

# *The Devotion to Love and Duty*

*E.I. Trubetskaya*



*P. Annenkova*



*M.N. Volkonskaya*



The wives and brides followed their beloved men to Siberia: **M.N. Volkonskaya, E.I.Trubetskaya, A.G. Murav'ova, E. P. Naryshkina, N.O. Fonvizina,, A. I Davydova, A. V.Ental'tseva, A. V. Rosen, M.K. Yushnevsckaya, Polina Gebl(Annenkova), Kamila De Dantu(Ivashov's bride).**

Te first woman to meet her husband the former prince and colonel was Ekaterina Ivanovna Trubetskaya. She was a daughter of a French emigrant county Ivan Stepanovich Laval. Among the guests in Laval's house were Pushkin, Ryleev, Karamzin. Ekaterina was an educated woman. Her remarkable personality, her persistence and determination to her duty deeply impressed even her enemies. Her example was followed by other Decemrists' wives.



*Kamila de Dantu  
(Ivashova)*



*A.G. Murav'ova*



*E.P. Narishkina*



*Bestuzhev «Damskaya street in Chita»*

The second woman was Maria Nicolayevna Volkonskaya. She was the daughter of general Rayevsky, a hero of the war with Napoleon. Maria's two brothers were Pushkin's friends. Maria was well educated. She was 20 when she married Sergei Volkonski. When she followed her husband to Siberia, she had a two-year-old son. This courageous woman understood that she would never see him again. Almost simultaneously A.G. Murav'ova went from St. Petersburg to Siberia. From Irkutsk Volkonskaya went to Nerchinsk, Murav'ova to Chita. She brought the famous Pushkin's poem with her. In autumn 1831 Ivoshov's bride Kamilla de Dantu came to Petrovsky Zavod. Polina Gueble, a French milliner followed her beloved the brilliant aristocrat-officer Ivan Alexandrovich Annenkov. Their wedding was held on the 4<sup>th</sup> of April 1828 in Chita. The Decembrists' wives supported their husbands and helped the other prisoners as much as they could.

They were greatly respected by the authorities and the local people.

The Volkonskys spent 10 years in Petrovsky Zavod. Then they were directed to Uric and afterwards to Irkutsk. With the help of their relative Orlov, their son Misha got an opportunity to study in Irkutsk Gymnasium. Some years later he published the notes of his parents. Annenkov was happy in his marriage with Praskovya Egorovna. He loved his sons and daughters and devoted much time to their education.

## *Children*

The first man, who took the new-born children after their birth was Ferdinand Volf. Only 14 children survived and grew up. Misha Volkonsky, Sasha Trubetskoi, Olga Annenkova, Nona Murav'ova are among them. All children were nursed and educated by the whole commune. Ivan Yakishkin wrote: "Nowhere children could be surrounded with such constant care as in Chita and Petrovsk. "All children studied foreign languages, music, painting, literature, mathematic, geography.

Olga Annenkova wrote in her memorials that she was brought up and educated by Decembrists. They taught their children to love people, to believe in kindness and all disappointments they met later couldn't destroy those ideals, which had been received in their childhood. Most of the Decembrists could sign the poetic words of V. Raevsky devoted to his daughter Alexandra. He wrote: " *Love people, help them ... feel for them ... It is not their fault that they are pressed by slavery and shame* ".

After 16 years of exile children who were born in Siberia and whose parents were noblemen and had married before the condemnation, could get education on the state account if they changed their surname. Only Davydov agreed with such condition. He allowed his sons and daughters to study on the state account by the surname of the Vasil'evs.

### *Mozaic panel at the station building in Petrovsky Zavod.*

#### *“Decembrists’ Wives”*

Odoyevski

#### *“Devoted to M. Volkonskaya”*

Был край, слезам и скорби посвящённый,  
Восточный край, где розовых зарей  
Луч радостный, на небе том рождённый,  
Не услаждал страдальческих очей.

Где душен был и воздух, вечно ясный,  
И узникам кров светлый докучал.  
И весь обзор, обширный и прекрасный,  
Мучительно на волю призывал.

Вдруг ангелы с лазури низлетели  
С отрадою к страдальцам той страны,  
Но прежде свой небесный дух одели  
В прозрачные земные пелены.  
И вестницы благие провиденья  
Явились, как дочери земли.  
И узникам с улыбкой утешенья,  
Любовь и мир душевный принесли.  
И каждый день садились у ограды,  
И сквозь небесные уста  
По капле им точили мёд отрады...  
С тех пор лились в темнице дни, лета;  
В затворниках печали все уснули,  
И лишь они страшились одного,  
Чтоб ангелы на небо не вспорхнули,  
Не сбросили покрыва своего.



The Decembrists called their wives “angels”. They brought up their children, ordered books, newspapers and medicines from Moscow and St. Petersburg. The Decembrists began to get letters from relatives and friends with the help of their wives. With their help they had a connection with the outside world. Few of them returned to their native places. The first victim was the most courageous and most fragile of them. Alexandra Murav’ova died on November 22, 1832 at the age of 28. The second Decembrist wife to lose her life was Camilla de Dantu. For eight years she lived happily and in harmony with Vasily Ivashov. She was 32. Ekaterina Trubetskaya, who was the first to join her husband in Siberia, died two years before the amnesty.

***Many years have gone, but people still admire those brave and noble women.***

