

RUBENE CHURCH'S MEMORIAL PLAQUE

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ABOUT

The abolition of feudalism took place gradually in Latvia – first of all in Kurzeme, then in Vidzeme and later also in Latgale. The freeing of serfs in Vidzeme took place in 1819. Rubene Church's memorial plaque on which gratitude has been expressed to the Russian tsar for this act of charity to the Latvians, is dedicated to the 50th anniversary of this event.

The plaque was produced on a bent metal plate, the top side being polychrome with text covering its entire surface. An imitation wood-pattern decoration (backing) has been used for the background on the base. A simplified decorative frame with small acanthi has been painted along the perimeter of the text. The plaque has corroded under the influence of moisture creating serious damage to the base material, as well as irreversible damage to the paint layer. Small stab-marks and holes of a mechanical nature have also been established in the metal, as well as deformation in the base.

CATALOGUE INFORMATION:

AUTHOR: UNKNOWN

DATED: 1869

MATERIAL: METAL

TECHNIQUE: OIL PAINT

SIZE: HEIGHT 80CM; WIDTH 45CM

RESTORATION

Hasty conservation measures were required to limit the further corrosion process. The following processes were undertaken in the restoration of the plaque: cleaning of the surface (both sides with a Storra solution 20%). Removal of the layer of lacquer (ethyl spirit, turpentine, dimethylformamide 3:3:0.5) with the use of compresses. Consolidation of the fragmentary layer of paint (PVB 5% solution in ethyl spirit). Fine rotating nozzles of various form were used for the mechanical cleaning of oxidation products. The process was undertaken in zones where the layer had crumbled away, as well as in completely corroded areas. Details were fixed with soldering. Partial levelling of some of the deformation. Processing with tannin solution on the surface in small areas. General processing with a tannin solution on the rear side. Repeated consolidation of the paint layer. Laying of restoration primer (5% PVB, chalk, pigments) and polishing on the top side of the zones where the paint layers have been lost. Laying of a protective coat on the top side (5% PVB). Toning and retouching done on the top side with Schmincke MUSSINI retouching paints.



Fig. 1. The front of plaque before restoration



Fig. 2. The front of plaque after restoration



Fig. 3. The fragment of plaque before restoration



Fig. 5. The fragment with restoration primer



Fig. 7. The back side fragment of plaque before restoration



Fig. 4. The fragment of plaque with removed lacquer, consolidated layer of paint, mechanically cleaned of oxidation products and processing with tannin solution



Fig. 6. The fragment of plaque after restoration



Fig. 8. The back side fragment of plaque after restoration