

# Mysterious Death of Alexander I

Tsar Alexander I became increasingly involved in and increasingly more suspicious of those around him. On the way to the conference in Aachen, Germany, an attempt had been made to kidnap him which made him more suspicious of the people around him.

In the autumn of 1825, due to increasing illness of Alexander's wife, the Emperor undertook a voyage to the south of Russia. During this trip, he himself caught a cold which developed into typhus, from which he died in the southern city of Taganrog on November 19 (O.S.) / December 1, 1825. His wife died a few months later, as the emperor's body was transported to St. Petersburg for the funeral. He was interred at the Sts. Peter and Paul Cathedral of the Peter and Paul Fortress in St. Petersburg on March 13, 1826.

The unexpected death of the Emperor of Russia far from the capital caused persistent rumours that his death and funeral were staged, while the emperor allegedly renounced the crown and retired to spend the rest of his life in solitude. It was rumoured that a "soldier" was buried as Alexander, or that the grave was empty, or that a British ambassador at the Russian court said he had seen Alexander boarding a ship. Some claimed that the former emperor had become a monk in either **Pochaev Lavra** or **Kievo-Pecherskaya Lavra** or elsewhere. Many people, including some historians, supposed that a mysterious hermit **Feodor Kuzmich (or Kozmich)** who emerged in **Siberia** in 1836 and died in the vicinity of Tomsk in 1864, was in fact Alexander I under an assumed identity. While there are testimonies that "Feodor Kozmich" in his earlier life might have belonged to a higher society, his identity as Alexander I was never established beyond the reasonable doubt. In 1925, the Soviets had Alexander's tomb opened, and it was found to indeed be empty. The truth remains unknown.

The immediate aftermath of Alexander's death was also marked by confusion regarding the order of succession and by the attempt of military coup-d'etat by liberal-minded officers. The heir presumptive, Tsesarevich and Grand Duke **Constantine Pavlovich** had in 1822 renounced his rights of succession, but this act was not publicly announced, nor known to anybody outside of few people within the tsar's family. For this reason, on November 27 (O.S.), 1825 the population, including Constantine's younger brother Nicholas, swore allegiance to Constantine. After the true order of succession was disclosed to the imperial family and general public, Nicholas I ordered that the allegiance to him to be sworn on December 14 (O.S.), 1825. Seizing the opportunity, the Decembrists revolted, allegedly to defend Constantine's rights to the throne, but in fact - in order to initiate the change of regime in Russia. Nicholas I brutally suppressed the rebellion and sent the ringleaders to the gallows and Siberia.

Some confidantes of Alexander I reported that in the last years the Emperor was aware that the secret societies of future Decembrists were plotting the revolt, but chose not to act against them, remarking that these officers were sharing "*the delusions of his own youth.*" Historians believe that these secret societies appeared after the Russian officers returned from their Napoleonic campaigns in Europe in 1815.

**Wikipedia**

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander\\_I\\_of\\_Russia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_I_of_Russia)