

Tomb of Figure Behind Russian Serfs' Emancipation Discovered in St. Petersburg

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The tomb of a 19th-century figure behind legislative statutes that led to the freeing of Russia's serfs has been discovered in St. Petersburg, Interfax reported.

Yakov Rostovtsev, a career military man loyal to the imperial family, chaired a commission tasked with drafting rules that led to the great emancipation of 1861. Rostovtsev died a year before Tsar Alexander II adopted the policy, which abolished landowners' power over the serfs.

Rostovtsev's sarcophagus was found during restoration works at an 18th-century cathedral, Interfax [reported](#) Friday, citing Alexei Odintsov, the head of the project.

Odintsov said 31 additional tombs have been found at the Feodor Novgorodsky Cathedral of 1748, including 26 belonging to a Georgian imperial family.

The cathedral makes up part of the Holy Trinity Alexander Nevsky Monastery, more commonly referred to locally as the lavra, a word for a large and important Orthodox monastery. The complex was founded by Peter the Great in 1710 and [houses](#) the graves of Fyodor Dostoevsky, Pyotr Tchaikovsky and other famous Russian composers and writers.

The tombstones will be displayed behind bulletproof glass, Interfax reported.

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