

PRINCE BERNHARD OF THE KINGDOM  
OF THE NETHERLANDS

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Artchil Djavakhadze

**Prince Bernhard  
of the Kingdom  
of the Netherlands**

The Kingdom of the Netherlands is one of the most beautiful countries in Europe. Most of the country is located in north-western Europe and on the south-eastern coast of the North Sea. The country is divided into twelve provinces. The Kingdom of the Netherlands also includes several islands in the Caribbean. The European Netherlands borders Belgium to the south and Germany to the east. The capital of the Kingdom of the Netherlands is Amsterdam and the seat of government is The Hague.

The population of the Netherlands is 17.8 million people, the area is 41,850 km<sup>2</sup>, the population density is 531 per square kilometre. More than 18% of the surface is covered with water, and most of the land is below sea level.

Despite the not very favourable geographical location, the Netherlands is currently one of the most developed countries in the world and since 1957 has been one of the founding members of the European Community, and subsequently the European Union.

In 1911, when the events described in the work begin, the world looked completely different. Then both Germany and Russia were still empires.

On June 29, 1911, in Germany, in the city of Jena, Bernhard Leopold Friedrich Eberhard Julius Kurt Karl Gottfried Peter Prinz sur Lippe-Biesterfeld was born into a noble family.

His official father, Bernhard zur Lippe-Biesterfeld sr., bore the title of prince. Bernhard's mother, Baroness Armgard von Cramm (German: Armgard Kunigunde Alharda Agnes Oda von Cramm; 18 December 1883 – 27 April 1971), married the prince after a divorce. In those days, society did not welcome marriage to a divorced woman and she was initially awarded only the title of countess, not princess. Their children were also initially given the titles of counts. Only five years later, in 1916, the head of the family Leopold IV (Prince Lippe) decided to give his daughter-in-law and her two sons the title of princes. Since that time, Bernhard bore the hereditary title of Prince zur Lippe-Biesterfeld. Almost two years later, the German Empire fell and the importance of hereditary titles, which had previously been considered, was abolished. This was a serious blow to the German nobility, as they also lost much of their land and wealth, and their representatives were considered ordinary citizens without any special privileges.

Bernhard spent his childhood years at his parents' estate in Reckenwalde, East Prussia (now Wojnowo, Poland). Until the age of twelve, he received a private education. Since April 1924, he continued his studies at the boarding school Pädagogium in Züllichau (now Sulechów Poland). From 1926, he studied at the elite Arndt-Gymnasium in Berlin, where he received his diploma three years later. In 1929 he entered the Higher School of Commerce in Lausanne, Switzerland. In 1930 he studied law in Munich, and from 1931 to 1935 he studied law at the University of Berlin and received a doctoral degree.

Since childhood, Bernhard was greatly influenced by the equerry, and then the manager of their estate, the former colonel of the Russian cavalry Alexis Pantchoulidzew (Panchulidze). In his youth he served in the Hussars regiment of cavalry. Like his famous ancestors, he was one of the best riders. He used to compete in several international equestrian competitions. 22-year-old Alexis Pantchoulidzew won several prizes in equestrian competitions in Austria in 1911. At the equestrian competitions in 1914, which were again held in Vienna, he again managed to achieve success.

The family of Panchulidze are originally from the Georgian region of Imereti. In 1724, king of Kartli (Eastern Georgia) Vakhtang VI, in order to enlist the support of the Russian Tsar, with his family and retinue of 1200 people, left for Russia. One of the members of his retinue was David Panchulidze, the son of Mate. The original purpose of the visit was to receive support and

assistance from Russia, and then return to Georgia. Both receiving support and returning to their homeland, unfortunately, remained an impossible dream.

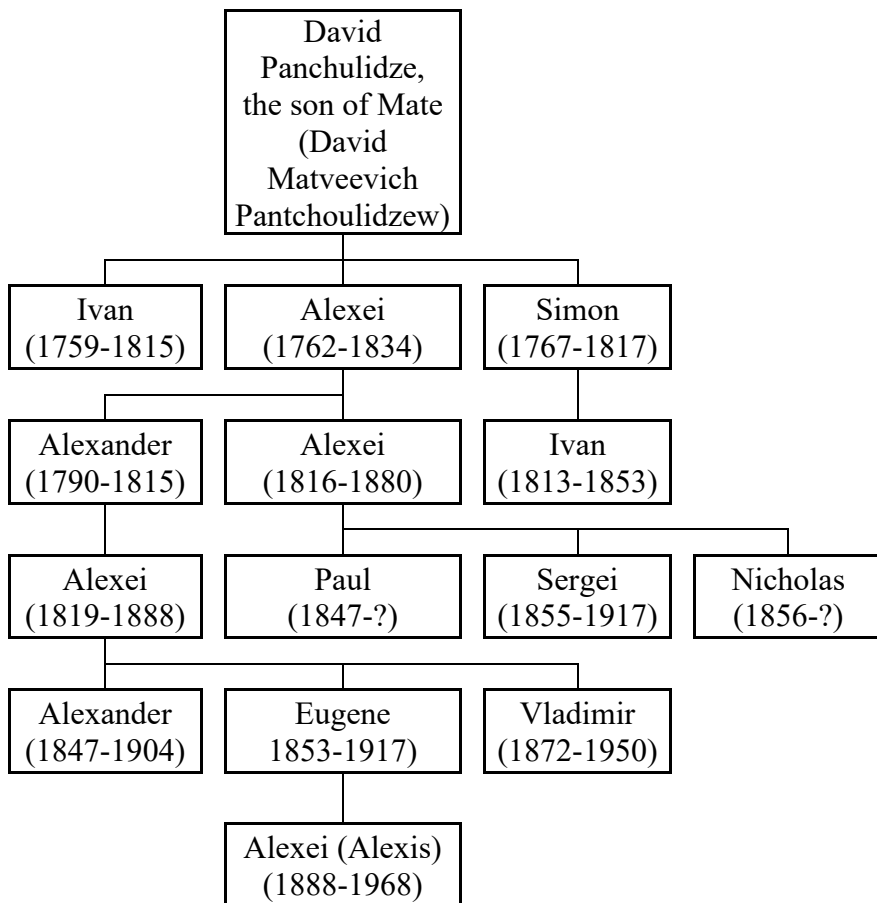
Subsequently, those who remained at the Russian court received the title of Russian princes and, accordingly, their surnames were changed to the Russian style. David Panchulidze and his descendants have since become known as the Pantchoulidzews.

David Panchulidze had three sons, two of whom, Ivan and Simon, became generals of the Russian army, and the middle son Alexei became the governor of the city of Saratov.

The name of Alexei Davidovich Pantchoulidzew is associated with the construction of the Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Saratov, the opening of a gymnasium (August 1820), the creation of a theatre and a provincial printing house. Alexei Davidovich Pantchoulidzew died on July 29, 1834. At the end of the 20th century, a monument was erected to A.D. Pantchoulidzew in Saratov.

The family branch of the Pantchoulidzews looks like this:

David Matveevich Pantchoulidzew - Alexei (1762-1834) - Alexander (1790-1867) - Alexei (1819-1888) - Eugene (1853-1917) - Alexei (Alexis) (September 18, 1888, Pyatigorsk, Russia - April 10, 1968, Diepenheim, the Netherlands).





Alexis Pantchoulidzew's father, Eugene Alexeyevich Pantchoulidzew, was born on September 17, 1853 in Saratov. He was a lieutenant general of the Russian cavalry, a hero of the Russian-Turkish wars of 1877-1878 and the Russian-Japanese wars of 1904-1905. He died on February 10, 1917 in Kyiv.

Because of the revolution of 1917, a refugee from Russia, Alexis Pantchoulidzew, went to Europe. He arrived in Germany via Finland and Denmark. There he became close to the noble family von Lippe-Biesterfeld and began to work as an equerry at their estate in Reckenwalde (now Wojnowo, Poland).

There, with great zeal, he trained the wife of Prince Bernhard zur Lippe-Biesterfeld, Armgard von Cramm and their sons Bernhard and Aschwin.

The boys from childhood fell in love with horse riding. In addition to playing sports, Alexis became a tutor and mentor to Bernhard and Aschwin throughout his life. There was an opinion that Alexis knew Armgard before, had a close relationship with her and came to her specially. There were rumours about their closer relationship.

Since the second half of the twenties of the twentieth century, based on dissatisfaction with the consequences of the First World War, the rise of the National Socialist movement in Germany began.

In 1931 Bernhard came to Berlin to study law. Immediately after his arrival, he saw that students who were not members of the Nazi organizations had to work twice as hard as the members of the Nazi organizations. What was the reason that he joined the National Socialist youth movement 'Sturm'.

Because Bernhard was very interested in modern technology, he became a member of the Sports Pilots League in 1932. This was the club where young people with national ideals were trained to become pilots. This league was the forerunner of the future military air force - 'Luftwaffe', which Germany was forbidden to have according to the Treaty of Versailles. Most of the famous pilots of the Battle of Britain were trained here under the guidance of the future Luftwaffe general, the legendary World War I pilot Ernst Udet. But after a minor accident, Bernhard had to leave this club.

Because of his interest in modern technology, he joined the National Socialist Mechanized Corps (Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahrerkorps - NSKK), which was the forerunner of the future tank corps (Panzerkorps).

In the early 1930s, the followers of the National Socialist movement were mostly disillusioned workers and members of the lower social classes. The National Socialists diligently tried to recruit young people from noble families into their ranks. By accepting the German nobility into their ranks, they hoped to make themselves more presentable to society.