

August 29, 1932

Dear Madam:

I trust that you will pardon my long delay in replying to your letter of June 20th. It reached New York when I was out of town and on my return I was obliged to wait until I could get in touch with one of the editors of McClure's magazine in 1895 before I was able to give you the information for which you asked. *tu*

Pardon, too, my sending you a typewriter letter in English. My French is awkward and I feel that I might, if I attempted to reply in that language, fail to be as exact as I want to be. In dictating instead of writing a letter with my hand, I am really sparing your eyes.

You ask if I was in New York at the time the Baron St. Pöl published in McClure's magazine the Wax Death Mask of Napoleon. No, at that time I was living in Washington. I knew nothing of the Baron nor of his credentials. I know that Mr. McClure accepted him, although one of his associates was always doubtful of his claims.

Mr. McClure broke his editorial relations with the Baron of St. Pöl some months after the publication of the article on the Death Mask when he found that a second article which the Baron had submitted on a subject concerning Napoleon was pure fiction. Interesting fiction, but as it was offered as a historical fact Mr. McClure refused of course to publish it.

Naturally this experience with the Baron raised the question in the McClure office of the truth of what he had written on the Death Mask and there were those on the staff of the magazine who even suspected his title to have been invented.

It would be possible I suppose to find if there was a person of that name at the Court of Würtemberg when Jerome was king.

Q

It would be also possible, I should suppose, to find out from the archives of the time of Napoleon III whether his entourage included a person so named.

It was thought by one of the most intelligent of the McClure staff that the man might have been a valet of the Emperor or of some one in the household. This would explain his familiarity with the ways and the members of the Court at that time.

I am grateful to you for calling my attention to a matter which had almost passed out of my mind and particularly for the copy of your book. I shall be glad to put it among the few items on Napoleon that I keep because of some personal connection.

Begging you, if by further research you find either that the Baron St. Pol was what he pretended to be or what I confess I suspect a clever adventurer you will give me the benefit of your knowledge, I am

Very truly yours

Mrs. Alfred Day Pardee
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