

WHAT'S THERE IN THE NAME?

The November 2003 RNJ News Letter reports on the issue of a medal honoring the Grand Duke Georgii of Russia. The legend on the obv. side of this medal reads: **Е. И. В. ВЕЛИКИЙ КНЯЗЬ ГЕОРГИЙ МИХАЙЛОВИЧ** which is interpreted as HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS GRAND DUKE GEORGII MIKHAILOVICH. There appear to be two discrepancies in this inscription - one major and one minor. 1) The abbreviation H.I.H. or its fully spelled form is an address and is not part of the royal title. It is used more or less as a pronoun when formally addressing, referring to or introducing a member of the royal family, and therefore does not belong on the said medal. 2) The less serious discrepancy is the spelling of Grand Duke's patronimic **МИХАЙЛОВИЧ**. The preferred form for the first names and patronimic for members of the Romanov family was the old Russian spelling **...МИХАЙЛОВИЧ(Ъ)** (**И** instead of **Й**) or **...ФЕОДОРОВНА**, for Empress Alexandra (**ФЕО...** instead of **ФЕ...**), or **СЕРГИЙ** (instead of **СЕРГЕЙ** for GM's younger brother), etc. but the revolution of 1917 changed all that. First, after the March abdication of Nicols II, he became "former Grand Duke Georgii Mikhailovich" and then, after the October bolshevik coup d'etat, his social status was downgraded to "citizen Romanov".

Over the last one hundred years of Romanov rule in Russia there appeared over a dozen medals honoring or commemorating members of the royal family and proper use of their titles on them can be seen on plate II of Y.B. Iversen's work on medals of the reign of Alexander II, SPB 1880.

This problem of how one properly addresses a Russian grand duke has also been addressed by the GM's older brother Grand Duke Alexander during his tour of United States over seventy years ago. In his book entitled: «Always a Grand Duke», Garden City, N.Y., on pages 272-273 he writes:

This also happened in Los Angeles.

"Say, what's your name, anyway?" asked a gentleman seated next to me at a luncheon during the course of which I had been addressed in turn as "Your Highness," "Excellency," and "Monseigneur."

"My name is Alexander."

"Alexander what?"

"Alexander nothing, just Alexander."

"Now listen," he said impatiently, "let's get this matter straight... Didn't your folks have a last name of some description?"

I confessed that there was a last name in our family but that a well-established custom precluded our being addressed by that name. In order to make myself thoroughly understood I pointed out that while the intimate friends of the Prince of Wales may call him "David" or "Edward," he has never been referred to as "Mr. Windsor," so far.

My neighbor shook his head dubiously and remained silent for a while.

"Now then," he exclaimed suddenly, "let's suppose for argument's sake that my name is Johnny Walker. Would I be introduced to you as Mr. Johnny or as Mr. Walker?"

"You would be introduced to me as Mr. Walker, to be sure, but had that been my name I should have been introduced to you as Grand Duke Johnny."

"That settles it," he admitted gloomily. "You win".

Submitted by V.A. 30. XI. 2003.

О рожденіи Его Императорскаго Высочества Великаго Князя Георгія Михайловича.

1863 1002/1738

Въ 11-й день сего Августа, Любезная Наша Невѣстка, Великая Княгиня Ольга Олександровна, Супруга Любезнаго Нашего Брата, Великаго Князя Михаила Николаевича, разрѣшилась отъ бремени рожденіемъ Намъ Племянника, а Ихъ Императорскимъ Высочествомъ Сына, нарѣченнаго Георгіемъ.

Такое Императорскаго Нашего Дома приращеніе, пріемля новымъ ознаменованіемъ благодати Божіей, въ утѣшеніе Намъ испосланной, Мы вполне удостовѣрены, что все вѣрноподданные Наши вознесутъ съ Нами ко Всевышнему теплыя молитвы о благополучномъ возрастѣ и преуспѣяніи Новорожденнаго.

Новеѣваемъ писать и именовать во всѣхъ мѣстахъ, гдѣ причлествуетъ, сего Любезнаго Намъ Племянника, Новорожденнаго Великаго Князя, Его Императорскимъ Высочествомъ.

указомъ
Крушение
сентября 19, 1900 г. № 111

ВЫСОЧАЙШІЙ МАНИФЕСТЪ.

БОЖІЕЮ МИЛОСТІЮ,

МЫ, НИКОЛАЙ ВТОРЫЙ,

ИМПЕРАТОРЪ И САМОДЕРЖЕЦЪ ВСЕРОССИЙСКІЙ,

ЦАРЬ ПОЛЬСКІЙ, ВЕЛИКІЙ КНЯЗЬ ФИНЛЯНДСКІЙ,

и прочая, и прочая, и прочая.

Объявляемъ всѣмъ вѣрнымъ Нашимъ подданнымъ:

30-го сего апрѣля, въ Корфу совершено Бракосочетаніе Любезнѣйшаго Двоюроднаго Дяди Нашего, Его Императорскаго Высочества Великаго Князя Георгія Михайловича съ Дочерью Его Величества Короля Эллиновъ Королевною Марією Георгіевною.

Возвѣщая о семъ радостномъ для сердца Нашего событіи и повелѣвая Супругу Великаго Князя Георгія Михайловича Марію Георгіевну именовать Великою Княгинею, съ титуломъ Императорскаго Высочества, Мы вполне убѣждены, что вѣрные подданные Наши соединятъ теплыя мольбы ихъ съ Нашими къ Всемогущему Богу о дарованіи постояннаго незыблемаго благоденствія Любезнымъ сердцу Нашему Новобрачнымъ.

Данъ въ Царскомъ Селѣ, въ 30-й день апрѣля, въ лѣто отъ Рождества Христова тысяча девятисотое, Царствованія-же Нашего въ шестое.

На подлинномъ Собственною Его Императорскаго Величества рукою написано:

«НИКОЛАЙ».

Царское Село
30-го апрѣля 1900 года.