



*January-February
2018 Newsletter
Part 2*

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**Our 2018 Conference
will be in Colonial
Williamsburg, Virginia
September 28-30.**

**We're going back in time.
Join us for dinners in historic
taverns, great talks, a tour of
Yorktown, & much more.**

**We will be based at the
Williamsburg Woodlands
Hotel, but other hotel choices
are available.**

**Check
napoleonichistoricalsociety.org
for updates.**



CAPTAIN REGNAULT

I am very pleased that I get to use another Keith Rocco picture. Above is some detail from his painting of Captain Regnault of the 3rd Tirailleurs of the Imperial Guard. I have included the complete painting on a

later page.

The 3rd was one of those Young Guard regiments that saw much of the fighting. Keith has again sent us some of the sources he used for the research.

In the last newsletter, I was so pleased to include a Keith Rocco painting, that I inadvertently failed to credit his colleague, Paul Lindsay Dawson. Which is a shame as Paul is a historian who has researched for many years in the French archives. Much of this information

has not been seen before, and has never appeared in English.

In the last issue, the text on Lieutenant Noel of the Grenadiers à Cheval de la Garde was all Paul's work, as is that on Captain Regnault to the right.



This is the period portrait of Regnault that Keith Rocco used as a source. It is, as he says, "a beauty." For his painting, he went on to say, "I picked up the pose and completed it."

The plate shows Captain Jean Francois Regnault of the 3rd Tirailleurs and several men of his regiment. The likeness of Regnault is taken from a portrait of him executed during the Hundred Days Campaign.

Regnault was born in Paris on 15 June 1789, in the district of Saint Germain, the son of Jean Baptiste Regnault. He was admitted to the Ecole Militaire in Paris as a cadet on 15 March 1806. He graduated the rank of sub-lieutenant on 1 June 1807 and was admitted to the 5th Legion of the Reserve which later became the 122nd Regiment of Line Infantry.

During a siege in Spain in 1809, Jean Francois Regnault was wounded with a sabre cut to the head. He was promoted to lieutenant on 20 March 1811. Promotion to captain-adjutant on the General Staff came on 8 January 1813, following the Russian campaign. Soon after this, he was transferred as captain to the 46th Regiment of Line Infantry. Admission to the 1st regiment of Tirailleur-Grenadiers of the Imperial Guard came on 26 July 1813, and he was awarded the cross of the Legion of Honour on 28 November 1813.

Regnault was wounded with a bayonet thrust to the left thigh at Soissons during the 1814 campaign. With the fall of the Empire in 1814, he was admitted to the 68th regiment of Line Infantry on 16 August 1814. With the return of Napoleon from Elba, he was named captain in the 3rd regiment of Tirailleur-Grenadiers on 13 April 1815.

Discharged 10 September 1815, Regnault was admitted as captain of the Legion of the Aube on 11 April, 1816 and was discharged again on 18 September 1816.

The paintings and text have all been taken from a project Paul Lindsay Dawson and Keith Rocco have done on the Guard in 1815. For details, visit the website at www.keithrocco.com. Paul and Keith are working on the follow-up, which looks at the Line units in the 1815 army.

At right is Regnault's service record. It shows that he was transferred to the 3^e Tirailleurs in April of 1815. The other column simple states that in 1815 he was on campaign in Belgium.

On the next page is all of Keith's painting of Captain Regnault.



This shako of a Young Guard officer is one of the items of militaria Keith used to get the right look.



A LEAF FROM THE IMPERIAL CROWN

In case you missed it, on November 19 of last year, Osenat, the auctioneer based in Fontainebleau, sold something unusual, a leaf from Napoleon's crown, the same crown he wore at his coronation. Who could manage to filch something like that? As usual, it was an inside job.

How to get your leaf?

Jeanne Renée de Valroger was a descendant of Martin Guillaume Biennais, a favorite supplier of

jewelry and such to Napoleon and those around him. Valroger related the family tradition in an article published in 1958. Biennais was given the commission of creating the laurel wreath to be worn at the coronation. Before the great event, he went to the Tuileries to get his client's approval. Napoleon's verdict was said to be, "Beautiful ... but heavy!"

It's claimed Biennais came up with a perfect courtier's response. "It's the weight of the victories, Sire ...

it takes a lot of leaves to remember them all."

Allegedly, Napoleon then said, "Let us forget some of them, for I can not bend my head under their load."

This makes Napoleon seem a little soft, but he knew that it was a very bad idea to overload a soldier before battle, and the coronation service promised to be very long.

On his return from the Tuileries to his workshop, Biennais set to work on the crown. When he returned to



his family that night, he was greeted by his wife and six young daughters. He told them of the Emperor's approval, and his answer to the weight problem, to cut off six leaves. He then gave each daughter a leaf.

We don't know which daughter's leaf ended up in the Osenat auction. It was either Marie Anne's or Amélie Victorine's, who both married the same man, a Monsieur Dutartre. It was passed down within the Dutartre family. The locations of the other five leaves are unknown,

A seventh leaf.

The only other known leaf was once the property of the painter Isabey. It became detached from the crown during a fitting before Napo-

leon's coronation as King of Italy in 1805. Isabey described the circumstances. "At St. Cloud in 1805, before leaving for Milan, I tried to place on the Emperor the Royal Crown [of Italy] which was to sit on top the crown of laurel used for the coronation in Notre Dame; a leaf came off. I was going to hand it to the first chamberlain. His Majesty told me, keep it as a souvenir of your clumsiness."

Late in life, Isabey mounted the leaf on a snuffbox. That appeared in an auction in Cannes in the 1980s. The French government used its rights to acquire the snuffbox, and it is now in the collection of Fontainebleau.

The experts tried to compare the Fontainebleau leaf with Osenat's,

but its inclusion in the snuffbox prevented exact measurement. What's visible seemed identical in its pattern of ribs and dimensions.

This leaf.

It's gold, with wavy edges and fine chiseled ribs, 3.6 inches long. At its widest, it's just short of an inch. It weighs 10 grams. It's in good shape, other than some slight traces of some pliers. Perhaps Biennais was in too much of hurry taking it off the crown.

The leaf came in a red morocco case with gold fittings. It is signed in gold, "biennais au singe violet rue s. honore n°511." The case is 5½ by 3 inches. It went for \$770,000 (just the hammer price).



A battered drawing of the Biennais family, complete with jeweller, wife, and six daughters, though some of the daughters are barely visible.



*How the crown was meant to appear.
Details from portraits by François Gérard, left,
and Jacques-Louis David, below.*



A BOX FOR JOSEPHINE'S ROUGE

Also in the Osenat sale was a Bien-nais "rouge box" intended for Josephine. To explain Josephine's fondness for rouge, Osenat ungallantly described her as a flirtatious woman, saying it was in part because of her age, being a woman of about forty in a young Imperial court. But then they corrected themselves, pointing out that rouge was the fashion under the old regime. When she was young, every woman of quality used it. It was an integral part of the toilette. But it's said she overdid it. "As for the rouge, not content to brighten up her cheekbones, she almost covered her cheeks."

But that's showbiz. At public occasions, she had to stand out at a distance. However she did buy a lot

of it. In 1808 alone, she purchased rouge at Martin for 2,749 fr. 58, at Madame Chaumeton for 598 francs. 52, and yet more at other perfumers, Gervais-Chardin and the Widow Farjeon and Son. I'd wager her ladies used much of it.

Josephine was determined to follow Napoleon's tastes. He liked all the women appearing before him to use rouge. He thought it a necessary part of court dress, and he could be rude to women who appeared without it: "Go put on some rouge, Madame," he said to one, "you look like a corpse."

To another, he said, "why do you have to be so pale. Are you recovering from childbirth?"

Napoleon's tastes were not shared

by everyone. When Louisa Adams, U.S. ambassadress in Berlin, was recovering from a miscarriage, Queen Luisa suggested she use rouge to look healthier. John Quincy Adams was outraged at the idea that a respectable woman like his wife should be seen in it.

Back to this exceptional casket. It's covered top and sides with mother-of-pearl, copiously decorated with flower-buds, bees, acanthus leaves, and horns of plenty. The base of the casket is lined in crimson velvet. A mercury mirror is inside the lid, which is lined in purple velvet. The key has a shield with clear traces of the letter J. The casket is 7 inches by 4¾ x 2.

It came with its own protec-



The complete set: rouge box, outer box, and Percier design.

tive wooden box covered in red morocco. The green morocco inside has a gold-embossed label reading 'Biennais orfèvre, rue Saint Honoré n°283, Au Singe Violet.' The bit about the purple monkey refers to the shop sign. The outer box is 7⅓ inches by 5⅓ by 2¾.

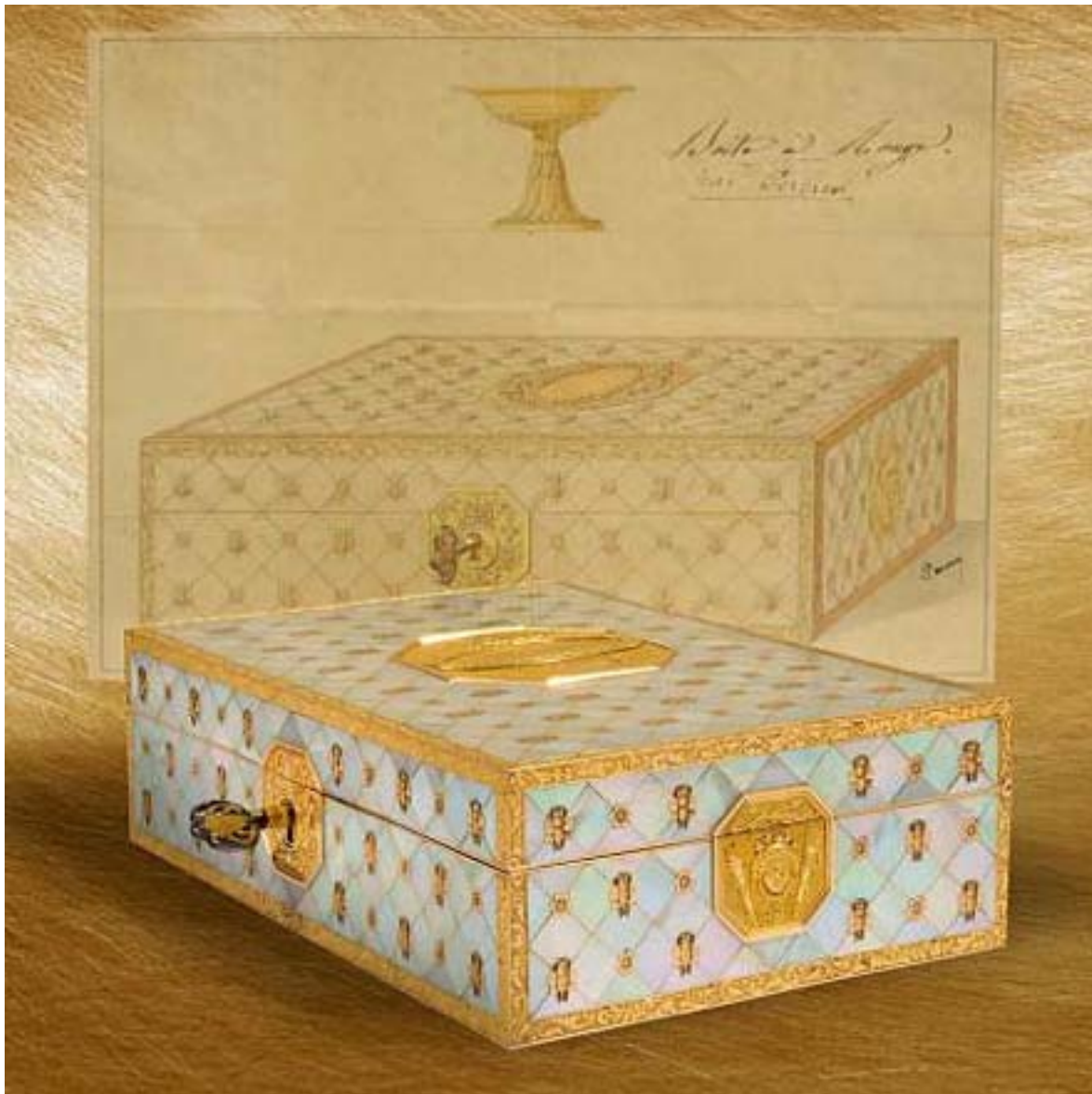
As an extra, the casket came with its original design, done in watercolor, and signed by Percier himself. It is titled, 'Boite à rouge par Percier,' and shows the design of this powder box as well as a



Goddess Diana is one adornment.

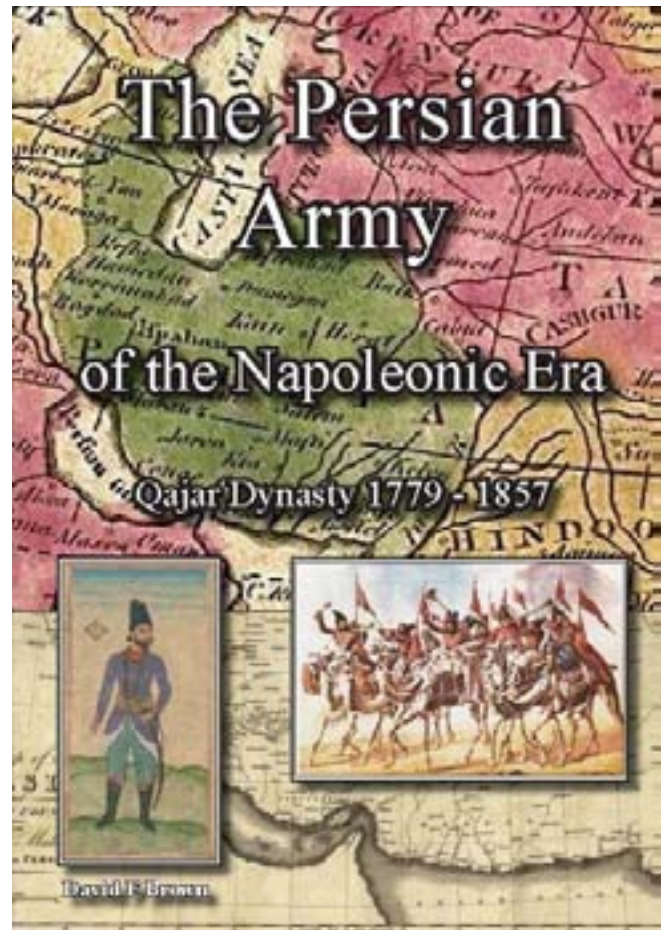
rouge dish also intended for her. It's safely framed behind glass.

I wonder if Josephine ever got to use this box. Osenat gave the provenance as Martin Guillaume Biennais, then his descendants. For one reason or another, it doesn't seem to have been delivered, or did Biennais buy it back in the clearance sale of Bonaparte property at the fall of Empire? At Osenat, it sold for \$192,000, but there would have been buyer's premium and perhaps some taxes added on to that.



PERSIAN ARMIES

Member Tom Tuck has been telling us about a book he found invaluable when he was researching the armies of Persia. I say armies because there were dramatic changes in what forces Persia could put in the field, with French and later British military missions trying to kickstart Persian military methods into the 19th century. Arch-enemies, the Ottoman Turks, were attempting the same, difficult, modernization. Various tribal groups, like the Kurds, the Turkomans, and the Bakhtiari, sometimes put a stronger force into the field than the Shah. The Persian army fought the Russians in 1796



and 1804-1813. The Russians ended up conquering large territories in the Caucasus and Caspian regions that determine the borders that exist today.

As Tom found, information on the Persians is scant and scattered, with only an occasional print, and most of the books are obscure and out of print. So this book, *The Persian Army of the Napoleonic Era*, by David F. Brown, is very welcome. It may not measure up to scholarly standards, as it's a bit of a data-dump of every available image and detail that the author could collect. It's a definite convenience, centralizing what is known. Often several variants of the same picture are reproduced. Usefully, Brown gives us his sources, so it's a time saver as well.

At left, a sample picture of the heavy cavalry, almost medieval in look and tactics.

The book is privately published, under the name of Evil Gong Press. The printed version is a booklet really. It's not on Amazon. I found

it at www.wargamevault.com/browse/pub/9284/David-F-Brown-Evil-Gong-Press.

A PDF copy is \$10.00, the soft-

cover book is \$18.00, and both together cost \$24.00. A little too amateur perhaps, but a good book even so.



Some sample pictures showing cavalry skirmishing with muskets.





*Tom's project, to raise a Persian army with 15mm figures to keep Russians and Turks in line.
Above, massed infantry from the modern army the Persians tried to raise.*



I FORGOT SOME ORME



In the November-December newsletter, almost as an after-thought to a piece on the Nelson portrait by Guzzardi, I threw in the study of Nelson by Daniel Orme. One reader pointed out I had missed a chance by not showing a more unusual piece by Orme, his study of Fanny Nelson.

He must have done this watercolor

on paper as a companion piece to Nelson's in 1798. He certainly didn't need it for the naval scene he was working on, but no doubt he hoped it would be as popular as her husband's once it was engraved. As I noted before, Fanny wrote to Horatio that 'Orme must have made a great deal of money.'

Perhaps it wasn't as popular

because the marriage was already spiralling to a humiliating breakdown. Horatio's affair with Emma Hamilton was soon to be notorious.

This picture of Lady Frances Nelson is part of the collection of the National Army Museum in Greenwich, in the far south-east of London.

I mentioned that Orme was working on a big oil painting entitled, *The Surrender of the San Josef at the Battle of St Vincent*. It was

suggested I should have shown it as well. The final result is below. Orme completed it in 1799, and the

dimensions are 60 by 78 inches. It's also in the National Maritime Museum's collection.



Daniel Orme (1766–1832?) was the son of a Manchester merchant, who came south to London to be an artist. He studied at the new Royal Academy, and then practised as a portrait-painter in oil and miniature. Some of his sitters were famous men, and included many naval figures, but Orme never achieved

his breakthrough.

Probably he made his living as an engraver. In 1814 he styled himself as artist to his majesty and the prince-regent. This wasn't a prestigious position, if it was a real one at all. Besides, George III was well-known to be hopelessly mad by this time. It's not surprising that the

same year he admitted defeat and returned to Manchester, where he gave lessons. His brother William was also an artist, but never left Manchester.

Orme may not be an important artist, but he did well with his Nelsons.

I FORGOT THE BRIENNE PICTURE



It has also been pointed out that I missed another picture in the last November-December newsletter. When I wrote about the museum re-opening at the Military School of Brienne-le-Château, it probably would have been the best time to include the Swebach sketch above.

Sotheby's in Paris sold it in March of last year for just over \$600 including buyer's premium. The

pen and brown ink sketch is 6¼ inches by 8⅞.

Jacques-François-Joseph Swebach (1769-1823) is mainly known as a specialist in battle scenes, often in collaboration with Carle Vernet. Swebach also did some superb work providing the artwork for Sèvres porcelain from 1802 to 1813.

This sketch of Napoleon in

Brienne was perhaps a study for a larger painting that was never done. It shows the visit Napoleon made in 1805. The Sotheby's expert thought Napoleon was nostalgic about the place, but as he only made this one brief visit to his old school, I doubt it. It was merely on his road to Milan, where he was going to crown himself as King of Italy.



SOME EXCITE- MENT IN NAPLES

*Here is Vesuvius
exploding in 1794.
The excitement in 2018
will be EHQ Travel's
tour of southern Italy.
Our tour will go from
Palermo to Naples,
through the land of
Nelson & Murat.*

Why Palermo? It's a beautiful city where bluff King Ferdinand and Queen Maria Carolina hid when the French chased them out of Naples. They had the protection of Nelson and his fleet. Nelson spent his time wooing the queen's favorite, Emma Hamilton. They were the celebrities of their day.

After Palermo we'll drive north. We'll visit the battlefield of Maida, where a British landing smashed a small French army. There's Pizzo, where Murat met his gory end. We may pause for a Greek temple or two. Then the Bay of Naples, which the world then thought the most beautiful place in the world. There's the isle of Capri, now the resort for the wealthy, then the site of a daring French amphibious action. As we're so close, a visit to Pompeii. But it was the palaces of Naples that seduced Murat & Caroline with a dream of a kingdom in the sun, a dream that led them to betrayal and ruin.

Enjoy palaces, treachery, great food & wine. To be honest, we doubt we can get the volcano to explode while we're there. But otherwise, it's history and fun.

May 21-29, 2018

The small print: \$4400 per person double occupancy, which includes all ground transport, hotels, food, and entry fees. Unfortunately for those who want a single room there's a \$650 charge, and to reserve your trip you need to make a non-refundable \$500 deposit. We start at Palermo and end in Naples. For those interested, we may add an option to extend the tour to end in Rome. Call our Todd Fisher at 773 807 5178 to chat, or contact marengo@aol.com.
EHQ Tours, PO Box 1371, Deerfield IL 60015.

AN UNEXPECTED GLIMPSE OF METTERNICH

What follows is not good history, as it comes from a source who knew Metternich only by living in his palaces, but here at the very end of the newsletter, we try get away with all sorts of odd things. If you have made it this far, I hope you forgive the following discussion.

Princess Tatiana Hilarionovna Vasilchikova was born in Saint Petersburg in 1915. She was still a baby when her family had to flee from the Bolsheviks. In straitened circumstances, the family wandered around Europe between the wars. She was one of the most beautiful women of her day, highly cultivated, and well known in international society. Tatiana tried to move to Britain, but those tiresome immigration people forbade it. She ended up in Berlin as the Second World War began.

As the whitest of White Russians, it's understandable that her family didn't recognize fully how nasty was the

new German government. Tatiana and her sister disliked the Nazis mainly because they fell short of their aristocratic standards. But both were decent people. They ended up in the circle of aristocratic conspirators that eventually attempted the July 20 1944 plot to assassinate Hitler. I will not tell her whole story, as it's rather long and involved. She wrote it all up in her book, *Five passports in a shifting Europe*. It's in this book I found an unexpected connection to our era.

The connection? It's more than her descent from the Prince Vasilchikov who led the Russian cavalry against Napoleon. It began with her marriage in 1941, to Paul Alfons, Prince of Metternich-Winneburg, great-grandson of the Austrian chancellor who opposed Napoleon.

The Metternich family retained three great estates, Schloss Johannisberg above the Rhine, and Schloss Königswart and Plass, both in what is now the Czech Republic. Johannisberg was lovely, but the allies bombed it flat in 1942. The family wasn't very fond of Plass, so Königswart was the place Tatiana knew best.

When her husband went off to the Russian Front, Tatiana not only found refuge at Königswart, but became its chatelaine. "To run a place like Königswart," she wrote, "was like directing a combination of palace, museum, and hotel..."

She does make Königswart seem like a lost paradise. The great Metternich "had rebuilt the earlier Gothic building to suit his taste, which was unerring. He turned it into a charming, turn-of-the-18th-century country-seat. In time it had all grown into a cohesive whole: the house set in the park seemed to melt into the landscape. It was all meticulously planned, yet with a dash of random unexpectedness, as if it had happened by chance. The balance was so perfect that to cut down a tree or move a picture became a major decision."

The house was pervaded by the memory of the great chancellor. "The long line of guest-rooms were furnished in the French-Consulate style after the Chancellor had been Ambassador in Paris in the early XIXth century."

Even the chapel wasn't exempt from this ghost. "On feast days, the good old priest donned vestments made from the Chancellor's gala uniform which he had worn for the Lawrence portrait."

Tatiana felt she had come to know and understand the



Here is Tatiana Metternich.

Chancellor. Please forgive the long excerpt that follows.

Tatiana’s take on the Chancellor.

“My French education had instilled me with a very jaundiced view of Metternich. Living among his personal belongings, collections and papers, this now underwent a radical change.”

“Metternich’s personality must have been completely incomprehensible to narrow-minded historians prejudiced by the upsurge of nationalism and liberalism. He did not lay much store by their opinions either.”

“Like so many statesmen of his time, he dealt with serious affairs with seeming levity and appeared to treat frivolous matters, such as the organization of a ball, with exaggerated attention. He was profoundly distrustful of abstract political theories and attached supreme importance to organic growth – in statesmanship too. He also maintained that two elementary realities were all too frequently overlooked by politicians: History and Geography. His family came from the Moselle region, but generations of service to the Church and to the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire induced an infinitely wider outlook than that typical of subjects of smaller principalities. He had a profound aversion to the ever-recurring German passion for ‘clear situations’ leading to catastrophic ‘final solutions’, brutality when in power and disastrous subservience when not. His persuasive talent doubtless aroused resentment at times, for he would proudly say that he never gave up until he ‘heard his own words repeated by his adversary.’”

“Although his far-reaching views

of 1815 were no longer applicable in 1848, Metternich was always consistent, never losing sight of his aim, which was to replace Habsburg power by Austrian influence, as opposed to that of Prussia. He considered this to be the keystone of European peace.”

“Unlike some of his contemporaries who find more understanding with modern historians, he never changed allegiances or took a bribe.”

“His patience and capacity for work must have been as overwhelming as the wide range of his



Chancellor Metternich by Thomas Lawrence.

I used this image in the last newsletter to illustrate the article on the Congress of Aachen, but I find myself having to use it again. Not only did the Metternich family think this was the best image of the Chancellor, but he is shown in the uniform that Tatiana says was later re-used to make vestments for the priest of the family chapel.

interests. The Museum contained a library of 30,000 beautifully-bound volumes, covering every possible subject including natural history, science and archaeology, often annotated in his hand. It also housed his collections of engravings, medals, coins and arms, as well as curiosities of every sort, from Queen Marie-Antoinette's ring and prayer-book, to the longest female hair, or Madame Tallien's tiny shoe. The Empress Marie-Louise, Napoleon's second wife, had sent several personal souvenirs of their son the Duke of Reichstadt after his death: his cane, his washbasin, a ring."

"Metternich must have seized any available moment to write, and liking lovely things around him, the writing-tables in every room of his houses were as different as they were beautiful. They seemed to suit every mood – from spindly ladies' 'secrétaires', to the double-desk in his smaller library, where he and his secretary spent long hours over despatches."

"He wished all around him to be

happy, for there were a number of slips of paper and memoranda in his archives referring to the most minute detail of the management of his estates, the planting of trees, the labelling of wine-bottles, but also directing the distribution of rooms for his children and their programme for the day. In drawers and cupboards I found forgotten souvenirs, diaries, and letters. There was for instance a note to his wife posted from Dijon in March 1814 on his way to Paris on defeated Napoleon's heels, describing a little dress 'with matching pantalettes' for his three-year-old daughter Léontine, which he had just had copied and sent home by courier. In a secret drawer of my own writing-table, I discovered two leather-bound copybooks in a flowing schoolgirlish hand by that same Léontine, now a teen-age girl. Here the 'Arbiter of Europe' appeared as a loving father, often in the company of his children, even at crucial moments of European history. His first wife had died some

years before and when his rather lonely little daughter was saddened by the departure of her best friend, he found time to give her an outing and buy her a present."

"The writer Varnhagen once said of Metternich: 'One felt at ease in his company.' A hundred years later we felt it still."

Emperor Francis and his wine.

In her book, Tatiana says, "Johannisberg had for a short period belonged to Napoleon's Marshal Kellerman, the victor of Valmy. After 1815 it reverted to the Austrian Crown and Emperor Francis I then gave it to his trusted counsellor and friend, Metternich, in compensation for destroyed property during the recent wars and as a token of gratitude for the peace achieved at the Congress of Vienna. Parsimonious in his habits, and by nature adverse to granting gifts, the Emperor usually retained what the Austrians call 'ein Zipferl,' meaning the corner of the tablecloth. In this case it was a tithe (the tenth part of



Königsward from the front.

the harvest) to be delivered in wine for the Imperial table.”

The Metternichs had maintained the title to the Habsburgs, even after that dynasty had lost their throne, saying they couldn't deprive them of this last right. In Tatiana's time, the Nazis asked for the title of wine, claiming they had inherited all Austrian rights. But the Metternichs refused, claiming it was a private matter between the two families.

Leaving Königswart .

In 1945 Alfons and Tatiana had to flee Königswart as the Russians were approaching, and the resurgent Czechs were taking reprisals against the Germans. Before they left, they wrote out recommenda-

tions for all their staff. To these documents, to add official gravitas, they pressed an imprint of the great seal of Chancellor Metternich, so often used at the Congress of Vienna. Tatiana took with her a ring that had belonged to Marie Antoinette and the Chancellor's watch.

After they left, it was the Americans who arrived first, part of Patton's army. They ransacked the palace for souvenirs and gifts to give the local girls. After that, the new Czech government took over. Especially after the new regime turned communist, more family treasures disappeared. Now the Czechs are trying to restore the palace. If you get to the very west of the Czech Republic, you'll find

the Metternich Palace, now called Kynzvalt Castle, open for visitors. You'll find more details at www.zamek-kynzvalt.eu/en.

The unexpected twist.

Tatiana's story is a long one, and I will not go further now that the Chancellor Metternich part is told. She died in 2006, aged 91. But as I began this article, I looked up her obituary to check the facts. There was a sad and unexpected ending to it.

After her husband, Paul Metternich, died in 1992, Tatiana discovered that he had left much of his fortune to a mistress. It seems that the Metternich genes had run true through the generations.



Königswart from the park.

PRINCE OF CAVALRY

I mentioned in the previous article that Tatiana had a Napoleonic ancestor. Her great-great-grandfather was Hilarion Vasilyevich Vasilchikov, born in 1776, the son of Vasily Vasilchikov, a favorite of Catherine the Great. So he began life well-connected.

He was educated at home on the family estate near Novgorod. But his real education began in 1792 when he joined the Life Guards Horse Regiment as a non-commissioned officer. In 1793 he was promoted to cornet, and by 1801 he was already a Major-General at 25. It sort of ran in the family, as his brothers Dmitry and Nikolai also became generals. It did help that in 1799 Vasilchikov had been appointed chamberlain at court, where he became close to the Grand Duke Alexander Pavlovich, soon to be Tsar Alexander.

In 1803, Vasilchikov was given command of the Akhtyrsky Hussar Regiment. He was not just a court general. In 1807, he was off to war, fighting at Pultusk and in other actions.

In the Patriotic War of 1812, he was very visible in the rearguard of Bagration's 2nd Army, until it joined the 1st Army. He was wounded at Borodino, but rewarded with promotion to lieutenant-general and command of the 4th Cavalry Corps. He led that at the victory of Tarutino, where Murat was thrashed. After the campaign, he was awarded the Order of St. George, 3rd Class, for the "excellent courage and bravery rendered in battles against the French during the current campaign."

In the campaign of 1813, he fought at Bautzen, the Katzbach,



The portrait of Vasilchikov by George Dawe that hangs in the 1812 Gallery in Saint Peterburg's Winter Palace.

and Leipzig. After that, he took part in the pursuit to the Rhine.

In 1814, Vasilchikov fought in the battle of Brienne, where he and Pahlen led the cavalry charges that routed Duhesme's division and captured eight artillery pieces. In the confusion, some of their cossacks nearly captured Napoleon. Vasilchikov also fought at Montmirail, and after that at Craonne, where his cavalry covered the Russian retreat.

At Fère-Champenoise, he trapped Pauthod's division between his cavalry and the Russian Guard escorting the Tsar himself. Pauthod's force was destroyed in a glorious

day for the Russian cavalry, but it was not without its embarrassing moments. Because the French were deployed in low ground, the Guard artillery cannonballs and canister sailed over them to strike Vasilshikov's troops. They returned fire, and Vasilshikov's gunners nearly hit the Tsar's party, with four cannonballs landing near them. Friendly fire is always disturbing, but with the Tsar as target, very embarrassing.

Fortunately, with such a victory, the Tsar was in a forgiving mood. After the campaign, the Tsar upgraded his Order of St. George to 2nd class, "for making the differ-

ence in the battle of Brienne.” Fère-Champenoise was not mentioned.

After the wars, the rewards came fast: the command of a Guards corps in 1817, and promotion to a full general of the cavalry in 1823. During the Decembrist uprising of 1825, Vasilchikov proved he was a devoted follower of the new Tsar Nicholas. He persuaded the Tsar to take harsh measures against the

insurgents.

Vasilchikov became one of the people Nicholas most trusted. “Prince Vasilchikov was the only person in Russia who, in all matters and at all times had free access and free speech to the monarch... Tsar Nicholas I not only loved him, but also honored him, like no other.”

So in 1839, Count Hilarion Vasilyevich Vasilchikov was made

a prince of the Russian Empire, a hereditary title, which is why Tatiana was already a princess before she married Prince Metternich.

Vasilchikov died in 1847. As we have seen, he wasn’t just one of the long list of court favorites of the Russian Tsars, but also a fine cavalryman.

A PERSIAN VIEW OF NAPOLEON

When Tom Tuck got us started on the Persians, I was reminded of a Persian portrait of Napoleon I saw in London in 2015. It’s on the following page.

In the middle cartouche at the top, the title of the painting is given as, ‘Picture of Napoleon setting out from Paris to fight the Commander of the Great Empire.’ The Great Empire meant the British one.

In the right cartouche, the artist signed off with, ‘Drawn by the most humble Mirza Reza son of Muhammad ‘Ali Ashtiyani Tabrizi 127[0] AH.’ That Islamic date would be 1853 for us.

Mirza Reza didn’t have much in the way of sources when he took this commission. It’s not just the exploding volcano that makes me think so. After all Napoleon could have gone to see Vesuvius if he had wanted. But the troops Napoleon is leading are dressed in red uniforms. The artillery carriages are also painted in the blue-grey color the British used. Tom Tuck tells me that once the Persians started to update their artillery on British lines, they used this color as well. So Mirza Reza just copied what he saw about him.

The work is gouache on paper, with the text above the painting in black nasta’liq script within three cartouches. It’s 8½ inches by almost 6. Sotheby’s got \$3,500 for it.

In the left cartouche, there’s a dedication: ‘It was made, exactly as himself, for His Lordship Qavam al-Dawlah 127[0] AH.’

Qavam al-Dawlah is likely to be Mirza Muhammad Mustawfi Ashtiyani, a prominent Qajar official and governor who died in 1873. He was either an admirer of Napoleon, or just disliked the British.

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