already transmitted duplicates of the report of his conversation with Radlianko to all the general headquarters, and has received replies that they will submit. That is, my abdication has become necessary for the sake of saving Russia and keeping her as a sovereign. Everyone at the general headquarters advise me to yield. I am not only ready but anxious. I told Rouszki that I will abdicate if my action will save Russia. The general headquarters has already prepared a manifesto on the subject. I have read the copy and am prepared to sign it. Rouszki informs me that he expects two members of the duma in the evening. I have no objection to that, but I know Shuchim to be a fiery and heartless revolutionist.

Late in the evening the two duma members arrived. I have found out that I was mistaken regarding Shuchim. He is a humane and compassionate heart. He is very considerate of my feelings. He speaks to me as to the one who is addressing a sick child. He is very kind and polite. My wife tells me to him for having thought him harsh and heartless. Our consultation was very friendly. I told them that I have already read the manifesto and am willing to sign it. A slight alteration was made and I signed it. A great relief! A tremendous load is cast off my overburdened shoulders. But how depressed I feel! And the night is not yet. Thru more tortures I must live. When will it all end?

Friday, March 3, 1917, Mohileff:  
I hardly realize what is going on about me. My train is stopping at Mohileff station. I would prefer not to meet my former staff, but I must meet the members of the military staff at least. My wife and I am informed that they are awaiting me, to bid me good-bye. I have decided to speak to them.  
They receive me with grave faces and many tears in the eyes of several of them. One of my generals told me that Fate had willed it all. I do not agree with him. Fate does not rule us; we ourselves choose our own fate. I have made my fate and would make a different one if I had another opportunity. But on this day I am not permitted to live twice. I am resigned.  
I received General Alexieff in the train. We had a short conversation and he told me that I have taken the noble course I have taken. Even if one's act appears noble, when taken under force or duress, moral or physical, it ceases to be noble. Later General Alexieff returned with more news from the capital. Michael has also abdicated. His manifesto ends with a declaration that he would only accept the throne after a general assembly based on universal suffrage is convoked and that assembly approves of him as their lawful sovereign. What mental agonies he must have suffered in signing such a disgraceful document. It is a shameful document and God knows what he must have suffered on signing it. Shame and sorrow is everywhere. General Alexieff is happy that he has ceased at Petrograd. I feel better and have taken food, but am still worried about my wife and children. My generals advise me to wait for a few days until things are settled. They tell me that the populace is bitter against my wife and my joining her would bring about serious crises. I will not listen to such advice. My place is with my wife and children, come what may.

Afraid of Rabbits.  
Tsarko Selo.  
Friday, March 10, 1917.  
I am more restless and I spent the night in comfortable sleep. The joy of our reunion made us forget the past and the future for a while. However, in the morning after breakfast my wife again became fearful of the future, and she is restless. Count Benkendorff succeeded in obtaining permission to pay us a short visit. His visit has somewhat strengthened my wife, and she is making plans for our future. I do not think that her plans can be carried out, for we are prisoners of the state, and prisoners should not make plans. Nevertheless, it prevents my wife from worrying about the future.  
Count Benkendorff has told me that the feeling of the Social-Democrats is still bitter against us. He feels that although the government is not vindictive, as they derive their power directly from the populace, they are afraid to treat us with more consideration for fear of arousing popular antagonism. How shameful! A government afraid to act for fear of the rabble!  
Soon after Count Benkendorff left us I examined all my papers and, after burning some of them, I put the rest in order. Some of my private papers must be preserved at any cost, for they have bearing on history. My wife tells me to destroy them all, for fear that a few might incriminate us. I will not listen to her advice. I am not a coward to cheat the historian for fear of consequences.  
Kerensky visited me. I had thought he was a generous big man. I am unpleasantly disappointed with him. He has not an honest face, and his eyes are not steady.

(Continued on Page 11.)

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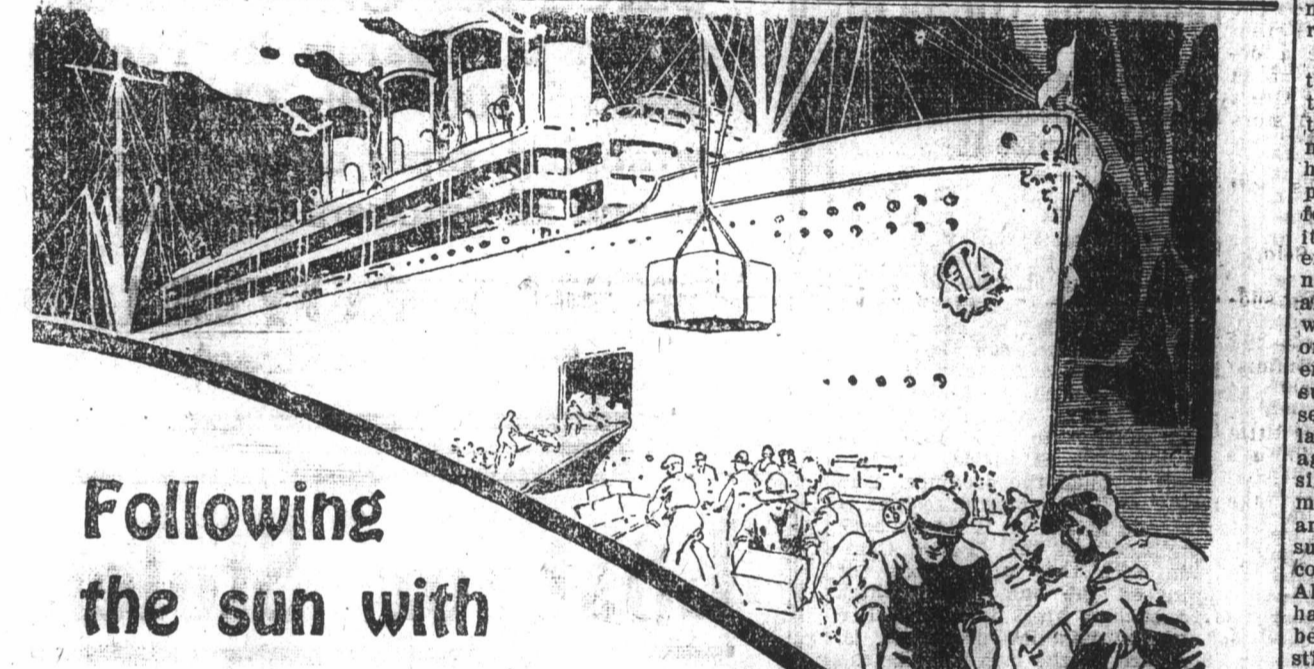
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After Every Meal

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Thursday, March 9th, 1917, Tsarko Selo.  
At 11.30 this morning we reached Tsarko Selo. The place is changed and I can hardly believe that it is the same place. Even the appearance of the town is changed. Everything has gone through a great transformation. The streets are full of soldiers and the place is surrounded by sinister-looking guards, and uncanny-looking non-commissioned officers fill the great court. They are disrespectful to me and their behavior is abominable. But I have at least seen my dear wife and children. My beloved Alexandra is looking well, but my children are all ill with measles, and are all lying in a dark room. They are getting on well with the exception of Marie, whose illness is just beginning. My wife is frantic with fear and still thinks about the past and what might have been done. I appealed to her to calm herself and put her trust in God. She became calm and tried to become courageous. Occasionally we hear shouts and stunts from the great court and these terrifies Alexandra. I again appealed to her to be courageous and we both prayed to God for protection. Will He hear it?  
In the afternoon I went out for a walk. Three under-tenants followed me closely. This time I found them more kind and respectful. I asked one of the officers for a snow shovel. He was amazed. "Citizen Romanoff, what will you do with a snow shovel?" he asks me. I told him that I wished to use it for what it was made. In half an hour he returned with a shovel. I cleared a path leading to the stairs and enjoyed the labor. A soldier offered to assist me. I thanked him and told him that I was enjoying the work. In the evening, with the exception of Marie, we spent the time together by ourselves. However, my wife is unhappy. She causes me worry. I wish she was courageous, as it is I who should look at the future with fear, not her. They will not harm her, because she is a woman and I am the symbol of all that was wicked in the past; I wish admit it.

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