

Oleg Vasiljevitch Filatov

*The Unknown
Tsesarevitch*

Reminiscences and Considerations on V. K.
Filatov's Life and Times



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Аннотация

The book is about the rescue of Tsesarevich. The central part is the reminiscences of O. Filatov. The I chapter “The Sources” gives the archive information about the course of events on 1918 in Ekaterinburg. The II chapter “Relations with Other People” is a description of the life of the family in the Urals. The III chapter “The North Star” is about the life of the family in the north of Russia. The IV chapter “The Royal Blood Must examined” is about the identification of Tsesarevich.

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The Unknown Tsesarevitch Reminiscences and Considerations on V. K. Filatov's Life and Times

Oleg Vasiljevitch Filatov

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THE Preface

**(Reminiscences and Considerations on V.K. Filatov's
Life and Times)**

За Отрока – за Голубя – За Сына

За царевича младого Алексия

Помолись, церковная Россия!

Очи ангельские вытри

Вспомяни, как пал на плиты

Голубь углицкий – Дмитрий

Ласковая ты, Россия, мать!

Ах, ужели у тебя не хватит

На него – любовной благодати?

Грех отцовский, не карай на сыне

Сохрани, крестьянская Россия

Царскосельского ягнёнка – Алексия! Marina Tsvetaeva ¹

April 4, 1917

Third day of Easter

Here is the content of the verse

For the Adolescent – for the dove

For the son

For the young Tsarevich Alexei

Pray, Christian Russia!

Dry your angelic eyes

Remember the Uglich dove
Tsarevich Dimitri
Falling to the flagstones
Russia, our tender Mother!
Is it possible that you do not give?
Your loving kindness to Alexei?
Do not punish the son
For his father's sins
Peasant Russia, save Alexei
A lamb from Tsarskoe Selo!

Once after an ordinary chat of the father and the son, I (Anzhelika Petrovna) asked Vasily Ksenofontovich about his attitude to the writing of memoirs. He answered: "I can't stand it at all, and about my wanderings you can read in the works of A.M. Gorky. He expertly describes this time". And to the question why he did not write, he replied: "Because all the memoirs in the world reveal the image of the author himself, and the time is not yet right, society has changed little since 1917."

When the son volunteered to describe the life of both his father and himself, he answered: "One shouldn't begin such a noble cause before 40 years are past."

At that time all members of the family were in no mood either for reminiscences or for literary effort. Only now, 10 years after V.K. Filatov's death, after numerous medical and criminal investigations and studies of archives, has each of us understood their task

In 1998 the “Blits” Publishing House in S.-Petersburg published the book “Tsesarevich Alexei’s Rescue. The Historical-Criminalistic Reconstruction of the Execution of the Tsar’s Family”. The book describes examinations carried out on the identity of Vasily Ksenofontovich Filatov, a school teacher, and Tsesarevich Alexei. Based on the comparison of their handwriting, photos made with the use of techniques generally accepted in the domestic criminal investigation, it was established that V.K. Filatov and Tsesarevich Alexei were the same man. Accordingly, it was Tsesarevich Alexei and not V.K. Filatov, who having lived the full-blooded life of a village teacher, retired on his pension in 1967. Everything happened as Marina Tsvetaeva prayed in her poem-prayer: peasant Russia had rescued Tsesarevich. In 1953, as a geography teacher in a village school, Alexei Nikolayevich Romanov (Vasily Ksenofontovich Filatov) married Lidiya Kuzminichna Klimenkova, born in 1917, a mathematics teacher in the same school. They gave birth to four children: Oleg, Olga, Irina, Nadezhda. On starting our reminiscences we saw that some self-manifestation could not be avoided. The most difficult part of the work has fallen to Oleg’s lot. But it was he who had stimulated our desire to write and to acquaint others with our thoughts. The events of our epoch have been shown through our reminiscences about one man. The history of the soul of a highly moral and charming man, our contemporary, will be constructed, like a mosaic, of the impressions of people who have known him well – his family.

I am glad that I have had occasion to have been acquainted with this interesting man, in spirit so like my grandmother Alexandra Ivanovna Karmaleyeva, born in 1898, who, like him, was inclined to original philosophic deductions and generalizations. Their discussion of life, their feelings, thoughts, their inner development will be of interest to many others. So, it was in April 1983 when I first heard the family history. I had come, at that time, to get acquainted with my husband's parents. On March 26, I got married to Oleg and he hastened to share his happiness with his mother and father. After the feeble spring of a northern town the Astrakhan sun seemed particularly bright. Numerous fishermen in their fishing-boats were seen on the Volga. They called these springtime catches 'the spring fishing season'. The leaves were turning green – and human hearts softened by the warmth were ready to open up to communication. On the morning of April 2 my husband and I went on the 'Meteor' hovercraft down the Volga to the village Ikrianoe, where his parents were living. His mother was busy with housework but his father was not feeling well after his work in the garden. Any scratches and blows would cause serious pain. 'Doctors can't ease my pain, – he said, – they only prescribe 'confinement to bed' for 2—3 days.' He would lay in bed and read, knowing his illness too well. Why did he know it? To make it clear, we should go back several decades. But we shall speak about this in more detail later. All day on April 2nd, I spoke enthusiastically about my relatives and myself, answering their interested questions. At

first the questions were general, and then they became specific and laconic. Direct questions demanded direct answers. Vasily Ksenofontovich listened to me attentively without interrupting. Then he asked if I remembered my ancestors. He was satisfied with my answer. He considered me sufficiently prepared for the story of his own. Among his kin there was a famous man – Metropolitan Filaret (Fyodor Nikitich was his worldly name). His own lands were in the region of the Middle Volga, in Kostroma Province. The peasants living on metropolitan monasterial lands as well as his relatives were nicknamed the Filatovs – this sounded more natural to the Russian ear. Filaret-Filafet-Filat – is the same name and means ‘virtue-lover’. During the Time of Troubles Filaret had been captured by the Poles, and upon returning to Russia he had become a patriarch of the church. Vasily Ksenofontovich spoke about Filaret as a man experienced in politics, which had a serious influence on the government. ‘That is where our roots come from. It must be known, – he used to say, – remember this.’ The story was very interesting and, of course, it has remained in my memory. More than once did he remind his son Oleg of Filaret, of the necessity to learn languages, to understand political affairs and know history well to avoid mistakes. Vasily Ksenofontovich wanted to know whether I had any people in my family who had been connected with the church. I told him that my great-grandfather Ivan Karmaleev, a middle-class man, had a house of his own at Tver. The house was located near the church, in a very

picturesque place, where the Tvertsa River flows into the Volga. On one bank there was a convent, on the other – a monastery. All the Karmaleevs have been tied to the river. This explains their family name. In his youth Ivan had even taken a job of a barge-hauler. This had told on his health in his old age. He had got hydropsy of the joints of his legs. He could not do any active physical work, but he worked as a churchwarden and bedral. He had taught his elder son Arseny to ring the church bells. Later Arseny became the conductor of a military band and painted historical pictures. Vasily Ksenofontovich was also interested in the fate of Ivan Karmaleev's other children as well as the life at Tver at that time. He himself said that as far back as the XIV century a bride (princess Maria) had been taken from Tver, that his family had researched the family names, or, as they are called now – their family tree. I asked if they still existed. 'No, because of the revolution and the wars all of this research has been lost', – he answered. Only after the death of Vasily Ksenofontovich did the family begin to compare all the stories and it became clear that Patriarch Filaret (Fyodor Nikitich Romanov, 1553—1633) had fathered the first Romanov tsar, Mikhail Fyodorovich. Vasily Ksenofontovich did not draw our special attention to this. He did say, however, that the life of Filaret and his family had not been easy. In 1601 Fyodor Nikitich was arrested by order of Boris Godunov, was forced to take monastic vows, was named Filaret and exiled to the Antoniev Siysky monastery. His wife, under the name of Marfa, was exiled to the Zaonezhye churchyard, and his

under-age son Mikhail and daughter were confined in Beloozero together with their aunt Anastasiya Nikitichna. In 1606 Filaret became the Metropolitan of Rostov. In 1610 he headed the 'Grand Embassy' which besieged Smolensk, but was captured by King Sigizmund III together with part of the embassy. Only 9 years later did he return to his homeland and begin to help his son. Vasily Ksenofontovich ended his story with the words: 'Yes. Such were events many years ago. And now tell me where did your grandparents come from?' I answered that my grandmother Alexandra Ivanovna Karmaleeva was born in 1898, on April 18, and my grandfather Efrem Alexeevich Octalopov was born in 1896 at Torzhok. Ivan Karmaleev had a two-storey house at Tver on the bank of the Tvertsa, where it flows into the Volga. Ivan had ten sons and two daughters. Karmaleev was a middle-class man and had a moderate income. His daughter Alexandra was a second child in the family

Alexei Ostalopov, a merchant, had a three-storey house at Torzhok on Bolotnaya street, 5, just opposite the church. The ground floor was not lived-in. There were kitchen and laundry there. The yard was large, there was a stable. His son Efrem, born in 1896, married Alexandra Karmaleeva. Their daughter Engelina was born at Torzhok in 1928, on April 27. The family lived on the second floor. Even now, in the late century, the house has lasted perfectly. It looks rather impressive, even among the present five-storey buildings

Engelina Efremovna married to Petru Tamas, the Rumanian,

born at Petroshani, Timoshoara District, Rumania. Their daughter Anzhelika was born in Leningrad in 1955, on March 30

Vasily Ksenofontovich emphasized that Torzhok had supplied the imperial family with golden embroidery. I said that my grandmother, having been a dress-designer in the clothing workshop, had learned this craft. Then he spoke about Nicholas II and the mass execution at that time. His story surprised me. He described the events in detail and spoke about the executed as if they were his relatives. First, speaking about Alexei in the third person, he imperceptibly proceeded to himself (the first person). He described in detail the rescue of the boy, gave the names of his rescuers – the Strekotin brothers and mentioned a further help from Mikhail Pavlovich Gladkikh

My husband also listened to him and asked straight: ‘So, you are Alexei, aren’t you?’

Vasily Ksenofontovich answered: ‘I’ve told you that already. You should remember things the first time!’

There were many heart-to-heart talks. Quietly, without hastening to tell everything at once, but little by little preparing for us our own conclusions, he achieved the main thing – he taught us to think. The ways of God are unknown

Being a tourist in Bulgaria, I had an opportunity not only to see the sights of the country and to get acquainted with the culture of the people but also to be blessed by Metropolitan of Plovdiv. Here is the story of it. It was July, 1982. I walked about old Plovdiv, taking photos of the architecture of the epoch of the

Bulgarian Renaissance, gathering interesting details. Going down the hill by the marble staircase I saw the Christian church – an ancient house buried in flowers and rose bushes. A stone wall was in place around it and two men were standing by the forged gate. I photographed that picturesque corner. The men stopped me. They asked if I knew what house was behind the wall and invited me to see it. It was very interesting to me, but I hesitated to go there alone. By chance I got my opportunity. Three tourists from our group happened to be nearby. During an excited conversation in different languages we learned that the men were monks from the staff of the metropolitan chambers. They spoke lively in Bulgarian and we told about ourselves in Russian. They repeated their invitation and we agreed. The Metropolitan's residence included several small halls for business talks and a large conference-hall decorated with carved oak panelling. There were portraits of the Head of the Church and of the Head of State on the walls as well as portraits of the Metropolitans of Plovdiv. We were also shown the private chambers, the cell icons and a prayer-book with a silver cover. By the end of the visit we unexpectedly met the host himself. He and his retinue had just returned from Greece. It was a business trip concerning the problems of the church. He was also accompanied by secular officials who had conducted negotiations and shot a film on Orthodoxy

We turned out to be the center of attention. I told them where we were from and about the sacred places of my city: the

chapel of the blessed Kseniya of Petersburg. I decided to ask for a blessing by the Metropolitan of Plovdiv. The sovereign blessed me with the words: 'I bless you, a God's slave, to great deeds.' We were invited to take part in the evening liturgy and we agreed with gratitude

So a chain of many opportunities had started

On the following day our tourist group set off for Kazanlyk and Shipka. There, at the height of 31m above sea level, stands the Russian church of Saint George built in honour of the Russian soldiers killed in action for Shipka. While the other tourists were being photographed and fussed over by the guide, I went to the cemetery near the church. A woman came up to me and told me about the graves in front of which I was standing. According to legend, the people buried there, were from the Romanov family which had ruled Russia for more than 300 years. Our country is going through peculiar times. Old Russia has gone but still there is nothing new, though more than 80 years have passed since the October upheaval. Life had made Vasily Ksenofontovich roam the country but everywhere he went, this cultivated man was received willingly. He found work everywhere but he felt drawn to Saint-Petersburg. He had sent his grown-up children to their native country, to their native city. My grandparents had also been sent to Povolzhye, to Tatarstan, to establish the Soviet power there and organize agriculture. They accepted the good local traditions and customs and helped the Tatars, but they could not consider themselves

one with the people. The village which was composed of mixed nomads could not be called a collective. It was very difficult to cope with everything. An attempt had even been made on my grandmother's life, but the people had shielded her with their bodies. Therefore when the term ended, Efrem and Alexandra, like many others who had left their homelands for different reasons, tried to come back. They lived in Moscow for some time and before long they were sent to Leningrad. My grandfather headed the building organization and my grandmother was the head of the Vasileostrovsky Party Committee. Grandfather had the right to carry a weapon. He did not wear a uniform but he lived as a military man. He went to the front from the very beginning of the war

I told about my relatives and Vasily Ksenofontovich told about his life in the Orenburg district, in the German-Dutch settlement

He said that it was both possible and necessary to learn from the Pretoriya villagers. While each member of the collective farm had a household of his own, life itself made them strengthen the feeling of collectivism. They would support an individual but only of their nationality: they neither recognized the foreigners nor helped them. In other, outwardly successful collective farms, in fact, an attitude of indifference was growing, that is, a man understood an interaction between 'my' and 'common', but nobody was interested in his opinion (probably there was no need). Ultimately, he got convinced that he cannot change anything. He knew, saw, understood but did not influence anyone

or anything. Vasily Ksenofontovich would say: 'Our freedom and independence are not supported financially. An enormous mass of peasants and workers have been reduced to the state of poor proletariat. The government is very strong, it has all the means of production, and any abuse of power tells immediately upon a multitude of people.' And now, in the late 90's we witness a re-organization of political power but the country has not been prepared economically. The government does not consider its obligation to care for the needs of individuals. All of us have been office workers and had no means of production. Now the right of the collective use of already accumulated resources, that is the results of collective work, has been cancelled. But the government has not properly determined the economical rights of an individual (that is, the right of property). Vasily Ksenofontovich said: 'The Russian State and the Russian soul now suffer a chronic disease because of the political machinations. Our ancestors, who had modernized their lands to bequeath them to us, have left us quite other lands.' I still remember our talks. Of course, we talked not only on the social-political themes. Vasily Ksenofontovich spoke about his life and his children. Oleg was their first son, then two children, three, four... What should bringing up children start with? Daughters are most brought up by their mother. And he, father, teaches his son to nail a plank, to saw wood, to cut a stake, to dig a vegetable bed, to sharpen an instrument... He teaches his son not only with words but he finds real work for him. The aim of Vasily

Ksenofontovich had been simple and clear – to LIVE. I listened attentively to his analysis of the experience of life of other people and a critical comparison of it with that of his own. The past... the experience of previous generations... Life of fathers and mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers... Why do we often mentally look backwards? What do we search for in life that has already passed? Probably, they had also looked back into the depths of people's lives. And so on generation after generation. Now it is our turn to record, understand, and preserve everything that has been accumulated by concrete people. The life of Vasily Ksenofontovich had its specific history, unique details, and he told them to each member of the family in a different way. Each of his stories revealed a new turning point in his life, every time new facts appeared. Each story was not an exact repetition of the previous one but revealed some regularity. Details added an exactness and volume to the events

In September of 1984 my mother Engelina Efremovna went to the village, Ikrianoe, to see her relatives. There she heard for the first time that after the execution of the Tsar's family the boy remained alive and that that boy was, he, himself. He had survived this tragedy as a youth, and during many years he had been keeping, the burning truth about his experiences to himself. Mother was surprised considering this outwardly plain man: what could be the source of his strength, his endurance and his emotional energy? Mother and Vasily Ksenovontovoch talked much about the war. She was 13 years old when the war

began. The German troops besieged Leningrad and the hospitals started being organized there. My grandmother worked in the Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology. During the war it was re-organized as a hospital specializing in cranial-brain and jaw surgery. At first Mother worked there as a junior nurse, then as a telephone-operator, and then she was taught to be a surgeon's assistant. She accompanied ambulances, took the wounded away from the battle-fields and delivered them to the hospital. Mother told us how they had nursed the wounded through their illnesses and how they almost died of dystrophy. My grandmother was the commissar of the hospital and could have a ration but never took it. Vasily Ksenofontovich recounted how he had met thousands of refugees from Leningrad and had accommodated the evacuated people. They were very weak but their stories inspired others with faith in victory. Lidiya Kuzminichna also told about her military past. Because of frequent moves? It was never officially registered, that she was a medical sister during the war. With Oleg's help, we registered her. They listened to us in the recruiting office and sent an inquiry to the archives – justice triumphed. Mother helped examine the documents, write an application and accompanied Lidiya Kuzminichna to the commissar. Some years later Oleg appealed to the military-medical archive where additional documents were found, and Lidiya Kuzminichna received an additional pension. But it was only in 1997! The elder generation has something to remember. Their life has been full of trials but they have not become

pessimists. On the contrary, they rejoice over life. Mother and Lidiya Kuzminichna performed their household duties, but also walked through Astrakhan looking at the ancient houses and the Astrakhan Kremlin. Some days later Oleg and I also went to Astrakhan, where the two grannies (Lida and Gelia) nursed their granddaughter Nasten'ka. She was 8 months old then. Oleg spoke about the history of that region. We walked a lot and visited friends. Grandad was also fond of looking after his granddaughter. He took her in his arms but she would not sit a minute. She would jump to her feet and skip on his knees. His hands were massive, T therefore it seemed that the child had no body and only her legs and head were skipping. If the child was out of sorts for some reason, her grandad sang songs or ditties and clapped his hands. Sometimes he played the piano together with Nastia. It was something unimaginable. Nastia liked it very much. Later, granny Lida helped this tiny little child play the piano by herself. I took their photo

Each day I bathed my daughter in a baby's bath, dipping her, splashing the water. The leaves of the cherry tree rustled above us. In the garden, Grandad sat and loughed, watching the bathing

His night's lodging was in the garden, in the bed with a canopy. Usually the nights in the open air were quiet, but sometimes the dust storms made him go into the house. In the evening we used to have tea and talk. Life passed quietly and peacefully, until one day a thief sneaked in to the garden and then into the house. Everybody was frightened. Vasily Ksenofontovich calmed

us down with the words: 'Nothing can be more frightful than the basement of the Ipatiev house. They shot the people there, but a thief comes by chance.'

He took an axe and went to the garden to sleep. But we could not go to bed and sat a long time, discussing the incident

The appearance of Vasily Ksenofontovich was noteworthy and my lack of patience was well known to the artists who saw a model worth painting. He had impressive eyes, shadowed by bushy eyebrows which struck me with their wisdom as if they had absorbed the life of the age and its pain. His parchment-skin face was lean

Every time I tried to sketch him, he became shy and went away to the garden. He also did not like to be photographed. He would sit in the shadow and the photos were indistinct. Once we (Oleg, Vasily Ksenofontovich and I) were mending the roof, covering it with a new roofing-felt. When our work was nearing completion, I managed to take his photo, because being lame he could not rapidly descend from the ladder. Feeling confused he smiled and went on repeating: 'Now, now!'

I did not draw pictures of only Vasily Ksenofontovich. I would go to the Volga, look at the thick, branchy trees growing along the river and at villages resembling clusters of mushrooms. They seemed something ancient. (Water, the river bank, a burning buoy). As soon as you wanted to put them on paper, you understood how difficult and mysterious it is and yet at the same time, surprisingly simple

Oleg asked father to go fishing but Vasily Ksenofontovich refused saying: 'I can't keep pace with you. I only walk about the garden.' Next morning Oleg gathered the fishing-rods, got worms ready, took bread to coax the fish up, got instructions from his father and, together with his sister Irina and I, set off to fish. The morning was foggy but the sun rose higher and higher, and the scenery changed, becoming more cheerful. Without wasting time I began sketching a small fishing-boat, peacefully lying in the blue-gray mist on the unruffled surface of the water

The fishing was successful, my husband caught several perches and red-eyes, but his father made fun of his catch. Then Oleg made arrangements with his friends and we made a motor-boat trip to a fishing-boat. There we bought a big zherekh. These fish, like zander, wild carp, bream, and catfish, spend the winter in pits and are called pit-fish. We spent the evening at the river-side cooking fresh-fish soup on a fire, in a large cauldron. We also bought several kilograms of bream and, for the first time in my life, I salted and dried fish. Later, in the winter, we treated our relatives and friends to our stock of fish

The house stood on a Red Mound surrounded by a multitude of ilmens (semi-flowing reservoirs) overgrown with reed and kultuks (bays). 150m from the house, the erik (a deep sound from the river to the lake) Khurdun flowed which supplied the villagers with pumped water, to water their gardens and for household needs. Every morning Lidiya Kuzminichna first watered her garden and only then did she fry scones and called everybody

to take tea. In the evening she was busy with sewing and embroidery. She sewed clothes for her daughters, granddaughters and neighbours. Everybody loved her creations

Vasily Ksenofontovich used to say: "The traditional Russian culture must be preserved. The Slavic people love a loose cut of clothes. Heavy boyar clothes were the result of the Tatars' influence on the Slavonic traditions. Peter the Great was convinced of it." Vasily Ksenofontovich recalled also Alexander III: "In the late XIX century the army was dressed in a uniform of the Russian cut. The tsar himself wore a new Russian tunic. The Russian army had a comfortable and practical uniform." In their childhood the girls dressed up in embroidered blouses and Oleg – in a red Russian shirt with a sash. Our holiday came to the end. Later, in Leningrad, while recollecting it, we wrote letters to Astrakhan and received news of those we left behind

"Anzhelika and Engelina Efremovna, we congratulate you on the festival and wish you health, happiness in everything and high spirits

Spring has arrived. The buds are swelling on the trees. We are digging our gardens. Radish, which I planted in January, will grow soon. In April I will plant out strawberries. In my room there are already seedlings of pepper, and tomatoes. The tomatoes have started blooming. The cucumbers have sprouted. Please, write and tell us how things are with you. The apricots will ripen from the 15th to 20th of July. It would be better if Oleg went on holiday in the fall. My love to Nasten'ka

Anzhela, send me your measurements

I kiss everybody. Your mother.”

The next time we went to Ikrianoe, it was in May of 1985. There was much work in the garden. Akimenko, a friend of my husband, gave us his car and we went to buy a wire mesh for a fence. Every year we spoke about substituting the reed fence with wire mesh. So, at last, the wire mesh was bought and the work began. We put in new wooden posts, made a new wicket-gate, mowed the grass in the garden, and put up the new fencing. The garden became more spacious. We graveled the walks and put down concrete. The garden was indeed changed. After work we would go to bathe in the river. We would buy fruit and other products and, in the evening, when the heat abated, we would eat supper with pleasure. One day, they brought the firewood for winter. Only Vasily Ksenofontovich and I were at home. And we had to unload the truck and then to roll the big blocks in to the garden. Vasily Ksenofontovich limped, and groaned but worked quickly

In 1987 we came to granny and grandad with two granddaughters – Nastia and Yaroslavna. Anton (Ira’s son), was also there. The 3 grandchildren played merrily in the garden, amusing the grown-ups

Vasily Ksenofontovich was ill, he would lie on his small plank-bed for hours. I recalled how the people cured themselves in the salt caverns on Lake Seliger. During the war there was a hospital there. Many people were cured in these caverns.

My grandmother had told me about it. Vasily Ksenofontovich recollected his youth and said that he had also been there. Oleg and I went to Astrakhan to search for some necessary medicines. In spite of being seriously ill, Vasily Ksenofontovich was always an optimist. Constant sufferings during his youth had not broken him. Throughout his life he had had faith in a great and a strong Russia. He would say: "She will return to her centuries-old traditions. People will learn not to destroy but to create." Vasily Ksenofontovich, within his powers as a teacher, tried to influence all young minds and introduce them to the richest cultural and historical traditions. He taught this to everybody: pupils, his children, and his grandchildren. Naturally, special attention was paid to his son. He cultivated generosity and dignity in him. During the upbringing of his family he gave to his son the professional knowledge and skills required to govern the State. This book as presented to the reader consists of several parts. Oleg Filatov's reminiscences make up the main part of the book. This is normal. Owing to the special history of Russia and the life of Tsesarevich's family in the period of the Soviet power, under which name he may have lived, what he may have been, he could only have passed this experience on to his son. Apart from a description of the way of life, the book contains also a review of press, reports, archived materials, assessments of forensic medical men and lawyers. The position of the General Prosecutor's Department of Russia is given, which rejects the results of the examinations

made, without denying, however, the effectiveness of the applied techniques in all cases. Such a position of the General Prosecutor's Department may be reasonable and understood only in one single case: to acknowledge the identity of V.K. Filatov and Tsesarevich Alexei, the results of examinations made by qualified criminalists on their initiative, making use of techniques effective in all other cases, are quite enough for the Prosecutor-General. But if the identity of V.K. Filatov and A.N. Romanov when examined by methods of genetics is confirmed, it will make the results of the examinations carried out before incontrovertible. And this does not coincide with the political order executed by the officials of the prosecutor's office, since it utterly changes a lot of monarchical scenarios: then would appear one more monarchical scenario, most unsuitable for the ruling "élite"

Having read this book, the reader will hopefully ponder over his life, the life of his generation and of the previous ones. We hope for it. *Anzhelika Petrovna.*

Chapter I

SOURCE

Мысли у дома Ипатьева

Дорога длинная, пустая была так долго без огня
И вот пришла пора святая, которая спасла меня
Отцы и деды, поколенья восстали мигом
Рядом в ряд
И мы, как воины России, должны спасти её опять
Благая вера, где ты в людях?
Восстань, воспрянь и воскреси
В Россию веру вековую в народе нашем укрепи
Заветы предков поминая
Нельзя России изменять
О Русь!

Воскресни, созида
Чтоб, созида, побеждать
Oleg Filatov
October 1995

Thoughts near the Ipatiev House

A long road has long been dark
But one day the Holy Dawn has saved me. Fathers,
grandfather, generations
Have risen, row upon row

We, the Warriors of Russia
Must save our land once more
Oh, good Faith, where are you?
Help the Russian people rise, liven up, resurrect
Remembering the behests of ancestors
One cannot betray one's motherland
Oh, Russia! Resurrect and create
Through creation you will win the whole world

Когда приходит час судьбы

Когда приходит час судьбы
Мы поминаем всех усопших
И на останках тишины
Мы мыски наши поверяем
Мы помним всё, всё, кроме снов, – История, судьба, Рос-

сия

Когда приходит час судьбы
Мы поминаем всех героев
И день и ночь, и тьма и свет
Борьба, смятение души
И горе, счастье и любовь
Нас посещают в час единый
Приходят новые огни – Огни, которых ожидали
Мы все, конечно, сплетены
И нашем горем, и печалью
Судьба и Бог, и мы – России верные сыны
Сегодня путь мы выбираем

Oleg Filatov

September 1994

When the fatal hour strikes

When the fatal hour strikes

We commemorate our dead

And in the silence the thoughts

Are crowding into our minds

We remember everything but dreams – The history, the fate,

Russia

When the fatal hour strikes

We recall all our heroes

And in day light and at night

The fight, confusion, grief, happiness

And love visit us at this hour

New lights we were waiting for

Have come

Of course, we are all interlaced

With our grief and sorrow

Today the Fate and God, and we – The faithful sons
of Russia – Are choosing our way

I often thought about how I could tell the truth about my father. After having talked with my friends, colleagues, and acquaintances I came to the conclusion that it should be written in the way he himself had told about it. He was not a historical character of a distant epoch but our contemporary born early in the XXth century and during 84 years, together with his

people, endured hunger, suffering, and repressions. It is almost impossible to imagine, how he felt, realising who he was and keeping silent for so many years. He had seen and endured a lot to save himself and his family, his children. Maybe we shall never know the whole truth but we should try. “Non progredi – estra gredi” (“Not to go forward means to go backwards”)

Father had lived a long life. He had compensated for his physical defects by his constant desire for harmonious development and knowledge. This had given him a stimulus to live. We, his children, were born when he was far from being young, we cheered up, he sensed a new meaning in life. And when his granddaughters were born, the truth finally came out and he told their mother, my wife Anzhelika Petrovna, about his tragic fate. It was in 1983, five years before his death. Only then did we understand that Father and the boy whom he spoke of as executed on the night of 16—17 July, 1918, but not killed, in the basement of the Ipatiev house in Ekaterinburg, – was the same man, that is, he was Alexei Nikolaevich Romanov. Before, he had told us about it allegorically, piece by piece to each of us. Now we are collecting all his stories and our reminiscences of him to better understand what had happened. Part of the reminiscences of the members of our family – his children and his wife Lidiya Kuzminichna (due to her, strictly speaking, he had lived for so many years) – has been published in newspaper articles and served the basis for special investigations carried out by experts and continued until now. Unfortunately, there are

many gaps in these reminiscences: he was restrained in his stories and we were children then and did not ask him any questions, we simply believed that what he had said was true. How could we not believe in our father, when we saw how he suffered and understood that his life could have been quite different! One might notice repetitions in this book, but this is not so awful. The most important thing is – to be honest (this is the basic principle) and to tell the truth as it could have been/. Of course, much could have been taken from the archives, both open and closed. But we cannot get there due to some circumstances, partly for lack of money, partly because of the fear which still lives in people. But without reading these pages, which will cause us to not allow anything like that to happen again, we will not know how the history of our country could have formed, without the revolution. If we speak about repentance, we should understand who killed Emperor Nikolas II. Why have none of the leaders of the country, specialists in forensic medicine, or lawyers suggested a true version of those events in July 1918? How has the life of the participants of this tragedy in Ekaterinburg developed?

In 1988, on his death-bed, Father said: “I’ve told you the truth, and that’s what the Bolsheviks have brought Russia to.” We, his children, know that he has not deceived us. Unfortunately, he had told us little, and we still have questions. But as if his soul is still with us, we ask him questions, as if he was alive, trying to go back in time and associating with him

When one’s parents are alive, one takes them for granted,

without thinking that they are not going to be with us forever. Therefore we have now to collect the crumbs of what he had said, supplementing his story with our own considerations and new facts revealed during recent times. Therefore Father's story is sometimes interrupted by my reasoning's. The investigation is not finished yet. Our friends, relatives, colleagues, and scientists interested in this story are helping us to carry this heavy cross that has fallen to our lot. I hope that, after all, all of us will know the truth. And this will be the real compensation

Yes, this is a fantastic and still not cleared up story. The first reaction to it of most of people is: "It can't be so!" When children are confronted with something unknown, they cry, but grown-ups try to turn their back on it and ignore it. Apparently this is the reason, why, despite some serious examinations carried out on our initiative and voluminous, actual material now accumulated by various scientists, the official structures have not seriously investigated this story, which has a lot of blanks. There is no other explanation to the contrary. But nobody has been interested in checking up on whether it is so. And maybe the point is that such a story does not appeal to everyone... This is a form of unconsciousness, one way to forget. I am a christian and it is my opinion that only atheists have to be convinced. Of course, we, his wife and his children, simply believe in our father, but still not everything in his life is clear to us, because he had to keep out of sight in order not to expose us and the people who had helped him to danger. Therefore we are trying to find

more facts to unravel the whole truth about this martyr who lived a long life, and saw and experienced so much that it would have been enough for several lives. As far as the improbability of this story is concerned, – the rescue of innocent children from terrible death is a miracle. God saves!

Father's Biography

How did this all start? It began when father himself prompted us to start studying his life. He did it with his stories, when he told us what he knew about the execution of the Tsar's family. Of particular importance for us was the fact that a boy remained alive after the execution of the Tsar's family in Ekaterinburg, and in 1983 father gave us detailed information that the boy, i.e. Tsesarevich, was he himself. This information corresponded to the facts reported by members of the State commission to the media. Later on the family decided to be more active. Within the framework of a criminal case, prosecuted on the fact of murder, without trial or inquiry of the family of Nikolas II, it is said that the bodies of two of the Emperor's children – Tsesarevich Alexei and his sister Maria – have not been found

We have gotten acquainted with the inquiry carried out by the investigator Nikolai Alekseevich Sokolov¹. We have studied the materials of his book. We have gotten acquainted with the evidence of Vladimir Nikolaevich Derevenko, the Heir's doctor, with the materials of interrogations of staff-captain Simonov, later a member of Kolchakov's counter-intelligence, as well as of investigators: I.A. Sergeev, V.F.

Kirsta, and A. Nametkin. We have read the report by the public prosecutor of the Kazan forensic department Miroliubov to Minister of Justice Strynkevich on the course of inquiry into the execution of Nikolai II and his family on December 12, 1918. Tomashevsky, investigator, said that many of those mentioned above were of the opinion that not everybody had been killed on the night of July 16—17, 1918. Staff Captain Simonov's opinion deserves special attention. The fact is that before the Whites occupied Ekaterinburg, Simonov had served on the third army staff under the command of Berzin. General Diterichs² mentioned in his book that he had sent the officer to the army of Kolchak. After the occupation of the town he served under Admiral Kolchak as chief of the intelligence and counter-intelligence unit. He himself reported to Admiral Kolchak that, according to the information available, the Tsar's children had been rescued. However later on General Diterichs dropped this theme (that is, the content of the report by Staff Captain Simonov)

We should emphasize that the life and fate of the participants of the outside guard of Ipatiev house have not been mentioned in any of the published materials on the investigations of the execution of the Romanovs. We may only get detailed information on the team of executioners. And who were the soldiers from the local people, the participants of the outside guard? Who were their relatives? Where did they live? What was their occupation? What were their connections? By that time the

situation had been unstable, the Soviet power had not yet been established in the Urals. The people had lived as they always had

What was to be done if the power changed to-morrow? What would life have had in store for them if the Whites came? In those days, being in contact with the Tsar's family, could change their opinion of them and help them to regain power. They did not know how long they would guard the Ipatiev house, or what was in store for them. They exposed themselves to risk. The Whites and the tsar's adherents could find them and they would have to answer for their service under Soviet power

One should note that the investigators have not examined the fates of those children of Nikolas II who had been executed but not killed, let alone who could have rescued them provided they remained alive, that is, Tsesarevich Alexei and Maria, Grand Duchess. From Father's stories we, his children, knew that the rescuers were the Strekotin brothers, Alexander and Andrei, and the Filatovs, Alexander and Andrei, from the first company of the First Peasant Regiment, quartered in Ekaterinburg, as well as Vasily Nikanorovich Filatov, brother of Afanasy Nikanorovich Filatov who fathered Ksenofont Afanasyevich Filatov. Vasily Nikanorovich had lived in Ekaterinburg till 1921 and after serving in the army he returned to Shadrinsk. The respective archives of the CPSU Central Committee do not contain any information about the Strekotin brothers. There is information on the jewels in corsets handed by Yurovsky, but nothing is said about two other corsets, those of Tsesarevich Alexei and

Maria Nikolaevna, Grand Duchess. Yurovsky was responsible for the delivery of the royal valuables. What did he do with these corsets? How could he allow for such a shortage? Maybe he got them as a payment for the freedom of the Tsar's two children? Answers may be found in his biography. We should take an interest in the qualities of this man, his strengths and weaknesses, his vital interests. After all, he was born long before the revolution. We learned that from youth Yurovsky had loved to search for hidden treasures. He did it and was rich. From 1905 he had lived in Berlin. His biographical data can be found in a book by O.A. Platonov¹. Hardly anybody noticed the fact that he had lived in Berlin, that he had changed his religion (and this always implies one's inner break-down and submission to another world view) and, moreover, became a man capable of carrying out other people's orders. Having studied for only 1,5 years, in Berlin he became a professional photographer. After having lived in Germany for seven years, shortly before the First World War broke out, in 1912 he appeared in Russia, in the Urals, in the region of concentration of the defence industry of the Russian Empire. That same year he opened a photographer's studio of his own and started working. He compiled a card-index of all the prominent residents of Ekaterinburg: administrators and heads of enterprises. We cannot rule out the possibility of his handing over the needed information to the enemy. After all, the Revolution broke out only five years later. From Father's stories and other available facts and documents, many

of the agents either sent to Russia or recruited by the German intelligence service and living in Russia both during the first World war and before World War II, handed over the lists of suspect soviet people to fascists. The consequences are obvious. For instance, a certain head physician of a regional hospital had lived and worked for 17 years in one of the frontier regions in Bielorussia. In 1941, on the intrusion of fascists, he handed over the lists of 100 activists, whom the Germans sent to the gestapo. So, Yurovsky handed over his card-index to the Emergency Commission (ChK) and, using it, the chekists made raids into the apartments of these activists. The scheme of action is the same. In 1914 Yurovsky was called up to the rear units, where, again, he was sent to study. He became a military doctor's assistant and again served on the home front. Being constantly in contact with the staff of hospitals, with officers and soldiers coming from the front for cure, he gathered the needed information. These and other facts testify to the possibility, that probably, he was not the man he pretended to be. In 1917—1918 there were negotiations with the Germans in Brest-Litovsk. And again, there he was! He provided the guard for the hostages, that is, the family of Emperor Nikolas II. First, the Emperor, the Empress and some of the children were brought. Tsesarevich and his sister remain in Tobolsk. Why? After all, the main problem was not to leave the Emperor's heirs alive. It means that at that time the problem of paramount importance was to negotiate with the Germans. Thus, a direct communication during negotiations

with the Germans was carried out via Yurovsky. So, after the Emperor's refusal to surrender Russia to the Germans, Yurovsky receives an order to exterminate the hostages. But how? Three weeks before the execution all the Russian-speaking guard and Doctor Derevenko were replaced by German-speaking people. Upon the execution of the Romanov family the German-speaking guards were killed – there were five of them. The Russian-speaking people are blamed for the execution, while contrary to everything they have rescued part of the family of Emperor Nikolas II. Yurovsky carried out the enemy's order. Then he takes the jewels and three vans of royal robes and sets off for Moscow. And Tsesarevich Alexei lives in Shadrinsk at the Filatovs'. Of interest is that the Filatovs and certain Yurovskys are neighbours. Who are they? On February 24, 2000 we received an answer from the Shadrinsk municipal archive which read: in the fund of the Shadrinsk municipal uprava (administration), the sorting register to the municipal budget as of 1915 contains several real estate owners named Yurovsky. Almost all of them are former peasants, natives of the Makarov district, Shadrinsk region: Peotr Andreevich, Ivan Andreevich, Emel'an Yakovlevich, Ivan Ivanovich, Peotr Alekseevich, Ivan Osipovich, and Anna Kirillovna Yurovsky¹. It is difficult to determine to-day whether they had been that Yurovsky's relatives, but such a coincidence does exist. Relatives? It means that they had had no contacts with that Yurovsky. Yurovsky's ancestors had been exiled to Siberia for

theft and the relatives did not like him very much for his cruelty and for his attitude towards them

In 1918—1919 Yurovsky was the chief of a regional department of Moscow ChK doing undercover work. In 1919—1920 he returned to Ekaterinburg and, again, did undercover work in ChK. In 1920 he was appointed the chief of Gokhran and again he was admitted to State secrets. In 1923 he was responsible for a secret operation on the transfer of the Russian crown, globe and sceptre to a Japanese Agency in China for their subsequent sale to America and Europe via Manchuria. He ruined this transaction. A leakage of secret information took place. Yurovsky was relieved of all his duties. He was deprived of access to State secrets. After this he worked at various enterprises not connected with any secrets. He died in 1938. Not until 1950, was there any mention of him. Then his children started talking about his deeds. Such is the fate of this figure. His biographical material can be found in the party archive of Sverdlovsk, now Ekaterinburg (f. 221, inv. 2, c. 497) as well as in the journal “Nashe Naslediye” (Our Legacy) (1991, №2, p. 40—41; №3, p. 47). In 1961 father told me about participation of Yurovsky in the execution of the Tsar’s family

It is still unclear why Yurovsky being a professional photographer, had not taken photos of the Romanov family members either before the execution or at the execution scene. And if he had done so, where are those photos? Investigator N.A. Sokolov recorded the story of the Strekotins.

Both the executioners and the outside guard participants also mentioned the Strekotins. It was they who knew who stood where, and who was doing what. But neither the Whites nor the Reds interrogated them and Sokolov himself does not quote them as principal witnesses whose stories had served as the basis, apparently, for the Whites' inquiries. The Strekotin brothers had been at Dutov's front and then they returned to the environs of Ekaterinburg, where they lived, and later were deployed in the guard of the Special House. There remained reminiscences of Alexander Strekotin of Nikolas II's family, a description of the appearances of the members of the stately family and their style of behaviour in everyday life. Father said that the fate of one of the brothers, Andrei, was tragic. Alexander Strekotin had told father about it during the Civil war, when he came for a short time to Shadrinsk. This testifies to the fact that he had been acquainted with the Filatov family members either before the above-mentioned events took place or that they got acquainted in Ekaterinburg. So far, there is no other conclusion

Andrei Strekotin died on July 18, 1918 from a stray bullet on River Iset. Father had told me about his death (of course, as heard from Alexander Sokolov): "It happened on July 18. They were sitting in a little trench by the Iset River. At that time the fighting was located at the approaches to Ekaterinburg. Andrei said to Alexander: "I am heavy at heart, Sasha; I feel that I will be killed today. Let's embrace by way of farewell." – "Andrei, what are you saying? Stop it!" – "No, Sasha, I feel it." They embraced.

Then Andrei put his head out of the trench and a stray bullet hit him straight in the forehead.”

From Alexander Strekotin’s stories, he remained alive only because he went to the forests with N.D. Kashirin, Commander of the partisan detachment, who went with him as far as Perm, and the Kungur caves. Then he worked as a stableman in the Party regional committee in Ekaterinburg. Later on he headed the Machine-tractor station (MTS). He was a family man. In 1988 his wife was still alive. On January 22, 2000 Alexander Strekotin’s relatives who lived in Ekaterinburg, called us up. They told us that uncle Sasha died a mysterious death in the early 60’s, falling out of a car while it was moving. His three sons have also disappeared. All this happened when Father told me about the fate of the Tsar’s family and the execution. In the early 60’s we also left the Urals for northern Russia

They started searching for father both abroad and in Russia. I learned about it from Mr. Spelar, a publisher, secretary to Princess Irina Yusupova. It was in November, 1999, when I was in New-York. When I signed my book, he told me about it with a mysterious air. I asked him: “Why did you search for my father? Did you want to help or kill him?” There was no answer. Quite a number of discoveries and documents that are now collecting dust on the shelves of both Russian and foreign archives, await those who investigate the last days of the imperial family

A remark of Swedish writer and translator, Staffan Scott

in his book, Romanovs, deserves notice: "...of a once numerous branch of Konstantinovichs no one man has remained (except perhaps two of the Romanovs, who disappeared after the Revolution but remained miraculously alive in the Soviet Union)." (Scott S., *The Romanovs*. 1989, Ekaterinburg: Larin Publ., 1993. P. 22). It should be noticed that this book was published in 1989 and, surprisingly, this event coincides with the publication in Russia of the book of E. Radzinsky "*Gospodi... spasi i usmiri Rossiyu*" (God... save and quell Russia), which also contains information about rescue of two children, the children of Nikolas II – Tsesarevich Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria. What could this be? A coincidence or an established fact? Staffan Scott does not say any more about the rescue of two Romanovs in his book. Even when writing about his meeting with a relative of these children, Vera Konstantinovna Romanova, that is, Konstantin Romanovich's daughter. In the chapter "The Soviet Union and the Romanovs" Staffan Scott writes: "The attitude of the Soviets to the Romanovs who have survived the Revolution, has also changed compared to stock accusations of the generation of the time of the Revolution. The Soviet secret police – ChK, NKVD, KGB, etc. – have never shunned attempts on the life of Russian politicians in exile or turncoats. But nobody heard either about attempts on the life of the living Romanovs or about their kidnapping. Since they are of no political threat to the soviet system, they do not persecute them – unless we count the rare attacks against

pretender Vladimir Kirillovich. We also know that there was no veto for the Romanovs to visit the Soviet Union. From the early 60's many members of the dynasty have visited the USSR as tourists, including Nikita Nikitich, a historian. Soviet people, whom they met with, treated them with well-disposed curiosity.” (Scott S. *The Romanovs*. P. 272—273)

So, the executioners are packing the wide double-doors. Strekotin is close by. (What did he want to see there?). That's what he saw. “... Yurovsky: Alexei and his three sisters, a Romanov maid, and Botkin were still alive. We had to finish them off. The bullets, surprisingly, rebounded off of something and, like hail, were jumping all over the room. – The executioners were shooting as madmen. The light from electric bulb could hardly be seen through the smoke from the gun powder... Figures lying in pools of blood —on the floor, a strangely surviving boy stretched his hand to protect himself from the bullets. (Auth.: “After the execution he was not undressed, he was also in corset. His corset has never been found.”). And Nikulin, terror-struck, kept shooting him”.¹ Later on, in checking whether Tsesarevich Alexei had a corset, it turned out that two corsets with jewels had not been handed over by Yurovsky to the depository, that is, there were neither the bodies of two of the children nor two corsets at the burial site. How's that? If they killed the children, they ought to hand over the corsets with jewels, but did not do it. From Yurovsky's record (GARF, f. 601, inv. 2, d. 35): “... My assistant used the whole

clip of bullets (the strange survival of the Heir can probably be attributed to his inability to handle a weapon or to unavoidable nervousness caused by long trouble with Tsar daughters)". But the most incredible thing is that the bullets could have been blank cartridges. It is unclear so far, whether the present inquiry has made a ballistic examination. The executioners are known to have given their weapons to the Revolution Museum. The investigator ought to have ordered a ballistic examination, and the experts were to have shot bullets from these weapons, and then to have compared them with those found in 1919 at the burial site near Ekaterinburg. And if they do not coincide in their characteristics, then they are not those weapons and the people were killed by the use of other weapons, or these are the bodies of other people. And the version worked out by the inquiry is wrong. Other explanations to these facts should be found rather than to follow a mistaken path. The book of investigator Sokolov N.A.² gives the interrogation of Pavel Medvedev: "Blood flooded the floor. When I entered the cellar the Heir was groaning. Yurovsky approached him and fired at him two or three times, point-blank. The Heir quietened down. It made me sick." From the reminiscences of Andrei Strekotin cited by Platonov O.A.³ in his book: "All the prisoners were lying on the floor already, bleeding to death, but the Heir was still sitting on the chair"

A participant of the execution, 18-year old Netrobin Viktor Nikiforovich records: "The Heir still showed signs of life though

a lot of shots had been made...». Recollections of Andrei Strekotin: “Then Ermakov, seeing that there was a bayonet in my rifle, suggested that I stabbed those still alive. I refused. Then he took my rifle and started stabbing them...” (Sverdlovsk Party Archive, f. 41, inv. 1, c. 149, p. 164. References to the archive have been taken from O.A. Platonov’s book). “The shooting stopped. The door was opened to clear the gun-powder smoke... They began to remove the bodies. First the body of the Tsar was removed. The bodies were piled up in a truck.” Andrei Strekotin describes how the bodies were removed, in which order, and he knew exactly when it would be the Heirs’s turn. He had told his brother Alexander that the Heir was the last one taken out and the last one laid in the truck, since that night Alexander did not return to the Ipatiev house. Was the end gate of the truck closed? How high were the sides of the truck?

“There was not enough room in the carts for all the bodies (Auth.: “The truck got stuck five miles from the town, near the Upper-Iset plant»). There were not enough carts which worked well. They were falling apart. (It was already 4:00 or 4:30 in the morning. Who was loading whom? And where to?” – author’s remark). Then it turned out that Tatiana, Olga, and Anastasia had some corsets on.“¹

When the funeral team noticed during the transfer of the bodies that some bodies were missing, they feverishly began to feel the pulse of the remaining bodies because they understood that those missing remained alive, and only at that moment did

they find out that. Tsesarevich Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria were missing, as well as two corsets. That's why nobody of the funeral team had mentioned in their memoirs that there were two missing children and two missing corsets. That's why the truck went on to the shaft carrying only part of the bodies. It turns out that there was no post-execution search. Apparently, there was no time. But why? If the executioners knew the Romanovs by sight? Maybe, it had already grown light and they had to hurry? (They did not search Tsesarevich, his mother and other bodies). The conclusion is the following: it means that the escort had lost the bodies before the pause near the Upper-Iset plant and nobody had noticed it. That was an enigma. Father's words were confirmed. The stealing had begun. In Radzinsky's² book Yurovsky says: "I decided to dismiss the team immediately, leaving only some sentries as a guard and five men of the team. The rest left..." Where did the rest go? And what for? When they did not know at all what to do. Did they understand only at that moment that two were missing or was it before? Did they go searching in the dark? Apparently, the jewels were also registered in the dark... Our father was terribly maimed. His back had many scars of various sizes. The scars were 1.5 to 5 cm. The scars in the center were up to 0.8 cm high. There were also scars to 10 cm. There was a shrapnel wound on the left heel, the scar was cross-shaped. Two ribs were broken. By 40 years his left leg was withered and by 1944 became shorter than the right one. On the whole, there were up to 20 scars and bluish

dents in his back. Father would buy shoes of different sizes: 40 for his left leg and 42 for his right leg. Because of the wounds, by 1944 his spine had become twisted to the right. We, when children, would ask him about his wounds and disabilities. He would tell us that he had gone to the Finnish war in a coach, but the planes had bombed the train and he, without reaching the front, returned to the hospital. And to the question what he was and why he was in the army he answered that he was a student in Leningrad and all students were called up. Or he would say that he was such from birth, or that he fell from a tree. Such were his answers until we grew up. Later on we understood that those had only been excuses and the reason of his wounds had been of quite another nature. According to the records in his serviceman's identity card, in 1942 he was exempt from military service. There are no records for other years. So, he was not at the front. At any rate, our family has not got any relevant documents, also. There is no disability certificate. From the evidence of F. P. Proskuriakov, a guard: "... When all of them had been executed, Andrei Strekotin took off their jewels. Yurovsky confiscated them and took them upstairs..."¹. A question arises. Everything was in gunpowder smoke (the guards were sick, they ran out in the open air and vomited). There was no doctor who could confirm the deaths. Strekotin had a revolver, was he going to gather the jewels in everybody's presence? Or, maybe, there was nobody else?

At that time, if Andrei Strekotin, feeling Alexei's pulse,

understood that he was alive, he could have put his revolver into Alexei trousers pocket, in the boot or slipped it into his bosom. Father would tell us that there was an understanding in their family – if they were faced with a military threat, somebody would hand him over either a weapon or a knife should the opportunity arise. On that day a sign will be made with a white handkerchief. It was to be made by whoever would chance to be on the outside guard during the walk of the family: usually Andrei Strekotin would stand at the watch-tower by the machine-gun. Later on father told me that after the truck had stopped near the Upper-Iset Lake, the boy regained consciousness? He was lying on the ground and it was raining. He decided that it was necessary to crawl from that place, as far away as possible. The boy crawled under the little bridge and, lying there, tried to think out where he should go to. Searching himself he found a weapon. This lent him vigour and energy. Reaching the railway branch the boy hobbled towards the station Shartash. Father went on: “By the morning he was already at the station and here the patrol saw him. They were seven. Remember, Oleg, they were seven. And they urged him on stabbing him with bayonets in his back. They did not understand Russian, apparently, they were “nekhristi”. And here father suddenly said: “You know, it hurt very much.” I listened to him without saying a word because he ought not to be interrupted. Otherwise he could fall silent and say not a word, ask him as you might, till he himself wanted to tell something new. Of course, I understood that he was speaking

about himself. Then father said that he could not resist them anymore but said to his tormentors that he would not give himself up alive. A switch woman, who was at that time at the station, saw the patrol took the boy away from the station, in the direction of the forest, and cried after them: “Where are you taking the boy to, monsters?” In answer they threatened that they would shoot. They threw him into a shaft. It was not deep. The boy hit his head against a log and slipped down. Where to go to? Then he saw a horizontal shaft and dove there. The tormentors threw a grenade after him, and some shrapnel hit his heel. So the scar on his left heel was caused by that shrapnel. Four hours later the Strekotin brothers came after him on the hand-car carried him out of the shaft and took him to the hospital. After they gave him first aid they took him to Shadrinsk. How could it happen? It’s simple – nobody had searched for the bodies. Apparently, Alexander Strekotin was not in the house at that time. Nobody mentioned him. Where was he? Radzinsky E.S.¹ gives Andrei Strekotin’s recollections in his book: “When the bodies had been removed and the truck had gone, only then were we dismissed.” It was at 3:00 a.m. on July 17, 1918

What did Alexander Strekotin do at that time? He was mentioned first in the case of investigator Sergeev (Sokolov’s book “*Ubiistvo tsarskoi sem’i*” – The Murder of the Tsar’s Family). In E.S. Radzinsky’s² books Medvedev, the son of the Chekist, says: “In the morning, when my father arrived at the market, he heard the story in detail from local market-women, where

and how the bodies of the Tsar's family were hidden. That's why the bodies were re-buried." In means that information from the Ipatiev house appeared in the town either at night or in the early morning and so, the Strekotin brothers, the Filatov brothers, and Mikhail Pavlovich Gladkikh had known everything beforehand, let alone Kleshchev and Shulin, who were in the Ipatiev house at that time. It is of interest that Andrei Strekotin described in detail both the family and the execution; hence, he had been deeply impressed by everything. Besides, he had a good memory. The White investigators did not find Alexander Strekotin because he did not stay in the town but went away to the forests. Alexander was outside the Ipatiev house. That night the time factor was very important, i.e. time was needed to send Tsesarevich to Shadrinsk and it was necessary to cover their tracks so that nobody would know that he, Strekotin, helped him, together with other soldiers. It should be emphasized that the officers of the Russian army General Staff were at that time, from May 1918, in Ekaterinburg and took an active part in the preparation of the Romanov's rescue. Facts are given in the book "*Tainy Koptiakovskoy dorogi*" (Secrets of the Koptiakov Road)¹. "In May 1918 the former Nikolas Academy of General Staff was moved to Ekaterinburg. It was quartered not far from Tikhvin Monastery located within the town. The senior grade had 216 students, only 13 of them later fought for the Soviets. Most of them considered the Treaty in Brest treason. In Ekaterinburg they found themselves in hostile surroundings.

Besides, commissars: S.A. Anuchin and F.I. Goloshchekin, of the Urals regional Soviet, considered the presence of “an organized center of counter-revolution”, under the guise of an Academy, in the very center of the Urals, inadmissible. By June 1918 the Academy had 300 students, 14 professors and 22 teachers on the staff. With an advance of the Czechoslovak troops the Academy was moved to Kazan by the order of Trotsky. But less than half of the students, declaring “neutrality”, moved there. Later almost all of them went over to Kolchak’s army, and the Nikolas Academy existed no more. It seemed that the 300 regular officers, who were in Ekaterinburg in June-July 1918, could not form a striking force to rescue the Tsar’s family. But today it is questionable. Where is the documented evidence of what the “uncovered” organization of officers did for the rescue and who else did they include in the rescue? And if it did save somebody, nobody would say a word about it. For he, who states it, not only did not serve in the army, but also knows neither operational work nor the methods used by the tsar’s secret service, let alone practical knowledge of secrecy. The level of training of the Russian officers was too high, especially of those who graduated from this Academy

So, after the town was annexed it turned out that there was a secret military organization of the officers among the students of the Academy. The following captains were in this organization: D.A. Malinovsky, Semchevsky, Akhverdov, Delinzghauzen, Gershelman, Durasov, Baumgarden, Dezbinin.

Via Dmitriy Apollonovich Malinovsky the organization had made contact with the monarchists in Petrograd. It was systematically in great need of money. Captain Akhverdov's mother, Maria Dmitrievna, took part in this organization. The officers contacted Doctor Derevenko. They tried to get the plan of the Ipatiev house. Lieutenant-colonel Georgiy Vladimirovich Yartsov, chief of the Ekaterinburg instructor's school of the Academy, testified the following on June 17, 1919: "There were five officers among us to whom I frankly spoke about taking some measures to rescue the Royal Family. These were: Captain Akhverdov, Captain Delinzgausen, Captain Gershel'man. We tried via Delinzgauzen to get the plan of the Ipatiev apartment where the Royal Family was kept." (He succeeded in getting the plan via Doctor Derevenko who described to him orally the lay-out of the rooms). "Later I myself happened to be in the Ipatiev house and saw that Derevenko had given correct information." (The officer, accidentally or carelessly, had practically given Doctor Derevenko away. Thus, if this document reached the Reds, then it is no wondered that in 1924 Doctor Derevenko was summoned to ChK in Perm and in 1930 he was arrested and spent his last years in the concentration camp.)

¹ For the same purpose we tried to establish contacts with the monastery which supplied the Royal Family with milk. Nothing substantial came out of it: it could not be done, first, because of the house guard and, second, because we were followed. I remember that on July 16, I was in the monastery. On that

day the milk was delivered to the house. The head of the photo-section of the monastery the nun Augustina said to me that the soldier said to the nun who brought the milk: "Today we shall take the milk, but to-morrow do not bring it, there will be no need" (Auth.: "That is, he notified her"). I do not remember the things we found in the shaft, apart from those I mentioned. All these things were taken by Captain Malinovsky to be stored". Captain Malinovsky also mentioned it in his records. He described an exact lay-out of the rooms where the Royal Family members lived, namely, who and where. Then he says that he was one of the first who got into this house after the annexation of the town. He said that there was also a student kept in this house who twice took photos of the house. "...Akhverdov's man-servant was also a source of information (I know neither his name nor his surname. It seems to me that it was Kotov). He got acquainted with a guard and learned something from him. ... I informed our organization in Petrograd sending agreed telegrams in the name of Captain Fekhner (an officer of my brigade) and Riabov, esaul (sergeant) of the combined Cossack regiment. But I never received any answer." This phrase of Captain Malinovsky shows that the officers' organization had branches about which Malinovskysaid little. It means that, probably, the organization had been formed before the departure of the Academy from Saint-Petersburg, and the officers told even the White inquiry neither about the number of participants in the organization in Peterburg nor how long

it existed, what it did in general and whether they had contact with it later on. It was because the officers were afraid for the life of their people and for the activity of these branches, which could still be effective for a long time in the future, supplying with useful military information and serving as channels to take people to safe places in case of failures. Besides, among the White investigators could be those who worked in the interests of the Red or somebody else. It was the war. The point was that the Tsar's family should be rescued, and members of the organization did not know all the information because they knew that they should think about security in this dangerous work. All of them risked their lives and the lives of their relatives. "I would say that we had two plans, two goals. We had to have a group of people who at any moment in case of the expulsion of the bolsheviks could occupy the Ipatiev house and guard the safety of the Tsar's Family. The other plan consisted in a daring attack of the Ipatiev house and taking the Royal Family away. Discussing these plans we drew seven officers more from our Academy. These were: Captain Durasov, Captain Semchevsky, Captain Miagkov, Captain Baumgarden, Captain Dubinkin, and Rotmistr Bartenev. I forgot the name of the seventh. This plan was utterly secret and I think that the bolsheviks could not learn about it. For instance, Akhverdova knew nothing about it... Two days before the occupation of Ekaterinburg by the Czechs I, among 37 officers, left for the Czechs and on the next day after the occupation I returned to the town." "Note that Nikolai Ross

(1987) who published the cited part of Malinovsky's evidence cut off the end of the protocol recorded in 1919 by N.A. Sokolov. Captain Malinovsky believed that the Germans took the Family to Germany, simulating an execution."¹ However, there are documents in the State archive of the Russian Federation which testify to the fact that not everybody agreed that all the members of the family had been killed. So, as Fyodor Nikiforovich Gorshkov from Ekaterinburg said, officer Tomashevsky asserted that the execution took place in the dining room and that not everybody was killed. Doctor Derevenko, as investigator Sergeev said, also believed that somebody remained alive. Incidentally, Sergeev himself was of the same opinion. N.A. Sokolov's report on the inquiry into the murder of the Tsar's family in the Urals is known to have been sent to widow Empress Maria Fyodorovna who till her death in 1928 believed that her son Nikolas II and grandson Tsesarevich Alexei remained alive. She had written about it to Marshal Mannerheim in Finland. In this report N.A. Sokolov writes: "... Jewels sewn to clothes as buttons had, apparently, burned. The only diamond was found on the outskirts of the fire trampled into the earth. It (its setting) was slightly injured by fire."... These words do not hold water. Carbonaceous compounds such as diamonds cannot be damaged by fire. These conclusions are incorrect. If Sokolov did not find what he was searching for, it means that the people had been annihilated. But maybe they had been rescued? Who had rescued them? Sokolov is known to have left this version out of his account.

Why? What prevented investigator Sokolov N.A. from inquiring into the version of the rescue of part of the family of Emperor Nikolas II?¹ Today we know information about the people who had rescued Tsesarevich Alexei Nikolaevich Romanov and who had named him Vasily and had done everything for him to live and work. It was the middle-class family of Filatov K.A. in Shadrinsk. What and who was he? The Filatov family – Ksenofont Afanasyevich Filatov and Ekaterina, his wife – could have refused to take a wounded boy into his family if they had not been prepared for this morally. They had a son born in 1907. In 1937 Vasily Filatov mentioned in his biography that his mother and brother died early² and by 1921 he was alone. Though he had two uncles who served in the Red Army and disappeared

Our examination of the archives revealed that Vasily Filatov had also step brother and sister, born of the second wife of Ksenofont Filatov, Ekaterina Dmitrievna Utusikova. These were Konstantin born in 1915 and Nadezhda born in 1917.³ The two uncles are Ksenofont's siblings – Alexander born in 1887 and Andrei born in 1891, and their sister Anna born in 1895.⁴ Then records in the documents related to the complement of the family of Ksenofont Afanasyevich Filatov are made with pencil by a clerk of the municipal administration (according to the archive data). The form itself is printed using the pre-reform letters *i* and *ѣ* filled in without them. It should

be emphasized that it was 1915 and the documents were then recorded in a strict correspondence with instructions, using special ink, a numbered pen, and in special handwriting. Further, apart from the wife of the first-grade soldier Ksenofont Filatov Ekaterina, son Vasily eight years, son Alexander six years, wife Ekaterina eighteen years old, father Afanasy Nikanorovich, mother Maria Andreevna, brothers and sisters are included in this document. Andrei served in the army, and was discharged for 6 months to recover, Alexander was in prison, and their sister Maria was 15 years old, who was born in 1899. An examination of the documented family-tree of the Filatovs from 1863 and further has shown that Ksenofont Filatov had the following children by his first wife Elena Pavlovna Gladkikh (1889—1912): sons Vasily born in 1907, Alexander born in 1909, died on December 3, 1915, Konstantin born in 1911, died in 1911, daughter Antonina born in 1912, died in 1912. Documents of the Shadrinsk municipal uprava and of “Commission for the Care of the Poor” for 1915 contain an application for allowance to his children filed by Filatov Ksenofont Afanasyevich on January 8, 1915. That is, his son Vasily born in 1907 and son Alexander (1909—1915). Protocol #11 of January 27, 1915 mentions son Vasily (1907) and Alexander (1909). Vasily is also mentioned in Ksenofont Filatov’s other applications (protocols #12 of February 25, 1915 and #13 of March 18, 1915).¹ after these records in pencil, in 1915—1916 the records are made with pen. But in the documents of later years the

name Maria disappeared. What does it mean? It means that superfluous dependents had appeared but not in July 1918 – in 1915, which could have aroused suspicion when inspecting and when searching for the two children of Nikolas II. Therefore the record had been dated 1915. Similarly, to save a man, one could have added a superfluous child to the register of births, deaths and marriages after the event, since the point was to save the lives of Tsesarevich Alexei and his sister Grand Duchess Maria. If later anybody wanted to check the relatives of Ksenofont Filatov, then these records could have been found. But one could always say that yes, really, Vasily and Maria did exist but it was Civil war at that time, disruption, and they disappeared somewhere, and witnesses died. Father did tell us that during the Civil war he “had travelled” very much. Even when teaching in Tiumen oblast he told us that he led a free life and once he decided with his friends to cross the border near Sukhumi into Turkey but was wounded by border-guards, fell from the cliff and broke his leg. It is not clear, however, how he, the son of a former military man and then a shoe-maker, being young, could succeed in escaping from the border-guards. And later on, it is also not clear why he wanted to run away from his living parents and why they let him do it, etc. A conclusion can be drawn from father’s documents that he left home in 1921. The records of the Shadrinsk municipal archive say that on February 8, 1921 he entered the Polytechnic school but then and there, on February 8 he went on leave and was not on the list of students any more. How’s that? He is admitted, put

down for allowances, provided with everything necessary: fur-coat, felt boots, clothes – an important support to his parents! But he left. Besides, in this Polytech there were teachers, Candidates of Science, from Ekaterinburg, and, naturally, there was a danger that they would identify him, Vasily, as Tsesarevich Alexei Nikolaevich Romanov. Hence, he could not stay there for long.¹ Then a new contradiction in his biography: as if there was a famine in Shadrinsk in 1921 and he had to leave for the Volga. But at that time a famine could be anywhere but not in Shadrinsk. In 1995, after our trip to Ekaterinburg and Shadrinsk, we learned that between 1960 and 1962 the prosecutor's department searched for two Filatovs, Vasily and Maria. For this purpose they collected the eldest citizens of Shadrinsk with their written undertaking not to spread anything. We heard about it from a relative of Ksenofont Filatov in the line of his uncle Vasily Nikanorovich. Vasily Nikanorovich had a son Leonid Vasilyevich who married in 1918 Sedunova Zoya Pavlovna.² They had a daughter born in 1919, and it was she who told us that her mother Zoya Pavlovna Filatova (Sedunova) had been among those summoned to the prosecutor's department. She herself was not there due to her young age (she was then 43). In 1918 her mother was 18 and her father was 22. A conclusion can be drawn that there was something behind the fact that among the aged, the Filatovs including, they were questioned about the 1918 events. And with this fact there was connected the fate of our father, Vasily Ksenofontovich Filatov. Why was

it necessary for the prosecutor's department after so many years to search for Ksenofont Filatov's children? What did they mean to this department? Then, the photo of Mikhail Pavlovich Gladkikh dated March 1922; order #53, negative #6, signed by Father himself, as he said, is direct evidence that he exactly is Tsesarevich Alexei. The photo was signed in 1922, it means that these events concerned Ekaterinburg and Shadrinsk. The Filatovs and Gladkikhs had been saving the tsar's son. If this photo were signed in 1915 or 1916, it would be quite natural, the Romanovs were then alive. Tsesarevich Alexei could have signed the photo of any acquaintance and it could unnecessarily be Gladkikh or somebody of the Filatovs. But after the events of 1918 this man, who had saved his life, became dear to him. He signed this photo in memory, carried with him through his long hard life and handed it over to us. The Filatovs had served in the army before the Revolution, and so far, it is not clear in what town, in what units, whether they could have seen Tsesarevich Alexei and, maybe, could have been in the guard of the Ipatiev house. In the summer of 1918 both Filatov brothers served in the First Peasant regiment in Ekaterinburg. Alexander served in the first company and Andrei in the wagon train. Alexander was killed during that summer of 1918. Andrei remained alive but was sickly. He lived with the family of his father Afanasy Nikanorovich who was 56, with the same family Ksenofont Afanasyevich lived, ill with tuberculosis. But in 1920 he was still summoned

to the call-up commission. He died on September 22, 1922. The children of Afanasy Nikanorovich totaled five. Afanasy Nikanorovich now receives a pension for his lost son Alexander. He lives in Shadrinsk, Soviet Str., 54, district 50, region 3.¹ The second wife of Ksenofont Afanasyevich lived in Shadrinsk after his death and, from the archive record, in 1930 she worked as an unskilled labourer. Elena Ivanovna Gladkikh, the first wife of Ksenofont Filatov (died of consumption in 1912).² She had a brother Mikhail Pavlovich Gladkikh, born in 1896. He had two siblings: Fyodor and Grigory. Mikhail was called up in 1915. In 1930 he lived in Shadrinsk and worked in the artel “Obuv” (Footwear). He and his wife Gladkikh Daria Yakovlevna lived in Shadrinsk, Pokrovskaya Str., 169, district 2.³ Mikhail Pavlovich brought Tsesarevich Alexei from Ekaterinburg to the Filatovs, his relatives, and this is always risky (however, the participation of the Filatov brothers – Ksenofont, Alexander, and Andrei – in the rescue of Tsesarevich Alexei is now evident). He could have brought him to other people, but it was in war time and he could not trust other people. It turns out that the Filatovs, M.P. Gladkikh, the Strekotins (they were seven, as known from their relatives who have been living till now in Ekaterinburg), Shulin, and Kleshcheev must have known each other for some time. Maybe, they served in the army together, that is, those people must have been in close contact and, by the order of the Tsar could have undertaken to save his son. Hence, they had

had to have planned everything beforehand, long before the execution, that is, probably, in 1917, and, knowing about Alexei's illness, Nikolas II would never entrust his son to unknown people. I know that between 1937 and 1970 one of the lecturers at Princeton University, USA, was Chebotarev Grigory Porfiryevich (born in 1899). He was a building engineer. On December 9, 1917 Tatiana Nikolaevna Romanova, a daughter of Nikolas II, wrote a letter from Tobolsk to Chebotarev's mother. In her letter she asked about Filatov's health. At that time they had not yet lived in Tsarskoe Selo for 6 months. Chebotarev wrote a book "Russia my Native Land" (published in the USA). I wonder, which Filatov Tatiana wrote about to G.P. Chebotarev's mother. Valentina Ivanovna Chebotareva (née Dubiatskaya) was married to Major-General Chebotarev Porfiry Grigoryevich. The daughter of Major-General Chebotarev P.G. was married to Edward C. Biil in 1941. She has been a lecturer on Russian language and literature at Princeton University, USA since 1948. I think that it was either Ksenofont Filatov, the step-father of Filatov Vasily Ksenofontovich, who had served in the army, or his sibling Andrei who was dismissed in 1916 for 6 months to recover and then was cured in the third infirmary in Tsarskoe Selo, about whom the Grand Duchess Tatiana had asked, in her letter. (From Grand Duchess Tatiana Nikolaevna to V.I. Chebotareva +). The letter is on four pages, 18x14. Tobolsk. Byvshy Gubernatorsky, 9. December 9, 1917. My dear Valentina Ivanovna, have you received my letter of the 29th?

Kindly, pass this letter to our Prince (E.A.Eristov). Probably, you now miss L.F. (Krasnova)? But it's good that they (the Krasnovs) are together again. I am sorry for poor Filatov. It's a pity that he has been ill for so long. He was already bedridden when we were with you. Is it really his wound that hurts him or maybe it is something else? And how are our Baron (D.F. Taube) and Kupysh?... ..Well, good-bye, darling Valentina Ivanovna. God be with you. If anybody wants to write us – let them do it directly. My kisses and love to you. Also to Aliusha (V.P. Chebotareva) and O.P. (Grekova). Good-bye. Your Tatiana

+) The total original text has been published for the first time. In G.P. Chebotarev's book "Russia my Native Land" part of this letter is translated into English (p. 195) together with photocopies of its first and last pages (Figure 27).¹

Also, in 1998 Doctor Botkin's grandson Melnik told that while in Tobolsk, a soldier had approached Doctor Botkin and warned about impending danger, advising him to send his daughter to a more safe place. And, of course, Doctor Botkin had informed Emperor Nikolas II about it, since he was devoted to him till his last days. Recollections of S.P. Botkin's grandson Melnik-Botkin K.K. were published in the newspaper "Chas Pik". The article by Elizaveta Bogoslovskaya was entitled "The executed doctor's grandson's life-long struggle against the bolsheviks".² First, the article text confirms completely that it was only the soldiers who could have participated in the rescue of Tsesarevich Alexei. The history of saving the daughter

of Doctor Botkin S.P. was told by his grandson who had worked under de Gaul, President of France. Father had also mentioned that one of his acquaintances was in Dubrovnik. So, here is a shortened text of the article. “That night I decided not to go to bed and kept looking at the illuminated windows of the governor’s house, through which, it seemed to me, sometimes appeared my father’s shadow, but I was afraid to draw the blind aside and to observe the scene too openly in order not to cause the displeasure of the guard. At 2 a.m. the soldiers came for the last things and suitcase of my father... At dawn I turned out the light. The governor’s house and barracks were brightly illuminated. Behind the fence stood a string of sledges... My father would come out of the house several times, clad in Prince Dolgorukov’s rabbit-skin coat, because they wrapped up Her Majesty and Maria Nikolaevna in his fur-lined coat, since they had nothing but light-weight fur-coats. At last Their Magesties, Grand Duchesses and their retinue appeared on the steps. It was 5 a.m. and they all were clearly seen at the dawn of a pale spring day. Commissar Yakovlev walked by the Sovereign. My father noticed me and turning back, made the sign of the cross several times... They began to take seats, wrap up themselves... Set forward...” Tatiana Evgenyevna Botkina saw her father, leib-medic Evgeny Sergeevich Botkin, no more: three months later he was executed together with the Tsar’s family in Ekaterinburg. During their funeral the grandson of Doctor Botkin, the son of his daughter Tatiana, – Konstantin

Konstantinovich Melnik-Botkin came to Russia from Paris for the first time. “We, the descendants of Doctor Botkin, wanted to bury Evgeny Sergeevich separately, without waiting until the dispute on the Romanovs’ remains subsided. We were ready to bury him in Ekaterinburg to perpetuate his name. I even applied to the commission. But public prosecutor Solovyev came and convinced us that everything would be solved soon. Fortunately, the funeral was held and now I can come to the motherland of my parents. I’ve come here with my wife, daughter and granddaughter – a representative of the fourth generation of the Botkins after Evgeny Sergeevich. Now it’s a comfort to me. I have three photos of my grandad. In 1912 in the Crimea – he was a happy man. In 1914 —he understood that the Empire was on the brink of ruin. And in 1917 – a photo for the pass. From these photos and his last letters one can see that in 1914 his life changed and in 1917 it ended. Probably, such was the fate of many people and of the country itself. The more so that he, the doctor, close to the Tsar, ought to have understood a lot, unnoticed by ordinary people. He had been at the war, written a book there – letters to his wife from the front. I don’t know whether the book exists in Russia. Mother had told me that when he had read this book, Nikolas II had sent for its author and from that time until their mortal hour they had practically never parted. Mother and Father lived in Tsarskoe Selo and from there she went with him in exile to Tobolsk. Mother was then 19, her younger brother – 17. She secretly corresponded with

the Grand Duchesses who lived in the “House of Freedom” – so was cynically named the Tobolsk governor’s house which became the place of confinement for the Tsar’s family. The Grand Duchesses had given the letters to my grandad and he handed them over to those at freedom. I’ve got such a note with the words: “Christos voskrese, dear Tania...” Every morning Grandad would go to them and each night he would return and tell what had happened in this “House of Freedom”. When Grandad together with Nikolai Alexandrovich and Alexandra Feodorovna was exiled to Ekaterinburg, Mother wanted to go with them, too. “This is not a trip for a young girl” – a soldier said to her confidently. Apparently, he knew what would happen. So, Mother with her younger brother Gleb remained in Tobolsk by them and survived only due to the fact that they were the children of the known and respected doctor. Before he left for Ekaterinburg, Konstantin Semenovich Melnik, warrant officer of the Imperial army, my future father, had come to Tobolsk. He was of Ukranian peasant heritage, from Volynsk Province, a man having nothing in common with the world of fashion. But he had come to Tobolsk because of my grandad. The point is that during the war with the Germans my grandad had opened a hospital for the wounded in Tsarskoe Selo, and Konstantin Melnik was one of the first patients. Apparently, the relationship between the elderly doctor and the young warrant officer had been so touching that when the Revolution began and Father learned that Doctor Botkin was in Tobolsk together with the

Tsar's family, he immediately decided to organize the rescue of the Emperor and his retinue. He was a brilliant officer, wounded many times at the front, courageous, and daring. He set off through Russia where the Civil war had already begun." Maybe, he also thought about my future mother? Surely, he had met her in Tsarskoe Selo. Maybe it was also love!" "No there was no love, Mother looked at him with arrogance – she had been brought up at court, and he was some Ukrainian... But before his leaving for Ekaterinburg Grandad had once said to this young officer: "I know that probably I'm leaving for good. It's quite possible that I'll never see my daughter again. Do save her. Marry her." That is, he had given him his blessing... He was blessed. The wedding was after my father had learned about the execution in Ekaterinburg. He took his young wife and her brother to the Far East, together with the White army. Father served under Kolchak, then in Kolchak's counter-intelligence. In Vladivostok he found a Serbian ship which was to return to Europe. The surname helped unexpectedly: the Serbians recollected that Sergei Petrovich Botkin had organized a medical aid during the war of the Serbians with the Turks. Having learned that the daughter of Sergei Petrovich was in Vladivostok, they helped save her. They went to Serbia. There they went through hard times: the times were desperate, they lived in some camps. When an opportunity arose to go to France, they set off for France as many of the other émigrés. I've got two elder sisters – one was born in Vladivostok, the other in Dubrovnik. I was

born in a small town not far from Grenoble”¹ ... What does this excerpt from Doctor Botkin’s grandson’s reminiscences inform us of? It says that really, soldiers were not indifferent to the fate of the family of Emperor Nikolas II, to his retinue and especially to his children. And naturally, they also thought about how they could help them. It was via the soldiers, that direct contacts were established with the necessary people, that is, with the outside world. I have mentioned above about Staff Captain Simonov who served on the Staff of Berzin’s Red troops in Ekaterinburg and conveyed the officers to the Whites and then served in Admiral Kolchak’s counter-intelligence. From reminiscences of Doctor Botkin’s grandson, his father – warrant officer Konstantin Melnik – was also in Kolchak’s counter-intelligence. Of course, they ought to have been acquainted with each other and compared their opinions both on the execution and on the inquiry into this case carried out at that time. If Staff Captain Simonov believed that not everybody was dead, then, probably, warrant officer Konstantin Melnik was of the same opinion. So, two officers of Kolchak’s counter-intelligence had something to do with the events connected with the possible Romanovs’ rescue. One of them was directly related to Doctor Botkin since, marrying his daughter he had saved her. Nobody has been interested in these facts so far. Such accidental coincidences can happen and the whole subsequent life of our father has testified to it. Young officer Melnik did know from Doctor Botkin about the danger threatening the family and knew

that some soldier had warned him about this danger and he fulfilled the Doctor's request. Later he could have carried out an investigation together with Staff Captain Simonov and searched for that soldier and other possible participants in the rescue of some of the Royal Family members and could have found them, but, so far, we do not know what they had known and what they could have done for the rescued people. One thing is absolutely known. These people who prepared an operation on the Royal Family rescue ought to have been familiar with the environments, to have known the people capable of making the documents ready and inventing a legend. They ought to have known where and how one could hide a man, cure him, etc. And this, in its turn, explains the fact that they had accompanied father during all his life for they lived long. And later on they passed him on, again, to reliable people. The availability of such people is testified by the fact that father had a system by which he could easily find them in the town of interest. Each street and house marked by a certain number had a corresponding name both before the Soviets and later. These were the streets known to everybody. It is clear that without these people he could not have survived. Father lived like everybody lived. He would live at one place for a long time. From 1936 on he was known as a teacher. He did not distinguish himself in this sphere, let alone tell anything to others. He was single, had no children. He would say: "It was war time. It was dangerous, life was difficult, therefore I was single." Really, one war,

industrialization, schooling, another war. From 1934 Father had lived in Tiumen Oblast, Isetsk Region. It was the place of administrative exiles, for the former aristocrats and the place of German settlements. This explains the fact that the Germans worked and taught in schools. In the Upper-Beshkil School, for example, a mathematics teacher was the German Mason. Of course, he could know much from the people who before the exile had lived in Central Russia and had contacts and information on the fate of many of their acquaintances, friends, and relatives who had lived there before the Revolution. Father had lived in the forested places, near the Urals, where G.E. Rasputin had lived. He was a free-time student. He had to earn his living, to eat. His full-time schooling had lasted for only two years. Between 1934 and 1936 an advantage in his work was that he had a long vacation in summer and was free of his job. He had an opportunity to travel, as he called it. He had travelled all over the country. He would long for a change of places. Characteristically, from 1955 we moved four times. The Siberia, the Urals, the North-East, South Russia – such is the geography of our movements. Together, with our parents we got to know our country, its people, various climatic zones, got acquainted with people, their traditions, and their living conditions. When we moved, our parents could not take everything with them, they were always numerous, and they would get rid of things, partly handing them out among the people, partly selling them. Little has been left

Here is one more fact from father's biography. His notebook was left after his death. Having read it, we found in it a strange record with figures. We appealed to the military-historic archive in Moscow. They answered that they did not know the time period the record had been made. The record was made in a simple code. But it turned out that his code system is used nowadays in fax-transmission of information, that is, each letter is denoted by a certain figure. Such a system has also been given in the case of investigator Sokolov A. N.. But father's code was twice more difficult than that given in Sokolov's book "*Ubiistvo tsarskoi sem'i*" (The Murder of the Tsar's Family)¹. This book demonstrates also the codes of the Royal Family. Each child of the Royal Family is known to have had a code of his own, which the child himself invented, as well as the Empress and the Emperor. In the book "*Pis'ma tsarstvennykh muchenikov iz zatocheniya*" (Letters of the Royal Martyrs from the Confinement) we read: "These days V.N. Stein came again from Tobolsk, who brought the Family 250 000 thousand rubles from the Moscow monarchical organization. On March 12/25 the Sovereign recorded in his diary: "For a second time Vl. Nik. came from Moscow and brought a considerable sum from our kind acquaintances. As well as books and tea. I just saw him passing by along the street." On this arrival he not only brought money but also organized a secret written communication with the Royal prisoners. See a letter of the Empress of January 23, 1918 to Vyrubova, note 3. An excerpt from the Empress's letter:

“...In general, letters do not often reach us. If you have read “Solomon’s parables”, you should start now reading “Solomon’s wisdom”. You will find there much of interest... Kind Sednev has just brought a cup of cocoa to me, to warm myself, and asked for Jimmy

“From Grand Duchess Maria Nikolaevna To V.G. Kapralova. Letter is on 4 pages, 17x13. #9 (Tobolsk) March 29, 1918. 11 (April)

Thank you very much, my good Vera Georgievna, for your letter, #10. I did not answer it simultaneously with Anastasia since I think; there would be more enjoyment for you to receive not two letters at once but one by one. As she said, Vera Nikolaevna wrote letters to us c/o you, but we have never received them... What are you doing, dear, and how are you? If you chance to be at the Sidorovs’ remember us to them and to other acquaintances. Do you happen to know where A.A. Miller is? I’ve received your letters # is 1,2,3,4,8,10. So, unfortunately, four letters are missing. And what about my letters? – In our monotonous life we are always glad to receive letters. My sisters send their regards to you. Anastasia and I embrace you tenderly

God save you. Maria. +)

The source is unknown.¹

What father needed it for remained unclear, though we supposed that he used these codes in his correspondence with his friends. To-day all of them are probably, dead. Those alive who

have father's letters, either attach no importance to them, or know that father died, or do not know that he had children. We haven't got any relevant instructions from father and, respectively, could not keep up any contacts with these people. When father lived in the Isetsk region, he had no dwelling of his own. He decided to build a log-house. Since he lived in woodland, there was no problem with the building material. He got timber and built himself a five-wall house on the shore of the River Iset, where he lived. He built this house despite his physical disability. He handled an axe with skill. He would say that both axes and saws should be different. An axe for notching, a hatchet, an axe for chopping. But most of all he loved a carpenter's axe and would say that one should never use axes anyhow, that is, one must not chop wood with a carpenter's axe, it gets blunt and needs special sharpening. He knew how much time it was necessary for the logs to dry to be used in building. In general, father was always interested to know how and of what materials it was better to build. I still remember that he would say he always dreamed of building roads and bridges, but unfortunately he was unable to graduate from the Highway Institute. He explained that the Motherland needed teachers at that time and they, the students of the Highway Institute, were transferred to the Teacher-training college. As far as his studies in the Highway Institute are concerned, we found only the surname Filatov, without initials. It was a pay-roll with the signatures of the students of the workers' faculty. That Filatov got a stipend only

for May and June 1933 ¹, and from his biography it follows that he studied at the workers' faculty of the Tiumen Pedagogical Institute from 1930 to 1934. There is a certificate which is not numbered. According to the Tiumen State archive the Highway Institute workers' faculties were organized in 1932 in four towns: Shadrinsk, Kurgan, Krasnoufimsk, Sterlitamak. In connection with the liquidation of the Urals Highway Institute during the period 01.06—21.07, 1933, the workers' faculties in these towns, including Shadrinsk, were also closed. The name of student Filatov V.K. was also not found in other Highway Institutes in the Urals and Siberia.² Six Institutes, secondary schools and colleges have been examined. "Try as we might to obtain "two" at exams, they entered all of us on the list of the students of the Lunacharsky Tiumen Pedagogical Institute", – said father. It turns out that the son of the former military man became a shoemaker because of his illness, and had reasons to conceal some facts of his biography. It is not likely that he had had amnesia and had not remembered the names of his parents and sisters and therefore had not mentioned them in his biography when entering the Institute, etc., during all his life. It was the considered line of action of a literate and knowledgeable man. The documents available in our family always lack something in the general information necessary for the documents of that hard time. Life in the 30's was difficult, only on the eve of the war was there almost plenty of everything. When father was a student, they got food by using coupons. He would say: "I would come to the

students' dining-room, they would give me a soup, I would look into the plate and see how a grain gains on another grain..." He could no longer live in this way, and in 1937 he became a free-time student. His life without relatives and home was very hard, but in the village where he taught in the Upper-Beshkil school one could get potatoes, in summer one could go berrying, but all the same it was difficult. He bought a cow and drank milk, but he could not keep it long and soon sold it. And so the years slipped by. As I recollect, father would like to listen to the radio and was always well informed about everything. He subscribed to a lot of leading journals and newspapers, local newspapers, journals on embroidery, fishery, medicine, chemistry, geography, chess, history, and newspaper in German "Neues Leben". When in 1963 it became possible to buy a TV set, our parents bought "Yenisei-3". And it was the first TV set in the village. Teachers would often come to us to look at films and telecasts, especially "Goluboi ogonek" (Light-blue light). Since we lived 80 km from Orenburg, an antenna was needed, and father, having made arrangements with the chairman of the kolkhoz (collective farm) Konstantinov, made an antenna and mounted it with guide wires. It was 20 m high. Thus we had information and learned about life in the country and in the world. Then our parents bought a washing machine. Being an invalid, father especially wanted to get a three-wheel carriage intended for invalids. But he had no disability certificate and did not want to get it. The kolkhoz "Karl Marx" was rich, its

members had motorcycles and cars, but my father wanted an invalid's carriage to go to work and fishing. Unfortunately, he had never gone to the medical commission. Apparently, father did not want to change his habits and wanted to avoid publicity that he suffered from bleeding. Father corresponded with his old acquaintance from Leningrad, who during the war ostensibly lived with children in the Iset region with the evacuated. He was Boris Vasilyevich Zhuravlev, a lecturer on mathematics in Leningrad University. He had also taught it in the regional centre at Iset. He had two daughters: Natalia and Tatiana. Natalia studied in the senior grades and Tatiana in junior grades. Later Natalia became a physician and worked in GIDUV (State Institute for Improvement) in Leningrad, and Tatiana headed the chair of pathological anatomy in the First Medical Institute. To-day it is the I.P. Pavlov Medical University. The Zhuravlevs would send us parcels from Leningrad. In 1961 my mother and I went to Leningrad, father went there in 1964 and in 1966 he visited the Zhuravlevs in Melnichy Ruchei (a suburb near St. Petersburg). We had no idea about the topic of their talks. Most likely they had talked about the war. Zhuravlevs children remember our father. They recollected that in 1942 father helped to accommodate the evacuated families. Several decades later I found them. They lived on Bakunin Str., 29 and worked in Leningrad but they could not tell us anything special about father. They recollected: "Yes. There was such a geography teacher, he was poor. He kind of married a collective farmer

Polina, it was a civil marriage. They were childless. The marriage was not a success. He lived at her house, they were glad that it had become easier for him because he was an invalid.” Now it is known exactly that Filatov V.K. was not married during the war.¹ Therefore doubts arise that the Zhuravlevs were in the village of Isetskoe at that time. When I asked them what their father Zhuravlev B.V. had been they answered that he had long been in captivity in Poland wounded in the legs and then had been exchanged for somebody. Zhuravlevs knew nothing about his relationship with V.K. Filatov. I asked for his photo. They refused to give it. When we voyaged from Samara to Leningrad in 1966, father would call Zhuravlev B.V. up and visited him. We thought that they had known each other long before the war. When father went to Melnichy Ruchei, he never took us along. When father and I went to see “memorable places”, as he called them, in Leningrad, I remember that he showed me the places where the Russian tsars had shed blood – in Winter Palace, in the streets, namely the embankment where terrorists had killed Alexander II. I asked him, why Alexander II had been killed. He answered, that he was a progressive man, who wanted to change much in life, but was killed. The Revolutioners did not want the Tsars to rule Russia. The “Spas-na-krovi” church was built in honour of that Tsar. In the Winter Palace he showed me the dining room where Kerensky’s provisional government had sat. But Kerensky had not managed to keep power. “These people have changed the Tsars and this has led to civil war” –

father said. Father showed me Mikhailovsky castle where Pavel Ist had been killed. We walked about the town with mother, at father's request. He would get tired. Mother took me to St. Peter and Paul's fortress and we went to St. Peter and Paul's Cathedral where I saw, for the first time, the Tsars' tombs. Everything was interesting to me, I tried to be close to the guide to hear and learn more. I was especially struck by the fine marble tombstones. The size of the Cathedral was also impressive. We were in churches, cathedrals, and museums. We visited all the environs, and parks. Such was my childhood. Every summer we were in Leningrad. Every time they told me about the life of the northern capital and its people, and, of course, they fixed in my mind, that all that had been built on the initiative of the Tsars. I was surprised why, instead of going to health resorts (and we could allow for it), our parents would take us to Leningrad for two months and we would live at mother's sister's place (Olga Kuzminichna) as if there was no other place on earth, in Russia

Besides that, the contact with the city on the Neva continued in autumn, when it was harvest time. Trucks would come to us from Leningrad and the drivers would often tell us about the city. During my visits to Leningrad I was also informed about the history of the blockade, they would tell me about the heroism of the people of Leningrad. I remember our visit to Piskarevskoye cemetery. Father, when recollecting his youth, would often speak about his travels about south Russia – it was very warm there and of course there was access to the sea.

Together with other lads of the same, or almost the same age, he would spend the summers in southern towns. There was enough food there, there was no need of a special dwelling. Father would swim a lot and dive. But he could not dive deep because if he did, blood started running from his nose and ears. They dived for cockle-shells and caught fish and lobsters. This was between 1921 and 1928. He often went to the Sukhumi and Saakhi health resorts. There was a mud-resort at Saakhi, and father could get mud-baths there. He was in Baku and in the Crimea. Once father said that at that time he had tried to get work at the Dneprogress building, but conditions were very hard there and he, on the advice of someone from the personnel went to Magnitka. But there was mainly physical work there and he, being of delicate health, could not work there and went to the Cheliabinsk tractor works (to-day there is a Highway Institute in Cheliabinsk) and then to “Uralmashzavod”. At both plants there were engineers from Germany who suggested that he study to be a road-building engineer, since, as they explained, in disrupted Russia there was a lot of work in the reconstruction of roads and bridges

Having got work at “Uralmashzavod”, he entered the Highway Institute, where he studied for several years. I always wondered how without education he could obtain full-time tuition at a technical institute. At the same time, according to the documents, between 1930 and 1932 Father studied by correspondence, and from 1932 to 1934 he was a full time student at the Lunacharsky Tiumen Pedagogical Institute (see

his biography for 1967). We have a reference given to him in 1933 at the Highway Institute that he was of poor estate, from a shoe-maker's family, but having the right to vote.¹ That year they started issuing passports. Passports and references were issued according to one's place of residence registration. Father lived in a hostel and was directed to the institute from where he worked (the year unknown). One can judge from the certificate of graduation from the free-time workers' school at the Lunacharsky Tiumen Pedagogical Institute that he had not lived in Tiumen, and they had not demanded any reference there. From the documents, the tuition term at that school was 1930 to 1934, hence, father had not been registered in Tiumen. It turns out that he could have graduated from the Highway Institute, too. Clearly, it ought to have been so. Thus they had not known him in Tiumen until 1934, when he became a full-time student of the Pedagogical Institute, then, again, a free-time student of this Institute from 1937 to 1939.² We have no documents concerning the Highway Institute. But where are they? It is interesting that the certificates contain some discrepancies. Certificate #22909 of the middle school teacher V.K. Filatov's graduation from the Teacher's Institute in Tiumen in 1936 was issued on August 9, 1938 and signed by RSFSR people's commissar of education L. Tiurkin himself. The question is: how does a graduate from the Institute, without a certificate get work in 1936? Maybe, such were the rules in 1936? It follows from the certificate signed by the Deputy Director of the

Pedagogical Institute on July 17, 1937 and found in the Institute's archive, that on July 1, 1936 he graduated from the Teacher's Institute as a geography teacher. Then it gets more interesting. By order of deputy director #24/79 of 18.07.1937 he was admitted to the Pedagogical Institute as a third-year student of the free-time geography faculty, and as a graduate from the Teacher's Institute of the Tiumen' Pedagogical Institute. The printed order on V.K. Filatov's graduation from the Institute has not been found. The geography teacher's diploma #054485, given to Filatov V.K. on December 16, 1939 reads that he entered the Pedagogical Institute in 1934 and graduated from it in 1939. The result is that Filatov V.K. entered the Pedagogical Institute not in 1937 as a third-year student, but in 1934, and at the same time, according to order #63 of July 2nd, 1934 he was admitted to the Teacher's Institute. If he entered the Pedagogical Institute in 1934, according to the record of the higher-education diploma and not of the certificate, then, again, according to the certificate, he graduated from the Teacher's Institute on July 1, 1936 and by order #24/79 of 18.07.1937 he was admitted as a third-year student of the Pedagogical Institute. Then one year (1936—1937) of study in the Pedagogical Institute falls out. In the extract from order #122 of July 25th, 1939, paragraph 1, the management of the Pedagogical Institute commends and thanks officially the four-year, free-time student, Filatov V.K. for excellent studies and social work. Signed by the Director of the Institute, Korolev. Again, it does not make five years.

That is, he studied from 1934 to 1939, but in 1939 Filatov V.K. was a four-year student and on December 12, 1939 he obtained a higher-education diploma. This does not fit with five-years of studies. It means that his studies ought to have lasted for seven years, i.e., from 1934 to 1941, and father's diploma ought to have been issued on December 16th, 1941. But from archival reference #51 of 12.09.1967, from the Department of public education of the Administration of Isetsk Region, Tiumen Province, in 1941 Filatov V.K. was the acting Director of this department. Though, they could count the years of studies in the Teacher's Institute and Pedagogical Institute as a term needed to obtain a higher education, that is, 5 years. But, again, it is more than 5 years, i.e., 7 years. And again, it is not clear, why he obtained the certificate in 1938 and not in 1936. Such is the history of his studies. But let's go back. As a free-time student, father could freely move about the country and he got acquainted with many interesting people. He told me about one of them who was a man working at "Uralmashzavod" and who had graduated from the Highway Institute. Later on, when father spoke about the importance of learning languages, he recollected that that man knew German perfectly because he had associated with German engineers. Father told us about the fate of this man during the war: he was in the partisan detachment in the occupied territory. His messenger in Poland Yavorsky, a former forester in Bielovezhskaya Pushcha, had lived in our village. Yavorsky associated with father and told father about this man in my

presence. The man they talked about was Kuznetsov Nikolai Nikolaevich. I'll remember it all my life. Only now, after decades, have I understood that Kuznetsov was a man who was well acquainted with father. They had been acquainted for a long time. Father took Kuznetsov history to heart and during his life he thoroughly studied all the related materials published in the press. The impression was that father had been with him all his life. Besides that, Litvinov Georgy lived in our village. He was another man who during the war had also known those partisans, such were the rules. Father would meet with him and they would speak about the war. I remember it well and it is still of interest to me because the detachment where N.I. Kuznetsov had been was located in Bielovezhskaya Pushcha, where, as father often recollected, he had been in his early childhood with his parents. He spoke so often and in such detail about that place, that is, Rovno that one would think that he had been there later on, and not just once. During the war Mother had also been there. She was a medical sister, in 1943—1944 their hospital accompanied the army over Bielorussia and the Ukraine. Father would often speak with me about the usefulness of sciences. For instance, he would cite not only the works of scientists but also the deeds of Peter the First, stressing their force and emphasizing the importance of getting into the bottom of all spheres of knowledge and learning the arts, literature and languages. We lived in a village where the native villagers were the Germans and the Dutch, from the times

of Catherine II. He himself spoke German with the villagers but at home he never did. He would often suggest that one ought to know languages and use them to learn the culture of other peoples. Later on, being a student of the faculty of foreign languages at the S.M. Kirov Pedagogical Institute, I would often hear from him that what we study at the Institute is only theory, and one needs practice. But there was no practice in the spoken language. However, I translated both technical texts and texts on archaeology, history, fish-breeding, physics, and chemistry, etc. By 1975, I was already in my fourth year. I was in the group "Poisk" (Search), which studied the lives of the students of our Institute who had been in World War II. That year a Museum of Glory was created. Because we started this museum the RSFSR Ministry of Education awarded our group "Poisk" with a bonus, and the management of the institute decided to send us students, to Bielorrussia, to visit the most famous sites of the war. Before leaving for Minsk, in May of 1975, I told father about it. Father listened to me and suddenly said that he had studied in the Highway Institute and worked at practising the language. Nikolai Ivanovich Kuznetsov, a future hero of the Soviet Union, a known secret service agent, studied and worked with him. Father said that Nikolai Ivanovich spoke German fluently, and when he was taking his examinations he wrote his graduation essay in German. Kuznetsov spoke German and wrote it without any mistakes, better than the other students wrote and spoke their native language. Father said that I ought to know German

as well as Kuznetsov had known it. Then he said that the body of N.I. Kuznetsov had not been found, and the statement that he had been killed was only a rumour. Father said: "When you are in Minsk, look at Kuznetsov photo in the WW II Museum. That photo is the only original available. His weapon and his officer's map case are also there."

Later I told father about our trip. He listened to me and said nothing. Still, I wonder why father remembered that man for so long. From the documents available in our family he had not participated in the war and could not know any of these details. Namely, about the photo being the only original or about Kuznetsov's personal weapon and map case or that all these things are kept in the WW II Museum in Minsk

He had never been there, as far as we know. I thought that maybe he had learned about it from Yavorsky who lived in our village, but that was in the 60's and Yavorsky had been very old already and also had not left the village. How could that be? This fact of his biography has also not been clarified. We've sent inquiries to the Highway Institutes in the Urals and Siberia about father and got answers that there was no such student. To-day we should, probably, study not only our father's biography but also the biography of Nikolai Ivanovich Kuznetsov. It is clear from publications that Kuznetsov was called the Hero of the Soviet Union not post mortem but while he was still living. In the book of the Heroes of the Soviet Union kept in the archives of the Military-historical museum

of artillery, military engineering and communication, there is a record: “Kuznetsov N.I. – partisan, secret-service agent, Hero of the Soviet Union.” No other Kuznetsovs. The facts of his death are still unknown. Somebody had seen something, somebody had heard something. Not more. Theodor Gladkov in his book *Disappeared from the place of attempt* writes that people still hope that Nikolai Ivanovich is still alive and that maybe he has moved to another place, with his death feigned. And that Kuznetsov has continued his work but under another name and on another theme, because at that time the era of nuclear confrontation was approaching

Father would tell that N.I. Kuznetsov had been concerned with the search for the Amber room. And he said that in Koenigsberg, on the left side of the highway going into town, there was an underground airdrome where it was kept in one of the wells. But nobody had searched for it in that region. It is of interest that the head of the geo-archaeological expedition on the search for the Amber room in the 60's and 70's at Kaliningrad, a Candidate of History, expert in the recent history of Germany, Andrei Stanislavovich Przhezdovsky is of the opinion that “...The Amber room and numerous valuables of interest not only to us but to world culture have remained on the territory of Prussia, namely, on the territory of Koenigsberg. Only the lack of skill, our famous haphazard ways and inability to approach the case from the scientific point of view, seriously explains a lack of results. If we can overcome our shortcomings, we shall be

able to bring the valuables back.”¹. Maybe their lives had really intersected and we know nothing about it. We do not know whether father had ever been to Bielorussia or what friends he had there. I was born when he was 49 and his life during those earlier years we have only just begun to uncover. Much is to be studied. The life of this man is enigmatic and mysterious. We do not know how many similar fates there have been in Russia. If each of us studied these lives, we would enlarge the volume of information about Russian history, with the deeds of these people. Father had passed through numerous ordeals. For instance, three wars: World War I, Civil war, and World War II. Years of disruption of collectivization, and of reconstruction of the economy. After the Civil war he was registered nowhere for 12 years – he lived in several orphanages. Therefore it would have been difficult to find him if anyone had wanted to. We have mapped his life and seen that he was mainly in central Russia, and in southern Russia where the climate was milder, and there was plenty of fruit and vegetables, and mud resorts. He had lived for a long time in the Siberia and in the Urals where his family had been executed and where he had studied. Grigory Rasputin’s relatives had also lived there. Here it becomes clear why Father appeared as a student in 1930. Industry was developing intensively at that time. In 1933 a passport system was introduced. One ought to be registered somewhere, to work and live. In 1930 he entered the Highway Institute (we have a related reference). Father had never kept a diary, his photos

were not numerous, he neither liked to be photographed nor to take photos himself. But he had bought us two cameras and books on photography. We learned to do photography ourselves and we were photographed by other people on father's request. Once a lad had come and lived with us for two weeks (it was Kukolev). He photographed us but left no photo. There are no other documents in our family apart from certificates, diplomas, references, and birth certificates. Father had asked us to guard these documents like they were the apple of the eye. He said that they contained everything about his life, and the remaining could be found in books such as Gorky's books "*V liudiakh*" (Among People) and "*Moi universitety*" (My Universities). In all his life father had never sought for information about his relatives, at any rate, in our presence. He would say: "What should they need me for? It's my life and they have a life of their own". His secluded life astonished us. He knew how to be silent. We have never heard of his other family or whether he had any other children. Mother said that when I was born, father celebrated that event for a fortnight. Apparently, he had long waited for an heir. So one period of his life had ended and another period began, full of care for his children. He needed to earn money and worked from morning till night, like mother. Strange as it was for that time, we had "nurses". They were Kashirins' children from another village who studied in the Pretoria middle school and lived with us. When I grew up, I myself looked after my sisters when our parents were at school. Father dreamed

that our life would not be like his. Therefore he did his very best for us and tried to pass all his knowledge on to us. It was a very interesting time. At school, where he worked, he tried to create an atmosphere of accessibility to knowledge and trained the children's interest in it. For example, Father's stories about Kuznetsov N.I. or Gladkikh M.L. have created a life-long impression. He was always near them or they near him, days and nights, during all his life, that is, his life and their lives had been intertwined and, of course, he had learned much from them. I saw how father was cautious with people though he himself was approachable for others. Therefore later, when I observed him, and after his death examined his documents, I understood how hard it had been for him to get those documents. He had never kept diaries. Moving from place to place he had tried either to destroy or to take with himself all the necessary documents, which would be left after he died. So, as mother told it, from Tiumen and from Orenburg Province he took with him a file with his dossier. In 1955 our parents moved from Tiumen Province. As Father explained later, it was impossible to live there because due to a nuclear accident in Cheliabinsk, dead fish could be seen floating in the river Iset for a whole year after. Our parents travelled via Moscow. In Moscow they came to the Ministry of Education and tried to get work but, for some reason they failed. Mother cried, and father soothed her. Later mother recollected that father went away somewhere and sometime later the Minister appeared in the corridor and asked mother why

she was crying. She answered that she could not find work. The Minister asked her: "Where would you like to work?" Mother answered, either in Altai krai or in Orenburg Province. The Minister took mother's arm and conducted her to the personnel department, where my parents obtained a permit. So that's how they came to live in Orenburg Province. The first seal witnessing a record in father's work-record card appeared only in 1955. I still can't comprehend how this could have happened, because father himself had once been Director of RONO. As if all those years he had been either in an administrative exile or on a business trip. And the most incredible thing is that he had served in the army and had had a serviceman's identity card. Father had been exempt from military service for poor health but he was called twice to the medical commission. What for? When we appealed to the Military-medical archive of the Ministry of Defense in St. Petersburg, they said that they could not understand it either. We also failed to find his medical cards. Though the archive officers explained that medical commissions in the time of war had consisted of the medical workers of the hospitals and not of the region, and all medical records had been sent to the military districts. The districts had turned over the documents to the archives. But nothing has been found there either. Order #336 of 5.12.42, item 12 testifies to the fact that father suffered from a chronic illness of the muscular system of a neuropathic nature.¹ It's a terrible disease. They had prescribed other medicines, while in this case strychnine ought

to have been used, for example. Everything was and is strange. Father had not registered a disability certificate either. It seems that with this illness, and with any other, one should be examined, obtain a disability certificate, be registered in the polyclinic, be treated, get medicines, and go to resorts. Father had done nothing of the kind. He was already 60 and could think only of his children, about their health, but he would not do anything for himself. Was it unwillingness or a disregard for medicine, because it could not help him since he knew about the incurability of his hereditary illness? His hereditary illness had accustomed him to the thought that his life was in God's hands, and he would live as many years as God gave him. And father had lived each day as if it would be his last. During his last years father would pray and repeat: "God, how long shall I suffer? When shall I die at last?" There was a single answer: "We all are in God's hands." He would say, that only thought, his ability to think, had made it possible for him to live. Many years later we decided to ascertain the diagnosis of father's illness with the help of forensic genetics and medicine, that is, whether father was ill with haemophilia "A" or not

A case with our elder daughter Anastasia has marked the beginning of these investigations. During an ordinary medical examination the endocrinologist suggested that we should examine our child in the Genetic Centre in St. Petersburg. We got a permit to this Centre and medical examinations lasted from January till June, 1999. None of the hereditary

illnesses have been discovered. However, Vasilyeva I. Yu.,¹ specialist in genetics, gave a permit to Anastasia's real aunts Olga, Irina, and Nadezhda to be examined for the haemophilic gene. Examinations were made in the D. O. Otto Institute, in the laboratory of prenatal diagnostics, IAG, Russian Academy of Medical Sciences, for a period of two weeks, by Candidate of Biology Aseev M.V. supervised by Doctor of Medicine, professor, chief of this laboratory Baranov V.S. One of the daughters of Filatov V.K. has a 14 year old son. He has no haemophilic gene. A conclusion: "Since Mozhaiko A.V. (V.K. Filatov's grandson) is not ill with haemophilia "A", a 95% probability is that his grandfather, on his mother's side, Filatov V.K. was not ill either."² On March 15, 2000, Candidate of Medicine, specialist in forensic medicine, lecturer of the chair of forensic medicine and criminalistics of the St. Petersburg State University, Petrov V.V., together with Professor Egorov G.B., having analyzed the records in the diaries of Emperor Nikolas II and Empress Alexandra Feodorovna, of Tsesarevich Alexei's sisters and the doctors who observed Tsesarevich, stated³ that "an analysis of literature³ has not revealed any manifestations of Tsesarevich Alexei's haemophilia during the time period 1914 to 1918." Doctor Botkin E.S. had appealed to the Ekaterinburg Executive Committee on Tsesarevich Alexei Nikolaevich Romanov's state of health. Doctor Botkin had observed him for ten years. He wrote:

“Alexei Nikolaevich is subject to pains in the joints from bumps that are completely unavoidable in a boy of his age and that are accompanied by seepage of fluids and resultant excruciating pains “...⁴ Chairman of the “Committee for Russian Peoples’ Culture Protection”, Dean of St. Peter and Paul’s Church, archpriest N. Golovkin has a statement from the Russian Federation State Archive (RFSA) that “The notebook of leib-medic Botkin does not contain any information either about blood group and composition or the state of the Tsesarevich, Grand Duke Alexei Nikolaevich Romanov during haemorrhage.”⁵ The Russian State historical archive keeps in the “File of the Office of Her Majesty Empress Alexandra Feodorovna and Management of the Files of Royal Children of Their Imperial Majesties” (General archive of the former Ministry of the Court) records of the state of health of the Tsesarevich, the Heir. “The Government Bulletin” for September, October, and November 1912 contains bulletins on the health of Tsesarevich Alexei Nikolaevich Romanov. There are hourly records of temperature, pulse, the state of swelling resulting from kicking the boat rowlock, as well as breathing, but not a word about haemophilia. Tsesarevich’s medical documents, his medical card, if one may say so, are signed by: Honorary leib-surgeon, Professor Fedorov, leib-medic E. Botkin, Honorary leib-medic Ostrogorsky. Minister of the Imperial Court baron Fredericks. When specialists in forensic medicine and genetics examined these medical records they were bewildered by such

a glaring mistake in diagnostics, i.e. mixing up the state of a man after a violent bruise, that is, haematoma, with such a serious illness as haemophilia. Involuntarily one may think that here is a political intrigue to demonstrate that the Romanov family will become extinct, and therefore it should be renewed by killing the ill representatives, exchanging them for more healthy representatives of the same family. Any means are good to serve the purpose, including information for the public about the approaching death of the Heir or about an intensified crisis in his illness, that is, the formation of a negative in the social opinion of the public. In such a way a thought could have been developed by the interested people that the Heir would not live long. The conclusion is simple as the truth: the boy could live long and did live in defiance of everything

Examining father's complicated biography, I paid attention to the map of his life we had drawn from the places where he had been during the Civil war and after it. Considering that father and Alexei are one in the same man and this is clear from his words, and since he had been wounded, then, after he had been drawn out of the shaft, he ought to have got qualified medical aid. I thought: "Who could have done it?" It could have been done by a man who was close to him and who knew how to treat him. At that time Doctor Derevenko V.N. lived in Ekaterinburg. In his memoirs he writes that three weeks before the execution he was sent by the order of Goloshchekin (commissar of Ekaterinburg) to serve the neighbouring garrisons near Ekaterinburg. It is also

known from the description by Derevenko V.N. and investigator Sokolov N.A. that in Ekaterinburg at Shartash station there was a train where the hospital was organized. Golubeva ² was the chief of this hospital. From father's words, they took him to Shartash station where the surgeon wanted to amputate his leg, but he would not permit it. Probably, Derevenko V.N. was that surgeon who knew that it ought not to be done. Though, maybe, doctor's first thought that there was no way out of the situation, but he had also known before that Alexei had repeatedly been on the brink of life and death and each time he had emerged from the crisis and continued to live. If it had been another surgeon, the results for Alexei could have been disastrous. He could have lost his leg, but nothing like that happened. To-day we know about it from he himself. After all his moves father finally found himself in the North. I've written about it already. He left Shadrinsk late in the summer of 1918 and little is known about his movements until late in 1919. But we do know that Derevenko V.N. lived in Ekaterinburg till the Whites left the town and took doctor along to Tomsk in the fall of 1919. In January 1919 the Russian White army South front was formed, the German expeditionary force landed on April 20, 1918 and then that of the Allies. From 1917 in the Caucasus, Georgia, Abkhazia and Armenia the mensheviks came to power, in Azerbaijan were the Turks, the Germans and the English. On September 15, 1918 Baku was taken by the Turks. On January 20 the General Denikin's volunteer army took the following towns in the North Caucasus:

Essentuki, Kislovodsk, and Piatigorsk. Poltava was taken by the Whites on June 31, 1919, freed by the Reds on December 11, 1919. Kastornaya was freed by the Reds on November 15, 1919, Kharkov – on June 24, 1919, Ekaterinodar – on August 15, 1919, Novocherkassk was taken by the Whites on April 7, 1918, freed by the Red 9th army on January 7, 1920. Kiev was taken by the Whites on July 31, 1919, freed by the Reds on December 16 1919. Kursk was taken by the Whites on September 20, 1919, freed by the Reds on November 17, 1919. Orel was taken by the Whites on October 13, 1919, freed by the Reds on October 20, 1919. Tsaritsyn was taken by the Whites on June 30, 191, freed by the Reds on January 3, 1920. Voronezh was freed by the Reds on October 24, 1919. Tomsk was taken by the Reds on July 15, 1919. Shadrinsk was taken by the Whites on July 25, 1918, Zlatoust – on May 26, 1918, Perm' – on December 25, 1918. Perm' and Kungur were freed by the Reds on July 1, 1919, etc.¹. As he said, father hoped for a long time that everything would be restored. This period was sufficiently long: from 1918 till 1921. The Widow Empress Maria Feodorovna (the wife of Emperor Alexander III), mother of Emperor Nicolas II, was in the Crimea. There were mud resorts there. From father's words, Konstantin, a relative on the side of Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich, lived in Tiflis. To-day it is difficult to relate him to the Grand Duke, since father had not dwelled on this fact. He could have been the grand-grandson of Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich, Prince Konstantin, born in 1890

I draw a conclusion that father had wanted to be there but could not get there alone. He would have had to have crossed the front line and known where, with whom and how to find his relatives. Who could welcome him there? Besides, he needed information about the course of events. If he went in early 1919, the question arises: how could he roam about the country and eventually find himself in the Crimea? There was no unbroken line of the front strictly corresponding to the idea of the war. One had to go by railroad to the places occupied by the Whites in order to have a guaranteed successful crossing of the front line with the help of Gladkikh Mikhail Pavlovich and his people. As father said, the help of Gladkikh? M.P. was the only guarantee that they would not arrest him and let him move on. Father's movement over the country was miraculously combined with an occupation by the Whites of the towns in the south and central Russia. And this movement could have taken place in early 1919 and back – in late 1920, when it became clear that the White army had lost (when the White towns were abandoned?). Then father returned to Shadrinsk in 1921 where he met with Alexander Strekotin and learned of the details of his sister Maria's rescue. Here, in Shadrinsk, he entered the leather-processing course of the polytechnic school on February 8, 1921 and on the same day, i.e. February 8, 1921, he went on holiday and no information about his studies anywhere has been found in the State archive up to 1933. It should be mentioned that in this school, M.P. Gladkikh's younger

brother – Grigory Gladkikh, studied (see Appendix, documents from the Shadrinsk State archive). In this polytechnic there were leather-processing, gardening, electricians, land communication, and junior nurses' courses. The teachers were from Ekaterinburg and many of them, according to the archive data, were highly educated. In his biography of 1937 father wrote that in 1918 he graduated from the fourth grade of the parish school. "I lived with my father until 1921. That year my father died and I was left alone, since at that time I had no family, although I had had two uncles. They had joined the Red Guard while my father was still alive and disappeared without a trace. Between 1921 and 1930 I worked as an apprentice at shoe factories in various cities of the Union." In his biography of 1967 he wrote that he was born in 1907. (Here we should digress. The point is that neither the Shadrinsk ZAGS nor the archive has records of issuing Vasily Filatov's birth certificate to any of his parents. There is only a record that a boy Vasily was born in the Filatov family. A question arises: how could Vasily Filatov get work without his birth certificate? From his words, Father had lost his birth certificate during the Civil war. He, as a homeless child, was sent to an orphanage in Kaluga. The medical commission determined his age with a 3-year difference. But they ought to have given him a document certifying him and to have indicated his age. His birth certificate was probably of the 1940 pattern. Person, who made out father's birth certificate, did not date the document. On the back of the page there is a seal that the passport was

issued in 1940 in the village of Isetskoe, Tiumen Province. There are no records that before 1940 Filatov V.K. had received any other certificates including a passport. There are no other records as of to-day. Though there is a possibility that information about Filatov V., having changed one document for another, is contained in the passport department of the village of Isetsk, Tiumen Province. This has yet to be checked.) Further he wrote that during his father's life time he finished the primary school and entered the Shadrinsk Polytechnicum, where children were taught various trades. (To-day it is known from the archival data that grown-ups, up to 40 years old could also study there for a period of six months. But, according to the Shadrinsk archive, Vasily Filatov was there only one day). Then father wrote that he was unable to finish up there due to his father's death in 1921. (His foster father really died on September 22, 1921 due to the famine that began in their district after a failed harvest.) These circumstances in 1922 forced father to abandon his studies and to work. (In the first biography he worked from 1921 in various cities of the Union) and had to leave his native region in order to save himself from starvation. From 1922 to 1928 he worked in various towns west of the Ural Mountains. Doctor Derevenko V.N. had been in Perm from the fall of 1920. Had father visited him? It's unknown. In November 1923 Doctor Derevenko moved to Dnepropetrovsk, the south Ukraine, near the Crimea. In late January father went to Moscow to try his last chance to declare himself. He went to the

British Embassy on Diplomaticheskaya Street where John was waiting for him in February of 1924. Who was that John? One can suppose that it was Sir John Hensley-Williams. Sir John Hensley-Williams was a British general, chief of the military mission of Great Britain at the Headquarters of the Russian Army in the period 1914—1917, quartered at Mogilev. It was only he who could wait for father at the Great Britain Embassy. Father had not the habit of misleading us, his children. He was not going to do that because, first of all, he was worried about the safety of his family, i.e. his heirs. The fact of the planned meeting can probably be reflected in the materials archived in the Great Britain Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The British Embassy was the first one opened immediately after Lenin's death. It was opened on February 2, 1924. One can read about it in M. Paleolog's book¹. But after a failure with this visit he left for the Crimea and lived there for some time. After Baron Wrangel's White troops abandoned the Crimea he returned to the Urals and lived in different places of the Urals, including Perm Province. The locals taught him how he should treat his illness using natural remedies, the people's healing knowledge, the climate, and diets. Judging from his knowledge of the komi-permyak language, he had close contacts with the locals and knew their life, rituals and traditions. As a child, I often listened to him singing komi-permyak chastushki (humorous folk ditties). I then understood that with one's wish, one can become a harmonically developed personality and with one's aim set correctly one can

learn any language. Besides, he then had friends there whom Strekotin and Gladkikh had acquired from the times of the Urals army campaign, when they were in the detachment of Kashirin and Bliukher. Both Strekotin and Gladkikh had made certain attempts to legalize the Heir in those places. He had to accustom himself to a new system, and life style. As he would say, “to save his life by all means”

In 1930 Doctor Derevenko V.N. was sentenced to five years of camps. Once, during the Civil war, father took a job on a ship cruising from Nizhnii Novgorod to Astrakhan and back. He did the job of a sailor, and cook’s assistant. He did everything he was told to do. (an experience on “Standart”). And, of course, any moment father could disappear and move to the North Caucasus via Astrakhan, to the Crimea via Novocherkassk, or Rostov-on-the-Don. He had fought with querulous old sailors, but he had the advantage of being comfortable, he had a place to sleep and to work. He worked both on deck and in the galley. While in port, father could obtain information from the talk on the street, about who was where, i.e., where the Reds were, where – the Whites. Besides, it was difficult to break his cover, while he was on board a ship

From 1921 he worked as a piano-tuner in Kaluga, Moscow and other cities of central Russia, as well as a shoemaker’s apprentice on hire. As a piano-tuner he, respectively, called on the families who could afford to have a piano, that is, the families of intellectuals. He could communicate with educated

people who had information on the current events; many of them were military men. Besides, in his time, Nikolas II had intended to move General Headquarters to Kaluga and, of course, father had been there before the Revolution and had known many people who served under the Tsar. Also, he had been to Yaroslavl, Kostroma, Torzhok, and Tver. He was acquainted with the priests who helped him. Specifically, he had been treated in the island monastery on Lake Seliger. There were salt caves there, where he took treatments according to home remedies. Once he lived with monks in Tsar Ioann III's house, in the forests near Moscow, near Serpukhov. In winter he longed to go south. It was warm there and the border was nearby. He lived in the mountains near Sukhumi

Our family was there in the summer of 1989 in the region of Pitsunda

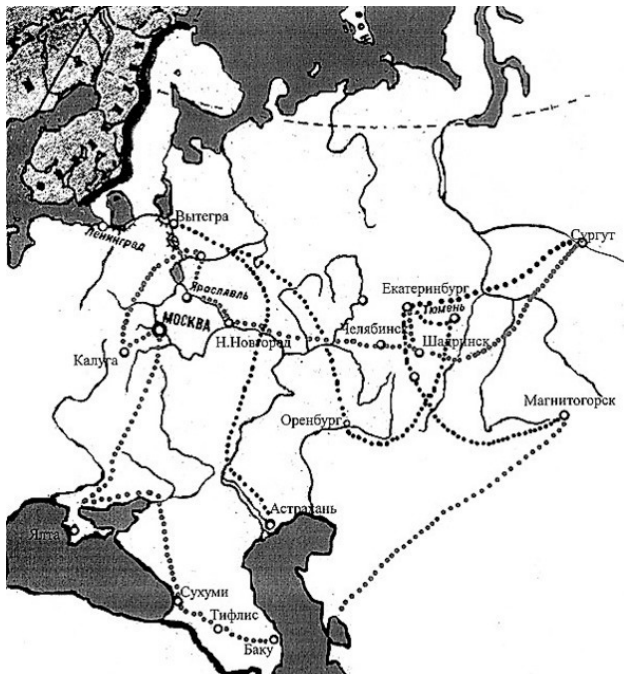
Father was a man with a broad outlook and a vast circle of people who had known him while he lived. He would tell us much about some interesting facts which he knew for various reasons. For example: where the state storehouses and special repositories were located, as well as the reserve command posts of defence objectives organized before the Revolution. So, when he lived in Ekaterinburg, the Staff Military Academy was quartered there and he knew many of the officers. Part of these officers went over to the Whites, part – to the Reds, and during World War II they already held high posts. These people knew him as Tsesarevich Alexei Nikolaevich Romanov, after the

tragedy, even with changing his name, he needed no proof as to who he was. Not all of them but some could have helped him.¹

Of course, it is difficult to-day to describe all his connections because he was doomed to silence both by his origin and by the age. For some time during the Civil war he did not reveal his name and age because he could keep them concealed because of the unrest. And later, when the Soviet Republican Government declared that children are the future of the country, homeless children were gathered into orphanages, and father declared himself an orphan. At that time he was already 16—17. But one should say that he was always young-looking. He was not tall and had physical defects. Strange as it may be, the defects helped to conceal his age and origin. But he could not conceal his age completely, he could only forget who he was and when he was born, since, as he would say, he was 4 when his mother died, then his father died, too, and by 1921 none of his relatives remained alive. So, when, as a result of a round-up, he turned out to be in an orphanage, the doctor determined his age approximately from his teeth. He had not taken along any documents, let alone his birth certificate record, when crossing the front lines. He would try to keep out of sight. Some years later he made an inquiry about his birth certificate at Shadrinsk. We should dwell upon father's style of life, his behaviour, his established habits, his special ability to adapt himself to life, and the environment where he would happen to be. With these facts left out of our account, one would not understand how he became



Gladkikh, Mikhail Pavlovich. March 1922.



Geographic scheme of V.K. Filatov's places of residence and movements in 1918-1988.



The Bely Ruchey middle school.



**Bely Ruchey. The Arkhangelsk highway. The teachers' house where the Filatov family
lived from 1967 to 1970.**



**Filatov, V.K. as a guest at V.V. Melknetsov's place,
teacher of music. 1970.**



**The village Bely Ruchey, Vologda Province.
The family of Filatov V.K. 1969.**



Leavers' class of the Bely Ruchey middle school 1969. Second row, second and third from the left – directors of studies Filator a L.K., and Duniushkina V.P.



The Camp Eaglet. Second brigade. 1966. First row, third from left – Filator Oleg, sixth – Litvinov Sascha – Peters Petia.



Vankov Alexandr. 1967.



**Filatov O.V. among his class-mates after a football game.
The village Pretoria. Summer of 1962.**



The Filatov family's relatives on a holiday. The Caucasus. 1973.



Filatov Oleg. Leningrad. 1961.



The village Pretoria. 1961.
The Filatovs - Olga, Irina, and Olga.



The body of the Pretoria middle school.



The body of the Pretoria middle school, 1960. First from the left - Filatova L.K.



The Pretoria middle school. Tenth grade. Filatov V.K. Second row,
third from the left. Director of the school Gurbenko A.A., fourth from the left.



The Pretoria middle school. 1957.
Third from the right - Filatova L. K.
Her friend is holding her daughter Irina in her arms.



Subbotnik (voluntary unpaid workday). First from left – Filatov V.K. teacher of music Trunov A.A., 1960. The Pretoria middle school, Orenburg Province.



Filatov, V.K. among his friends. 1946.



Filatov, V.K., a student of the Tiumen Pedagogical Institute 1936. First from left.



The village Sloboda-Beshkii. Filatov, V. K., director of studies. Second row, second from the right.



Filatov, V. K., 1939.



**The Hero of the Soviet Union
Kuznetsov N.I. The WWII period.**



**The Hero of the Soviet Union
Kuznetsov N.I. The WWII period.**



First graduation from the Tiumen Pedagogical Institute. 1939.

Filatov V.K. is in the bottomrow , third from the right.



Astrakhan. The Red Embankment.



Astrakhan. The Komsomol Embankment of the river Volga.



From the left: Akimenko Vladimir Alexeevich



Filatov's student's pass. The Astrakhan S.M. Kirov Pedagogical Institute.



**The summer of 1979. Cheliabinsk.
Among the army friends.**



**Astrakhan. The workers of the Stroibank.
The 7 November 1982 demonstration.
Filatov O.V. with a guitar.**



**The Lower Volga. Filatov O.V.,
a brigade counsellor of Camp Eagle.**



**The group Search - Poisk. Summer of 1975.
At places of the past battles during the World War II.
The Kalmyk steppe.**



Filatov, O.V. at the site of the Ipatiev house



Forest road to the village Koptiaki.

Chapter II

RELATIONS WITH OTHER PEOPLE

When I was 5—6 years old, we lived in the village of Pretoria, in a large house of cut limestone, with an enormous roof. The front part of the house was occupied by our family, the Urbanovichs lived behind us. They were also teachers in our school. Across the street lived our former director of studies Yakov Yakovlevich Kliver. The Trunovs lived next door. Trunov was the music teacher in our school. I observed that father associated with him both at work and after work. Father loved music and played various instruments, both keyboard and stringed. At school the music teacher Trunov Alexander Alexandrovich had bayans. Father would often take the school bayan, play it and sing songs. He did it in the following way: he would take the bayan, run his fingers over the buttons and then start playing. Especially popular were the war-time waltzes and the war-time songs – with lingering melody, sad, about the people's lives, even sorrowful, one might say. I tried to understand then, what the matter was with him, why he was singing them if all of us were alive. But he would sing looking into the distance and suddenly would break off the song, sigh and lay the bayan aside. You could see how sad he was

It was very interesting to see how he, pressing the buttons, derived a melody from a special mosaic of black and white buttons. I myself tried to repeat this mosaic, but it was difficult. I was little and could derive nothing but a cacophony of sounds. Father saw it and later took me to Trunov A.A. He listened to me and said that “a bear had trod on my ear”. Father took it to heart, and even though I tried to persuade him to buy me a bayan, he never did it. Though many a boy whom I knew had bayans, Petia Peters, in particular

But father would try to develop my love of music since he considered that Trunov A.A. should not have said those words in my presence. Father showed us how to chord, how to press the bass buttons to harmonize them with the melody. Father would often sing the songs about “Orenburg down kerchief”, “River Volga”, “At an Unnamed Height”, “In a dug-out”, “Song about anxious youth”, about Maria, whom he was going to come to. He also sang chastushki. He was not a professional poet, but sometimes he wrote poetry. We have in our family a greetings card wrote by him for his younger daughter on August 31, 1985

В день рождения с любовью посылаем Вам привет
Желаем счастья и здоровья, и славных трудовых побед
Мы поздравляем Вас до срока, чтоб не забыли Вы о нас
И чтоб хорошая погода стояла в городе для Вас
Чтоб всё сбылось, о чем мечтали, в годину трудную
для Вас
И чтобы нас не забывали, не проклинали бы подчас

Бывает в жизни часто трудно, без этого прожить нельзя

Но закаляться в этом нужно, тогда легко пойдут дела

Here is an English version

With love on your birthday we send you best regards

And wish your health and happiness, and great labour feats

We send congratulations beforehand so you do not forget us,

And wish a spell of fine weather continuing for you

Let everything you've dreamed about in times of stress be realized

We ask you, do remember us and do not curse us much sometimes

Life's often difficult to people, and no one avoids his fate

But steel your will, then all the problems will be solved

While reading a book on the murder of the Tsar's family,

I discovered a poem named "Pray"

Пошли нам, Господи, терпенья

В годину буйных, мрачных дней

Сносить народные гоненья

И пытки наших палачей

Дай крепость нам, о, Боже правый

Злодейства ближнего прощать

И крест тяжелый и кровавый

С твоею кротостью встречать

И в дни мятежного волненья

Когда ограбят нас враги

Стерпеть позор и оскорбленье

Христос Спаситель, помоги
Владыка мира, Бог Вселенной
Благослови молитвой нас
И дай покой душе смиренной
В невыносимо страшный час
И у преддверия могилы
Вдохни в уста твоих рабов
Нечеловеческие силы
Молиться кротко за врагов

Holy God, give us patience to bear the persecution and

tortures

By our butchers in time of trouble

Do give us, God, the ability to pardon the evil deeds of our
Neighbours and to meet meekly the heavy bloody cross
Christ, Saviour, help us endure insults and disgrace

When enemies are robbing us. God, bless us and restrain our
souls at an unbearably horrible hour

And at our mortal hour give us the superhuman power
To pray for our enemies

Of course, the poems are not of equal value and have been
written on different occasions. But it seems to me that even
a self-trained reader will find in them a consistence in style
and form of expressing oneself. I deliberately cited these poems
at the beginning of the chapter, because these poems seem
to explain splendidly father's state of mind and his ability
to adapt to another life, even one built by his enemies who had

killed his family, and, having adapted to it, to live in a fitting manner. Forced to conceal his real origin, he had to disguise his knowledge and breeding, to make himself as inconspicuous as possible

He lived as if everything around him was a sort of mirage, i.e., everything was different, not his. My sisters and I were close by and felt his inexplicable force and influence. We believed that his whole life is some other life, unknown to others

What was it? Probably, a mirage of his former life

Being alone with him, somewhere, like simply in a field, one could often observe how he would suddenly stop (and we were going to the management board of the kolkhoz, the chairman of which was a friend of his) and start counting the birds flying above. Suddenly, as if he recollected something, he would recite Esenin's poem: "You're still alive, my little old woman, and I am still alive. My kind regards to you, my greetings. Let the inextinguishable light stream above your hut..."

Then, as if he recollected something, he would look at me and say: "Come along, Oleg, We should go to the Board now." I later understood that he was grieving over his mother, fair-haired, beautiful and kind

He associated with people easily. He would come to the Board with me. The chairman would say: "A-a, Ksenofontovich, do come in." Entering the room, father would stand just inside the doors, look to see who was where and only then would he move on, and I with him. Father wore his cap on one side. He would

take it off and keep it in his right hand. When he put on the cap, he would take its vizor by his left hand and with his right hand he would put it onto the back of his head and, holding it with his right hand he would pull the vizor down to the forehead, as if fixing it. Before putting on his cap, he would always shake it. Another thing he did was check his boots for comfort. He would put on his boots in the following way: he would put his right foot on a low stool, tie up the lace with a seaman's knot, first showing it to me, then he would do the same with his left boot, straighten his back, shake himself, and take along his field bag and – out he went. At that time I thought that he had been a military man. He would leave for work early, 30 minutes before the beginning of lessons, though the school was 300 m from our house. He would sit in the teachers' room and take his time to prepare to his lessons

His whole life was given to school and to his family. He was an authority at school. He would always find a simple form of expression for the material. The children loved and respected him. One time he taught geography in the 6th grade. I saw how he tried to help the pupils even if they hardly knew the material. He did not let them know their marks. At the end of the lesson they would come up to him to ask about their marks for the lesson, but he first put dots in the class register and then would say either “a satisfactory” or “learn better”, but he never gave a “two”

At the next lesson he would simply ask, for instance, Andrei Yancher, whether he was ready to answer or not. If Andrei could

answer the new material then he would not ask him about the old. He did not ask me until I raised my hand. I would come to the blackboard and answer the questions. He would listen to me without interrupting and then say: “Well, Filatov, you know the lesson, I’ll give you a “five”. But I felt confused: he was my father, after all. Of course, I did my best not to let him down in order that others would not think that I got “fives” because I was the teacher’s son

When father lectured on the material, he never looked at the pupils, but if anybody made a noise, he, without looking at the pupil, would call him by name, and it was effective, the pupil stopped immediately. Father would go about the classroom, leaning on the pointer

If the noise continued, father would glance once at the pupil and silence fell immediately, because the look of his eyes was special. He gave the pupil a piercing glance – and he would shrivel up. When Father brought films on geography and showed them, many pupils from other grades would come to see the films. For instance, a film about the conquest of the North he showed in the assembly hall during a long break. Father did everything himself, like the projectionist

He would come home very tired. He would change his clothes, go to the kitchen, have dinner, then go to the room where the desk was, sit down and read the newspapers, and listen to the radio. In the evening we would come home having had plenty of running about the fields where the steppe tulips bloomed

in the spring, the grasshoppers chirped, butterflies flew the in summer, and gophers often ran about. We spent our time on the river Gusikha, on the first lake. When we came home we first drank milk and ate wheat-bread which had been baked in the oven which stood in the street. We baked bread from our own flour. We ground wheat in the mill which had stood in our village from the times of Catherine II. Our district was famous. Tatishchevo was close by, where Suvorov had captured Pugachev. The environs of Tatishchevo had been described by Pushkin in his "Captain's daughter". During the Civil war the Strekotin brothers, Tsesarevich's rescuers, had fought there. Kashirin headed the Urals army march to Perm, to the Kungur coves. Chapaev, my father showed me his death place, located there. They were virgin lands in the 50's and 60's. All those years, the years of Khrushchev N.S., we lived at Pretoria

It was the time when the world was on the brink of nuclear war, the time of changing the way people thought

At that time father read the newspapers attentively, listened to the radio and told me much about the presidents of other countries and about the international situation

We were children then and all these problems did exist but without our participation. Besides it was the time of the first space flight of Yuri Gagarin

In the days of Khrushchev, father suddenly felt drawn to the memorable places in Leningrad. It continued till our sudden movement to Vologda Province in 1967, nearer to Leningrad

Those years we had lived within our own peculiar dimension. A lot of events were shaking the world of which we were witnesses. Father crammed us with information on all fields of knowledge. He read much and rapidly. In the evening he read aloud to us. He was in a hurry because each day could be his last day. He tried to be among the people and took me along. I often asked for his permission to go to the drivers who lived in our club-house in the summer. They were mainly from Leningrad. They would take me along to the field, to the combine, where the trucks were being filled with grain. Then a truck would go to the barnyard where women tossed grain up to the transporters with wooden spades. Boys of my age worked as combiner's assistants, as, for instance, Yasha Kliver, but I could not – father forbade me, he was concerned for my health

At that time father was a Village Soviet deputy and therefore he tried to be everywhere. He helped the Board to accommodate people who had come from other cities to harvest

In those distant years mother mainly looked after us. In the summer, when it was possible she would work as a tutor in the Young Pioneer camp. During the days my sisters would be on the lake or in the gardens with the other children of their age

When we lived in Pretoria, we did not have a garden of our own. His entire spare time father would spend fishing. He tried to disconnect himself from the political environment in which we had to live

In the evening he would go to the kitchen garden, dig out rain-

worms, then go home, check his fishing-rods, mainly of bamboo, and choose one. At about 5 o'clock in the morning he would go to the river, first investigating the weather-forecast, he looked at the barometer, at the sunset colours, and checked the wind. On the river he would usually choose a place on the lee side, near the stones. If the fish were biting, he would catch 10—15 red-eyes, and some chubs, go home and gave his catch to mother, “na zherekh” – (to frizzle), as he would say. Usually it was already 7 o'clock, and the distance to the river was 1.5 km, so father, apart from his callisthenics, kept in training by walking, and he splashed himself with cold water. It should be emphasized that walking to the river required special skill, because in some places near the river Gusikha the land was marshy, with tussocks, and one ought to jump from tussock to tussock. The bog was about 100 m long, but father did so. I wondered how he managed it despite his physical deficiency. His one leg was bad, but he covered the distance there and back, and with a load. The load was a 3- or 5-litre can with water and with living fish. Father would wait impatiently while mother fried the fish, then he would sit down at the table and rapidly eat them up. When he was eating, it was better not to ask him anything, he would never answer. He followed the rule: “When I'm eating, I am a deaf-mute”. When anyone of us did not follow this rule, he would get a blow on the forehead with a wooden spoon (not powerful, though). Part of the catch was left for a fish-soup for dinner. Father was the single constant angler, on the river. Many other

teachers had cars, three-wheel motorcycles, they bred cattle, had poultry, and cultivated gardens with vegetables and fruit. They did not go fishing often. Neither did the collective farmers. Partly because they worked in the field, partly because there was no need. But we had neither garden, nor cattle, nor poultry or a car, though father all his life wanted to get an invalid's cart. For this purpose it was necessary to go to the medical commission. But he never went to doctors. When possible we would have hams usually hanging in the passage. But it was later, when I was about 9 and we got our own house

It was a three-room house. The house was of saman brick. This brick had been made at our place. It was made of clay and straw. It was all made in a large pit filled with clay, water and straw/ Then it was mixed up. A horse was driven into that pit and it trod and mixed up the mortar till it became workable

Then the mortar was poured into rectangular boxes 30x20x10 cm in size. Then the moulds were taken out and dried in the open air. The resulting bricks were then used in building. But this does not mean that every house was built of straw. There were some built of real brick and wooden planks. There were many who had gardens. It was hot in summer. They had steel tanks, pumped water into them and the whole day the water got warmed in the sun. In the evening they watered their gardens. We had nothing of the kind. Our small house stood near the old shop. There was a road in front of the house, but it was screened with enormous lilac bushes. Two windows faced the road. If one stood in front

of the house then the shop and the road to Mikhailovka (a branch of the kolkhoz) was on one's left

It was a three-room house, not including the kitchen: two small rooms and one large. In the hall, as father called it, there were bookshelves, a round table, the radio, and bookstands

The entrance was from the roadside. On one's right there was the entrance to the corridor. The small corridor had a double door to keep the warmth. (The plan of the houses was standard). Then, on one's left there was a kitchen (10m^2), on one's right – a children's room (12m^2), farther, straight ahead, – a large room, “hall” (20m^2), and – parents' bedroom (16m^2). There were two windows in the “hall” – one window looked on to the road, the other – on to the neighbour

So, when you entered the “hall”, on your right, in the corner, was the radio with a bookstand underneath. The table stood in the center. Near the door to the parents' room there stood a bookcase. The hall was illuminated with a lusters. The house was heated by the stoves. One stove was in the kitchen, the other was in the children's room. By order of the director of the school, the parents as teachers were always provided with coal. Father and I unloaded the coal with the spades and then carried it to the shed in buckets. One and a half bucket was enough for one day to heat the rooms in winter. Winters were very cold – we were located on the steppe, with surrounding hills

Father liked to associate with people. Not simply to speak

with, but to play chess, dominoes, to go wolf-shooting, duck-shooting, fishing. He loved to take part in performances, in amateur concerts, to lecture, to see films, and to participate in competitions, etc. When we lived in Pretoria, a former middle-school director of studies Kliver Yakov Yakovlevich lived just across the street. He was a pensioner. Father often visited him, they played chess over tea. Father was friends with Yakov Shmidt. He was a miller, his son studied at father's school. Father distinguished him from the rest and said that he was a genuine man. Father had one close friend – the chairman of the “Karl Marx” kolkhoz Konstantinov. He also associated with A.A. Makarov, an old man who later moved to the village of Sud'bodarovka. During World War II, he was in captivity in the Buchenwald concentration camp. He had two sons: Sasha and a younger one, Kostia. There was a thrown-away lorry in our yard. We would often sit in it, giving ourselves out to be drivers, as if we were travelling. I remember this because father with Makarov and the chairman would go either to the chairman's house or to the Board, and we were left all by ourselves. Makarov worked as a supply manager in our new, brick-built school. Once F father told me that this Makarov was captured during the beginning of the war, but before the war he had worked in the NKVD and that he was an untrustworthy man. Later on, when his elder son finished the middle school, they moved to Orenburg. They had left before our departure from Pretoria (the Makarovs lived near the club-house, opposite the Klivers)

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