

Last letter of King Ludwig II.

Staatsstreich on Bavarian (A stately act against a Bavarian)



On the banks of Lake Starnberg, a commemorative cross commemorates Ludwig II. At this point, the king of Bavaria was killed.

Ludwig II was insane and drowned in Lake Starnberg. This was considered as a safe theory for a long time. Now a letter from the King creates doubt concerning this theory.

On June 10, 1886, three days before his mysterious death in Lake Starnberg, King Ludwig II sent a most remarkable letter to his cousin, Prince Ludwig Ferdinand. It sounds like a desperate call for help. This letter, which Wittelsbacher Ausgleichsfonds acquired from a member of the House of Wittelsbach, was Ludwig's last letter.

„Think what has happen today, it is unbelievable!“ He wrote very distracted and upset. „This night one of my stable servants came up to me and told me that several of my Ministers have formed a horrible dictum. They and some of my court have arrived in silence and plan to force me to go to Linderhof with them; where they plan to hold me prisoner and force me to abdicate the thrown; in short a shameful conspiracy.“

These lines, historically, contain a small sensation. The content disregards the assumption, expressed by the Psychiatrist Dr. Gudden and his colleagues, that Ludwig had been paranoid in the last days of his life. The letter expresses no doubt that the king had at that time clearly recognized the arrival of a state commission, which was to inform him of his incapacitation. He therefore implored his cousin imploringly to inquire about the state of things in Munich.

„How can such an infamy be possible,“ complains Ludwig, who complains bitterly, „that I heard of rumors about me (purported illness), purposely strewn about with money, on which not a syllable is true.“ He suspected his uncle, Prince Luitpold, the later Prince Regent, of the conspiracy.

The king recognizes the danger, but interprets it wrongly

These lines show that Ludwig II was mentally able to see the threat that threatened him. This is confirmed by Gerhard Immler, Chief Archiving Director at the Bavarian State Archives, one of the best experts on the Ludwig II estate.

However, the king had strangely responded, says Immler. He did not manage to take the right steps for him. He misinterpreted the situation in which he was. „He did not rate the events against the background of the constitution, but as an act of a royal drama à la Shakespeare,“ says Immler.

What took place between the 9th and 12th of June, 1886, reminded of a peasant theater production, a folk grotesque tragedy against the backdrop of the White Castle, the historian Hermann Rumschöttel once described the core of the drama. The First Government Commission, led by his successor to Neuschwanstein, under Frederick Freiherr von Crailsheim, the Minister of Foreign

Affairs, failed by the resistance of gendarmes, fire-brigades, and royal staff. The king had them arrested

After a few hours, the Commission was released. On the 11th of June a second commission, under the direction of the physician Bernhard von Gudden, appeared. Ludwig had, in the meantime, consulted with his advisor and Sgt. of Arms Alfred Graf Dürckheim-Montmartin, who suggested that he should go to Munich and turn to his subjects.

Ludwig rejected this idea as well as the proposal to flee to Tyrol. He lacked any strength to resist. „For my sake, no blood shall be shed,“ he said.

An expert opinion explains the king for mental illness - by remote diagnosis

From the letter, moreover, it is also new that Ludwig's abduction from Neuschwanstein originally took a different course. Accordingly, he should be driven from the first fishing commission to Linderhof. In this case the story and the myth would have been different. Ludwig II would not have drowned in the lake of Starnberg under unexplained circumstances.

„That he was then brought to Berg seems to lie with Dr. Gudden,“ Immler suspects. Gudden had still succeeded, and had taken over the direction of the Second Government Commission. He and some colleagues had previously confessed to the king an incurable mental illness, paranoia (insanity).

Gudden also regarded Ludwig as „born insane“, because he was pursuing the concept of a cable car across the alpine lake.

The fact that the experts had been wrong in a number of points, one of them later admitted. It was expected that a man would be uncontrollably mad, while Ludwig had behaved quietly and reasonably during and after his arrest.

„How can you declare me to be mentally ill, when you have not looked at me or examined me before?“ Asked King Gudden, who had carried out his incapacitation by remote diagnosis?

„Your Majesty, that was not necessary, the file material is very rich and completely proof, it is almost overwhelming,“ Gudden replied, according to a note from the conversation. The king was then transported to Schlossberg on Lake Starnbergersee, where he arrived at noon on June 12, 1886. Five days before, five ministers and the Prime Minister had had his „complete internment“.

The Staatsstreich as a stairs joke of history - with unexpected point

The politician Peter Gauweiler, a profound expert on Ludwig II, is convinced that „the executive bearers of the government's action have actually neglected, bowed, and broken what was right at that time in the German Reich and the Kingdom of Bavaria.“

The King had not been granted any rights or means of defense at any stage in the proceedings, which, according to the legal situation in Bavaria at that time, were self-evident to everyone in the process of decontamination.

The letter in the wording:

Dearest cousin! Forgive the poor writing, I write this in the greatest haste. Think what has happened unheard of today! This night a man came up from the stable building, and there were several people (among them horrible dictum) a minister, and one of my court rulers had arrived in silence, ordered my coach and horses to be taken from here (from the upper castle) Back and wanted to force me to go to Linderhof, apparently and to keep me trapped there, and God knows what to do, to abdicate abdication briefly a shameful conspiracy! Who can only be behind such a crime, Prz. Luitpold, presumably? Through gendarmerie and fire-brigade, which was bravely opposed, it was

provisionally thwarted. The shame-rebels were arrested. Keep this for yourself. But how can such an infamy be possible? Please investigate this for yourself with the help of others! Do you hold such a thing for possible!

Earlier, I wrote to you that I heard about rumors about me (purposely ill-conceived) that I purposely strewn about with money, on which not a syllable is true. It's too bad. There must be light in this abyss of wickedness! Your trusting cousin, Ludwig Hohenschwangau. June 10, augmentation with a pencil: This scum of wickedness will attack me at night!

For Gauweiler, it was a highly treasonous coup, committed by ministers who feared their office. Thus considered, it does not matter to Gauweiler whether Ludwig's death on the evening of the 13th June 1886 happened in an escape attempt or by suicide. „The ministers have him on their conscience, whoever forsakes the king against right and law, and bears the blame for his death in flight,“ he wrote in an essay on Ludwig II.

The stairs joke about the story is that the king has become an icon of Bavarian history precisely because of these tragic circumstances.

In this regard, Gauweiler would like to point out that in the Ammergauer Alps, a huge fire is annihilated every year on Ludwig's birthday on the 25th of August. “For which this historical person in Germany, there still such a festive celebration given annually”



Königstreue (death day Votivkapelle in mountain)

King Ludwig II. Unforgettable and misunderstood

On the 129th anniversary of the death of Ludwig II, more than one hundred pilgrimages to the Votivkapelle in Berg. The fans of the “fairy tale king” keep loyal to the monarch who died under mysterious circumstances.