

HISTORY OF THE PSKOV DRAGOONS 1796 - 1812

AND

PSKOV CUIRASSIERS 1812-1815

[Extracted, edited and translated into English by P.G.A. Phillips from Prince S.P. Chrusov's History of Her Majesty's 4th (Pskov) Leib-Dragoons, published in 1886].



Field Officer, Pskov Cuirassiers, 1815, by Ludwig Karl von Kiel.

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CHAPTER 1.

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The short reign of Paul I, which took place at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, can hardly be called a brilliant era of Russian history; nevertheless, a historian should never pass it by without comment. This brief period in the life of the Russian state was, essentially, a time that was, in its own way, quite remarkable. The Russian government, carried away during the reign of Catherine II by the Enlightenment movement in the West, was alarmed at the unexpected appearance in the West of the menacing spectre of revolution at the end of the 18th century; although this spectre was only menacing in the West, for Russia it was invisible and incomprehensible. The Russian people remained completely removed and uninvolved in the great novel movement in the West; they had not the slightest idea about this progression. The Russian court and government were in a completely different situation. Over the previous 50 years, the Russian court had become extremely close to the French court, was familiar with and interested in all its sorrows and joys, and knew all the details of its culture.

Under such conditions, the essentially unfounded anxiety that began to be noticed in the Russian government as early as the last years of Catherine II's reign and was revealed in full force during the time of her successor, Paul I, will be completely understandable. The Russian government came to the conclusion that it was dangerous to be progressive in the direction taken by the West; progress was paused initially, and then, under Paul, it was decided to regress. The decision to go in the opposite direction was resolute, but there was no clear concept for this direction, there was no specific route map for this unambiguous lurch. Thus, government policy in Paul's era takes on the character, firstly, of reactionary politics and, secondly, of uncertainty and instability. Everything, or the majority of that which was created in Catherine's era, was cancelled, rejected as inopportune or dangerous, and was replaced by something else; yet there was also no certainty about the appropriateness or necessity of these new policies, and what was done on one day was dismantled or cancelled the next. This impression of uncertainty and indecision lies on almost every action and instruction from Paul I's government.

The above-mentioned phenomena could not but affect the fate of our regiment. And so, in just four years, the regiment, despite the fact that it did not take part in any of the contemporary campaigns, nevertheless underwent such a mass of postings, reorganisations, re-designations, disbandments, resignations, dismissals, assignments, and so on, as never before.

Looking through the so-called Army Administration Files and the regiment's monthly reports during the years of Paul I's reign, we see that throughout this time our regiment wandered from

one corner of Russia to another, like the biblical Israelites in the desert. At the time of Catherine II's death and Paul I's accession to the throne, the Pskov Regiment was in Toropets and Velikiye Luki. This was at the end of 1796. A few months later, by January of the following year 1797, they were already on the march, en route to Kexholm [Priozersk]. From July 1797 to May 1798 they were in Kexholm; but in May the regiment had already left Kexholm, and we see our Pskov men on the march to the town of Tikhvin. The regiment stayed in Tikhvin for just one month; new orders put them back on their feet, and they set off for Shlisselburg. Thereafter the regiment scattered into camps throughout the Shlisselburg and Petersburg *Uezdi* [districts], in Rybachya-Slobodka, in Plitnaya-Lomka, in Ust-Izhora and other locations in this area and stayed there from September 1798 to March 1799. With the arrival of spring, the regiment rose once more and already in March we see them on the way to Dorpat [Tartu]. They had not even reached Dorpat when unanticipated orders in May of that same year sent them to the Rossieny [Raseiniai] *Uezd*. The distance from Shlisselburg to the Rossieny *Uezd* is very impressive, and it is barely feasible to make it unless it were necessary; yet in the meantime, our Pskov men had not even had time to explore the Rossieny *Uezd*, when six months later, in January 1800, orders were received to prepare for another journey and set off, again to the Shlisselburg *Uezd*... One might think that the regiment was being sent to Shlisselburg in order to be stationed there in more or less permanent quarters; in fact, nothing of the sort happened: the regiment was not to be stationed in Shlisselburg at all and went from Rossieny to Shlisselburg in order to get to, guess where, Orël! Exactly one year after their departure from the Rossieny *Uezd*, the Pskov men arrived at their destination, the promised city of Orël. In this city, with the onset of the first spring of the 19th century, in March 1801, they were caught by the last surprise: the news of the death of Emperor Paul I and the accession to the throne of Alexander the Blessed, so glorious in the history of Russia. The regiment's homeless wanderings had ended.

During the short reign of Paul I, our regiment was made to view not only many new locations, but also new personalities, who occupied both the higher and lower levels of the military hierarchy. The politics of indecision and mistrust were expressed with the greatest force precisely here, with the unusually frequent reshuffles, removals and transfers of senior officials in various departments. During this five-year period, the Pskov Regiment bore witness to a whole series of individuals, one after another, appointed to head the army formations to which the regiment belonged. Thus, at the beginning of Paul I's reign, in 1796, the regiment came under the command of Field Marshal Prince Repnin and Lieutenant General Zagryazhsky. By January of the following year, 1797, Zagryazhsky had already been replaced by Lieutenant General Rumyantsev. Only six months passed before our regiment saw Field Marshal Count Kamensky and Lieutenant General von der Felden as its commanders. Two months later, von der Felden was replaced by Lieutenant General Prince Vasilchikov and the regiment became part of 6th Finland Division [Inspection]. Thirteen months pass and in October 1798 we already find the regiment as part of 1st St. Petersburg Division, under the command of the General-of-Cavalry Count Pahlen. Seven months later, General-of-Infantry Count Lacy and Benckendorff became the leaders of the corps and division. A month later, Lieutenant General Hermann replaces Benckendorff, and a month later Hermann is replaced by Langéron; and after another month, in August 1799, Vioménil took Langéron's place. Finally, by July 1800, the regiment was included in Saltykov's army and here it welcomed in the new reign.

The officers leading the regiment most intimately, its regimental commanders, held on to their posts no more firmly than corps and divisional commanders. After the death of Count Tolstoy, an old veteran of the regiment, Major General, Baron Ieronim Kazimirovich von der Osten-Sacken, was appointed in his place. The appointment was made quite successfully: Baron Ieronim

Kazimirovich knew the regiment entrusted to him as well as could be, in which he had already managed to get well known and in which he had acquired universal respect. But he did not remain the leader of the regiment for long; a year and a half later we see another commander, Major General Fyodor Nikolaevich Blum. This one held the position for only a few months and on 31 January [11 February] 1800, he gave up his post to the distinguished and veteran Pskov man, Major General Stepan Khristoforovich Guriel, whose personality we had become acquainted with in the campaigns and battles of the previous reign. Thus, we see that in only three years the regiment had three commanders, and, on average, each of them was to stay in the regiment for just about a year! It goes without saying that in such a short period of time none of them was able to execute the implementation of their administration of the regiment in any strictly developed, consistent system or to instil in the regiment the spirit that, in the personal opinion of the commander, would be most appropriate for the regiment entrusted to his care. Whatever one of them imposed in one year was abolished by another in the next. Under such a state of affairs the development of any set spirit, character, and structure for the regiment could not happen; everything had to remain as before, as it had been developed in the preceding era under Catherine, full of life and activity; everything had to remain as before, despite the strong desire of the government to change everything in the new fashion.

These were changes and reforms that had no profundity, glided, so to speak, along the surface, were limited to mere appearance, were dogmatic, or existed in name only. One such reform which should be noted was the renaming of regiments that took place during this reign. On 31 October [11 November] 1798, a Supreme Order commanded that every regiment be named after their colonel-in-chief; by virtue of this order, our regiment, instead of the Pskov Regiment, received the designation Major General Baron von der Osten-Sacken's Regiment, while from 11 [22] March 1799, with the appointment of a new colonel-in-chief, it began to be called Major General Prinz Eugen von Württemberg's Regiment. The new reign of 30 March [11 April] 1801 returned the regiment to its former name of Pskov. Such rebranding is of course very difficult to explain by any motive of necessity; apart from some inconvenience and confusion, it could hardly have led to anything substantial.

As is well known, the reign of Paul I concluded the 18th century, and this same reign concluded the first century of the existence of our regiment. We find it very much appropriate, having come to this moment, to summarise, so to speak, everything that the regiment has lived through and accomplished during its centuries-long existence. In this regard, we must take into account two circumstances: firstly, that a regiment cannot be viewed in isolation, separate from its whole, from the entire Russian army, and secondly, the character and spirit of our army in the 18th century was formed mainly in the active era of Catherine II, in the battles and campaigns of this glorious reign, it was created by such major military figures as Rumyantsev, Suvorov, Potemkin and other associates of Catherine. And so, in summing up the 18th century, we must primarily keep in mind the century of Catherine II, her glorious reign.

The campaigns and battles of this time revealed in practice the esprit that should distinguish good cavalry, and those living conditions, weapons, equipment and training with which it can come closest to its ideal. And this ideal was clearly developed in the minds of Potemkin and Suvorov, and they put it into practice. The general transformation of the cavalry, developed by these two brilliant commanders, were reflected in due course in our Pskov Regiment, therefore we intend to trace in general terms its cavalry lifestyle, which was built upon the foundations developed through combat experience by the regiments under Rumyantsev, Potemkin and Suvorov.

A dragoon regiment of that time was divided into ten squadrons or companies, all of similar

composition to the squadrons of other cavalry, and its fighting echelon constituted two battalions. The highest administrative formation for cavalry was a brigade of two regiments, which came under the command of a brigadier.

The cavalry fighting line, according to the earlier regulations, remained in three ranks, but the necessity for a modern two-ranked formation was already beginning to make itself felt at that time, under the influence of combat experience. Likewise, demands for correct horse riding and correct equine control began to be made known, and, moreover, the most important requirement was the rider's firm seat, not tugging with his hands, working primarily with his thighs, and deftly handling his weapons. Rumyantsev tried to eliminate the use of firearms from horseback in close formation: this remarkable commander ordered that 'cavalry firing weapons is to their own detriment, and they are not to be used; regimental commanders are answerable for this.'

Since 1786, Potemkin, already being president of the Military Collegium,¹ with the rank of field marshal, had opened up a broad and completely independent field of action for himself. Remaining the Governor-General of the Novorossiysk *Krai* [Marches] at the same time, he had every opportunity to apply all his projects and reforms to the formations that made up his Potemkin Army, from where these reforms were spread to other army units throughout the empire. Incidentally, the troops, including the cavalry (primarily dragoons), owed the introduction of the most comfortable clothing to him, which was in keeping with climatic conditions rather than with the Prussian model that had prevailed until then, adapting, as far as possible, to the spirit and character of Russian national costume. Everything unnecessary, burdensome, or awkward was banished and destroyed, and the main issue was to establish the principle that 'a soldier's uniform, they say, should be such that he can stand up and be ready!'

In 1786, new cavalry regulations were drafted, with the regiments left almost unchanged at the same ten-squadron strength that had been granted to them eleven years earlier, on Potemkin's initiative.

The two-rank formation for cavalry was introduced in 1774 by Count Rumyantsev, but while it was used in practice, it was not accepted in strictly defined statutory form throughout Catherine's reign. It simply represented the most convenient method of operating, and Potemkin, as a practical cavalryman, constantly championed it. Since the squadron was subdivided into two half-squadrons and four *kapralstvo* (today's platoons) since 1766, we can therefore determine its frontage in two-rank (practical) formation as seventeen files; but, of course, this figure, in most cases, was only theoretical; in reality, the squadrons had from 10 to 17 files per *kapralstvo*.²

Potemkin insisted that cavalymen, in caring for their horses, avoid the pampering used, according to legend, in the so-called heavy cavalry, 'which refers only to its own weight and not to the blows they may inflict on the enemy.' He tried, whenever possible, to avoid remounts of stud-farmed horses, and in the light horse regiments he positively forbade having horses of this kind, preferring Ukrainian and Don bloodstock to them, and demanded that the men have a natural seat, be competent with sabre and broadsword, and perform all turns, both individually and as units, deftly and quickly. One of his main concerns was the desire to ensure that the cavalryman's clothing was not at all restrictive and was loose enough to allow for foot wraps in the summer and stockings or woollens in the winter.

'Do not use cruel beatings, or fear of punishment for this; take more care of the men than

1 Since 2 [13] February 1784.

2 V.A. Ivanov, *Обозрение состава и устройства регулярной русской кавалерии* [Review of the composition and structure of the regular Russian cavalry], St Petersburg, 1864, p. 120.

the horses, and by doing so torment the horses less with grooming, for the beauty of a regiment does not come from this, but from bringing them into the condition necessary for combat.'

He also suggested that commanders refrain from sizing the horses in the ranks and demanded that there 'always be as many men in the ranks as possible.'

These demands show that Potemkin was a true cavalryman at heart, a cavalryman by vocation, who deeply and truly understood the tasks, requirements, needs and direction of true cavalry, and, it must be admitted, almost all of his views, even to this day, have retained all their freshness, all their suitability and, so to speak, their urgent necessity.

Yet at the same time, another great practical genius (Suvorov) taught the cavalry that immutable, but, sadly, not always applied axiom, which states that 'the weapon of the cavalry is the sabre!' He personally taught and supervised that 'in training, the horses must be accustomed to enemy fire, the flash from their weapons and their shouts; when galloping at a fast pace, every cavalryman must be able to cut hard.'³ Who is not familiar the system of his short lessons, always similar to a real battle, and his dashing penetrating attacks? Even the horses loved this daring and courageous manoeuvre, because it was immediately followed by the command 'dismount' and 'calm the horses.'

Under wartime conditions, the dragoon regiments were to operate with eight active squadrons. The 9th and 10th squadrons were detached from the regiment, under the designation of replacements or as a two-squadron sub-unit, and became part of the general reserves to the rear of the active army.⁴

It is impossible not to admit that the view of the cavalry and its roles that are found in Rumyantsev, Potemkin and Suvorov is the most rational view, as a result of which the cavalry of Catherine's era, created on their initiative, truly were combat cavalry. While there may have been little synchronisation of parade ground drill movements in the regiments, there was uniformity of action in combat and uniformity of cavalry esprit, because at that time attention was paid precisely to this esprit and not to the corporate and parade ground side of service; much was left to the initiative of personally responsible unit commanders, and the consequence of this was trust in the knowledge and diligence of subordinates, who strove to justify this trust practically, with all their might. It was in this school that capable and efficient commanders were developed.

With the accession to the throne of Emperor Paul, the Russian cavalry, as we have already noted, was subjected to reform, and, along with all the aimless and ineffective ones, some even brought significant benefits. The Emperor was an admirer of Prussian tactics, Prussian regulations and the Prussian system in general. His reforms had been developed through practice, and over a fairly long period of time (since 1781). They were applied initially to the troops of the Gatchina detachment, so that when Pavel Petrovich ascended the throne, he brought with him a completely prepared, fully developed set of reforms. The entire Russian army was divided into administrative inspections. The number of troops were now significantly reduced, so as not to burden the people with conscription, and the budget for the army was increased, as a result of which the level of its physical well-being rose. Officers' salaries were increased by 15 to 20 percent; the forage allowance was also increased: each war horse, with the exception of six weeks a year (from 15 [26] June to 1 [12] August), began to receive four *garnets* [23 dry pints] of oats and 15 *funt* [13½ pounds] of hay daily, and in addition, bedding straw was also issued to the horses, 2½ *funt*, 16

3 Extracted from *Примечаний генерал-аншеф Суворова* [notes by General-in-Chief Suvorov].

4 D.A. Milyutin, *История войны 1799 года* [History of the War of 1799], part 3, p. 44.

zolotnik [two pounds, six ounces]daily.

The army was dressed in the Prussian style once more and an unusually imprecise variety of uniform colours was introduced, as a result of which the troops sometimes mistook their own for the enemy.⁵



Drummer, Pskov Dragoons, 1797 to 1801.

According to the tables of 1796 and 1798, changes were introduced in the uniforms and weapons of the dragoon regiments at the same time as in the cuirassier regiments. Based on these changes, each dragoon was entitled to: a coat with an aiguillette, with a shoulder strap, and in some

⁵ As happened, for example in 1799 at the Battle of Alkmaar.

regiments also with lapels, in the same colour as the collar and cuffs, and with a fawn-coloured *Karazeya* [thin wool] lining; a waistcoat made of fawn cloth; elk-skin breeches, or if there was a shortage of elk, goatskin or other hide that resembles elk; blunt-toed high topped boots, with large heels, iron spurs and leather over-and-under spur straps; boot cuffs made of white shirt-linen; a black wool neck-cloth, without trim, with ribbon ties at the back; suede gloves with cuffs and pointed corners; a bicorne hat, four *vershok* [seven inches] high, with pointed corners tilted downwards, with a tie of black worsted wool, with tassels on the side corners with a fringe of black and yellow, and later of red wool, with a cockade of black woollen tape with two orange edges, with a button in the colour of the fittings on the officer's uniform and with a plume of small white feathers, and black and yellow or orange feathers at the bottom or root; the forage cap was of the same cut as that of infantry regiments, the top was white, the band was the same colour as the collar; the tunic was made of white, rough linen with a small standing collar and large, flat, covered buttons, six on each side of the chest; a warm winter jacket made of sheepskin; a cloak of green cloth with a narrow standing collar and one flat brass button.

The weapons and munitions items included: a broadsword similar to a cuirassier's, but with a lion's head on the hilt instead of an eagle's, and with a scabbard, which instead of an iron frame had only a brass hook and a brass tip, also embedded under the leather; moreover, with a cuirassier's sword knot, in an infantry sword belt with a bayonet scabbard, stained to match the colour of the waistcoat; a musket or gun, two *arshin* [four feet, eight inches] long without bayonet, and 2½ *arshin* [six feet] with a bayonet, with brass fittings, with an iron hook for the shoulder belt, a lock cover and a half-case made of red *yuft* [waxed leather]; a cartridge case made of thick black leather and, finally, a cartridge case cross-belt with a buckle, harness, tip and hooks. The pistols had brass frames and the Emperor's monogram on the frame.

The saddles in dragoon regiments were German style, made of black leather, all the straps and pads were black; curb bit and iron stirrups; iron snaffle bit with brass loops decorated with the image of a double-headed eagle; a blanket made of white cloth, saddle cloth and holsters without monograms with cloth trim or edging along the edges instead of a fringe.

The officers had a coat the same as the ordinary dragoons, but without shoulder straps, with gilded or silver-plated buttons and with a similar aiguillette; a fawn-coloured waistcoat with buttons the same colour as on the coat, bleached elk-skin breeches; high topped boots and silver or silver-plated spurs; boot cuffs, suede gloves, black twill neck-cloth; a hat with a bow or cockade, a buttonhole or a button, with tassels of gold and black silk, and later of silver, black and orange silk; a sword belt and a broadsword with a gilded hilt, hook and tip. Saddle cloths and holsters in all regiments were made with a smooth braid (the colour of the buttons), without teeth and with a patterned, silver stripe, made of gold or silver cord, depending on the braid, instead of monograms.

The generals were distinguished from the officers only by the white edging on their hats.

The colours and other distinctions assigned to the Pskov Regiment were as follows:

For lower ranks - a coat without lapels, with collar, cuffs and shoulder straps of red cloth; yellow aiguillette and brass buttons; saddle cloth and holsters of red cloth, with yellow trim. The officers had gold lace-loops with tassels, and tricot [ribbed cloth] collar and cuffs.⁶

Suvorov rebelled strongly against these impractical, albeit splendid-looking, innovations, and against the Prussian regulations in general, as a result of which he fell into disfavour and was

6 We extracted the description of the regiment's uniforms, weapons and equipment from Viskovatov volume 8.

banished to live in his village of Konchanskoe. The requirements for the grooming of horses also became much more complex: their coats and ears were to be trimmed, their manes and tails braided, and their bits polished; yet a proper, effective school of riding in the cavalry was still lacking.

The year 1796 brought new cavalry regulations with it, which, being a product of the Prussian school, had first been tested in practice by the Gatchina detachment. These regulations introduced many long-standing and beneficial advances, particularly in cavalry training. The two-rank formation was finally legitimised, along with platoons of 16 files, which were divided into four squads (four each on the right and left of the squadron); while the formation of columns by the centre was also introduced, with the strictest precision in the execution of all evolutions. But, unfortunately, for the sake of conformity some practical conveniences were sacrificed, as a result of which, along with the good aspects of the Prussian regulations, we also adopted all of its excesses. What irritated our cavalymen most were other complex evolutions, such as counter-marching, which we retained even until 1812. For example, such a simple thing as 'changing front to face the rear' was performed as follows: the commander ordered:

1. Change direction, front and flanks.
2. To the right, in fours, march! Halt, right dress!
3. Shorten reins.
4. From the mark, march-march!

And what happened after this command? The entire regiment turned by sections to the right and raced from the spot at full gallop towards the lead section, which had immediately turned left about and dashed along just behind the frontage that the regiment had occupied before the command. What this meant was that one half of the regiment ended up racing in a deep column to pass the other, and how? Almost elbow to elbow with the oncoming riders! And this was done until the moment the entire line exchanged flanks, that is, until the right flank ended up in the place where the left had been, and vice versa. Whereupon the order was given:

1. Halt! Face the front, march.
2. Halt, right dress!

The racing line reined in their horses on the spot and, by sections, turned to the front, that is, with their backs to the previous front line. But just imagine the chaos that occurred during this literally mind-boggling evolution, especially if it was a ten-squadron hussar regiment dashing along! The horses in our cavalry of that time were generally poorly trained, and it was on such horses that we had to do such a thing! What resulted from all this? Horses would pull up, poorly trained riders could not and did not know how to control them, horses would collide, men would clash, chaos ensued - and as a result, almost no training exercise would go by without several men and horses being killed or maimed! But the evolution had a very impressive appearance!

The new regulations brought literal and strict precision to the formation: every movement, every technique was only to be executed according to tempo; everything was subject to a strictly and clearly defined framework, beyond which even field marshals dared not go. The regulations prescribed to everyone 'everything that they were supposed to do' from the field marshal to the private. These regulations, through their principles, did not allow the slightest deviation from the statutory formulas, nor the slightest spirit of personal initiative, subordinating everyone and everything to a single dogma and demanding only unconditional, precise, so to speak, automatic

execution. To go beyond this framework meant being 'too clever' and being clever was considered a mortal sin. For the lower ranks, any mistake was already a sin and entailed severe punishment. These regulations introduced a centralisation, formalism, and an extreme development of bureaucracy that was unprecedented. First of all, appearances were required - and only appearances, while penetrating down to fundamental principles for things and actions was prohibited. The regulations covered not only squadron and regimental training in minute detail, but also all linear tactics, so that, in essence, the commander-in-chief's initiative was absolutely out of the question. As a result, much later, even at Austerlitz, we fought and manoeuvred in exactly the same way as at Gatchina. The new regulations turned so sharply and decisively away from the institutions of Catherine the Great that they destroyed all the growth that had been laid as the foundations of the ethos of the forces by her great commanders.⁷

Everything we have said about the state of the cavalry and dragoon regiments in general applies, in particular, to our Pskov Regiment, with the difference, perhaps, that the regiments in Suvorov's army, moving with their 'miraculous hero' across the peaks of the Alps and fighting on the fields of Italy, would not strictly obey all the superfluous, pedantic formalities of the new regulations, whereas our regiment, finding itself deeply mired within the constraints of this situation, had to apply them to the business at hand with the most constrictive and merciless precision.

⁷ We have extracted the outline of the general state of the cavalry and, in particular, the dragoon regiments based on the work of Colonel P.A. Ivanov: *Обозрение состава и устройства регулярной русской кавалерии от Петра Великого и до наших дней* [A Review of the Composition and Structure of the Regular Russian Cavalry from Peter the Great to the Present Day], St. Petersburg, 1864.

CHAPTER 2.

A new century, a new reign, and a new order. - A new name, new uniform, and weapons for the regiment. - The formation of dragoon regiments in the time of Alexander. - The Alexander Column. - The influence of the Guard. - The tragic consequences of unsuccessfully imitation. - The state of political affairs in Europe. - Russia's preparations for war with Napoleon. - The regiment's departure from Vyazma for the western border. - The First War. - Why the regiment did not participate. - Our preparations for a new war. - The regiment's second journey abroad. - The battles of Pultusk and Golymin. - The outcome of the latter battle. - The distinguished Pskov Dragoons. - The movements by our army. - The retreat from Jonkowo. - Rearguard skirmishes with the enemy. - Remarkable incidents therefrom. - Awards received by the regiment. - Movement to Preußisch Eylau. - The two-day battle on its fields. - Outcome of the battle. - Battle of Heilsberg. - The exploits of Goloshchapov and Pushkarev. - The Battle of Friedland. - Foreign opinions on the battle.

With the advent of the new century, a new reign began in Russia, new transformations in state and public life, new political combinations... All this could not but affect the fate of the regiment, whose history we are studying.

First of all, by Supreme Order dated 30 March [11 April] 1801, our regiment was renamed, as before, the Pskov Dragoon Regiment. That same year, a new colonel-in-chief, its former regimental commander, Baron Fyodor Karlovich Korff, was appointed.

Furthermore, the military collegium found it necessary not only to establish new troop-types, but also to reform the uniforms and weapons of the old ones. According to the newly approved uniform tables and munitions items, a dragoon private was supposed to have: a jacket, breeches, boots, overalls, a neck-cloth, a hat, a coat (long-tailed), a greatcoat, a fleece, gloves, a broadsword in a leather sheath with a sword-knot, a sword belt, a musket with a bayonet, a cartridge pouch on a wide white shoulder belt, a pair of pistols in holsters, an Hungarian saddle with bit, bridle and reins, a saddle cloth, a portmanteau, a horse blanket and a girth strap. The caftan (coat) of the Pskov Dragoons was double-breasted, made of lighter green cloth, with a red standing collar and a red epaulet on the left shoulder; the buttons were white metal and flat. The coat was always to be fully fastened. White cloth trousers, grey overalls with leather reinforcement. The boots were greased. The forage cap was lighter green with a red band, the greatcoat was gray. A full-dress bicorne hat with a white plume; gloves with gauntlet cuffs.

The officer's uniform was very similar to that of the soldiers; only a few minor changes were made. Thus, officers wore a coat with a red lining and elk-skin breeches; a black neck-cloth; and, off duty, they were allowed to wear a rapier instead of a broadsword.

War horses were allowed in a variety of colours, which created an undesirably colourful appearance on parade. They were to be no less than two *arshin*, one *vershok* [147 centimetres] tall and, for privates, cost no more than 50 roubles. In the summer, they were turned out to pasture, where they quickly became unaccustomed to saddle and bit.

In addition to the listed items of regimental equipment, each squadron was provided with entrenching tools to the tune of 15 axes, eight shovels and four picks. Drums were withdrawn in 1802 and there were none in dragoon regiments during the entire reign of Alexander Pavlovich. This is evidence that dragoons were considered to be pure cavalry by this time, which is why at the end of 1812 they also had their firearms taken away, although they were returned to them a few

years later.



Fyodor Karlovich Korff.

The formation of the dragoon regiments remained the same, in two ranks, with platoons consisting of 16 files. The end files in each platoon were assigned to flanking duties. Two-thirds of the flankers advanced in open order and covered the front and flanks of the platoon or squadron, while one-third followed them as a dedicated close order unit, as a reserve. Attacks were carried out in closed order, in line, while dispersed attacks were only allowed when pursuing a fleeing enemy. When a squadron was dispersed, it would leave six to eight files to protect the Standard, which proceeded at a walk or trot, or generally at a reduced gait. In those squadrons where there

was no Standard, only three or four files were left on the right flank, which served to indicate the location where the squadron should rally after an attack. When deployed at the halt, a squadron would form in platoon column, while a regiment formed in squadron or half-squadron column.



Nikolai Zakharovich Khitrovo.

In combat, the cavalry of that time would form in two waves: the first in line, at full interval, the second in the same way or in platoon columns, opposite the intervals of the first line, that is, in a chessboard formation. However, it was also permissible to form the second wave directly behind the squadrons of the first, in line or in platoon columns. The divisions of the line remained the same, that is, by fours and by ranks.

At this time there was another formation called the 'Alexander Column.' It was a column of an

entire division: each regiment formed in a closed squadron columns; the heads of the regiments were in one line and almost without intervals. The Emperor loved to use this column at reviews and parades. The effect of such muscular masses was enormous and astonishing.

The guards served as the model, in terms of knowledge of military service and all the subtleties of drill at that time and, understandably, line regiments tried to imitate them, to which end, from time to time, they sent their best officers to St. Petersburg for one or two years, where they were assigned to guards units 'to learn the drills and duties.' At the time described, Ensign Ivan Vasilievich Bezobrazov was sent there from the Pskov Dragoon Regiment; like all such seconded officers, he lived in Strelna. Something like today's training squadron was organised here. At the end of their tour of duty, these officers returned to their regiments, with or without instructions, and passed on to them everything they had managed to extract from the guards. But in the guards regiments, as yet, no strictly authorised service regulations had been developed, and their amendment and cancellation, which depended almost exclusively on the will of Grand Duke Konstantin Pavlovich, occurred quite frequently. This sometimes led to misunderstandings in line regiments, since each of the innovations in the drills did not always reach them in a timely manner. The persons inspecting line units, not knowing of course and not wanting to know exactly when an officer sent on assignment had returned to the regiment being inspected, nevertheless strictly demanded knowledge and implementation from the regiment of everything that was the 'last word' in Strelna on the state-of-the-art at any given moment, yet much before this officer had undergone it. Naturally, not every regiment could meet such requirements; and the inspectors remained dissatisfied with the regiments and gave poor marks to their regimental commanders. A commander commented upon two or three times in this way would be subjected to punishment and even deprived of his command for 'ignorance of the drills and duties' thus being found guilty 'through no fault of their own.'

Incidentally, a similar misfortune befell the commander of the Pskov Dragoon Regiment, Colonel Philip Ivanovich Krasnokutsky, who had taken over the regiment from Major General Baron Fyodor Karlovich Korff on 15 [27] June 1801.¹ In 1804, during an inspection, Krasnokutsky was unable to present his regiment as satisfying all the requirements in the modern Strelna fashion. This was a source of displeasure among the inspectors, and by order of 3 [15] June, Krasnokutsky was retired from service with the rank of major general, and Colonel Nikolai Zakharievich Khitrovo was appointed regimental commander in his place.

Let us turn to the military and political events with which the history of the regiment is connected.

The first two years of this century passed 'peacefully' for Russia and Western Europe. But the peace would not last long. The question raised by historical events was whether the European powers should submit to the centralised authority of the new conqueror, or maintain their independent existence, established under international treaties? It could only be resolved through a military struggle between representatives of these opposing principles: Napoleon I and Alexander I.

In 1803, war broke out between France and Great Britain. In order to secure his position with regard to the continental powers, Napoleon managed to sow such mutual distrust between them that they agreed on only one conviction - the impossibility of relying on each other. The series of flagrant violations of international rights and treaties that he then committed, which inspired only panic and horror in Western European governments, and finally the murder of the duc d'Enghien,

1 Korff, later adjutant general, was also regimental colonel-in-chief from 6 [18] April 1801 until 1 [13] September 1814, the day when colonels-in-chief were abolished for line regiments.

forced our Emperor to break off diplomatic relations with France (midway through 1804). He decided to destroy Napoleon's high-handed rule over almost half of Europe by force.

To that end, on 4 [16] July 1805, a military convention was concluded with Austria, a military operational plan of action was drawn up, and both powers began to arm themselves.

By 1 [13] January of 1805, we had 26 dragoon regiments, comprising 22,038 men. In August, among others, two new dragoon regiments were ordered to be raised (the Zhitomir and Livonia). From the units located on the western border, an army of 90,000 men was formed for military operations abroad under the command of Michelson, designated the Western Army. It consisted of three corps: Count Bennigsen's, Count Buxhöwden's and Essen's. The Pskov Dragoon Regiment became part of the corps under General-of-Cavalry Count Bennigsen, in the Second Column. The corps was concentrated near Grodno. The army's rendezvous point and headquarters were located in Tauroggen [Tauragė], on the Prussian border.

The regiment departed Vyazma with a ceremonial farewell from the population. Upon setting off, orders were received to leave a reserve half-squadron of 134 men there. Thus, when the regiment arrived near the border, at the village of Miedniki [Medininkai], it numbered 770 men, including support personnel, and 969 horses. Thereafter, it was assigned to march to Merech [Merkinė] and Olita [Alytus].

Before the opening of hostilities on the part of the Coalition, Kaiser Franz had sent Napoleon an offer of armed mediation. Napoleon, having learned that Austrian troops had entered Bavaria at the same time as this proposal, broke off diplomatic relations with Austria and sent his troops towards the Rhine and Main.

Thus began the decade-long (from 1805 to 1814) bitter struggle between Alexander I and Napoleon I across the area from Moscow to Paris, in which our regiment played a significant role.

However, in the first year of the war, which ended with the triumph of the French over the Austro-Russian force at Austerlitz, they did not get to fire a single shot. At the beginning of the war, Bennigsen's corps was ordered to proceed from Grodno, through Warsaw and Nowe Miasto, to Breslau [Wrocław] and onwards, wherever the situation demanded. Their onward movement from Silesia towards Bohemia to join the corps under Erzherzog Ferdinand served as just one of the factors that prompted Napoleon to express his readiness to offer peace terms immediately after the victory at Austerlitz. In mid [late] December 1805, as a result of the treaty concluded between Prussia and France, this corps received orders from the King of Prussia to return to Russia.² They marched sorrowfully, seeing the impossibility of taking revenge on the French for their triumph in the Battle of the Three Emperors, as the Battle of Austerlitz became known.

The failures of this first war prompted Emperor Alexander to postpone his intention of checking Napoleon's ambitions of conquest for the time being, rather, to take up a strong defensive position, preparing his armies to go to the aid of Austria and Prussia should they be attacked by Napoleon.

To that end, upon the return of the Tsar to St. Petersburg, a Military Council was established; the inspection bodies, into which the units had been allocated until then, were transformed into 13 divisions. The divisions included cavalry and were numbered from 1st to 13th. Five more divisions were formed later. The chief commissioner for military remounts was charged with supplying the cavalry and artillery with horses. The eight divisions assembled on the western border were

² The corps under Count Bennigsen [in Silesia] and the detachment under Count Tolstoy [in Hanover] had been at the King's complete disposal.

divided into two corps - Bennigsen's and Buxhöwden's - while the formation of the cadre of a reserve army was entrusted to the command of Rimsky-Korsakov. The Pskov Dragoons, the Military Order Cuirassiers, the Poland Horse Regiment and two Cossack regiments became part of 4th Division, commanded of Lieutenant General Prince Golitsyn 5th.

In 1806, Prussia's ultimatum for the removal of French units from Germany served as a pretext for Napoleon to declare war. At the first news of this, Emperor Alexander ordered Bennigsen to go via Warsaw towards Silesia with his 60,000-strong corps, located between Grodno and Jurburg [Jurbarkas] at the time. But after the defeat of the Prussians at Jena, he was given orders not to cross the Vistula and to position the corps on the right bank, between Warsaw and Thorn [Toruń], and then to operate at his discretion. The reason for this was a change in the political situation. Having established himself in Germany, Napoleon now set his sights on Poland. The Polish population from the Oder to the Vistula rose in rebellion. Napoleon himself advanced on Warsaw and issued a declaration of war on Russia in army orders. We had to switch from an offensive to a defensive stance; instead of intending to drive Napoleon beyond the Rhine, we had to think about protecting our own borders.

On 18 [30] November, Emperor Alexander declared war on France via a manifesto. A veteran of Catherine's reign, Field Marshal Count Kamensky, was appointed Commander-in-Chief. His command, however, was short-lived, lasting only a few days. Kamensky would be replaced in this appointment by Bennigsen in 1807.

Before Count Kamensky's departure from the army, Bennigsen remained in Pułtusk to await the enemy, contrary to Kamensky's strange orders to return the troops to Russia. On 14 [26] December, a battle took place here, victory in which was claimed by both Marshal Lannes and Bennigsen. In any case, from that moment on, the name of our future Commander-in-Chief became popular among Russians. The 4th Division did not participate in the Battle of Pułtusk. Only Staff Captain Vasiliev of our regiment remained with the corps commander, carrying out his orders under enemy fire with remarkable efficiency and composure, as Bennigsen himself attested to before his superiors.

At the same time, other events were taking place at Gołymín, where 4th Division was stationed, which we will discuss in more detail, because the history of the Pskov Dragoon Regiment is more closely connected with them.

During the initial offensive advance from Pułtusk, Count Kamensky had sent Prince Golitsyn towards Ślubowo with the Kostroma Musketeers, Military Order Cuirassiers, Pskov Dragoons and 18 heavy guns, ordering him to send the Kostroma regiment and the artillery from there to Łopacín, to Sacken's division, and to form Bennigsen's reserve with the Military Order Cuirassiers and Pskov Dragoons, who was moving towards Nowe Miasto. Upon arrival in Ślubowo, Prince Golitsyn went on to Nowe Miasto, where the Field Marshal's headquarters had been assigned, but he found no one there, as everyone had already gone to Strzegocin, on the retreat towards Pułtusk.

Upon returning to Ślubowo, he sent [orderlies] to find the headquarters and to request orders. He was instructed to remain in Ślubowo, to monitor the enemy through patrols and to send [an aide] to Bennigsen for further orders. On the morning of 13 [25] December, the prince learned of the French seizure of Strzegocin, and then of their appearance on the road from Łopacín. Finding himself in the midst of the enemy, Prince Golitsyn turned towards Gołymín with his entire detachment, where he hoped to link up with Dokhturov. After marching about four *versta* [2½ miles], he was halted by his artillery. It had become bogged down, and more than half of the guns

could not be saved. Having spiked the bogged-in cannon, the order was given to harness their horses to other guns, and to distribute the projectiles among the cavalry. Continuing his difficult march, Prince Golitsyn informed Dokhturov of his route, adding that the French were catching up with him from two directions. Dokhturov received this news shortly after receiving the Field Marshal's orders to march towards Putusk via Maków, where his entire division had already departed; only the Moscow Dragoons and Moscow Musketeers had not yet set off. Upon reaching Gołymin on the morning of 14 [26] December, Prince Golitsyn had to halt here due to the complete exhaustion of his men and horses.

Meanwhile, marshals Augereau, Davout and Soult were also moving towards Gołymin, from where they were to wheel to get behind the right wing of our army via Maków. Augereau was the first to approach Gołymin, but not with the entire corps: the rearmost units were mired in the *rasputitsa*. Prince Golitsyn ordered the detachment to stand to arms in front of Gołymin and sent Major General Prince Shcherbatov to hold the forest in front of our left flank with the Kostroma regiment and four guns. To their right, in the open, stood three squadrons each of our dragoons and Military Order Cuirassiers. The squadrons of dragoons and cuirassiers that had not joined Prince Shcherbatov's detachment, together with the Tauride Grenadiers and Dnieper Musketeers, formed Prince Golitsyn's front line.

Combat broke out in the forest with the Kostroma Regiment. The French attempted to outflank the forest as the fighting developed, but were prevented by the accurate fire of the Russian batteries. The enemy cavalry attacked them and were brilliantly driven off by our dragoons together with the Military Order Cuirassiers. Augereau ordered his infantry division to redeem the cavalry's failure and to take our guns without fail; yet even this attempt was in vain. However, the rearmost units from his corps and Davout's leading columns were approaching the Marshal. Prince Golitsyn was enveloped by the French from various directions, but he resisted stubbornly, hoping simply to hang on until nightfall to retreat. At three o'clock unexpected reinforcements reached us - the detachments under Count Pahlen and Czaplic, who had been cut off by the French during our general retreat from the Wkra and were marching from Zechenau [Ciechanów]. This gave Prince Golitsyn and Dokhturov the chance to stand their ground on the battlefield until nightfall. At dusk, they began to retreat. At the same time, the head of Soult's corps emerged near our right flank, and Napoleon reached the theatre of battle, ordering relentless pressure on the Russians. The French followed us into Gołymin, where they fought in the darkness with the Russians, lashing out with bayonets and musket butts. The next day, 15 [27] December, our generals linked up with Count Buxhöwden in Maków.

Total Russian casualties at Gołymin amounted to 1,000 men, a figure that is comparatively insignificant, bearing in mind that this was a very bitter fight against overwhelming enemy numbers and that our troops were extremely tired after difficult marches and were fighting in snow flurries that at times prevented objects being identified at the shortest ranges.

The number of Pskov men who died here or were wounded cannot be determined due to the incomplete surviving data relating to this and a number of subsequent battles. From the fragmentary information we know that Ensign Isakov and Squadron Quartermaster Filonov were killed; Colonel Vasilchikov and Captain Hoffman suffered contusions; *Wachtmeister* [sergeant major] Afanasiev and Dragoon Parfen Kondratiev were wounded at Gołymin.

More information has been preserved on the military achievements of the Pskov Dragoons. For example, their colonel-in-chief, Baron Korff, who commanded the entire cavalry component, not only repeatedly repelled attacks by numerically superior opponents, but also inflicted heavy

defeats on more than one occasion. He was awarded the Order of St. Vladimir, 3rd class. Colonel Nikolay Vasilievich Vasilchikov, having just three squadrons with which to shield Prince Shcherbatov's detachment, tasked with holding the forest in front of our left flank, held his ground with fearless resolve, steadfastly repelling the furious cavalry attacks and those of Marshal Augereau's infantry division. For this feat, Vasilchikov was initially awarded the Order of St. Vladimir, 4th class, and then, in 1808, the Order of St. George, 4th class. Dragoon Private Parfen Kondratiev was wounded by a bullet through the cheek, but remained in the ranks for a lengthy period - until the retreat was sounded.

Lieutenant Colonel Ivan Ivanovich Yurlov was given a Supreme Commendation, and Major Prince Volkonsky received the Order of St. Vladimir, 4th class, for the courage, initiative, and resourcefulness they displayed in combat.

In addition, Prince Golitsyn attested before the Supreme Command that the following persons had distinguished themselves by outstanding bravery: Lieutenant Volzhin, sub lieutenants Zhurba and Yakovlev, Ensign Korbutovsky and from the lower ranks: Yegor Yuganov, Grigory Fokin, Ignat Afanasiev, Pyotr Alexeev, Fyodor Kalinnikov, Potap Antonov, Akinfy Dorofeev, Vasily Stetsenko, Andrey Abramov, Lukyan Fyodorov, Mikhail Tsvetnenko, Panteley Titov, Parfen Kondratiev and Fyodor Goncharov.

Just as with Pułtusk, Napoleon presented Gołymin as his victory, indicating the bogged-in Russian cannon he had captured. But the truth soon emerged. These two battles had ruined the plans with which Napoleon had marched his army on Pułtusk and Gołymin. These two battles, along with the successful actions by Count Osterman at Czarnowo and Barclay de Tolly on the Wkra, produced a change in morale in both belligerent's armies. The fantastic successes that Napoleon had achieved over the Austrians and Prussians in 12 months inspired the French army with the conviction of Napoleon's invincibility. But these four engagements with the Russians instilled in them the thought of the possibility that even they might be defeated. Russian troops now celebrated the restoration of their glory, which had been dimmed at Austerlitz.

On 15 [27] December, Bennigsen led his corps to Ostrołęka, and then to Nowogród, in the midst of the *rasputitsa*, freezing nights and without any means of provisioning. Hunger led to marauding within the corps. From Nowogród, both corps - Bennigsen's and Buxhöwden's - retreated further towards Tykocin, which they reached on 28 December [9 January 1807]. Having waited here for two days, these formations moved towards Johannisburg [Pisz], fulfilling the decision of the council of war held in Nowogród. On the march there, a directed decree was received appointing Bennigsen as Commander-in-Chief of the Russian army abroad.

With the advent of the new year of 1807, a new military era began for these formations, under Bennigsen's command, as they changed their role from passive and defensive to aggressive and offensive.

The aim of the offensive was to prevent Napoleon from seizing Königsberg [Kaliningrad] and Pillau [Baltiysk], the possession of which would have given him the opportunity to disrupt our land communications with Danzig [Gdańsk] and deprive us of the provisions and military supplies stored in Königsberg.

The main army set off from Bialla [Biała Piska] on 4 [16] January, heading for Arys [Orzysz], Rhein [Ryn], and Heilsberg [Lidzbark Warmiński]. Three vanguard columns, commanded by Markov, Barclay de Tolly, and Baggovut, whose column included the Pskov Dragoons, marched west through Allenstein [Olsztyn], shielding the army's route.

After the successful action by Markov's column at Mohrunen [Morąg], Bennigsen arrived in Liebstadt [Miłakowo] with the army on 14 [26] January and drew up a new organisation for the corps: L'Estocq's I Corps (at Freystadt [Kisielice]); Tuchkov's II Corps (at Osterode [Ostróda]); Prince Golitsyn's III Corps (at Allenstein); Sacken's IV Corps (at Seeburg [Jeziorany]). The vanguard was assigned to Prince Bagration (at Löbau [Lubawa]). An independent detachment under Prince Dolgorukov was stationed in Passenheim [Pasym], forming the vanguard of the army's left wing.

For his part, Napoleon had the intention of outflanking our left wing, cutting Bennigsen's army off from Russia and pushing it back into the Vistula. An operational plan, drawn up in this manner, accidentally fell into Russian hands and, in order to disrupt it, on 20 January [1 February] Bennigsen immediately ordered, all corps to quickly concentrate at the town of Jonkowo [Jonkendorf]. They concentrated there, with the exception of L'Estocq's corps, early in the morning of 22 January [3 February].

Having assumed that the Russian army was heading towards the Vistula, Napoleon was extremely surprised when he learned of its concentration at Jonkowo. He decided to attack them. After repeated clashes at Bergfriede [Barkweda] over the crossing of the Alle [Łyna], which remained in our hands, Napoleon postponed the general attack until the following day; but Bennigsen, waiting until the early hours (23 January [4 February]), withdrew from the Jonkowo position and moved toward Wolfsdorf [Wilczkowo] in three columns, hurrying to get onto the Königsberg road before the French. This movement was screened by a rearguard under Bagration's command, who split it into three detachments, corresponding to the three columns of the army. The detachments were commanded by major generals: Markov's in the centre, Baggovut's on the right [western] wing, Barclay de Tolly on the left.

Napoleon learned of the retreat of the Russian army at first light on the day he had designated for battle, but he did not abandon his original intention. Orders were issued: Soult and Davout were to march on Guttstadt [Dobre Miasto] and Heilsberg, enveloping our army on the right; Ney was to march to the left, towards Liebstadt; Augereau and Murat were to follow the army, while Bernadotte was to hasten to rejoin Napoleon.

Having marched several *versta* from Jonkowo, Baggovut's detachment was attacked by the enemy. Having fought them off, Baggovut ordered a retreat, first the cavalry, since their route passed through forests, followed by the infantry. Upon leaving the forest, French cavalry attacked the Belozersk Musketeers and 4th Jägers. They cleared their route with small-arms fire and musket butts. However, having received support from our dragoons, the Military Order and Malorussia cuirassier regiments and 7th Jägers, the detachment was called to a halt. The French, seeing the reinforcement of the detachment, paused their attack, waiting for their following units. Having won some time, Baggovut fell back by bounds by regiment, with the cavalry in the rearguard. Upon reaching a ravine near the village of Waltersmühl [Konradowo], Baggovut ordered the 4th Jägers to hold the village, while Colonel Gordeev was to take up positions on the high ground with some of the infantry and to place batteries there. The cavalry were then ordered to withdraw. The French advanced, but suffered heavy losses from our batteries. On the morning of 24 January [5 February], Baggovut's detachment reached the village of Warlack [Worławki], where they linked up with Markov's detachment.

During this most difficult retreat, the following ranks distinguished themselves through their fearlessness, resourcefulness, encouragement of their comrades and some heroic deeds: *Wachtmeister* Yegor Yuganov, Grigory Fokin; squadron quartermaster Fyodor Artemiev, who rescued a wounded infantry officer from the enemy; non-commissioned officers Pyotr Alexeev,

Fyodor Kamennikov, Potap Antonov, Akinfy Dorofeev; dragoons: Andrey Abramov, Lukyan Fyodorov, Mikhail Tsvetnenko, Panteley Titov, Grigory Ivashchenko, who took part as a volunteer with the flankers and during the attack by our squadron on the enemy, was first to race into their ranks; Mikhail Zhmurko, who rescued his officer from the enemy; Nikifor Bondar, who saved the regimental commander, Colonel Vasilchikov, and Grigory Fyodorov. Colonel Vasilchikov, who had already distinguished himself brilliantly at Golymin, once again demonstrated his excellent fighting qualities, for which he was awarded the Order of St. Vladimir, 3rd class. Korff was also awarded the Order of St. Anna, 1st class, while Sub Lieutenant Yakovlev, for successfully executing the orders from his superiors under enemy fire, received an inscribed Golden Sword.

Having persistently pursued the Russian rearguard detachments for three days and having defeated Barclay de Tolly at Hoofe [Dwórno], the French forces settled there, within sight of our army, which had concentrated at Landsberg [Górowo Iławieckie]. Napoleon expected Bennigsen to engage in battle here. But in the early hours of 26 January [7 February], his army marched toward Preußisch Eylau [Bagrationovsk]. Prince Bagration was ordered to proceed as quietly as possible with the rearguard, giving the army and its trains time to pass through the town. Murat attacked our rearguard but to no avail. When Napoleon arrived on the battlefield, our troops were unable to withstand the enemy onslaught and retreated step by step through Eylau, which remained in French hands. On exiting the town, Bagration met Bennigsen and received orders from him to drive the French out of the town with 4th Division. The prince took command of the division and led it towards Eylau. With a cry of "Hurrah!" the division stormed into the town, scattered through the streets and houses, slaughtering and stabbing the French – and the town was ours. Unfortunately, this possession was short-lived. The successful assault resulted in disorder among the units. They needed to be rallied and reorganised. General Somov ordered the rally to be beaten without specifying a location. The drums thundered in that part of the town furthest from the enemy. Everyone rushed to the rallying point, leaving the town gates, the square, and the streets unprotected. The French took advantage of this and re-entered the town unopposed. The 4th Division was placed between the town and the army in order to protect it from a night attack.

Our army was positioned for the imminent pitched battle on 27 January [8 February] between Schmoditten [Ryabinovka] (right wing) and Sausgarten [Berezovka] (left wing). The village of Serpallen [Kashtanovka], in front of Sausgarten, was held by Baggovut's detachment. The 5th, 8th, 3rd and 2nd divisions were placed in the battle line with Markov's detachment in the centre and batteries to the front. The reserves were in two locations: behind the left wing - 14th Division (Count Kamensky) and behind the centre - Dokhturov with 4th and 7th divisions. As mentioned, 4th Division had been ahead of the army and was intended to be moved into the reserve at dawn. The cavalry were stationed on the army's flanks and in the centre. The Cossacks were positioned at various points along the battle line. Tuchkov commanded the right wing, Count Osterman the left, and Sacken the centre.

The French forces were positioned as follows: in the first line was Soult's corps (in front of the town was Legrand's division, with Leval's division and Lasalle's cavalry were on the left wing, on the right was Saint-Hilaire's division), in the second line was Augereau's corps with the cavalry and *Garde*. Marshal Davout, detached during the advance from Jonkowo in order to sever Bennigsen's communications with Russia, was ordered to hurry towards Serpallen and Sausgarten, to get behind the left wing and into the rear of our army; while Ney, holding L'Estocq from joining Bennigsen, was ordered to get behind Bennigsen's right wing.

The battle opened with gunfire from the Russian batteries on the right wing. The French responded in kind, simultaneously deploying their army parallel to ours. At 10 o'clock, having

received a report of Davout's approach, Napoleon ordered Soult to hold Eylau and his position, Saint-Hilaire was to move to the right and link up with Davout at Serpallen, while Marshal Augereau took his place. As soon as the troops set off, a snowstorm swirled and the light faded. Augereau's corps lost its way and unexpectedly found itself facing the batteries of the Russian centre. An unprecedented clash ensued. The enemy corps was routed and pursued by cavalry.

Saint-Hilaire's division also lost its way and, having arrived at Serpallen before Davout, was attacked and driven back by our regiments.

At around midday, Davout's corps appeared between Serpallen and Sausgarten, facing our left wing. Saint-Hilaire was ordered to drive us out of Serpallen. Attacked from two directions, Baggovut was unable to hold there and retreated to Sausgarten, setting the village on fire. Saint-Hilaire advanced there too. A fierce battle ensued, after which Osterman ordered the abandonment of Sausgarten, which was immediately occupied by the French. Davout deployed parallel to Osterman and, bombarding him with cannon, tried to envelope him more and more with his right wing, which he managed to extend towards Kutschitten [Znamenskoe]. Count Osterman's position was precarious. He was being forced to retreat. However, things took an unexpectedly favourable turn for us with the unauthorised, but very opportune, appearance of young Count Kutaisov from the right flank with 36 horse artillery pieces. Reinforcements from L'Estocq's detachment soon arrived. They drove Davout out of Kutschitten, who fell back towards Sausgarten. The plan was to attack the enemy here, which could have had decisive consequences. But the onset of night and Ney's approach prevented this plan from being realised.

The state of affairs was such that both sides were at a loss whether to resume the battle in the morning or retreat: the French towards the Vistula, the Russians towards Königsberg. It was resolved by Bennigsen's orders to retreat towards this city after midnight.

The results of the latter battle were as follows: the Russian army, consisting of 68,000 men, lost some 26,000; Napoleon had some 80,000 and lost more than 18,000; while Augereau's corps had suffered to such an extent that it was disbanded. This battle was the most stubborn and bloody of all the battles of its time. Both sides claimed victory. But Napoleon himself later admitted: "If I called myself the victor at Eylau, it was only because the Russians were good enough to retreat."

On the fields of Eylau the following also won glory and the Order of St. George: *Wachtmeister* Yegor Yuganov (wounded here by canister shot to the leg) and Grigory Fokin; Trumpet Major Timofey Vasiliev, who rescued his regimental commander, Colonel Vasilchikov, from the enemy; squadron quartermasters Ivan Yakovlev 2nd, who took a French officer prisoner, and Matvey Bogdanov May; non-commissioned officers Pyotr Alexeev, Fyodor Kalinnikov, who also captured an enemy officer, Potap Antonov, Akinfy Dorofeev, Kuriak Nikolaev, Alexey Lyapin, Potap Dmitriev, who took an enemy officer prisoner, Ivan Vasiliev and Ivan Yakovlev 3rd; dragoons Andrey Abramov, Lukyan Fedorov, Yevstigney Terentiev, Mikhail Tsvetnenko, Panteley Titov and Parfen Antonov.

It should be noted that the aforementioned lower ranks, who distinguished themselves only in the latter battle, were awarded the Military Order on an equal basis with those who earned it in all three actions (at Golimin, Jankowo and Preußsch Eylau) or two of them.

Baron Korff earned himself an award here also, the Order of St. George, 3rd class. Captains Pushkarev and Hoffman were given inscribed Golden Swords.

May arrived. Both armies remained inactive, but grew stronger. Having stocked up on provisions, Bennigsen intended to carry out his previous plan - to defeat Marshal Ney, who was stationed at Guttstadt. On 23 May [4 June], the Russian army was deployed to the following locations:

Dokhturov, with two divisions, 4th and 7th, at Wormditt [Orneta], Sacken at Arnsdorf [Lubomino], Gorchakov at Seeburg, Bagration at Launau [Łaniewo]. The following day was designated for the offensive as follows: Dokhturov was to attack Marshal Soult's force located facing Lomitten [Limity, no longer exists], on the right bank of the Passarge [Paślęka], push them back across the river and sever his communications with Ney; Gorchakov would attack Ney's right flank, Sacken would head to get behind him, while Bagration would advance frontally.

At three o'clock in the morning (24 May [5 June]), having set off from his forming up point, Dokhturov encountered a detachment from Soult's corps, fortified with abatis, in the forest. The abatis were attacked and captured. Upon being reinforced, the French recaptured the abatis and a fierce fight ensued, resulting in the French being driven out of the forest. Soult retreated to the left bank of the Passarge and prepared to engage Dokhturov's detachment. Dokhturov went after them and halted on the right bank, having severed direct communications between Soult and Ney. Thus our detachment carried out the task assigned to it exactly, while the main attack on Marshal Ney proved unsuccessful for reasons that are not appropriate to mention here.

Having noticed the French intention to go on the offensive following this, Bennigsen decided not to avoid a pitched fight. The only question that troubled him was: where to give battle - at Guttstadt or Heilsberg? The final decision fell on the latter location.

29 May [10 June] was marked by the glorious defence of the Heilsberg position by our army against a fierce twelve-hour attack by Napoleon's troops. We won a defensive victory here.

That the role of the Pskov Dragoons in this heroic defence was, nevertheless, not insignificant is evidenced by the numerous awards granted to the regiment. To Baron Korff - a sword decorated with diamonds; to Colonel and regimental commander Vasilchikov, who this time was more careful and did not fall into enemy hands, an inscribed Golden Sword; to lieutenant colonels Yurlov and Saß the Order of St. Vladimir 4th class; Captain Grigory Fyodorovich Goloshchapov, who took a cannon from the enemy, and was badly gashed by sabre cuts, the Order of St. George 4th class; Captain Pushkarev, who attacked the enemy with his squadron, killed many and took many prisoners, the Order of St. Anna 4th class; to lieutenants Koshelev and Ricard, sub lieutenants Yakovlev, Volzhino, Yanov, Zhurba and Kloel, ensigns Knizhnikov and Korbutovsky the Order of St. Anna, 3rd class.

The following day, in the evening, Napoleon set off with his army towards Landsberg and Friedland [Pravdinsk]. Prince Golitsyn was ordered to hurry to seize Friedland before the French. He successfully carried out this mission with two regiments (the Tsarevich's Ulans and Military Order Cuirassiers) and four guns, driving the French cavalry detachment out of the town that had managed to reach it earlier. Upon the arrival of the entire army in Friedland, Bennigsen placed it on the left bank of the Alle, in front of the town, with their backs to the river (over which four bridges were hastily laid) on ground bisected by a deep ravine. The 3rd, 4th, 6th and 7th divisions and the majority of the cavalry were stationed on the right side of the ravine under the command of Prince Gorchakov, while the remaining units were on the left under the command of Prince Bagration. The deployment of our army was so unfavourable that, upon seeing it, Napoleon was perplexed and said: "Of course, other Russian units must be stationed covertly elsewhere..."

The unfortunate choice of position and the physical illness of the commander-in-chief, which deprived him of the strength to continuously and attentively follow the progress of the action and give the necessary orders, resulted in the hasty re-crossing of our units over the Alle, the evacuation of Friedland and their sorrowful march towards Wehlau [Znamensk] and Tilsit [Sovetsk]. On 2 [14] June, the fields of Friedland were left with some 10,000 Russians, and half as

many French dead and wounded.

There can be no question of a lack of courage among our units at Friedland. One foreigner, an eyewitness to that battle, stated: 'did fate once decree that Napoleon should triumph at Friedland, is this why the Russian army had to succumb so completely through no fault of their own?' Another eyewitness, Lord Hutchinson, wrote to the British government: 'I lack terms sufficiently strong to describe the valour of the Russians, and which would have rendered their success undoubted, if courage alone could ensure victory.'

On 6 [18] June, our army began to cross the Neman and settled down four *versta* [2 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles] behind it, between the villages of Pogegen [Pagėgiai] and Mikieten [Mikytai].

The immediate consequence of the Battle of Friedland was the conclusion of an armistice on 12 [24] June and then, on 27 June [9 July], the Treaty of Tilsit.

CHAPTER 3.

A peaceful stay in Lida. - Unpleasant memories of ‘the second Austerlitz.’ - The ‘military excursion’ to Austria in 1809. - The stay in Vidzy. - Colonel Saß. - Political events that gave rise to the Patriotic War. - Our preparations for it. - The invasion of Russia by Napoleon’s hordes. The Pskov Dragoon Regiment’s retreat towards Moscow in the rearguard of Kutuzov’s army. Their battle with the enemy vanguard at Kochergishki. - Awards for the regiment. - The onward retreat. - The Battle of Borodino. - The feats of the Pskov Dragoon Regiment. - The abundance of awards received. - The move through Moscow to the Ryazan and Kaluga roads. The Battle of Vinkovo and subsequent awards to the regiment. - The Battle of Tarutino. - The forced march to Maloyaroslavets. - The advance to Vilna. The daring pursuit of the detachments under Marshal Davout and *vice-roi* Eugène. - The regiment receives French cuirasses as prizes. - An account of our losses. - Measures for their replenishment. - A farewell to Marshal Ney from the Russian cavalry. - Transformation of the Pskov Dragoons into cuirassiers. - The regiment is appointed to remove the Austro-Saxon detachment under Prinz Schwarzenberg from Russia. - Their voluntary departure. - The entry of the Pskov Cuirassiers into the Duchy of Warsaw.

Returning to Russia after the short stay by the Neman, the Pskov Dragoon Regiment went into permanent quarters in Lida, where they remained for almost two years (from July 1807 to June 1809). Peaceful domestic life resumed. The regiment began to recover from the losses and hardships they had endured during their foreign campaigns. The intimate circles of officers began to recount what each of them had experienced and felt in one battle or another, to analyse and assess their own orders and actions and those of the enemy... They were either delighted or outraged. Most of all, of course, they discussed ‘the second Austerlitz’ – Friedland. Everyone here agreed on the bitter conclusion that this was the creation of the incompetence of its commanders and not of the weakness of the military masses. Our army’s position was split into two halves, completely disunited; the generals’ orders showed no coordination, no unity, no ability to take advantage of the factors of time and space... And our losses were calculated to be much higher than those indicated in the official data.

Meanwhile, European politics and diplomacy were going about their business - or the kaleidoscopic game. Previously we had fought against France for Austria, for Prussia; now we were faced with fighting for France against Austria, just as later we would fight for Europe once more against the same ill-fated France!

In 1809, the Austrian Kaiser, taking advantage of Napoleon’s war in Spain, planned to retrieve the territories lost under the Treaty of Pressburg and declared a breach with France. Russia took the latter side, by virtue of the Treaty of Tilsit, sending a 30,000-strong auxiliary corps to Austria, which included the Pskov Dragoon Regiment. The role of our corps in this war was not distinguished by any particular combat activity or continuity. Apart from minor skirmishes in which the losses were limited to a few men, there were no significant actions. We advanced very slowly and went no further than Galicia. And our feelings towards the Austrians were not at all hostile. The Austrians also did not consider us their foes. They once incidentally captured some Cossacks, who were returned to us almost apologetically. This is explained by the fact that Emperor Alexander really did spare his former ally. The defeat of the Austrians at Wagram and the Treaty of Schönbrunn (14 October 1809, new style) were the finale of this campaign. The Pskov regiment, having conducted a military tour through Austrian territory from mid [late] June to mid [late] November of that same year, returned to its homeland and was located in the Vilna Governorate in the town of Vishnevo [Wiszniew]. They were soon (in July 1810) transferred from here to the town of Vidzy [Widsy] in

the same governorate, where they were to remain until the events of the Patriotic War, listed as part of the Western Army, which was commanded (from 1809 to 1812) by General-of-Infantry Count Buxhöwden, and 4th Division, which was commanded by Prince Golitsyn 5th, and in 1810, by Lieutenant General Baggovut. From 28 September [10 October] 1806, after Khitrovo, the position of regimental commander was held by Colonel Nikolay Vasilievich Vasilchikov, who gave up this appointment to Colonel Andrei Andreevich Saß on 19 [31] July 1810. Before this appointment, Saß had only served in the regiment for a short time, since March 1807. Nevertheless, he managed to swiftly familiarise himself with the state of the regiment and worked hard to give it all the essential qualities of true combat cavalry. His efforts were quickly appreciated and brought excellent results. On 20 September [2 October], 1811, a Supreme Commendation was awarded to him for his exemplary command of the regiment. At the same time, Lieutenant Colonel Ricord was awarded a similar commendation for the excellent condition of his squadron. The year of 1812 would show that the Pskov Dragoons had learned to fight even better on the battlefield and to defeat such skilled opponents as Napoleon's marshals.



Andrei Andreevich Saß 1st.

We have said that the outcome of the Battle of Friedland was the Treaty of Tilsit. In essence, it was

an armistice. It contained the germ of a renewed and terrible social disaster, known as war, which this time would manifest itself on a scale incomparably more acute and extensive. Although the two emperors had become quite close in their pavilion on the Neman; although it was only to please the Russian sovereign that Napoleon did not wipe Prussia from the face of the earth as a political entity at that time, and Russia received the Bialystok *Oblast*; yet at the same time, the Duchy of Warsaw was organised right next to it, and the notorious Continental System was created, ruining us more than it did Britain, against whom it was directed; at the same time, Napoleon felt himself even more powerful - and his autocracy knew no bounds. The hegemon of Europe could in no way come to terms with the fact that in the east there was a country not subject to him and with whose representative he had to deal as an equal. From the beginning of 1811 Napoleon no longer concealed his hostile intentions towards Russia.

Even Russian society was not happy about the Treaty of Tilsit, because everyone considered the war of 1807 to have been unlucky. Even the military pride of the Russian army suffered at the memory of Friedland, which could not be brightened even by such glorious deeds as the action at Eylau. Moreover, the first year of the new decade was especially difficult for Russia: the export of raw materials fell to a minimum, goods became more expensive, banknotes fell in value, hard currency disappeared; floods, storms, and fires destroyed villages, towns, fields, and forests. The moral foreboding of the superstitious masses was intensified by the appearance of a comet. Everyone expected a great, cruel, and bloody war. Many desired it as the only way out of the dire situation in Russia and Europe.

Indeed, Napoleon and Alexander were preparing for a decisive struggle.

Our Ministry of War¹ staffed the units, took care of the formation of reserves, the arrangement of depots, magazines, hospitals and parks.

Let us recall that the dragoon regiments at that time, as before, consisted of five squadrons, which were supposed to have 1,018 men and 927 war horses (8 [20] November 1810). The manning of officers, according to the establishment of 6 [18] April 1811, was as follows: one general, four field officers, nine subalterns (seven of whom were with the squadrons). In wartime, one of the three centre squadrons, at the discretion of the colonel-in-chief, was to remain in their quarters under the designation of 'replacement'² and served specifically to replenish their regiment with men and horses. The other squadrons were designated as 'active.' The complement of both was determined by the table of organisation at 150 men. The replacement units from dragoon regiments in each division constituted a four-squadron replacement brigade.

In order to supply the active regiments with more or less trained men, there were (in addition to replacement battalions, companies and squadrons) three echelons of recruit depots located within European Russia. By the establishments of 10 [22] October 1808 and 11 [23] August 1809, it was ordered to have from 80 to 350 men in each recruit depot the cavalry, and with them no fewer than one subaltern with three non-commissioned officers and no more than two subalterns, ten non-commissioned officers and 50 privates with 40 horses from the cavalry regiments. While on 18 [30] November 1811, it was ordered that 600 recruits for the cavalry be allocated to nine artillery depots and 900 to another, with the latter being divided into six squadrons, and the rest into four, which received the designations '6th squadron' in cuirassier and dragoon regiments and 11th and 12th squadrons in lancer and hussar regiments, each being 150 strong. On 22 November [4 December] 1808, the 1st and 2nd Recruit or Reserve Divisions were renamed I and II Reserve

1 It replaced the Petrine Military Collegium in 1802.

2 To replace the existing replacement half-squadron, which was abolished on 8 [20] November 1810.

Corps, the brigades became divisions and the depots became brigades. The overall command of both reserve corps was vested in the Minister of War.

The regiments were put on a war footing very quickly and therefore everything unnecessary, burdensome on operations and useful only on ceremonial parades was done away with. Thus, by order of the Inspector of All Cavalry, Grand Duke Konstantin Pavlovich, dated 20 December 1811 [1 January 1812], kettledrummers were disestablished in dragoon regiments. The regimental trains were lightened and reduced to the smallest possible number, leaving only whatever was essential for military life on campaign. In general, energetic measures were taken to train the men in combat skills rather than parade drill and to replenish the regiments with horses. They did not, however, rule out the possibility of acquiring horses locally, through incidental purchases from private individuals. The latter purchases were made, for the most part, by the regimental colonel-in-chief, and sometimes by the squadron commanders themselves, who often exchanged some 'undersized and ill-proportioned' horses for better ones, of course, for a small fee.

Each cavalry regiment was provided with standard officers' horses. But many regiments were seriously short of them. Consequently, existing regulations allowed officers to select and exchange horses from the line. In general, in this regard, the government at that time granted many benefits to cavalry officers.

Following all the military preparations, three active armies were formed on our western border: Barclay de Tolly's First, formed up in the Vilna Governorate; Bagration's Second in the Grodno Governorate, and Tormasov's Third, or Reserve-Observational, in the Volhynia Governorate, activated, however, only in April 1812. These formations were stretched over a distance of 400 *versta* [267 miles], along the western border from the Dvina to the Styr. The Army of the Danube, commanded by Admiral Chichagov, was still in Wallachia. Moreover, an independent corps on the right flank (Count Wittgenstein's) was concentrated near Polotsk to cover Novgorod and Pskov.

The Pskov Dragoon Regiment was assigned to II (Reserve) Cavalry Corps under Adjutant General Baron Korff in First Western Army.

The fateful year of 1812 was upon us. Napoleon's enormous army of 600,000 advanced toward Russia and halted on the banks of the Neman. We had no more than 200,000 men under arms. It is true, however, that to this comparatively small force must be added the 300,000-strong *opolchenie* that was soon assembled. But that was a militia, a mass of people, temporarily dragged from the scythe and plough, ignorant of military skills or discipline, and filled only with enthusiastic patriotism. Over there was the numerical superiority, and knowledge of military skills, and long-term combat experience, and brilliant memories and faith in their own invincibility, in the lucky star of their great leader! The comparative strength of the opponents seemed far from equal: the advantage, of course, was not on our side... Indeed, truth be told, our soldiers went against the enemy more confident of dying for the Fatherland, Freedom, and Faith than of winning. However, things turned out otherwise...

On 12 [24] June, the first enemy detachment crossed the Neman at Kovno [Kaunas] under Napoleon's personal supervision. We, along with the entire army, received orders to retreat towards Svetsiany [Švenčionys] and Polotsk. II Cavalry Corps retreated in the rearguard of the main column from Smorgon [Smorgonie] to Mikhlishki [Smolzavod].

On 23 June [5 July], our corps was attacked by a brigade of French light cavalry under General Subervie, which formed the vanguard of Murat's *réserve de cavalerie*. We gave battle near the town of Kochergishki [Kačėniškės], but then we retreated beyond the Disna river and held there

the whole day, retreating only at night on the orders of the Commander-in-Chief. Our overall losses here were quite significant, but the enemy also suffered no small losses, as we alone took more than 30 prisoners, including a colonel from the Württemberg contingent, Prinz Hohenlohe.

This first, steadfastly endured onslaught by fresh enemy forces on the rearguard was clear proof that our regiment had indeed used two years of peaceful inactivity to good effect in preparing itself for serious combat operations. The holding of the French vanguard in this action had another, more important, significance: it gave Barclay de Tolly the opportunity to avoid a general battle, in accordance with the system he had adopted for this period, and to lure the enemy further into the interior of the country.

In the cavalry clash at Kochergishki, the Pskov Dragoon Regiment was especially proud of the daring actions of Major Goloshchapov, who was awarded the Order of St. Vladimir, 4th class. The young officers, ensigns: Verzhbitsky, Kalinnikov, Denisov 2nd and Mirbach competed with the veteran warriors in bravery and were awarded the Order of St. Anna, 3rd class.

By the end of June [mid July], the army had arrived on the Dvina and settled into the fortified camp near the town of Drissa. Having paused here for only a few days, on 8 [20] July they moved through Vitebsk towards Smolensk, where all their formations were drawn together on 20 July [1 August] and set up camp on the right bank of the Dnieper. On 23 July [4 August], Second Army (Bagration's) joined ours. Following the battles of 4 and 5 [16 and 17] August in and around Smolensk between our main force and the enemy, which ended with the burning of the city and its surrender to the enemy, we continued the systematic retreat along the Moscow road towards Dorogobuzh, Vyazma, Gzhatsk [Gagarin], and Mozhaisk. During this retreat, our regiment also proceeded in the rearguard of the first column (General Dokhturov's). The rearguard fell back slowly, halting frequently to repel persistent attacks by the enemy vanguard under the valiant marshals Murat and Davout and delayed their advance. Wherever we encountered open ground, our cavalry, under the overall command of General Konovnitsyn, would halt, form up in a chessboard pattern, facing the enemy vanguard, and, under covering fire from our batteries in the rear and infantry in forest ambushes, pin the enemy in place, often for a whole day. The largest rearguard actions took place near the villages of Rybki (15 [27] August) and Tsarevo-Zaimishche (16 [28] August), near Gzhatsk (19 [31] August), the village of Gridnevo (22 August [3 September]) and at the Kolotsky Monastery (24 August [5 September]). We arrived at Borodino on this day, having travelled 300 *versta* [200 miles] from Smolensk.

Meanwhile, on 17 [29] August, while we were stationed at Tsarevo-Zaimishche, the newly appointed Commander-in-Chief of all Russian operational forces, Field Marshal Prince Golenishchev-Kutuzov, arrived. The system of retreat as executed by Barclay de Tolly did not correspond to the extremely inflamed mood of the army, the people and the Tsar himself. And thus Kutuzov was selected to lead Russia's defence, as the representative of an opposing system and the most skilled of the generals.

Kutuzov decided to give battle. The site chosen for it was near the village of Borodino.

According to the dispositions issued by the Field Marshal on 24 August [5 September], every unit concentrated at Borodino was assigned to a location. The Pskov Dragoon Regiment took up a position on the right wing, which was composed of Barclay de Tolly's army, the entire II Cavalry Corps being behind IV Infantry Corps deployed in two echelons (under the command of General-of-Infantry Miloradovich).

The entire next day was spent in preparations for one of the greatest battles in modern history -

130,000 allied troops against 100,000 Russians.

On 26 August [7 September], just before nine o'clock, the battle began with a cannonade from the enemy against our flèches on the left wing, and then a persistent onslaught was carried out by concentrated enemy forces along the entire length of both this wing and our centre. At nine o'clock Kutuzov deemed it necessary to order Miloradovich to bring our cavalry and IV Infantry Corps from the right wing to reinforce the centre. Upon arriving there, Baron Korff immediately sent the Izyum Hussars and Poland Ulans to attack Wathier's cuirassiers and Defrance's carabiniers. Before they had time to deploy, they were attacked themselves and disordered. However, they were quickly brought back into order. Meanwhile, Colonel Saß, noticing that the enemy infantry and cavalry were rapidly advancing again, threatening the right flank of the Izyum Hussars and Poland Ulans as they were still rallying, drove them back despite the superiority of enemy numbers and, recalling his squadrons, rallied them again in the best possible order while under enemy fire. Whereupon Grouchy's French cavalry, which had been in reserve, rushed to attack our Pskov Dragoons, but were also thrown into disorder by them and pursued right up to their infantry. Taking advantage of this success, the Pskov Dragoons struck the left flank of the outer battalion and carved into them. This success was facilitated by canister fire from 2nd Lifeguard Horse Artillery Battery. The enemy cavalry fell back in disarray.

During these actions, the rest of our corps and the regiments of III Cavalry Corps arrived at the scene of the battle. A tenacious struggle ensued. Attacks followed one another in quick succession, with varying success. The horses of fallen riders stampeded in herds. Barclay himself and his retinue were caught up in the melee and were forced to draw their swords in self-defence. Then, the troops on both sides, exhausted by the prolonged battle, gradually began to cease their actions. Only on the Russian left flank did the heated exchange of fire continue. But even there, by six o'clock in the evening, all had calmed down.

The role of the Pskov Dragoon Regiment as described in the grand battle was highly appreciated and rewarded at the time. In Baron Korff's report to Barclay de Tolly it stated:

'It would have been desirable for every cavalry regiment to have acted in this way. Your Excellency yourself was a witness to the disorder into which our infantry had already been brought, and had the cavalry not checked the enemy advance at this point, then the infantry would inevitably have been driven back, which would have been to the detriment of the entire army. Your Excellency, please do full justice to the cavalry and do not leave distinguished officers without awards. I consider it my particular duty to recommend Colonel Saß, who was resolute in repelling the enemy with his regiment.'

In this same report, the corps commander petitioned for the award of five Military Order crosses for each squadron.

We have not found any positive information about whether the crosses of the order were issued. However, we do know that the lower ranks were each awarded five roubles at this time. Almost every one of the officers present was awarded decorations. Indeed, in this desperate struggle, everyone was swept along by the truly heroic valour of their regimental commander; everyone was burning with the desire that the question of whether the French would get to Moscow would be decided on this very day and place. Therefore, everyone, from the oldest to the youngest, fought with a grim determination. The regimental commander and inspiration, Saß, received the Order of St. George, 4th class himself. Colonel Avdulin, non-commissioned officer Pavel Pereverzev, and private Vikula Andreyev were also awarded this same order. Colonel Pushkarev 1st, Major Pushkarev 2nd, *Stabs-Rittmeister* Zhurba and Knizhnikov, and Lieutenant Prince Kozlovsky 1st

received the Order of St. Vladimir, 4th class (Pushkarev 1st's with a bow); lieutenants Freimann, Stobbe, Sakovnin 2nd; cornets Prince Kozlovsky 2nd, Knizhnikov 2nd, Yurlov 2nd, von Korff and Bogdanovich, the Order of St. Anna 3rd class.

As a result of ten-hours of fierce combat, it emerged out that our forces had yielded all the most important points of their position to the enemy and were completely disordered, having lost almost half of the available regular troops.³ II and III Cavalry Corps were so depleted on that bloody day that they had to be consolidated into a single corps under the command of Baron Korff. Therefore, Kutuzov did not dare renew the battle the following day and at midnight gave the order to retreat towards Moscow.

They set off from the Borodino position at first light on 27 August [8 September]. The Pskov Dragoon Regiment was in the rearguard of the first column. During these stages (to Moscow) the enemy bothered us little and weakly, and no more or less major skirmishes with them occurred.

Following the convening of a council of war in the village of Fili (1 [13] September), the Commander-in-Chief, as is known, decided to give up Moscow without a fight and retreat along the Ryazan road.

The troops marched through the ancient capital in a gloomy, sombre mood. On 2 [14] September, it was occupied by French troops.

Retreating from Moscow initially along the Ryazan road, the Russian army then turned sharply west, towards Podolsk, and, having arrived at the village of Tarutino on 2 [14] October, halted to give the enemy another fight. The Pskov Dragoons retreated in Miloradovich's rearguard and were repeatedly obliged to ride out to engage the enemy in combat. The most significant of these, in terms of size, occurred on 22 September [4 October], near the village of Vinkovo. And here our rearguard overall and the Pskov Dragoons in particular fulfilled their important mission - to prevent the enemy from trying to disrupt the retreat of the main force - very successfully. Our regiment not only steadfastly repelled the French attacks, but also counter-attacked them, inflicting significant damage. Miloradovich obtained awards for this action for the following individuals who had particularly distinguished themselves: Colonel Pushkarev, Major Ricord, lieutenants Abber and von Halte, and Cornet Korbutovsky 2nd received the Order of St. Anna 2nd class, while *Rittmeister* Kolesnikov 1st, *Stabs-Rittmeister* Korbutovsky 1st and Cornet Prince Kozlovsky 2nd received Golden Swords inscribed *за храбрость* [for valour].

A 20,000-strong French detachment under Murat was stationed near Tarutino facing our forces. An attack on it was scheduled for 5 [17] October. According to the disposition, the Pskov Dragoons, as part of the combined II and III Cavalry Corps, was assigned to be located together with IV Cavalry Corps and two cuirassier divisions, under Miloradovich's overall command, as the vanguard of the left wing, whose entire cavalry were to attack the enemy at the moment that the blow on the right wing (under Bennigsen) was delivered. When the attack plan was being carried out, this element (on the left wing) was not put into action. And although Bennigsen's fight began and ended successfully, Kutuzov did not allow our wing to attack the enemy, for reasons that, notoriously, remained unexplained, which is why Murat thus avoided total defeat.

Having received news of Napoleon's departure from Moscow with his army and his movement along the new Kaluga road, Kutuzov ordered our troops to leave the Tarutino camp. We left there on 11 [23] October, heading for Maloyaroslavets. When our main body arrived there, along with Kutuzov, on the evening of 12 [24] October, the French were holding the already devastated city

3 And on the enemy side the losses amounted to about 30,000 men.

after an eighteen-hour battle with Dokhturov's leading detachment. Miloradovich arrived with the Pskov Dragoons and other cavalry at the end of the battle, having made a forced march of 50 *versta* [33 miles]. Delighted by his unexpected arrival, the Field Marshal told him: "You march faster than flying angels!" this because he intended to fight a pitched battle here, in a position that was quite advantageous for us, the outcome of which would decide the enemy advance on Kaluga. But circumstances changed, and on 14 [26] October, Napoleon headed towards Borovsk, Mozhaik, Gzhatsk and Vyazma, while the Russian army retreated in the opposite direction – to the village of Goncharovo, then west to Polotnyanye Zavody. Miloradovich remained near Maloyaroslavets with ours and other cavalry and infantry corps. The next day, his detachment headed west to Adamovskoe, then north to Yegorievskoe, where they joined forces with the detachments under Karpov and Platov, and on to Nikolskoe, proceeding parallel to the French army. At that time, Kutuzov's main body was moving in a similar direction (towards Vyazma), but along different roads – from Kremenskoe to Selenki and reached Dubrovo (27 *versta* [18 miles] from Vyazma) on 21 October [2 November].

Moving between Kutuzov's army and Platov's detachment, our vanguard (under Miloradovich) halted at the village of Spaskoe in the early hours of 22 October [3 November], a short march from Vyazma. Miloradovich and Platov agreed to attack Davout's enemy detachment, which was heading there along the main Smolensk road, at first light.

At four o'clock in the morning, the Pskov Dragoons, together with their own and IV Cavalry Corps, as well as five Cossack regiments, set off from their overnight camp. The infantry followed us. After passing the village of Maksimovo at eight o'clock in the morning, the cavalry formed up on the high ground overlooking the main road between the villages of Fedorovskoe and Myasoedovo. Davout's corps, pursued from behind by Platov's Cossacks, reached Fedorovskoe. They were attacked here but fought their way forward to Myasoedovo, where a second fierce fight ensued, forcing the enemy to continue their retreat toward Vyazma. Here, on the surrounding high ground, they attempted to keep the city under French control. But from here, too, they were driven off by us. Subsequently, despite the onset of night, we stormed and captured Vyazma. The French retreated towards Smolensk, which they reached on 28 October [9 November].

After driving the enemy out of Vyazma, our vanguard and Platov's detachment were sent to pursue them from the rear and flank.

During this pursuit, near Dolgomostye, 2,000 French cuirassiers from Ney's rearguard emerged, heading towards the rear of our army. Count Orlov-Denisov attacked them with the Nezhin Dragoons and two Cossack regiments with six horse artillery pieces, putting them to flight. 700 cuirasses taken from the slain enemy were subsequently given to our Pskov Regiment.

On 4 [16] November, when the force under *vice-roi* Eugène set off from their overnight camp along the road to Krasny, Kutuzov's main force was moving in that direction, settling between Novoselki and Shilovo. Our corps made a flanking march that day parallel to the main road, from Rzhavka to the village of Merlino. The *vice-roi* eventually managed to reach Krasny and linked up with the *Garde* there. Upon hearing the news that Napoleon and the *Garde* had marched from there towards Lyady, the Field Marshal decided to attack the formations following them on 5 [17] November. According to the disposition, we and the entire vanguard under Miloradovich were assigned to go out onto the main road, attack Davout's and Ney's detachments on the march from Smolensk, and push them towards Krasny.

On 5 [17] November, at about nine o'clock in the morning, as soon as Davout's main column drew level with the location of our vanguard, we rushed at the enemy, scattering the column,

whereupon the Cossacks pursued it, capturing many prisoners. The French position was all the more dangerous because they had to cross the deep ravine of the Losmina river in order to reach Krasny. Meanwhile, orders were received to halt and not to engage in any action, because the vanguard had been forbidden from severing the enemy retreat, rather, having orders to pursue them persistently as soon as they had passed by. This was not done and we remained inactive until nightfall.



Nikolay Vasilievich Vasilchikov 3rd.

As a result of successful operations by other Russian formations, Napoleon's units evacuated Krasny and headed for Dubrowna. Our II Cavalry Corps spent the night near the village of Uvarovo.

Thus we had seen off Napoleon's and Davout's forces. We had yet to engage Marshal Ney's rearguard. On 6 [18] November, Ney's corps appeared by the Losmina. II Cavalry Corps, having crossed the Losmina river at Uvarovo, enveloped the enemy. The remaining units from Miloradovich's detachment guarded the road. Our batteries opened fire on the enemy, then an attack followed. Ney's corps was defeated and thrown back into the ravine with heavy losses. Convinced that the enemy had been complete scattered, we pursued them feebly. Meanwhile, Ney

managed to gather the remnants of his corps, numbering some 3,000 (out of 8,000 men), and led them through the forests towards Orsha, along barely visible tracks cut through the deep snow. But fewer than 900 men arrived there. The rest perished in minor skirmishes with the Cossacks.

After these events, Napoleon headed towards Minsk to settle into winter quarters behind Bortsina [sic]. Kutuzov chose a route to the left of the Orsha road, leading to Kopys, ordering our vanguard to go there first, to arrange a crossing over the Dnieper for the army and from there move towards Tolochin, where we arrived, having fulfilled the order, on 13 [25] November.

After the battles fought by Chichagov and Wittgenstein against Napoleon on 14 and 16 [26 and 28] November near Borisov, on both banks of the Berezina, the pitiful remnants of his *Grande armée* simply fled. Napoleon himself abandoned it and went to Paris via Vilna, Kovno and Warsaw. Kutuzov arrived in Kopys on 12 [24] November, transported his main force across the Dnieper on 14 [26] November, and sent them around Borisov, via Krugloe, Mikheevichi, Ravanichi, Gorodok, Valozhin, Holszany, towards Vilna. Our vanguard was sent from Tolochin to Borisov and arrived there on 17 [29] November. A rest day was granted here, as well as for the delivery of provisions. From Borisov, we were ordered to advance to Logoisk, Radoszkowicze, Holszany, and Smorgon. Given our significant distance from the main army's route, a new vanguard was detached under the command of Adjutant General Vasilchikov.

On 24 November [6 December], the Field Marshal, wishing to directly command the Russian formations closing in on Vilna, moved his headquarters to Radoszkewicze, where the vanguard was located at the time, while command of the main army, moving towards Valozhin, was temporarily entrusted to General Tormasov.

On 28 November [10 December], the main army entered Vilna. Miloradovich's vanguard was positioned between Wilkomierz [Ukmergė] and Valozhin. After collating returns from all the available formations of our main army, we learned that of the 102,000 men who had left Tarutino two months previously, there were only about 42,000 left: 48,000 were in hospital, and 12,000 were either killed in action or died of wounds or disease. The cavalry had suffered the greatest losses. The Pskov Dragoons had no more than 100 men left in the ranks; only a few regiments had as many as 150, and some had no more than 60. The reasons for such losses should be considered, in addition to combat - lethal and widespread disease from malnutrition, drinking water contaminated by rotting bodies, and exhausting marches after crossing the Berezina, in the severe cold, through deep snow. Mobile provisions magazines lagged behind by significant distances. Obtaining fodder was even more difficult: both foraging and distribution proved inadequate.

It had been intended to collect the stragglers and convalescents of our victorious albeit exhausted army in Vilna and to entrust the onward pursuit of the remnants of the enemy force to the leading detachments under Wittgenstein and Chichagov.

Emperor Alexander did not approve of Kutuzov's intention to halt the main body of the army in Vilna and to pursue the enemy with the leading detachments alone. He had decided to continue the war and was actively preparing for it. Among the many measures taken to this end, we note the order that all cavalry regiments be reorganised into three, two, or even one squadron, depending on the number of men and horses remaining. The other squadrons, each retaining a few officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates, were to be sent to Starodub along with their squadron commanders, where, over the course of the winter, they were to be reconstituted with recruits and horses. Thereafter came the order to rationalise the number of squadrons in every cavalry regiment - to six active and one replacement - and to redesignate 18 dragoon regiments into cuirassiers, hussars, lancers, and mounted jägers. On 17 [29] December 1812, our regiment

was redesignated as cuirassiers.

In addition to the pursuit of Napoleon's *Grande armée*, in fulfilment of the Tsar's will, an order was issued to expel the Austro-Saxon force under Schwarzenberg's command from the borders of Russia. To that end, a detachment under the command of Dokhturov, its vanguard under Vasilchikov, and our II Cavalry Corps, II and IV Infantry Corps under the command of Miloradovich were sent to Grodno. It turned out, however, that there was no need for force of arms to induce Schwarzenberg to evacuate the Russian *Oblasts*. His force, after simple negotiations, voluntarily withdrew beyond the borders.

Thus ended the great Patriotic War and such was the role in it that the Pskov Dragoon Regiment bore on its shoulders. Who among fighting men does not know how difficult, tiring and dangerous vanguard or rearguard service is; how much tireless vigilance, anticipation and fortitude it demands! And the Pskov Dragoon Regiment endured this for more than six months, and under such conditions! Those who have studied the military events of 1812 are well aware of them and there is no need to list them here. But we will allow ourselves to emphasise one thing: it was the moral and material might of the enemy, against whom we had to tirelessly stand and move, move and stand; it was the brilliant Napoleon with a dozen gifted commanders, talented, and daring to the point of audacity. And the regiment confronted them always and everywhere with honour and resolve. And it has every right to recall such battles as those at Kochergishki, Borodino, Vinkovo, Tarutino, and Vyazma with pride.

We have already indicated how the regiment was rewarded for its service. Among its other awards, its representative, Commander Saß, received an annual pension of 1,500 roubles for his distinguished service throughout the War of 1812.

CHAPTER 4.

Motives for continuing the struggle against Napoleon. - Russian cavalry preparations. - The campaign abroad. - The Battle of Lützen. - Disagreements over the passive role of the Pskov Cuirassier Regiment during the fighting on 20 April [2 May] 1813. - The retreat to Bautzen. - The armistice. - Sweden and Austria join the Russo-Prussian Coalition. - Movement of the Coalition armies to Dresden and the retreat into Bohemia. - The Battle of Kulm. - Awards to the Pskov Cuirassiers. - The rout of Napoleon's army at Leipzig. - New awards to the regiment. - The victory at Brienne. - The Battle of Bar-sur-Aube. - The curious wanderings of the Pskov Cuirassiers around this battlefield. - Colonel Pushkarev is awarded a Prussian Order for the Dolancourt bridge. - The cuirassier's feats at Laubressel, Troyes, Arcis, Soudé-Sainte-Croix, and Fère-Champenoise. - More awards for the Pskov Cuirassiers. - The Battle of Paris and its capitulation. - The triumphal procession of the cuirassiers through the streets of Paris. - Their return to their homeland. - The regiment's second journey to Paris in 1815. - Killed and wounded Pskov Cuirassiers in the Napoleonic Wars.

By mid [late] December 1812, there was not a single armed enemy on Russian soil. But the dignity of the Russian people could not be satisfied with this; it demanded that the abuse inflicted on the heart of Russia - Moscow - be washed away by Russian soldiers in the waters of Paris... Indeed, did Europe now expect Russia to liberate only itself from Napoleon's tyranny. Therefore, the war had to continue. But from that moment on, the war for our fatherland was replaced by a war for the liberation of all Europe.

However, it was necessary to inject fresh, strengthening elements into our disordered military units, introducing the necessary changes and reforms dictated by harsh experience. The following measures were taken with regard to the cavalry.

Up to this point, dragoon regiments had constituted the predominant arm of our regular cavalry. Experience had shown that the combat strength of a four-squadron regiment, with a platoon frontage of 16 files, was inadequate. Losses from combat attrition and other hardship had left our regiments in such disarray that many had to be reorganised into three or even two-squadron regiments, and even then, with 12 or 10 files per platoon. And it occasionally happened that platoons barely managed to muster six files. Regiments simply melted away, the cavalry especially, since they bore the brunt of the immediate pursuit of the enemy, reconnaissance, and security duties. The abundance of dragoon regiments, to the detriment of the lancers and mounted jägers, which, in contrast, the French army was so rich in and which brought it many significant advantages, prompted our Ministry of War to equate the roles of the Russian cavalry with the enemy's. Based on this concept, on 17 [29] December 1812, Supreme Instructions to the Ministry of War ordered a reduction in the number of dragoon regiments by half, converting 18 of them into other forms of cavalry, namely: two regiments to cuirassiers (Pskov, as mentioned at the end of the previous chapter, and Starodub), one regiment to hussars (Irkutsk), seven to lancers and eight to mounted jägers. Thus, we added two divisions of lancers and two of mounted jägers. The Pskov Regiment was assigned to 2nd Cuirassier Division in Prince Golitsyn 5th's Cuirassier Corps.

Almost simultaneously with the aforementioned decree (on 27 December [8 January 1813]), a single universal establishment was approved for regular cavalry regiments, without distinction as to the specialisations within this combat arm. Every cavalry regiment would similarly consist of six active squadrons with a seventh replacement squadron. Each squadron was intended to have seven officers, 201 combatant lower ranks and 179 horses. Consequently, the fighting strength of

an active regiment represented a line of 1,075 blades.¹ Squadrons in a regiment were grouped in pairs, referred to as divisions. The 'divisioner' (of field officer rank) also had a dual role as commander of one of the two squadrons within his division, which endured until 1833. In the same legislation, the former *Wachtmeister* was redesignated senior *Wachtmeister*, while the senior platoon non-commissioned officers were redesignated junior *Wachtmeister*.

The raising of extensive cavalry reserves was also energetically put in train, the main depot for which was initially located in Mogilev on the Dnieper, while in April 1813 the entire reserve cavalry were transferred to Slonim and then to Brest-Litovsk. It was obliged, even after the units had been sent on campaign, to maintain two squadrons for each cavalry regiment, and therefore it consisted of 126 squadrons.

In order to quickly replenish the stocks of horses, an additional 10 roubles for each horse was added to the previous allowance of 50 roubles for the purchase of remounts. Subsequently, on 26 March [7 April] 1813, Supreme Instructions ordered that the populations of the Volhynia and Podolia governorates supply a calculated number of horses instead of recruits.

There was also a huge shortage of officers, and therefore the Supreme Will was expressed to accept civil servants into military service with the same ranks that were assigned to them upon their entry into the *zemstvo opolchenie* [territorial militias]. This exceptional policy continued until 1816. In addition, it was ordered that all officers who had gone abroad be granted a six-month salary advance, without deductions, and that salary tranches be paid from 1 [13] January 1813, until their return to Russia, and that frock coats and overcoats be made up for them without any deductions from their pay.

Following all these preparations, Russian units began to move out of Russia after Napoleon.

Kutuzov's main army crossed the Neman on 1 [13] January 1813, at Merech, and entered Warsaw on 27 January [8 February], which Schwarzenberg had evacuated of Austro-Saxon troops following a convention concluded between him and Miloradovich. On 8 [20] February, the Pskov Cuirassiers, as part of Miloradovich's detachment, moved ahead of the main army (Tormasov's right column) from Warsaw towards Kalisz, where Reynier's Saxon corps had departed, having been driven out from there earlier by Wintzingerode's detachment.

As yet, the European monarchs had remained deaf to the Russian Tsar's call to join them in liberating Europe from Napoleon's yoke. Only now the Prussian king Friedrich Wilhelm III, after meeting with Emperor Alexander I in Kalisz, concluded an alliance with him and issued an appeal to his people for a general mobilisation.

According to the plan drawn up by the Coalition, the Russo-Prussian forces moved into Saxony in two columns: one, under Wittgenstein's command, from the direction of Berlin, the other, commanded by the Prussian General Blücher, towards Dresden.

Miloradovich's detachment besieged the fortress of Glogau [Głogów], but on 18 [30] March was relieved by Prussian units and, having crossed the Oder, joined Blücher's column at Miltitz (in three echelons).

Blücher's advance through Bautzen and Dresden to Lützen did not encounter any great difficulties: the French evacuated these locations without resistance. On 12 [24] April, the Coalition forces under Blücher, Wittgenstein, Miloradovich, Wintzingerode and the main army already occupied the entire area between the middle Elbe and the Saale.

1 The six active squadrons were also intended to have 1,075 war horses, which, with 179 in the replacement squadron, gave a total of 1,254 horses.

Napoleon, however, had created a new army incomparably faster than the Coalition could concentrate their forces in Saxony. Meanwhile, as he reached Lützen with an army of 170,000 and intended to prevent the Coalition from going further, Kutuzov died in Bunzlau [Bolesławiec] on 16 [28] April. Without informing the troops at the time of an impending battle with a powerful enemy, the Coalition monarchs appointed Count Wittgenstein as commander-in-chief.

The battle he fought at Lützen on 20 April [2 May] ended with the Coalition retreating towards Dresden.

The Pskov Cuirassiers did not take part in the Battle of Lützen, because on the day of battle Miloradovich's detachment was in Zeitz, 20 *versta* [13 miles] from the scene of the fighting, merely waiting on orders to go to Lützen. Wittgenstein was reproached for this decision which deprived the army of the assistance of 12,000 men with such orders, and it was explained by the alleged rivalry that existed between Wittgenstein and Miloradovich. According to Wittgenstein himself, he did not bring our detachment in from Zeitz towards his forces, keeping them there as a reserve and intending to place them in the front line in the battle he had planned for the following day.

It became essential to retreat from Lützen as slowly as possible, holding the enemy back at every step. The Pskov Cuirassiers were assigned to cover the army's retreat along with Miloradovich's entire detachment. From Frohburg and Borna they retreated in two columns: the northern (Prussian) to Colditz, and on towards Meissen, the southern (Russian) to Rochlitz, towards Dresden. Our rearguard followed the second column. Napoleon decided to drive the Coalition in both directions.

On the morning of 23 April [5 May], Miloradovich's rearguard, having crossed the Mulde at Rochlitz, received word of General Saint-Priest's difficult situation at Gersdorf with 2nd Grenadier Division, which was under threat from *vice-roi* Eugène with superior numbers. Miloradovich led his detachment to assist Saint-Priest and arrived at the decisive moment, just as one of his regiments (11th Jägers) was being driven out of their forest position by the enemy, and Nilus' battery was being forced to pull back. The rearguard, formed into four strong columns, moved forward and stopped the enemy at Hartha. Saint-Priest retreated to Etzdorf and rejoined the army, while our rearguard withdrew to Reichenbach (Kriebstein). On 24 April [6 May], under pressure from the *vice-roi*, he moved to Etzdorf and then on towards Deutschenbora. Miloradovich divided his detachment into several echelons, placed one after the other half a stage apart from Nossen to Limbach, with the intention of holding the enemy back step by step, in order to give the army time to cross to the right bank of the Elbe at Dresden. The *vice-roi* attacked Lieutenant Colonel Wolf on the right with Macdonald's corps. Wolf defended his post for an hour and a half until he received the order to retreat.

Thereafter the *vice-roi* swiftly attacked the jägers, Pskov Cuirassiers and the other elements of II Cavalry Corps in Niedereula, which, due to the illness of Baron Korff, was under the command of Major General Melissino. They also stood firm and broke contact only when they received orders from Miloradovich to retreat to Wilsdruff.

While these rearguard actions were taking place, the Coalition main body managed to cross the Elbe on 25 April [7 May], and our cuirassiers, along with Miloradovich's detachment, occupied the outskirts of Dresden and the fortifications that covered the two bridges. The detachments under generals Emmanuel and Gorchakov joined the rearguard here. Once the rearguard had retreated to the right bank of the Elbe, the bridges were burned, and the rearguard units were redeployed as follows: Saint-Priest in the Neustadt, to the right of the city, at Briesnitz, were our II (Melissino's) and IV (Markov's) Cavalry Corps, and to the left were the detachments under Gorchakov 2nd,

Prince Volkonsky and Emmanuel. The Russian main force was already withdrawing towards Bautzen. The French army followed closely behind the Coalition, and their main body, led by Napoleon, the *vice-roi*, and Macdonald, stood facing the Russian rearguard on 26 April [8 May]. The enemy, having crossed the Elbe in the early hours of 27 April [9 May], began to smash the rearguard at Neustadt and Briesnitz with strong artillery fire, and, having suffered significant damage, the rearguard was withdrawn to Weißer Hirsch and Weißig on 28 April [10 May]. At that time, Wittgenstein's force was in Bischofswerda. On 29 and 30 April [11 and 12 May], under the pressure of superior enemy forces, the Coalition forces retreated further: Wittgenstein's main army moved towards Bautzen, Miloradovich's rearguard took their place at Bischofswerda, leaving a small detachment at Weißig. He received orders from Wittgenstein for the rearguard to remain there until noon (30 April [12 May]). At eight o'clock in the morning, Macdonald attacked the rearmost units at Weißig and pursued them as far as Schmiedefeld. Miloradovich, in preparing to check the enemy, placed a strong battery behind Schmiedefeld, under the protection of comte Saint-Priest's detachment, which included the Pskov Cuirassiers along with the entire 2nd Cuirassier Division. The remaining rearguard units were stationed at Harthau. Despite Macdonald's repeated attacks on this battery from the front and flanks, our detachment stubbornly defended it, which Miloradovich exploited by withdrawing the main rearguard force to positions beyond Bischofswerda. Saint-Priest's detachment retreated there later. By the end of the day, the enemy had occupied this place, where they remained for the next two days, while the Russian rearguard was withdrawn to Göda.

Throughout the duration of the retreat by the Coalition army from Lützen to Bautzen, our rearguard rendered them an important service. Thanks to their steadfastness, the army moved at a leisurely pace, following march routes as if in peacetime. Attributing these achievements to Miloradovich's resourcefulness, the Tsar granted him the dignity of a count.

The rearguard withstood renewed attacks at Göda on 3 [15] May and, after a lengthy resistance, retreated in perfect order to Bautzen, crossing the Spree there and rejoining the other Coalition formations. The Coalition had decided to give Napoleon a major battle here. It lasted two days (8 and 9 [20 and 21] May) and ended with the Coalition being forced to retreat to Reichenbach. The Pskov Cuirassiers, as part of 2nd Cuirassier Division under Major General Duka and Lieutenant General Prince Golitsyn's Cuirassier Corps, in accordance with Count Wittgenstein's disposition, were in the reserve commanded by Grand Duke Konstantin Pavlovich and did not take an active part in the battle. Nevertheless, during the retreat by Coalition forces, our regiment, just as the entire cavalry, rendered them a service, holding back the enemy units pursuing them, forcing the French infantry to remain constantly in square and preventing the enemy from capturing any trophies. They retreated in General Yermolov's rearguard, shielding the Prussian corps under Blücher, Kleist and Yorck, as well as the force under Barclay de Tolly. En route to Reichenbach, Yermolov's rearguard withstood four strong enemy attacks, and their line of retreat was repeatedly threatened with envelopment. At Reichenbach, they were relieved by Miloradovich's rearguard. After minor battles fought by Miloradovich at Reichenbach, by Blücher at Haynau, among other actions, the Coalition forces moved into Schweidnitz [Świdnica] and Pilsen [Boleścin] on 16 [28] May.

A few days later, on 23 May [4 June], the belligerents concluded a truce until 28 July [9 August], not counting the six days obligatory mutual notification of the intention to resume hostilities.

By virtue of the armistice agreement, both sides immediately gave orders to withdraw units from the neutral zone, and so the Pskov Cuirassiers moved from Pilsen to Striegau [Strzegom] and Schweidnitz.

Meanwhile, during the armistice, Austria and Sweden joined the Coalition against Napoleon. According to the operational plan of action drawn up by the Coalition in Schloss Trachenberg [Zamek w Żmigrodzie] (near Breslau), part of the main Russo-Prussian army located in Silesia under Barclay de Tolly, a few days before the end of the armistice, was to cross into Bohemia via Landeshut [Kamienna Góra] and Glatz [Kłodzko] to Jungbunzlau [Mladá Boleslav] and Budin [Budyně nad Ohří], to join with Austrian forces and form the Army of Bohemia under the overall command of the Austrian *Feldmarschall* Fürst Schwarzenberg. The rest of that army, remaining in Silesia, formed the Army of Silesia under the command of the Prussian General Blücher. The former army (of Bohemia or main) was assigned to act decisively on Napoleon's communications, while the other (of Silesia) was to protect Silesia. A third army, of the North, commanded by the Crown Prince of Sweden (Bernadotte), was to operate in the north of Germany and join the others at Leipzig. Subsequently, a fourth Army of Poland, Bennigsen's, comprising Russian units located in Poland, would enter the theatre of military operations.

By 9 [21] August, the units of the Army of Bohemia had concentrated in the area between Teplitz [Teplice] and Kaaden [Kadaň] and entered Saxony the next day in four columns. Our regiment, as part of the reserve cavalry, proceeded with the second column - with Kleist's Prussian corps. On 11 [23] August, they halted at Neuhausen [*sic*], from where they proceeded towards Dresden, halting at Dippoldiswald on 13 [25] August. On 14 and 15 [26 and 27] August, a battle took place at Dresden, ending with the Coalition being repelled at all points. The reserve, which included the Pskov Cuirassiers, was not called into action. The Coalition were forced to abandon further attempts on Dresden and retreat. They withdrew into Bohemia, towards Kulm [Chlumec]. On 17 and 18 [29 and 30] August, a glorious battle took place here for the Coalition forces against Vandamme's corps, which was trying to sever the Army of Bohemia's line of retreat by enveloping it. On the first day of the battle, the Pskov Cuirassiers fought on (Osterman's) right wing, on the second they were in the centre. Vandamme's corps was defeated, and Vandamme himself was captured. The destruction of this formation of the French force offset the outcome of the Coalition's failed attempt on Dresden. General Yermolov, who commanded the right wing after Osterman was wounded, testifying to the merits of his comrades, wrote in his report: 'I cannot report on all the feats of those who distinguished themselves - it would be necessary to provide a list of everyone in general...' Nevertheless, the Pskov Cuirassiers received three awards: Colonel Pushkarev received the Order of St. Anna 2nd class with diamonds, while *Stabs-Rittmeister* Friedrichs and Lieutenant Vanykin received the Order of St. Anna 3rd class.

When Napoleon and his main force were out of the general area, the Coalition, having defeated Vandamme, began to gather behind Napoleon, near Leipzig. The Russo-Prussian Guards and Russian cuirassiers passed through Kolikotau [*sic*], Altenburg and Zeitz, arriving at the latter point on 3 [15] October. Napoleon and the Coalition monarchs, who had arrived there, decided to attack each other on 4 [16] October. According to the dispositions issued by Prince Schwarzenberg, the Pskov Cuirassiers along with the other Russian cuirassiers were to serve as reserves primarily for the right wing (Count Wittgenstein's), but were to be committed to battle only in case of emergency. The reserve were assigned to the Magdeborn and Cröbern positions, under the command of Tsarevich Konstantin Pavlovich. On the third day, 6 [18] October, in the evening, our entire 2nd Cuirassier Division moved forward and halted between Guldengosa and the Universitäts-Waldung, while on 7 [19] October, they were stationed on the right flank in front of Zuckelhausen together with Count Pahlen's cavalry and under his command, adjoining their left to Wittgenstein's force, located facing Probstheida. During this massive three-day battle of 400,000 men, which ended with the defeat of the *Empereur des Français*, the capture of the King of Saxony, and the victorious entry of the Coalition forces into Leipzig, the Pskov Cuirassiers repeatedly had to

fend off swift enemy attacks on our infantry or batteries, and counter attack themselves, pursuing them, cutting them down, and trampling them. The most active Pskov men on these days were: lieutenants Knizhnikov, von Galtey, Count Pahlen and lieutenant colonel Shcherbachev, thus, the first three were awarded the Order of St. Vladimir, 4th class, while the latter received the Order of St. Anna, 3rd class. After this battle, the cuirassiers took up positions with the Russo-Prussian reserves at Pegau, from where they followed Napoleon's army to the Rhine, via Erfurt, Hanau and Frankfurt-am-Main. Here, on the banks of the Rhine, the Coalition armies halted and remained inactive until the end of the year.

In early [mid] January 1814, every column in the main army (nine in total) was on the move and the Pskov Cuirassiers, having crossed the Rhine near Strasbourg, not without difficulties due to the numerous ice floes, moved through Saverne, Lunéville to Brienne, which was taken in combat by Coalition forces on 20 January [1 February]. During the attack on the town, our cuirassiers were in reserve under the command of Tsarevich Konstantin Pavlovich. Their hasty advance, on the orders of the Tsar himself, to the village of La Rothière, which was located forwards of the town and had been reoccupied by the French, strengthened the forces of the attackers so much that the enemy were quickly driven out from there and Brienne passed back into our hands. The victory at Brienne secured the Coalition presence in France and their onward advance towards Paris.

While retreating from Brienne, the enemy persisted in defending the crossings over the Aube, which is why our Pskov men, sent to the vanguard the next day, had to repeatedly take part in fierce outpost skirmishes that continued for two days in a row.

For some reason, however, the Coalition did not reap the benefits of the Battle of Brienne... Our main army remained inactive for a long time, and was then forced to retreat to Bar-sur-Aube, where on 15 [27] February an equally brilliant battle took place, forcing the French to retreat from there. Our army now had the opportunity to end the onward retreat.

In this action, the Pskov Cuirassiers, who were with the rest of the cavalry under the command of Count Pahlen, were to outflank the enemy and cut them off from the Aube crossing. But, due to Count Wittgenstein's orders, which were amended several times, they spent the whole day in pointless marching back and forth and only seized the bridge at Dolancourt in the evening after the French had successfully completed their retreat. It was too late to stop them. But our cuirassiers prevented them from holding the bridge or burning it. The enemy rearguard, under attack from the cuirassiers, were forced to surrender the bridge to us. For these deeds, our regiment, in the person of its worthy comrade, Colonel Pushkarev, was awarded a flattering and rare distinction: the King of Prussia, who had been present with our troops all day, awarded him the *Pour le Mérite*.

During their retreat, the French forces halted at Laubressel and Troyes. Wittgenstein's corps, temporarily replaced by Prince Gorchakov after he was wounded at Bar-sur-Aube, followed and attacked the position at Laubressel on 19 February [3 March]. The 2nd Cuirassier Division was part of this corps. The French quickly retreated from their positions without waiting for an attack. The cuirassiers raced after them, overran two enemy battalions, and captured three guns. The next day, 20 February [4 March], the Russians reached Troyes, which was immediately evacuated by the French and occupied by us.

The Pskov Cuirassiers' daring sweep against the enemy from Laubressel to Troyes was duly appreciated by their superiors. Besides Pushkarev, who excelled always and everywhere with his selfless courage and who now received the Order of St. George 4th class, there was a long list of regimental officers decorated for both this and the previous action at Bar-sur-Aube. Cornets Yaroshevsky, Yefimov, Stupin, Kobe and Zhurba received the Order of St. Anna 3rd class; *Stabs-*

Rittmeister Korbutovsky 1st and Lykov, the Order of St. Anna 2nd class; Lieutenant Colonel Ricard, the same order, with diamonds; lieutenants Stobbe, Mirbach, Lyakhnitsky, Stetsky, Korbutovsky 2nd and Cornet Verzhbitsky received the Order of St. Vladimir 4th class; Lieutenant Sokovnin 2nd, cornets Gavlovsky and Deynekovich were awarded Golden Swords inscribed *за храбрость* [for valour].

From March onwards, the Pskov Cuirassiers were required to transfer, along with all of Count Pahlen's cavalry, to Arcis, where until 7 [19] March they were in the vanguard of Raevsky's corps (who had replaced Wittgenstein), in order to monitor movements by Marshal Macdonald's formation. On this day (8 [20] March) a stubborn fight took place here, which had no decisive outcome: both belligerent armies retained the positions they had taken up in the morning. A ferocious struggle was expected on 9 [21] March. By six o'clock in the morning, the opposing armies were ready for battle. Our cuirassiers took up position in the second line. Unexpectedly, the French army began to retreat at around midday, not daring to continue the fight. The Russians followed them. Count Pahlen attacked the French cavalry with the Pskov Cuirassiers and all the cavalry. The enemy were driven off, and three guns became our trophies. Then we attacked the French from the right flank, while Raevsky's infantry attacked frontally. They were forced to set off from Arcis and cross the Aube, burning the bridge behind them. The onset of night halted our offensive moves.

Having left Arcis, the French headed towards Vitry, with the aim of evading our main army and intercepting its communications. We followed them and on 12 [24] March halted between Vitry and Fère-Champenoise. From here we planned to march on Paris.

On 13 [25] March, the Coalition armies - the main army and the Army of Silesia - moved from Vitry toward Paris. They were ordered to halt for the night at Fère-Champenoise. The Pskov Cuirassiers formed the vanguard along with Count Pahlen's and the Württemberg cavalry. At Soudé-Sainte-Croix, we encountered enemy forces under Marmont, who, however, immediately began to retreat toward Sommesous and Lenharrée, closely pursued by our vanguard. Our repeated bold attacks caused confusion in Marmont's corps, and we took four guns from them. Nevertheless, they managed to link up with Mortier's corps. However, the marshals realised they could not march to Vitry to join Napoleon and began retreating toward Paris, sending the infantry first and leaving the cavalry in the rearguard. Pahlen's cuirassiers and cavalry dislodged them and drove them beyond the infantry. Reinforced by 1st Cuirassier Division (which had been engaged in earlier battles in France) and artillery, our detachment charged the infantry and broke several French squares. Thereafter the continuous coordinated actions of our entire cavalry, carried out in the presence and on the orders of Tsarevich Konstantin Pavlovich, were crowned with complete success. The enemy quickly retreated towards Fère-Champenoise in disarray and on towards Sézanne, herded constantly by the cuirassiers and abandoning guns, ammunition caissons and supply wagons. This fact is attested to by a French historian. According to Koch: 'The confusion was so great that 24 guns, more than 60 ammunition caissons, and the supply trains were abandoned before Connantray. Struck by panic, artillery, cavalry, and infantry all fled headlong towards Fère-Champenoise.'² In reality, their loss of guns was much greater, since the cuirassiers alone took 20.

At Sézanne the enemy halted, trying to rally their corps back into order.

The Fère-Champenoise action is remarkable in that it was carried out by us on a 30-*versta* [20 mile] march, with cavalry alone, predominantly Russian, numbering 13,000, against two infantry corps. Our infantry did not fire a single shot and simply followed the cavalry. The greatest share of glory in

² Koch, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de la campagne de 1814*.

this affair went to Count Pahlen's vanguard detachment, to which the Pskov Cuirassiers belonged. This action exposed the gates of Paris to the Coalition force.

The next day, 14 [26] March, both Coalition armies continued their offensive, in a similar battle formation, towards Paris, to where the marshals who had been defeated the day before were heading from Sézanne. Our vanguard cavalry did not cease from putting pressure on the enemy from time to time. The adversaries marched in this manner for four days, all the way to Paris. On 17 [29] March, Mortier and Marmont each occupied the dominant high ground at Belleville and Montmartre. The assault was scheduled for the following day. At the appointed hour, Belleville was attacked by Barclay de Tolly's corps. Our cuirassiers, having moved up here in support of his infantry, launched two successful strikes on the French skirmishers, driving them back to the Belleville batteries and taking their general prisoner. Every Russian column was in action at this point so successfully that they began to push into Belleville and even into the city of Paris itself; when suddenly an order was received to pause military operations due to the beginning of negotiations for the surrender of Paris. By nightfall the capitulation was signed - and Paris was handed over to the Coalition monarchs.

Daylight on 19 [31] March had arrived, a momentous day, unprecedented in history: the Russian Coalition forces entered the 'global capital of a great nation' as victors! They entered in accordance with a specially arranged order. The Pskov Cuirassiers and others, along with the artillery, brought up the rear of the ceremonial procession through the streets of Paris. The glory of the Russian armed forces had reached its zenith.

The appearance of the Lifeguard, the cavalry and the grenadiers made a mesmerising impression on the Parisian population. Here is what Lord Londonderry wrote:

'Anything that could be said about the martial bearing of these troops would be an understatement; their dress and equipment were admirable, and when one thought of what they had endured, and that a certain number of these Russians had left the mountains of Tartary (which border the Chinese Empire), had crossed their country and had gone, in the space of a few months, from Moscow to beyond the Rhine, one was seized with a certain terror for the colossal empire to which they belonged.'³

The ceremonial march by the Pskov Cuirassiers and Coalition units through the streets of Paris was followed by the setting of the sun on Napoleon's fortune and grandeur... The French Senate passed a decree to depose him from the throne, the royal crown was returned to the Bourbons, the former ruler of all Europe tried to commit suicide in despair and, finally, accompanied by a Russian officer, was exiled to the island of Elba. Thus ended the grandiose bloody drama of the 19th century on the theme: was Europe to be or not to be submissive to the titanic will of the great Bonaparte.

In May, the Pskov Cuirassier Regiment, exhausted and diminished, but proud in the knowledge that the sacrifices they had made were not in vain, returned to their homeland. They only reached the Volhynia Governorate in late October [early November] and settled into permanent quarters in Ovruch. These quarters, however, did not last long. As soon as the spring of 1815 arrived, the strongman of Elba, with a handful of enthusiastic followers, landed on the coast of France - to try his luck once again, staking the dregs of his charisma on the French... And Napoleon was not so gravely mistaken: just as a snowball, rolling down a snowy slope, grows into an avalanche, so a handful of Napoleon's grenadiers, having marched across French soil, still adhering to Bonapartist traditions, grew into a formidable army that shattered the calm of Europe. They had to get their

3 Marquis of Londonderry, History of 1813 and 1814.

troops back on their feet again in order to settle the score on the battlefield with the rebellious convict once more, but this time for good. Russian troops also moved towards France including the Pskov Cuirassiers. The regiment set out from Ovruch in April 1815, as part of the same 2nd Cuirassier Division, commanded by their former regimental commander, the valiant Major General Saß. Having passed through Galicia, Bohemia and the lands of the *Rheinbund*, our troops only arrived in France in July, setting up bivouacs in the Loire *département*.

To their general satisfaction, the epilogue of the Napoleonic drama unfolded at Waterloo before the Russians arrived in France, and they did not have to draw their swords or fire a shot, and on 29 July [10 August], the 2nd Cuirassier and 3rd Grenadier Divisions triumphantly entered Paris and Russian flags flew there for the second time. Thereafter, on 1 [13] August, our regiment set off with the other units on the return journey and arrived in the town of Lipovets, Kiev Governorate in January 1816.

We have recounted, as briefly as possible, the participation of our regiment in the ten-year struggle of Europe and Russia against Napoleon, and have cited in various places the names of Pskov men who stood out from among their comrades in the field of battle for their courage and bravery and received awards for it. The duty of respect for the memory of those who laid down their lives or shed blood in these same fields obliges us to include their names on these pages. However, the list of those killed or wounded in the Napoleonic wars that we have provided is far from complete, as we have already mentioned.

Of those killed, that we know of, were: Lieutenant Colonel Derfelden (at Borodino), Captain Strukov (at Borodino), lieutenants Kamarovsky (at Jankowo) and Abber (at Brienne); Sub Lieutenant Umyanitsky (at Friedland); cornets Yurlov (at Lützen), von Korff 3rd (at Paris), Denisov 2nd (at Bar-sur-Aube), Isakov (at Gołymín), and Squadron Quartermaster Filonov (at Gołymín). Those wounded were colonels Saß with a bullet to the left arm (at Mozhaisk), Pushkarev, with a bullet to the right arm (at Paris), Vasilchikov, with a contusion (at Gołymín); Lieutenant Colonel Goloshchapov shot through the neck with a bullet (at Gołymín); Captain Hofmann shot through the leg with a bullet (at Gołymín), Staff Captain Ricard shot through the mouth with a bullet (at Heilsberg); lieutenants Styatsky shot through the left leg with a bullet and a contusion of the right torso (at Bar-sur-Aube), Elsner 1st with a bullet to the right arm (at Borodino) and a contusion of the leg from canister shot (at Leipzig), Stobbe with a bullet to the left arm (at Bar-sur-Aube), Knizhnikov 2nd with canister shot to the leg (at Leipzig), Verzhbitsky with a bayonet to the leg (at Paris), Kozlovsky 2nd with a bullet to the left leg (at Paris); cornets Alexandrov 1st with a sabre to the shoulder (at Heilsberg), Yerashevsky with a bullet to the leg and sabre to the head (at Kochergishki), Gavlovsky with a bullet to the leg (at Reichenbach), Kalinnikov 1st with a bullet to the arm (at Kulm) and Alexandrov 2nd with a contusion of the right shoulder (at Leipzig).

Appendix I.

A Chronological List Of Changes In The Composition And Naming Of The Regiment's Combat Elements.

25 September [6 October] 1798: The regiment was renamed Major General Baron von der Osten-Sacken's Dragoons.

11 [22] March 1799: The regiment was renamed Major General Prinz Eugen von Württemberg's Dragoons.

31 March [12 April] 1801: The regiment was renamed Pskov Dragoons.

16 [28] May 1803: One squadron was assigned to the raising of 2nd Horse Artillery Battalion, and a new one was raised in its place.

17 [29] December 1812: The regiment was renamed Pskov Cuirassiers.

Appendix II.

Uniforms, Equipment And Weapons Of The Regiment.

For uniforms, equipment and weapons of the regiment during the reign of Paul I, see Chapter 1.



Trumpet Major, Pskov Dragoons, 1802 to 1806.

During the reign of Alexander I, on 30 April [12 May], 1802, a new table of uniform, equipment and weapons items for dragoon regiments was confirmed, on the basis of which dragoon privates were entitled to: a caftan, or coat, breeches, boots, overalls, neck-cloth, forage cap, tunic, greatcoat, fleece, hat, gauntlets, sabre with sword-knot, sword belt, musket with bayonet, sling and frizzen-cover, cartridge case with cross-belt and hook and a pair of pistols. The horse furniture and its accessories consisted of: a saddle with musket holder, holsters, bridle, mouthpiece, crupper, breast-strap, girth, stirrups, pack cushion and blanket; on the shabraque, sickle, valise, forage sack, nose bag and water flask.

The caftan, or coat, was to be double-breasted, made of lighter green cloth with a standing collar, cuffs and a shoulder strap (on the left shoulder) in the colour of the collar, with red lining on the

hem and tails, and with flat buttons. This caftan was required to be buttoned up fully both in winter and summer. Its length was 17 *vershok* [29¾ inches).

The buttons were sewn on: seven on the right side of the opening, six on the left, one by the collar for the shoulder strap, two on each cuff, two on the small of the back, one each on the lower hem of the uniform at the join of the hem and tail turn-backs.

The breeches were cut from white cloth, five *vershok* [8¾ inches] short of the heel, and had laces covered by the hem of the coat.

Greased boots were worn with breeches, blunt-toed, with screwed-on iron spurs.

Overalls were made of grey cloth with leather reinforcing along the inside leg; they were worn with greased, round-toed boots. The neck-cloth was made of black cloth with a small bib on a linen lining and was tied at the back with ribbons.

The forage cap was made of lighter green cloth with a band and seams in the same colour as the collar.

The tunic [stable jacket] was cut from raw *kalamyanka* [linen].

A greatcoat made of gray cloth with a collar, epaulettes, and buttons matching the coat colours. A fleece jacket or short sheepskin coat. A bicorne hat with a plume of white feathers.

Musket with bayonet, sling, flint, cover and half-case made of *yuft* leather.

A cartridge case with a brass coat of arms and a cross-belt with a buckle, loop, tip and hook were required, identical to the cuirassiers, made of black leather, 4½ *vershok* [seven inches] long and 2½ *vershok* [3½ inches] high, with two rings. The cartridge case was worn over the left shoulder, on an elk-skin, lacquered, whitened belt, 1½ *vershok* [2⅝ inches] wide.

Black leather saddle with holsters and musket holder.

The blanket was made of grey cloth.

The shabraque was to be made of cloth in the colour of the coat collar, lined and with monograms and trimming of the edges the colour of the buttons.

A valise made of grey cloth, cylindrical, with four brass buttons for fastening.

In addition to these items, each squadron was provided with 16 tin-plated copper cauldrons with lids, a similar number of hay scythes, 15 axes, eight shovels, and four picks and hoes, with leather covers for the latter three, and straps made from recycled leather items such as elk-skin sword belts and slings.

The dragoon horse, was to be no taller than two arshin, two *vershok* [four feet, 11½ inches] and no shorter than two arshin, one *vershok* [four feet, 9¾ inches], had no specific coat colour, and was priced, without delivery, at 50 roubles.

Non-commissioned officers and *Wachtmeister* in dragoon regiments had the same uniform as dragoon privates, but with gold or silver braid (to match the colour of the buttons) along the lower edges and opening of the coat collar, with hat tassels made of white worsted with black and orange in the centre, and with the additional difference that the tops of their plumes were made of mixed black and orange feathers. They were also issued canes, which, when on horseback, they hooked onto the grip of their right pistol, and passed the lower end through the breast-strap. They had the weapons and equipment of dragoon privates, except for the musket, while the 1½ *vershok* [2⅝ inches] wide cross-belt for the cartridge case was without a buckle, loop, tip, or hook. The

tassels of their sword-knots were white with a mixture of black and orange; their sword-belts had no bayonet frog, and their saddles were without a musket holder.

The *Fahnenjunker* were uniformed and equipped and had horse furniture similar to that of non-commissioned officers, only the coat shoulder strap had gold or silver braid (matching the colour of the buttons) sewn along the entire length of their centre; an officer's sword-knot; the saddle had a socket for a standard.

The trumpeters, uniformed in the same way as dragoon privates, with the white plume replaced by a red one, were distinguished from them by their wings or shoulder caps the colour of their coat [collar], and stripes made of white woollen lace. They had the same weapons, equipment, and horse harness as non-commissioned officers, with the exception of cartridge cases, which they were not entitled to at all; their trumpets were slung with tassels and cords of white worsted.

The Trumpet Major differed from the preceding squadron trumpeters in that, like the non-commissioned officers, he had gold or silver braid (matching the colour of the buttons) on the coat collar and cuffs; a plume with a top of black and orange feathers; white with black and orange tassels on his hat and sword-knot, tassel cords on the trumpet, and a cane.

The kettledrummer was equipped and armed in exactly the same way as the trumpet major; the kettledrums and their hangings were the same colour as the coat collar while the embroidery and fringe were the same colour as the buttons, the previous pattern was as described except for the change of the monogram from Emperor Paul I to the monogram of Emperor Alexander I.

Officers of dragoon regiments were entitled to the same uniform as privates, but with a red *stamed* [wool] lining, without shoulder straps or the seventh button on the right side; with horizontal pocket flaps with three buttons and with tails that stopped just a *ladon* [three inches] short of the knees. When on duty they wore: elk-skin breeches, boots with screw-on spurs similar to those worn by lower ranks; a black silk cravat tied at the back instead of a neck-cloth, hat, gloves, sword-knot, sword belt and broadsword.

The horse furniture remained the same, except for the saddles, which were replaced with Hungarian ones, covered with a cloth shabraque with gold or silver braid and an embroidered monogram under a crown in the button colour.

Officers of dragoon regiments wore greatcoats with collars that matched the colour of their coat collar.

The generals were assigned similar uniforms, weapons, and horse harness as the officers, only with the addition of white plumage on their hats.

On campaign, instead of elk-skin breeches and the boots described above, generals and officers of dragoon regiments were required to wear overalls and low-topped boots.

Off duty, dragoon generals and officers wore white cloth breeches; a cavalry sword instead of a broadsword with an infantry sword-knot and sword belt with a frog, worn under the coat.

The colour of the collar, cuffs, shoulder straps and shabraque in the Pskov Dragoon Regiment were: flame-red, the buttons were yellow.

On 17 [29] December 1812, the Pskov Cuirassier Regiment, renamed from the Dragoon Regiment, were assigned crimson as the collar colour with yellow trim.

Light copper and steel cuirasses were used instead of black ones. These had been captured by the regiment from the enemy during the Patriotic War of 1812.



Non-commissioned officer and private, Pskov Cuirassiers, 1813 to 1814.

On 27 December 1812 [8 January 1813], those squadrons newly added to cuirassier regiments were ordered to have the following brushes and nuts on their sword-knots: 6th squadron - red, and 7th replacement squadron - white with a touch of red.

On 7 [19] December 1813, officers of all cuirassier regiments were ordered to have white lining on their frock coats, and collars of the same dark green cloth as frock coats, with piping in the colour of the collet collar, which was also required on the cuffs and pocket flaps.

On 6 [18] April 1814, the white double-breasted collet coats that cuirassier officers had since 1802 were changed to single-breasted ones with nine flat buttons, a collar fastened with hooks, and

piping along the chest in the collar colour.

On 20 May [1 June] 1814, both officers and lower ranks in all cuirassier regiments, instead of double-breasted collets, were issued single-breasted ones with nine buttons with piping along the sides and down to the tails in the collar colour, and white around the collar. At the same time, the officers' campaign overalls with buttons that had been worn since 1802 were replaced, as before, by grey overalls with two wide stripes and piping in the colour of the collet collar and without leather on the inside leg.

On 19 [31] August 1814, similar overalls, only with leather on the seat, were also issued to the lower ranks of cuirassier regiments; elk-skin breeches and high-topped boots or jackboots were reserved for parades only.

On 15 [27] September 1814, cuirassier regiments were ordered to have 1,120 carbines and 112 *shtutser* [rifled carbines] each.

In this same year, a white ribbon was added to the cockades of officers' hats, which was later replaced by a silver one.

Appendix III.

Regimental Quartering and Operational Deployments.

The Reign of Paul I:

From June to December 1796 the regiment was in Velikie Luki and Toropets, under the command of Field Marshal Prince Repnin and Lieutenant General Zagryazhsky.

The regiment remained stationed in the towns of Velikie Luki and Toropets in January 1797, under the command of Field Marshal Prince Repnin and Lieutenant General Rumyantsev; in February they were in the Novo Rzhev *Uezd* [district] in the village of Fishevaya; in March and April they were in the Polotsk Governorate, in May and June the regiment was on the march to the town of Kexholm; in July and August they were in the town of Kexholm, under the command of Field Marshal Count Kamensky and Lieutenant General von Derfelden; from September to December they were in the same place under the command of Field Marshal Count Kamensky and Lieutenant General Vasilchikov, in 6th Finland Division [Inspectorate].

From January to May 1798 the regiment was in the town of Kexholm; in June they were on the march to the town of Tikhvin; in July they were in the town of Tikhvin; in August they were on the march to the town of Shlisselburg; from September to December they were in the town of Shlisselburg, in the village of Plitnaya Lomka, Shlisselburg *Uezd*, under the command of General-of-Cavalry Baron von der Pahlen; they came under 6th Finland Division until October, thereafter they came under 1st St. Petersburg Division.

War of the Second Coalition:

From January to March 1799, the regiment was in the village of Rybachya and Ust-Izhora, St. Petersburg *Uezd*, and in the village of Plitnaya Lomka and Mustolovo, Shlisselburg *Uezd*; in April they were on the march to the town of Dorpat, under the command of General-of-Cavalry Count von der Pahlen; in May they were still on the march, under the command of General-of-Infantry de Lacy and General-of-Infantry Benckendorff; in June they were in the Lithuania Governorate, Rossieny *Uezd* in the towns of Vilki [Vilkija], Sredniki [Seredžius], Vilionys and Kirstemon [sic], under the command of General-of-Infantry Lacy and Lieutenant General Hermann; they remained in these locations in July, under the command of General Lacy and Lieutenant General comte Langéron; they also remained here from August to December, under the command of General Lacy and General-of-Cavalry comte Vioménil, in 1st St. Petersburg division.

Armed Neutrality:

In January 1800, the regiment remained in the Lithuania Governorate, Rossieny *Uezd* in the towns of Vilki, Sredniki, Vilionys and Kirstemon, under the command of General-of-Infantry Lacy and General-of-Cavalry comte Vioménil; in February and March, they were on the march to Rybacha Sloboda, St. Petersburg *Uezd*; in April and May they were in the town of Staraya Russa; in June they were on the march to Orël; from July to December they were in the city of Orël, under the command of Field Marshal Count Saltykov 2nd, in 1st St. Petersburg Division.

The Reign of Alexander I:

The regiment remained in Orël throughout 1801, under the command of Field Marshal Count Saltykov 2nd, in 1st St. Petersburg Division.

From January 1802 to 1805 the regiment was in Vyazma, Smolensk Governorate, under the

command of Field Marshal Count Saltykov 2nd, in 4th Smolensk Division.

Wars of the Third and Fourth Coalitions:

From 1805 to April 1806 the regiment was part of the Western Army under General-of-Cavalry Baron Bennigsen; from April 1806 to 1808, they remained part of this army under General-of-Infantry Rimsky-Korsakov. They were on campaign on Prussian territory from 1806 to 1807. From July 1808 to June 1809 the regiment was stationed in Lida, Lithuania-Grodno Governorate, in 4th Division under Lieutenant General Prince Golitsyn 5th.

War of the Fifth Coalition:

From 1809 to 1810, they remained in the Western Army under General-of-Infantry Buxhöwden. From July 1809 the regiment was on Austrian territory, in Lieutenant General Prince Golitsyn 5th's 4th Division.

In January 1810 the regiment was located in Vishnevo, Lithuania-Vilna Governorate; while from July to September, they were in Vidzy, Lithuania-Vilna Governorate; they remained part of 4th Division, under Lieutenant General Baggovut.

The Patriotic War and War of the Sixth Coalition:

From 1811 to 1814 the regiment was part of the Western Army under General-of-Infantry Count (later Prince) Barclay de Tolly.

From January 1811 to February 1812, they were in Vidzy, Lithuania-Vilna Governorate, in 2nd Division under Baron Korff.

From March 1812, they were on the march to Bayarely [*sic*], Zavileisky [Švenčionys] *Uezd*, Lithuania-Vilna Governorate; in April they were in the village of Zhosly [*sic*], Trotsky *Uezd*, Lithuania-Vilna Governorate; in May they were in Lida, Lithuania-Grodno Governorate; Novogrudok, Grodno Governorate in June; camped by the river Dvina in July; they were part of 2nd Division under Adjutant General Baron Korff throughout.

In July 1813 the regiment was located in the village of Medtel [*sic*] in Silesia; in August they were camped at Trautenau [Trutnov], Silesia; in September they were camped at Teplitz, in Bohemia; in October they were on the march across Saxon territory at Oberfrohna; in November they were in Bablenhausen [*sic*]; in December they were in Etheim [*sic*]; they remained part of 2nd Division under Major General Kretoz throughout.

In January 1814 they were in Sankt-Ulrich [*sic*]; in May they were on campaign in France; in July they were on the march to the Duchy of Warsaw; in November and December they were in Ovruch, Volhynia Governorate; they remained part of 2nd Division under Major General Leontiev throughout.

War of the Seventh Coalition:

From January to March 1815 they were in Ovruch, Volhynia Governorate; in April they were on the march to Pilipovichi, Novogrod-Volhynia *Uezd*; in May they were marching through Austrian territory in Psvitno [*sic*]; in June they were marching through Zwittau [Svitavy], Bohemia; in July they were marching through France; in August they were in Braunau; in November they were marching through Leitomischl [Litomyšl], Bohemia; in December they were in Stopnica, Kielce Governorate, Kingdom of Poland; they remained part of 2nd Division under Major General Saß throughout.

Appendix IV.

Colonels-in-Chief and Regimental Commanders.

Colonels-in-Chief:

Yelagin, Vasily Ivanovich, Lieutenant General, later General-of-Cavalry, 10 [21] January 1797 to 10 [21] February 1798.

Chicherin, Vasily Nikolaevich, Major General, 10 [21] February to 25 September [6 October] 1798.

Baron von der **Osten-Sacken**, Ieronim Kazemirovich, Major General, 25 September [6 October] 1798 to 17 [28] July 1799.

Prinz Eugen von **Württemberg**, Major General, 11 [22] March 1799 to 6 [18] April 1801.

Baron **Korff**, Fyodor Fyodorovich, Major General and Adjutant General, from 6 [18] April 1801 to 1 [13] September 1814, that is, until the day colonels-in-chief of line regiments were disestablished.

Regimental Commanders:

Count **Tolstoy**, Dmitry Alexandrovich, Colonel, had served in the regiment since 1793, and on 9 [20] January, 1798, he was promoted to major general and appointed colonel-in-chief of the Nizhny Novgorod Dragoons.

Baron von der **Osten-Sacken**, Ieronim Kazemirovich, Colonel, 31 March [11 April] to 25 September [6 October] 1798, thereafter promoted major general and appointed colonel-in-chief of this regiment.

Blum, Fyodor Yermolaevich, Major General, 17 [28] July 1799 to 31 January [11 February] 1800.

Prince **Guriel**, Stepan Khristoforovich, Major General, 31 January [11 February] to 6 [18] June 1800.

Rozhnov, Alexander Ivanovich, Major General, 6 [18] June to 13 [25] October 1800.

Baron **Korff**, Fyodor Fyodorovich, Major General, 13 [25] October 1800 to 6 [18] April 1801, thereafter colonel-in-chief of this regiment.

Krasnokutsky, Filipp Ivanovich, Colonel, 15 [27] June 1801 to 18 [30] May 1803.

Khitrovo, Nikolai Zakharovich, Colonel, 5 [17] February 1804 to 28 May [9 June] 1806.

Vasilchikov, Nikolai Vasilievich, Colonel, 28 September [10 October] 1806 to 19 [31] July 1810.

Saß, Andrey Andreevich, Colonel, 19 [31] July 1810 to 15 [27] September 1813.

Pushkarev, Fyodor Nikolaevich, Colonel, 1 [13] June 1815 to 20 March [1 April] 1818.