



NOT ALL VANITY

by AGNES DE STOECKL

*Thank you so much for being a
Patreon supporter! This post is
exclusively for you.*

FILE UNDER: **SOURCE REPORTS**

THIS SOURCE KEPT POPPING UP in the footnotes of other sources. The tidbits usually related to Russian royals, so I bought a copy for myself and see what Agnes's story was all about. I'm glad I did – there's **a lot** more here than I thought there would be. And I wasn't expecting her story to carry us from the Gilded Age all the way to World War II.

BOOK DATA

THE BASICS

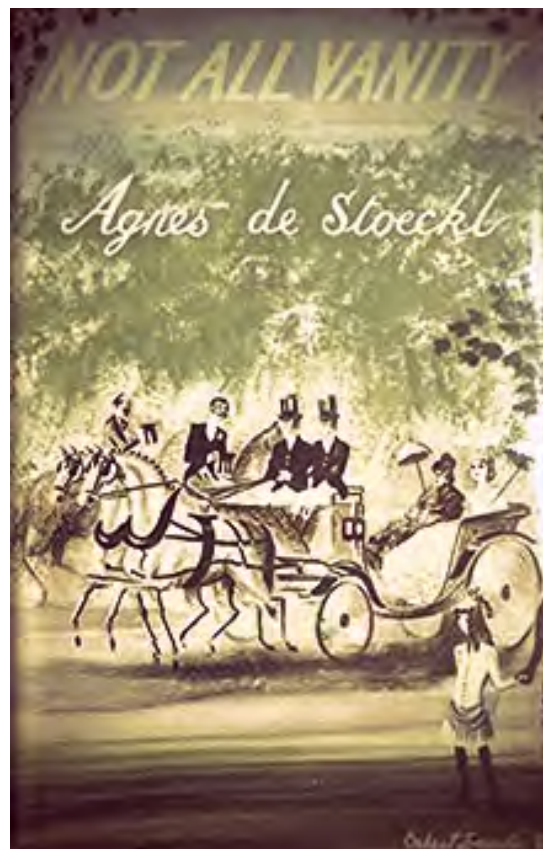
TITLE: *Not All Vanity*

AUTHOR: Agnes de Stoeckl
Edited by George Kinnaird

PUBLISHER: John Murray (London)

YEAR: 1951 (second printing)

LANGUAGE: English



FINDING IT

WHERE I GOT IT: Used, via Alibris

FIND YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY COPY: [Worldcat results](#)

BUY LINKS FOR USED COPIES:

- [ABE Books](#) (\$39+ at the time of this writing)
- [Alibris](#) (no copies at the time of this writing)
- [Amazon Marketplace](#) (no copies at the time of this writing; well, none less than \$831, which is BANANAS)

WHY THIS BOOK?

MY RESEARCH PURPOSE: Agnes de Stoeckl knew (and liked) Grand Duchess Anastasia Mikhailovna, the widow of Grand Duke Friedrich Franz III of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. After writing about Anastasia's daughter-in-law, born Princess Alexandra of Hanover, I decided to write about Anastasia, too. Obviously, I had to get the low-down from someone who knew her.



GRAND DUCHESS ANASTASIA MIKHAILOVNA BY AN UNKNOWN PHOTOGRAPHER, PUBLIC DOMAIN VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

PEOPLE MENTIONED

NOT EXHAUSTIVE AND IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER

- Baron Alexander de Stoeckl (became her husband)
- Baron Alexander de Bodisco (Russian minister plenipotentiary to the US in the early 1850s)

- Harriet Williams (de Bodisco's American wife)
- Baron Edouard de Stoeckl (became her father-in-law; replaced de Bodisco as minister)
- Eliza Howard (de Stoeckl Sr.'s American wife)
- Tsar Alexander II & Empress Maria Alexandrovna
- Abraham Lincoln (friend of her mother-in-law)
- Grand Duke Michael Mikhailovich and his morganatic wife, Countess Sophie Merenberg (later Countess Torby)
- Grand Duchess Anastasia Mikhailovna (Michael's sister)
- *Brief mentions as party guests during their time with Michael and Sophie:* Countess Mélanie de Pourtalès, Alice Keppel, Prince Edward of Wales (future Edward VIII), Lady Randolph Churchill, Winston Churchill
- Grand Duchess Maria Georgievna (born Princess Maria of Greece and Denmark) and her husband, Grand Duke George Mikhailovich

- Grand Duke Michael Nikolaevich, Maria's mother-in-law
- Tsar Nicholas II and his family
- *Brief mentions and encounters during their time with George and Maria in Russia:* Elinor Glyn, Princess Nelly Bariatinsky, Comtesse Alexie Orloff-Davidoff, the Emir of Bohara
- Dowager Tsarina Maria Feodorovna
- Dowager Queen Alexandra of Great Britain; her daughter, Princess Victoria; her daughter-in-law, Queen Mary of Great Britain and Ireland
- Prince Christopher of Greece (Maria's brother), King George of Greece (Maria's father), King Frederick VIII of Denmark (Maria's uncle)
- King Manuel of Portugal
- Count and Countess Raczynski
- Prince George, Duke of Kent and Princess Marina, Duchess of Kent

EVENTS MENTIONED (NOT EXHAUSTIVE AND IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER)

- Abraham Lincoln's assassination
- Tsar Alexander II's assassination (mention; brief)
- Grand Duke Mikhail Nikolaevich's funeral
- World War I & the Russian Revolution
- Death of the Duke of Kent in 1942

BRIEF SUMMARY

THIS BOOK IS AGNES'S MEMOIR. It's not a comprehensive history or biography. Luckily for us, she had such an interesting life that we get to meet dozens of royals and aristocrats as seen through her eyes. This book is interesting for the fine line it provides between an employee (chamberlain, equerry, lady-in-waiting) and a friend. We see moments where Agnes and her family are treated like both. The book begins during her childhood in Paris. As a young girl, she met her future husband, Baron Alexander de Stoeckl, in Dieppe. He worked for the Russian embassy in London, following in

the footsteps of his father, who had also been a Russian diplomat. When Agnes married Alexander (“Sasha”), they began a life of international adventures beside the rich, the famous, the infamous, and the royal. They worked for Grand Duke Michael Mikhailovich and then Grand Duchess Maria Georgievna. Agnes sat out World War I with Maria in England, then drifted into a less fulfilling career as a sales consultant and hostess after the war.



**BARONESS AGNES DE STOECKL. IMAGE BY
LAFAYETTE STUDIOS VIA [THE GRAND LADIES SITE](#).**

RELIABILITY

MODERATE TO HIGH. The fact that her book is still cited in other sources means that the tidbits she offered are either (a) accurate, or (b) too interesting not to mention. Some of the tidbits she relates were told to her, and have to be taken with a grain of salt. But I'm crossing all 10 fingers and toes that her anecdote about Queen Alexandra of Great Britain insisting on having a high-kick contest at Agnes's birthday party is true.

A WTF MOMENT

WHEN WRITING ABOUT HER CAREFREE

Parisian childhood, Agnes shared a crazy story that the Marquis de Biencourt had told her. I'm sharing it with you because it sounds like an urban legend.

The Marquis said that, as a young man, a doctor had one approached him with a very unusual proposition: "I have been asked by a lady to come to you. This lady belongs to one of the greatest families in Europe and she must have a son, so she has chosen you!" (17)

“I HAVE BEEN ASKED BY A LADY
TO COME TO YOU. THIS LADY
BELONGS TO ONE OF THE
GREATEST FAMILIES IN EUROPE
AND SHE MUST HAVE A SON, SO
SHE HAS CHOSEN YOU!”

The woman would come to him in secret and sleep with him, on the condition that Biencourt never try to figure out who she was. Biencourt accepted – the doctor who approached him as a famous *accoucheur*, after all. So the woman picked him up in a coach at the assigned time and took him to an empty house. Wearing a black face mask, she led him into the bedroom. He said she was absolutely gorgeous, but never took off the mask, no matter how many times he asked. The next morning, he left as agreed without knowing who she was. Nine months later, a note was hand-delivered to him: he had a son. He told her this story in the 1800s, when he was in his sixties. Presumably, this episode was set in the 1840s or 1850s. Doesn't this just sound like an urban legend?

MY FAVORITE TIDBITS

- **AMERICAN CONNECTIONS:** Baron Alexander de Bodisco, the Russian minister plenipotentiary posted to Washington, D.C. in the early 1850s, married an American girl named Harriet Beall Williams (1824-1890). She later lived in St. Petersburg.



HARRIET BEALL WILLIAMS DE BODISCO

PAINTED BY JOHANN CONRAD DORNER VIA [GENI](#).

De Bodisco's replacement was Baron Edward de Stoeckl, Agnes's father-in-law. He also married an

American girl, Eliza Howard. Edward and Eliza had a son, Alexander (“Sasha,” whom Agnes would later marry). As a child, Sasha watched Abraham Lincoln’s funeral procession. One summer, there was a reception at the Russian legation in Washington. A “Monsieur Davidoff” who later became the Russian minister in Tokyo suggested to Eliza that she greet a visiting Russian admiral in Russian. He taught her a phrase, which she learned and duly repeated at the party. Unfortunately, this was a prank – he’d taught her how to say, “How do you do, you son of a bitch?” I feel like there’s a lot of unexplored territory, research-wise, in terms of these Russian ministers and their American wives.

- **A TIDBIT ABOUT ALEXANDER II’S ILLEGITIMATE KIDS:** “They said that when the Emperor’s son, Alexander III, came to the throne and lived in the Palace, he carried out reforms. Amongst other things, on the second floor a huge cow was found! It had been for the use of the Yourievski nurseries (these were the natural children of Alexander II), and explained, no doubt, the noise overheard about which the late Empress

had complained when she lay dying.” (32-33)

- **AGNES’S MOTHER-IN-LAW ON TSAR ALEXANDER II:** “She used to tell me how really beautiful he was; he never lowered his head when he bowed, but always tilted it upwards.” (33)



TSAR ALEXANDER II BY SERGEY LVOVICH
LEVITSKY, PUBLIC DOMAIN VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

- **TOLD TO AGNES, ABOUT EMPRESS MARIA FEODOROVNA:** “I was told that, at

the Emperor's funeral, the Empress Marie Fedorowna (the new Empress) took Princess Yourievsky's hand and made her walk beside her saying 'There is no rank here, only unhappy women.' " (35)

- **WHEN AGNES INSISTED GRAND DUKE MICHAEL LOSE AT CROQUET TO PLEASE KING EDWARD VII:** "The Grand Duke got furious and said: 'Certainly not, I want to win.' " (70)
- **HOW TO TELL THERE'S A GRAND DUCHESS IN A RUSSIAN COACH:** The coachman will have his cocked hat turned sideways, according to Agnes. The reins will probably also be white leather, which only Grand Duchesses were allowed to use. (78)
- **PRANKS ARE THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE.** One day, Agnes had lunch with Michael Mikhailovich at the Café de Paris in Cannes. When the waiter brought out a chocolate soufflé for dessert, he asked if Agnes dared him to sit on it. Agnes tried to laugh it off, but he put the

soufflé on his chair, covered it with a napkin, and sat on it. Agnes stormed away, embarrassed...and probably pissed that because she had looked “forward with greediness to our sweet dish.” (66) Later, she ripped him a new one for his stupid stunt.

AGNES’S LIFE WITH GRAND DUKE MICHAEL

GRAND DUKE MICHAEL MIKHAILOVICH was the third son of Grand Duke Michael Nikolaevich (and a grandson of Tsar Nicholas I).



**MICHAEL MIKHAILOVICH BY AN UNKNOWN PHOTOGRAPHER,
PUBLIC DOMAIN VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.**

When he fell for a courtier, Countess Ignatieff, Tsar Alexander III sent him out of the country to get over it. This totally backfired, because while in France, Michael met and fell in love with Sophie Merenberg, the daughter of Prince Nicholas of Nassau and his morganatic wife,

Countess Merenberg (the Russian poet Pushkin's daughter). In 1891, Michael married Sophie in a secret wedding at the Russian church in San Remo.



**MICHAEL AND SOPHIE PHOTOGRAPHED BY JAMES LAFAYETTE,
PUBLIC DOMAIN VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS**

The tsar was SUPER pissed at being disobeyed – he had specifically ordered Michael not to get married while out of the country. He cancelled Michael's state allowance and refused to let him return to Russia. Luckily, although

Agnes's husband, Sasha, was acting as an unofficial equerry to Michael at the time, none of the tsar's anger was directed at him.

Although Agnes's husband, Sasha, was acting as an unofficial equerry to Michael at the time, none of the tsar's anger was directed at him.

A few years later, in the summer of 1897, Michael asked Sasha if he would take up an official post on his staff, as equerry. Hence Agnes and Sasha, once they joined Michael's staff, spent almost all their time in France and England. When Agnes and Michael signed on, the family consisted of Michael, Sophie, and two daughters, Zia (age 5) and Nada (age 1). In 1898, there would also be a son, Michael. Agnes's daughter Zoia became besties with Zia.

So what was their job, precisely? Basically, it was to act as companions – more than servants, but not quite family. Michael, for example, once yelled at Agnes when she was late for dinner in a restaurant – “he made a scene

and said it was our duty to be on time.” (55) They accompanied Michael and Sophie to parties, too. About their eleven years together, Agnes said the following: “...in Cannes for the next eleven years...I was thrown into the most frivolous, smart, corrupt society of the time. It represented then all that stood for amusement, flirtation and intrigues.” (56)

“...in Cannes for the next eleven years...I was thrown into the most frivolous, smart, corrupt society of the time. It represented then all that stood for amusement, flirtation and intrigues.”

The years followed a pattern: their British residence, Keele Hall, in the summer; visits to London; Paris in the fall; and Cannes in the winter.

As for Michael, she describes him – and all the Russian grand dukes – as “beings apart.” They did things no one

else would dare. As evidence, she describes one day when she had lunch with Michael at the Café de Paris on the French Riviera. They were having a lovely lunch, when, just for fun, Michael asked Agnes to dare him to sit on their dessert, a chocolate soufflé. Stunned, Agnes didn't respond. So Michael did it anyway – he put a napkin over the soufflé, put it on an unused chair, and sat on it. Angry and embarrassed, Agnes left the restaurant. Her only further note on this incident? “Later, when we met again I gave him an avalanche of words which made him stagger.” (66)

It wasn't all parties and good times, though. At the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, Grand Duke Michael and Sasha set up a hospital in Cannes for wounded Russian officers. Agnes and Sophie stayed in England to watch the kids. When the men returned, Agnes reports: “...we gasped! The Grand Duke, who up to now had dyed his hair, returned an old man with white hair...” (72)



**VANITY FAIR'S DEPICTION OF MICHAEL MIKHAILOVICH
WITH WHITE HAIR IN 1908. BY LESLIE WARD,
PUBLIC DOMAIN VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.**

At some point in 1907/08, the relationship between Agnes and Sophie foundered. She doesn't say why: "...relations with Countess Torby became difficult, for reasons of no interest except to ourselves" (74) AND US, of course.

**At some point in 1907/08,
the relationship between Agnes
and Sophie foundered.
She doesn't say why.**

Michael tried to smooth things over, suggesting Agnes and Sasha avoid Keele Hall, but "...matters did not improve, and finally it was decided we had better part."
(74) It caused a big stir among their friends – King Edward VII took Agnes's side, for what it's worth.

So what caused this big dust-up?

I wish I could tell you. When I searched in the British Newspaper Archive, only 20 results came up for Agnes for the years 1907-1914. None of them discussed her split from Sophie and Michael.

AGNES'S LIFE WITH GRAND DUCHESS MARIA

AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME they left Michael and Sophie, Agnes and Sasha got a new invitation. Grand

Duchess Maria Georgievna (Michael's sister-in-law) asked Sasha to become her chamberlain.



**MARIA GEORGIEVNA BY AN UNKNOWN PHOTOGRAPHER,
PUBLIC DOMAIN VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.**

To speed up the approval process with Tsar Nicholas II, she volunteered to pay his salary out of her private fortune. In early 1908, the deal was finalized and Agnes and Sasha were employed once more. Agnes notes that

“the Countess [Sophie] was very upset and refused to speak to us for a long time.” (74)

Agnes notes that “the Countess [Sophie] was very upset and refused to speak to us for a long time.”

Working for Maria meant they could finally travel to Russia – and they wasted no time. They set out in August of 1908, with a very excited 15-year-old Zoia. While in Russia, they met Maria’s father-in-law, Grand Duke Mikhail Nikolaevich, and Tsar Nicholas II and his family. Nicholas’s son, Alexei, whistled the *Marseillaise* in honor of Zoia’s French governess, Mademoiselle Sutton.

They went back to Paris after this first visit, and returned the next year when Maria’s father-in-law died. They discovered that, in his palace, he had left the room of his deceased wife exactly the same as they’d been when she was alive. Agnes says, “The old Grand Duke had been devoted to his wife...wherever he travelled, he always had by his bed a parasol, an old hat and a pair of gloves

which had belonged to her.” (86) Say it with me now...awwwww. That wife, BTWs, was Grand Duchess Olga Feodorovna, born Princess Cecilie of Baden; she had died in 1891.



**OLGA FEODOROVNA BY AN UNKNOWN PHOTOGRAPHER,
PUBLIC DOMAIN VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.**

After the mourning period, Agnes and Sasha went back to England. Soon afterward, the doctors advised Grand Duchess Maria to take her ailing youngest daughter, Xenia, to Yorkshire for the healthy air.

You didn't have to ask Maria twice – she took both her daughters to Harrogate and Agnes and Sasha joined her there. Princess Victoria came to stay with them in the aftermath of her father's death. Agnes tells a funny story about Victoria depressing the hell out of residents of an infirmary in Harrogate.

Agnes tells a funny story about Victoria depressing the hell out of residents of an infirmary in Harrogate.

They started out telling her they were very happy and well – and Victoria's replies were things like, "Of course you are not happy, you must miss your home" and "No, my poor dear, you think you are happy but you are not!" (95) Cue a ward of sobbing men and women.

Until 1914 and the outbreak of World War I, Agnes and Sasha went back and forth with Maria and George: England, Paris, the south of France, and Russia. There are too many interesting incidents to tell you all about: a protocol faux-pas at Zoia's Buckingham Palace presentation, an eye-opening trip to the East End during a dock workers' strike, a trip to Sandringham at Queen Alexandra's invitation, and meeting King Manuel of Portugal in Harrogate.

One of the highlights of these years was a trip to Harax, Grand Duchess Maria's home on the Black Sea (in the same Crimean enclave as Livadia, Dulber, and other Romanov homes).



**HARAX BY AN UNKNOWN PHOTOGRAPHER,
PUBLIC DOMAIN VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.**

There, she got to know Nicholas II, who seems to have liked her quite a bit. Agnes was present at the imperial ball at Livadia to celebrate Grand Duchess Olga's 16th birthday. At that ball, Agnes's daughter Zoia and Prince Christopher of Greece danced the "one-step" – and whatever it was, it shocked the hell out of everyone else. "If two inhabitants from Mars had suddenly dropped into the room and begun unheard-of antics, greater astonishment, interest and curiosity could not have been shown." (120)

“If two inhabitants from Mars had suddenly dropped into the room and begun unheard-of antics, greater astonishment, interest and curiosity could not have been shown.”

Later that night, Nicholas himself gave Agnes some dancing advice for Zoia: “I have been watching Zoia; she is so charming but for goodness sake tell her when she dances the Mazurka not to bend her knees.” Two days later, at the next ball, Zoia said, “Sire, I wish you would mind your own business... you have made my life a misery, the whole family’s eyes are glued on my knees.” Nicholas giggled. (121)

These little moments break your heart when you know what’s coming.

AGNES’S POST-WAR LIFE

AFTER WORLD WAR I, Grand Duchess Maria

remarried to the Greek Admiral Yoannides. They didn't have much money and Maria couldn't afford to keep Agnes on.

Her next 10 years were a struggle to get by, financially.

Agnes and Sasha survived by selling her jewels.

Although her sister Constance had married Thomas Baring (of Baring Bank), Agnes says she was too proud to ask her sister for help. So she went to work instead. First, she sold linen for a dressmaker and eventually became a personal shopper. Fashion designers wanted to hire her because of her friends and connections among royalty and aristocracy.

**Fashion designers wanted to hire
her because of her friends and
connections among royalty and
aristocracy.**

During this unhappy time, one of her infant grandsons died and her husband got sick, too. He needed two nurses to care for him, and she sold more jewels to be able to pay for his care. This meant she needed work more than

ever, and continued shilling for designers and dressmakers. She writes that she brought in £15,000 for Reville and Rossiter, for the whopping salary of £8 per week.



A REVILLE AND ROSSITER DRESS C 1911. IMAGE VIA [INVALUABLE.COM](https://www.invaluable.com) FROM A 2011 AUCTION.

The job broke her heart. They just wanted her for her connections, paid her little, and she got sick of being ordered around. She worked there for more than two

years, and described a feeling I know I've had before: "I was so unhappy going there in the morning, crossing Oxford Street, that I often wished a bus would run over me." (187)

"I was so unhappy going there in the morning, crossing Oxford Street, that I often wished a bus would run over me."

In the end, she decided what she needed was faith, and decided to join a religious order.

She visited Poland to see the "semi-convent of the *Chanoinesses*." (194) This was a religious order for aristocratic women that didn't require full-on convent life; the girls and women were allowed to go out into the world, and could leave if they chose to marry. Her goal was to establish a branch of that establishment in England, with the help of Cardinal Bourne.

In England, however, she says no one wanted to help her get her project off the ground. She said everyone

“wanted a secular life or strict convent but this was too great an innovation.” (196) With a sad and heavy heart, she went back to work as a designer’s assistant/hostess.

In 1931, her son-in-law accepted a job in Poland as a director of a coal and zinc mining company. Agnes stayed in England, although her daughter soon moved out to Poland to be with her husband. Agnes visited them frequently to see her two grandsons.

His family’s palace, Lancut, was an oasis of luxury that reminded her of better days. The Duke and Duchess of Kent came for a visit at Zoia’s request – as Agnes notes, “the first time a member of the British Royal Family had visited that country.” (204)

**The Duke and Duchess of Kent
came for a visit at Zoia’s request – as
Agnes notes, “the first time a
member of the British Royal Family
had visited that country.”**



THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF KENT IN 1938.
IMAGE IN THE QUEENSLANDER, PUBLIC DOMAIN
VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

Agnes divided her time between London and Poland. When we get to 1938, the book changes dramatically – instead of a fluid narrative, we get selected entries from Agnes’s diary, beginning on September 14, 1938. In August of 1939, she left Poland, aware that it might be for the last time. Her diary entries give a short but

interesting glimpse of how people who lived on the border with Germany saw war preparations being made even as Hitler spoke of peace. Zoia and the kids joined her in London later that month.

Continuing their friendship with the Duke and Duchess of Kent, Agnes and Zoia visit Coppins frequently. She notes that both George and Marina thought war could be prevented, as late as August 30, 1939. Agnes and Zoia both believed they were wrong – they'd seen German fortifications being built along the border with Poland firsthand.

**George and Marina thought war
could be prevented as late as
August 30, 1939. Agnes and Zoia
believed they were wrong.**

When the Germans bombed Poland on September 1, Zoia's husband survived. He made it from Poland to the Romanian border and fled, just ahead of the Germans. He made his way to Paris and then to England, where he rejoined Agnes and Zoia.

Strangely, the book ends with the Duke of Kent's death in 1942. It's as if his death robbed Agnes of the strength or will to share more about her experiences during the war. Or maybe she thought that was the last event her readers would be interested in. Either way, the last diary entry we get is from August 24, 1942. The half-page epilogue is short and simple – it doesn't mention what happened to her, Zoia, or Alik during the rest of the war. It just says her end can't be long now.

But it wasn't – she lived to age 94, dying in 1968.

QUESTIONS RAISED

- **WHAT, EXACTLY, IS AGNES'S FATHER'S** connection to Mexico? Agnes's maiden name is Barron. She says her parents were Irish, and moved to Paris after they married. Her father inherited “the enormous fortunes of the house of Barron, Mexico,” but preferred to live in Europe. The Mexican connection intrigues me, but she doesn't talk much about it in this book.

- **WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED**

BETWEEN Agnes, Sasha and Countess Torby? It was a serious enough disagreement to break up a years-long friendship and cause everyone – including Edward VII – to take sides.

- **WHO WAS THE AMERICAN GIRL** that Grand Duke Michael Mikhailovich had a crush on? Agnes reports that he wrote her love letters in English – but discovered he plagiarized them from an anthology of love letters.

WHAT YOU WON'T FIND

YOU WON'T FIND NEGATIVITY or salacious gossip. Agnes is truthful, but definitely keeps her stories on the positive side.

As an example, we have the story of Grand Duchess Maria's unhappy marriage. As Agnes relates, Maria was the first one to ask a friend if Grand Duke George Mikhailovich was into her. The friend replied, "Nope. Not interested."

But when word got back to George, he said he *was* interested...and the courtship was on. Unfortunately, Maria had moved on. Like, to a new zip code. But George pursued her for five long years. Finally, he wore her down. She admitted she didn't love him. "But he only answered impetuously that he had suffered so much during the last five years no future unhappiness could be worse." (142)



**GEORGE MIKHAILOVICH BY AN UNKNOWN PHOTOGRAPHER,
PUBLIC DOMAIN VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.**

George hoped she might come to love him over time. They had two daughters together, but the love he hoped for never materialized. Years and years went by - Agnes describes them as “hectic but not always happy.” (142)

Her summary of events is honest and kind to both parties. Does she blame Maria? No. Does she blame George? No. She’s gentle to both of them. When Maria left Russia for England in 1914, she describes their situation as “he adoring her and she more than indifferent.” (143)

That “more than indifferent” is the worst she’ll say. It’s up to you and me to read between those lines.

READ NOT ALL VANITY IF...

...you want a fascinating look at the life of late 18th and early 19th century royals from the inside. Used copies are a little pricey, so I’d start with your local library. If they don’t have a copy, they may be able to use inter-library loan to get one for you.

The End