

*Izabella Papp*

**The Son of a Greek Merchant in Diószeg in the Hungarian  
war of Independence**

**Pál Kiss, *honvéd*-general 1809-1867**

The revolution and war of independence in 1848-1849 has been the most glorious period of Hungarian history. Its participants have become ideals, its heroes are surrounded with legends, its memories helped to keep national awareness alive in times of later oppression. Its traditions and emblems survived and became national symbols. Even its defeat was heroic, as it expresses the desire of a small nation for freedom and its brave opposition to foreign power<sup>1</sup>.

The main aims of the revolution on 15 March, 1848 were to terminate feudalism and create the conditions of bourgeois development. Contemporary politicians did not have the same opinion on what these conditions were. István Széchenyi found it possible for Hungary to be reformed within the Habsburg empire<sup>2</sup>. His political opponent Lajos Kossuth thought that a radical change was essential, Hungary had to become independent of the monarchy<sup>3</sup>. Later events proved him right;

1. Several works describe the 1848-1849 war of independence and there appeared memoirs of its participants. General analysis in recent historical works: *Magyarország története, 1848-1890*, Vol. 6, ed. Endre Kovács, Budapest, 1987, pp. 61-423; Iván Bertényi, Gábor Gyapay, *Magyarország rövid története*, Budapest, 1992, pp. 364-397.

2. István Széchenyi (1791-1860) was an outstanding figure of the Reform Era. It was him who founded the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, controlled the river Tisza, and built the Chain Bridge in Budapest. He was the minister of transport in the first Hungarian government.

3. Lajos Kossuth (1802-1894) appeared on the political stage during the parliaments of the Reform Era. He was an outstanding speaker, his powerful speeches had an important role in winning the sympathy of the people. In the first ministry he was the minister of finance. From September, 1848 as the chairman of Országos Honvédelmi Bizottmány, he became the leader of the war of independence. On 11 April, 1849 he was elected the governor of the country. Because of probable retorsion he had to leave the country. He died in Turin in 1894.

the revolution became a national war of independence, which was defeated only after one and half year by the joined forces of Austria and Russia.

In many respects the Hungarians' struggle for independence resembles the Greek war of independence in 1821, which generated great enthusiasm both in Hungary and in other countries of Europe. Its victory kept alive and strengthened the idea and possibility of independence among the suppressed nations in Europe. There fought Hungarians among the philhellenic volunteers, as well<sup>4</sup>.

Similarly to that of the Greeks the Hungarian struggle for independence was followed by the sympathy of European nations. After the European revolutions broken out in the Spring of nations in 1848 had been defeated one after the other, the success of the spring campaign in Hungary in 1849 still showed promise for a small nation to win against the Austrian powers. Many foreigners supported the cause by taking part in the fights personally. They arrived in great numbers from Poland, general József Bem, the legendary "Bem apó" and lieutenant general Henrik Dembinsky among them<sup>5</sup>. After the defeat of the Polish war of independence in 1830-1831, they immigrated to Hungary where they continued to fight against foreign oppression. Soldiers and officers sympathising with the Hungarians arrived from nearly all provinces of the multinational Habsburg Empire. Beside the Polish and Italian legions there fought Germans, Czechs, Croatians and Serbs here<sup>6</sup>. Volunteers arrived even from Greece, one of them was knight Adam Gyra, who served in the Hungarian army as a major<sup>7</sup>.

As most of them had been living in their new country for three generations, the Greeks in Hungary took up the cause of Hungarian liberty, as well. They helped both financially and by taking part in the fights personally. Many of them fought as soldiers and some were

4. Ödön Füves, "Az 1821. évi görög szabadságharc és Magyarország", In: *Századok*, 1973, No. 1, pp. 106-113.

5. Gábor Bóna, *Tábornokok és törzstisztek a szabadságharcban, 1848-1849*, Budapest, 1983, p. 81.

6. Bóna, *op.cit.*, pp. 81-82.

7. At the trial in Arad Major Gyra was sentenced to a 12 year imprisonment in a castle but in 1850 he was granted amnesty. He died in Szolnok, the present-day centre of Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county. In 1852. Bóna, *op.cit.*, p. 165.

promoted to high ranks. Pál Kiss, the son of a Greek merchant in Diószeg, for example, became a general as the commander of Pétervárad castle. He took part in the war of independence till its end showing great personal courage, which won for him the respect of his soldiers and fellow officers.

Though Tiszafüred, his dwelling place in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok country commemorated him with a school, a museum and a street named after him and with a sepulchre in the cemetery, his life and combat actions are lesser known than those of his fellow officers of the same rank.

Pál Kiss was born in Diószeg in Bihar country in 1809<sup>8</sup>. His father was a merchant origin, who was risen to nobility by Francis I (1792-1835) in 1795<sup>9</sup>. Nobility was presented to him not for one great deed but as the preamble states it was a reward for the works of his whole life. Though the preamble is very general in its wording the figures in his coats-of-arm let us draw some conclusions<sup>10</sup>. The main motif in the shield is a woman with crown, which is a very rare heraldic figure. This time it might refer to Queen Maria Theresa (1740-1780), who with her *loyalty oath statute* (1774) guaranteed a new home country for the Greek merchants who were willing to permanently settle down in Hungary. The wheatear and bunch of grapes in the hands of the woman symbolise abundance, which can be a reward for loyalty.

The other figure of the coats-of-arm is a lion, which holds a sword in one of its legs and a golden balance in the other. A lion with a sword symbolises courage and heroism in emblems while the compositions in which a sword is accompanied with a balance refer to justice and dispensing of justice. The balance this time can hint at the occupation of Pál Kiss, at the fact that he gained distinction as a merchant<sup>11</sup>. In the

8. Bóna, *op.cit.*, p. 199; a short biography of Pál Kiss is published by László Sasvári, "Kiss Pál honvédtábornok", In: *Élet és Irodalom*, 24th Sept. 1977, p. 2.

9. Bóna, *op.cit.*, p. 200.

10. The preamble to the donation and the coats-of-arm is in the Magyar Országos Levéltár. (Hungarian National Archive). Királyi Könyvek. LVIII. 512.

11. The description of the coats-of-arm: "The shield is divided horizontally, a lady with a crown stands against the blue background of the upper half; she holds the ears of golden wheat in her right hand and two bunches of red grapes in her left. In the lower part a lion stands on its rear legs on a green area against purple background. It holds a naked sword in its right leg and a golden balance in the other. Above the shield a similar lion emerges from the crown of

18th century —mainly in the times of French wars— some of the Greeks living in Hungary were given nobility for war contracts<sup>12</sup>.

Pál Kiss, the son of the merchant did not follow the ancient trade, he became a soldier. He studied at the Debrecen College, and entered upon military service in 1828. He had been a captain of the imperial army since February, 1848<sup>13</sup>. As many of his fellow officers he joined the defensive warfare of the Hungarians from the very beginning.

In times of the Pest revolution of 15th March, 1848 and the events soon after it there seemed a possibility for a peaceful realisation of most of the Hungarian demands. The Imperial Court of Vienna was showed compliance at first lest Hungary should get separated from the empire. On 7th April, 1848 Ferdinand V (1835-1848) appointed the members of the first Hungarian Ministry responsible to the Hungarian Parliament. The Prime Minister became Lajos Batthyányi<sup>14</sup>. Hardly had the new government started its work when in May the Serb regiments and citizens of the military frontier turned openly against the revolution. The Vienna Court supported the discontented minorities first only from the background, later they made use of their activity in their own fight against the Hungarians. Shortly after the events in March the emperor appointed lieutenant general Jellašić of Croatian origin governor of Croatia and commander-in-chief of Zagreb and the Austrian government gave him even financial help in his fight against the Hungarians<sup>15</sup>. To prevent civil war the greatest part of the imperial forces stationed in Hungary was ordered to move to Bácska-Bánát and the Croatian frontier in May, 1848<sup>16</sup>.

the helmet". Iván Nagy, *Magyarország családai címerekkel és nemzedékrendi táblákkal*, Pest, 1857, Vol. 5, pp. 255-256.

12. László Schäfer, *A görögök vezető szerepe Magyarországon a korai kapitalizmus kialakulásában*, Budapest, 1930, p. 40.

13. István Vadász, *Adalékok egy ismert, de nem közismert 1848/49-es honvédtábornok életrajzához*. Manuscript. Archives of Kiss Pál Museum, Tiszafüred. I would like to express my special thanks to dr. István Vadász, research worker of the Tiszafüred museum and Zoltán Babucs, university student for their help in collecting the data in this paper.

14. Bertényi, Gyapay, *op.cit.*, p. 366.

15. The failure of the Hungarian government to establish friendly terms with the minorities was fatal. Their national ambitions that became stronger and stronger made them oppose the Hungarian revolution. Bertényi, Gyapay, *op.cit.*, pp. 369-372.

16. In summer, 1848 the war in the southern region widened. When on 29th

Pál Kiss, who in July 1848 became an organiser and instructor of the Hungarian national guard in Bihar county, served in the Southern region<sup>17</sup>. He took part in the Southern battles as a commander of a battalion in the camp of Ernő Kiss, they would be martyr of Arad, and started his military career. He showed outstanding courage in a battle at Perlász, which won him majorship on 6th, September. Soon after he was appointed the commander of the 9th battalion called "redcaps" of future legendary fame<sup>18</sup>. Here he got in connection with János Damjanich, the most popular general of the war of independence, who was organising the 3rd division at that time. The name "redcaps" referred to the fact that two of the ten battalions, the 3rd and the 9th, organised in May, 1848 were given red caps<sup>19</sup>. Both battalions fought with exceptional courage till the end of the war.

The two battalions competed with each other in heroism, which effected Pál Kiss personally. His military career was closely connected to the career of another officer of foreign origin. His relationship with the German Károly Leiningen-Westerburg was not exempt even from field rivalry. Leiningen was the commander of the 3rd battalions, which gained fame for their courage. The count of German origin could speak only a few words in Hungarian, still his men adored him. He was an excellent leader, who could inspire his troop with his own example<sup>20</sup>.

In the autumn of 1848 the 9th battalion lead by Pál Kiss and the 3rd by Leiningen fought side by side and they were the most prepared part of the Bánság-Bánát corps. In January, 1849 Pál Kiss was appointed lieutenant-colonel and he acted as a deputy for János Damjanich several times, when he was away on account of illness or on holidays<sup>21</sup>.

The first common action of the three officers took place in December, 1848 in the bloody battle at Jarkovác. Damjanich's division

September, 1848 the Hungarian army made the troops of Jellašich flee the breach between Pest and Vienna became final. Bóna, *op.cit.*, p. 14.

17. Bóna, *op.cit.*, p. 200.

18. Bóna, *op.cit.*, p. 200; Vadász, *op.cit.*, pp. 2-3.

19. Révai Nagy Lexikon, Vol. 11, Budapest, 1914, p. 663.

20. Leiningen kept a diary during the war of independence, which is considered to be one of the most authentic source of it. He was appointed general in June 1849. After the surrender at Világos he was condemned to be hanged and was executed on 6th October in Arad. Bóna, *op.cit.*, pp. 219-200.

21. Bóna, *op.cit.*, p. 200; Vadász, *op.cit.*, p. 3.

took up its quarters in Jarkovác with the majority of Serbian inhabitants on 13th December. The enemy together with local residents attacked the exhausted Hungarians while they were asleep. Pál Kiss and Leiningen took part in fierce street battles, then Damjanich making the fleeing troops turn back came to the rescue of them and by the morning the outcome of the battle was decided<sup>22</sup>. After that in several battles fought the three officers together; the three officers, Damjanich of Serb origin, the German Leiningen and the Greek Pál Kiss, who were so different in their upbringing and attitudes and so similar in their courage with which they fought for Hungarian liberty.

In February of 1849 Pál Kiss was appointed the commander of the besieging troops at Arad, then at the end of March he returned again to the division of Damjanich<sup>23</sup>. They took part together in the battles of the Spring Campaign with great courage and good results.

The Spring Campaign was the most successful period in the military history of the Hungarian war of independence. The main body of the army won a victory near Hatvan on 2nd April, near Tápióbicske on 4th and near Isaszeg on 6th. The 1st, 3rd and 7th corps broke through the left wing of the Austrian army first at Vác then at Nagysalló and at the end of April they raised the three month siege of Komárom. The troops of general Bem reconquered Transylvania by the end of March and Mór Percel cleared Bácska. By May, 1849 most parts of the country were liberated<sup>24</sup>. As a result of the victories the Declaration of Independence and the Dethronement of the House of Habsburgs were ceremoniously proclaimed in the Debrecen Great church on 11th April, 1849. Lajos Kossuth was elected the governor of Hungary<sup>25</sup>.

It happened during the Spring Campaign that differences arouse between Leiningen and Pál Kiss, which as it happened in the romantic novels of Mór Jókai were smoothed out in a kind of duel<sup>26</sup>. The conflict

22. Vadász, *op.cit.*, p. 3; Révai Nagy Lexikon, p. 663.

23. *Ibid.*

24. Bertényi, Gyapay, *op.cit.*, pp. 381-382.

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 381-382. The Imperial Court of Vienna always considered the act of Dethronement a great offence and in times of the retorsions it was always an often mentioned argument.

26. Mór Jókai (1825-1904) is the most well-known writer of Romantic novels. In March, 1848 he was one of the leaders of the youths taking part in the revolution. The heroes and events of the war of independence were described in some of his novels. A scene similar

started when Damjanich decided to form a separate brigade for Pál Kiss from the brigade of Leiningen. Leiningen was outraged and challenged Kiss to a duel, which took place at Tápióbicske. The troops of György Klapka were fighting here and as the military operation was not properly prepared they yielded ground to the imperial troops. The 3rd and 9th battalion were sent as relief troops into the operation<sup>27</sup>. The winner of the duel between the two officers would be the one who crossed the Tapió-bridge occupied by the enemy first. In the fierce battle Pál Kiss and Leiningen led their troops across the bridge together while bullets were hailing on them. They made an assault on the bridge and making the enemy retrieve occupied the bridge. Artúr Görgey the commander-in-chief of the Hungarian army praised the battalions for their heroism in dispatches. Pál Kiss and Leiningen were awarded with 3rd class military medals and they both were promoted colonel. According the memoir of Leiningen Görgey mentioned the controversy of the two officers "I heard about your dispute, never a controversy was settle in a nobler way, never a duel was fought in a more chivalrous way"<sup>28</sup>.

In spite of their conflict and rivalry Leiningen had a great opinion of Pál Kiss, whom he knew very closely from battlefield experience. In his letter on 31st March, 1849 he wrote about him that "...he is one of our best soldiers, he is herioc, determined and besides he is independent"<sup>29</sup>. The officer of aristocratic origin had a less favourable opinion about the manners of Pál Kiss: "...his manners are repulsive, being terribly envious he could not stand if anybody else was praised in his presence, and he was quick-tempered... With all these shortcomings he is an honest and reliable man"<sup>30</sup>.

The 3rd and 9th divisions were known about their noble rivalry after that, too. In the battles of the Spring Campaign they took part bravely

to the duel between Pál Kiss and Leiningen is present in his novel *Kőszívű ember fiai* (Sons of an iron-hearted man).

27. Vadász, *op.cit.*, pp. 4-5.

28. Károly, Leiningen-Westerburg, "A tápióbicskei csata", In: *A szabadságharc kilenc nagy csatája*, Selected by Tamás Katona, Budapest, 1978, pp. 28-33. Ferenc Karsa, *Szabadságharcos napló*, Budapest, 1993, pp. 159-161.

29. Vadász, *op.cit.*, p. 2.

30. *Ibid.*

and with good results. Similarly to his behaviour in the battle at Tápióbicske, Pál Kiss gave proof of his heroism at Vác, where he led an attack on the Austrians together with Károly Földváry. The battles at Isaszeg and Nagysalló saw the courage of their troops, as well. On 29th April, 1849 Pál Kiss was awarded with second class military medal and was promoted to the commander of the 1st division<sup>31</sup>.

Pál Kiss, himself sought the special and trying situations during the battles and knowing his talents his superiors gave him similar tasks. The same happened in April, 1849, when the supreme command decided to relieve the long sieged Komárom. It was the brigade of Pál Kiss that were given the task demanding the most boldness. At night they crossed Danube on a temporary bridge erected in great haste and by three in the morning they captured the most important positions of the enemy. The surprise attack through the moat was personally lead by Pál Kiss and the imperial troops could fire only a few bullets<sup>32</sup>. The relief of Komárom made it possible for the Hungarian troops to start the siege of Buda. Both Kossuth and Görgey considered it the most important battle of the war of independence<sup>33</sup>.

The victories of the Spring Campaign was of historical importance, as the Hungarian *honvéd* army made the enemy retreat from the line of the river Tisza to Komárom within a month. The redcaps of Damjanich, the divisions of Pál Kiss and Leiningen had a decisive role in it. The importance of the victories was made even greater by the fact that by spring all other European wars of independence were defeated, the only victorious revolution was the Hungarian.

The behaviour and combat actions of Pál Kiss were recognised by the military leaders, as well. In one of his letters Lajos Kossuth writes that "it is known that Pali Kiss is one of the bravest soldier of the country"<sup>34</sup>. On 14th April 1849 he was promoted the commander of

31. Karsa, *op.cit.*, pp. 166-167; Bóna, *op.cit.*, p. 200.

32. Vadász, *op.cit.*, pp. 5-6; Karsa, *op.cit.*, pp. 185-186; Révai Nagy Lexikon, Vol. 11, p. 825.

33. On 5th January, 1849 Windisch-Grätz, the Austrian lieutenant general occupied Buda, the capital of Hungary. The government had mode to Debrecen, where they led the military operations from. Reoccupying the capital was not important only from a military point of view but it symbolised the liberation of the country and gave inspiration for further fights. Bóna, *op.cit.*, pp. 25-34.

34. Vadász, *op.cit.*, p. 7.



Pétersvárad, the Southern fortress of great importance<sup>35</sup>. Here he got into connection with Sebô Vukovics, minister of justice, who again had a favourable opinion of him. "Pál Kiss is willing to do everything for the country —wrote Vukovics in a letter on 5th June— I beg, till the war ends, do not remove him from this post. He is satisfied here and even proud of the magnificence of his function"<sup>36</sup>. In the same letter he urged that Pál Kiss should be appointed a general. Meanwhile Lajos Kossuth had appointed Pál Kiss a general on 28th May but military situation made the document arrive much later<sup>37</sup>. The following can be read in the short letter of appointment<sup>38</sup>:

"Appointment, by force of which colonel Pál Kiss, commander of division is appointed general and commander of army with rank and stipend in the name of the Hungarian government from today. Dated Debrecen, 28th May, 1849.

The Governor of the country  
on behalf of the Minister of War"

Pétersvárad was an important fortress of the frontier, which had been surrounded by the imperial forces in winter 1848/1849, and it was attacked by the troops of Jellašić in June, 1849 from the direction of Újvidék. Pál Kiss organised the defence of the castle, which was made difficult by a series of treason and the hostile attitude of the local inhabitants<sup>39</sup>.

Meanwhile the successes of the Spring Campaign made emperor Francis Joseph (1848-1916), who was the successor of Ferdinand V ask for the military support of Nicholas I, the Russian czar. In the middle of June a Russian troop of 200 thousands soldiers led by field marshal Paskievics invaded Hungary<sup>40</sup>. Though the Hungarians continued to fight

35. *Révai Nagy Lexikon*, p. 663.

36. Vadász, *op.cit.*, p. 7.

37. Róbert Hermann, "Kossuth Lajos, az Országos Honvédelmi Bizottmány és a Kormányzóelnöki Iroda kiadatlan iratai 1849-ből", In: *Hadtörténeti Közlemények*, 1992, No. 3, p. 154.

38. Magyar Országos Levéltár (Hungarian National Archive) H.2. OHB iratok. 66 doboz. Iktatás nélküli iratok, dátum szerint. (unregistered documents, by date).

39. *Révai Nagy Lexikon*, Budapest, 1922, Vol. 15, p. 387.

40. Bertényi, Gyapay, *op.cit.*, p. 385.

with heroism and resolution their situation became hopeless against the threefold odds. As a result of the heavy odds and the series of defeats Görgey who had been invested with full power, laid down arms on 13 August, 1849 at Világos. The last symbolic manifestation of resistance was the fact that he surrendered not to Austrians but to the Russian troops<sup>41</sup>.

After that there was no serious resistance in Hungary. The last three fortresses in the possession of the Hungarians were Munkács, Komárom and Pétervárad, which was defended by the soldiers of Pál Kiss. The situation of the defenders of Pétervárad became hopeless after the surrender at Világos. In September, when Munkács fell, they decided to hand over the fortress. On 7th September they surrendered under more favourable conditions than Komárom at the beginning of October<sup>42</sup>. All soldiers in Pétervárad were given amnesty but they were held in captivity till the middle of October. The last to be released was Pál Kiss, whose military career ended here<sup>43</sup>.

The war of independence was followed by bloody reprisal in Hungary. On 6th October 1849, 13 generals of the war of independence were executed. János Damjanich and Károly Leiningen Westerburg, the two immediate comrades of Pál Kiss were among them. Lajos Batthyány, the prime minister of the first Hungarian responsible government was shot in Budapest and several other participants of the war were inflicted with capital punishment or imprisonment<sup>44</sup>.

Pál Kiss was deeply shaken by the defeat of the war of independence and the execution of his fellow soldiers, which he himself escaped only narrowly. He did not have a diary and even later he never wrote down his recollections, which makes it difficult to see his deeds and role clearly. His fellow soldiers and people who saw him in battles praised his heroism. Ferenc Karsai, as a young *honvéd* saw him gallop in front of his soldiers in the battles at Tápióbicske and Vác and witnessed how fiercely

41. *Ibid.*, pp. 386-387.

42. Vadász, *op.cit.*, p. 7.

43. *Ibid.*

44. 15th March, the beginning of the revolution is a national holiday in Hungary, while 6th October is the day of national mourning, when the martyr generals and the victims of the war are commemorated.

he protected his tired soldiers against even a malicious remark<sup>45</sup>. In his recollections he mentions Pál Kiss among the officers who could inspire his soldiers with their personal example and who took the lead in battles. He wrote about the famous battle at Tápióbicske: "The 3rd battalion was wading in the water up to the armhole while battalion three headed towards the bridge which was defended by gun-fire and the extended order of the enemy. Fifty paces off the bridge the heroic leader of the 9th battalion, Pál Kiss turned back with his sword above his head and advancing backwards in a leisurely way as if he had been on the drill-ground or had been a graceful recruiting officer he shouted Fix bayonet! and the battalion fixed the bayonets. Pál Kiss ordered again "Follow me with bayonets fixed"! The battalion ran as a windstorm and started the bayonet fight at once"<sup>46</sup>.

His behaviour in action and personal characteristics resemble slightly to János Damjanich. József Zalár, an acquaintance of his wrote about him 1888<sup>47</sup>:

"Hát hiszen a hős Kiss Pál ott,  
a marcona hadvezér,  
mestere a rohamoknak,  
Ahol cifrán káromkodnak,  
Most is övé a babér".

From 1850 on Pál Kiss lived in Tiszafüred. In 1854 he married Maria Bernát, also of Greek origin, who was 20 years younger than him<sup>48</sup>. They got acquainted during the war of independence, before the battle at Tápióbicske some of the Hungarian officers were quartered at the house of the Bernát family in Tiszafüred<sup>49</sup>. They married in the Greek church of Karcag; János Popovics officiated at the service. Five children

45. Karsa, *op.cit.*, pp. 183-184.

46. Karsa, *op.cit.*, p. 160.

47. Vadász, *op.cit.*, p. 8. "And there was the heroic Pál Kiss, the martial commander, the master of attacks, where the soldiers swear frequently, he wins the glory again".

48. Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok Megyei Levéltár (Archives of Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok Country; hereinafter SZML); Karcagi görög anyakönyvek. Házassági anyakönyv. 1854. (Greek registers from Karcag. Marriage register, 1854).

49. Vadász, *op.cit.*, p. 4.

were born of their marriage, two of which, Ilona and Pál lived to be a grown up. Ilona died at the age of 27; there is no evidence, on the other hand, on what happened to Pál<sup>50</sup>.

Pál Kiss lived retired in his country home and run the Tiszafüred and Tiszaörs estates of his wife. Though he did not write any memoirs, a diary of his can be found in the National Széchényi Library in Budapest<sup>51</sup>. As a result of the drought in 1863 there was a great famine in the country especially in the plain. Central measures were taken to relieve the distress. Famine committees were formed to organise assistance and to distribute subsidies<sup>52</sup>. The chairman of the famine committee in Tiszafüred was Pál Kiss. His diary testifies how consciences and humane he was in performing his task. It can be read in his diary that at several occasions he did not wait for central decisions and used his own money to help the families in great trouble. The hero of previous battles, the martial military leader marked many sums in his diary with "given from mine"<sup>53</sup>.

The diary lists donations of the widows of János Damjanich and Lajos Batthyány for the people of Tiszafüred. Their donations must have been motivated by their previous personal acquaintance with Pál Kiss<sup>54</sup>.

It was in these years that illness of Pál Kiss starts. As his diary refers to it, it made him be absent from the committee meetings<sup>55</sup>. It must have been a serious illness causing great pains, which we can learn from hints and the text of his mourning-card. He might have travelled to Budapest to get medical treatment, where he died on 27th May, 1867<sup>56</sup>.

50. SZML Karcagi görög anyakönyvek (Greek registers from Karcag) 1850-1895. The Greeks in Tiszafüred belonged to the Karcag parish, where János Popovics served for more than 40 years between 1852 and 1896. Izabella Papp, "Popovics János karcagi görög pap síremléke (The sepulchre of János Karcag, the Greek priest in Karcag)", In: *Honismeret*, 1994/4, pp. 37-40.

51. National Széchényi Library. Manuscript Department. Oct. Hung 1710. Fol. 134. Ínségi jegyzetek. (hereinafter Ínségi jegyzetek).

52. Lajos Györffy, *A nagy ínség 1863-ban* (The great famine in 1863), Túrkeve, 1931.

53. Ínségi jegyzetek, p. 15.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

56. SZML Karcagi görög anyakönyvek (Greek registers from Karcag). Halotti anyakönyv 1867, (register of death, 1867); Kiss Pál gyászjelentése (mourning card of Kiss Pál). *Tiszafüredi Kiss Pál Múzeum Adattára*, 83. 192, No. 1.

His mortal remains were carried home by train on 29th May and were buried in the cemetery of Tiszafüred on 30th May. The people of Tiszafüred, as well as the inhabitants and representatives of the neighbouring villages took part in the funeral with military honours. The funeral rites were conducted by János Popovics, who ended his blessing with the following lines: "Nyugodjál hazai földben Kiss Pál, honod emleget áldva, hült porodon lengjen béke és örök nyugalom"<sup>57</sup>.

His widow was escorted to the cemetery by two colonels, where his former fellow officers delivered funeral orations. Though respect was paid to the person of Pál Kiss, faithfulness to the ideals of 1848 was expressed even in the appearances of the ceremony, as well. It was of great importance as the heroes and the deceased of the war of independence had only been celebrated in secret before. The funeral of Pál Kiss, however, was only a few days before the compromise of 1867 and the coronation of Frances Joseph as the Hungarian king<sup>58</sup>.

On 15th March and 6th October in the following years hundreds of Füred inhabitants visited the tomb of Pál Kiss. They commemorated the deceased hero, the general of the war of independence and all the soldiers at the same time with flowers and wreaths. Very soon there emerged the idea of erecting a monument as a sign of their respect<sup>59</sup>. A hundred years ago in the year of the millennium (1896)<sup>60</sup> a monument of brown granite, erected from contributions and the donation of the Tiszafüred municipal corporation, was unveiled in the graveyard of Pál Kiss. Its inscriptions says: "Patriotic reverence erected this monument to commemorate Pál Kiss *honvéd*-general of 1848-1849 an his fellow soldiers resting in this graveyard. 1896"<sup>61</sup>.

57. "May you rest in peace in the soil of your home, your country remembers you with praise, may you rest in eternal Peace". Sándor Gál, "Kiss Pál honvédtábornok temetése és síremléke", In: *Füredi Hírek* 1989, Vol. 1, No. 4, p. 16.

58. The XII article of 1867 act consolidated the antagonism between the Habsburg Monarchy and Hungary that had existed since 1848. On 8th June Frances Joseph was crowned to be the king of Hungary. The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, with two member states of equal rights came into being with this act. Bertényi, Gyapay, *op.cit.*, pp. 416-418.

59. S. Gál, *op.cit.*

60. In 1896 the 1000 year anniversary of the existence of Hungary was celebrated with splendid ceremonies.

61. The tombstone of his István Bernát, his father-in-law is by the monument.

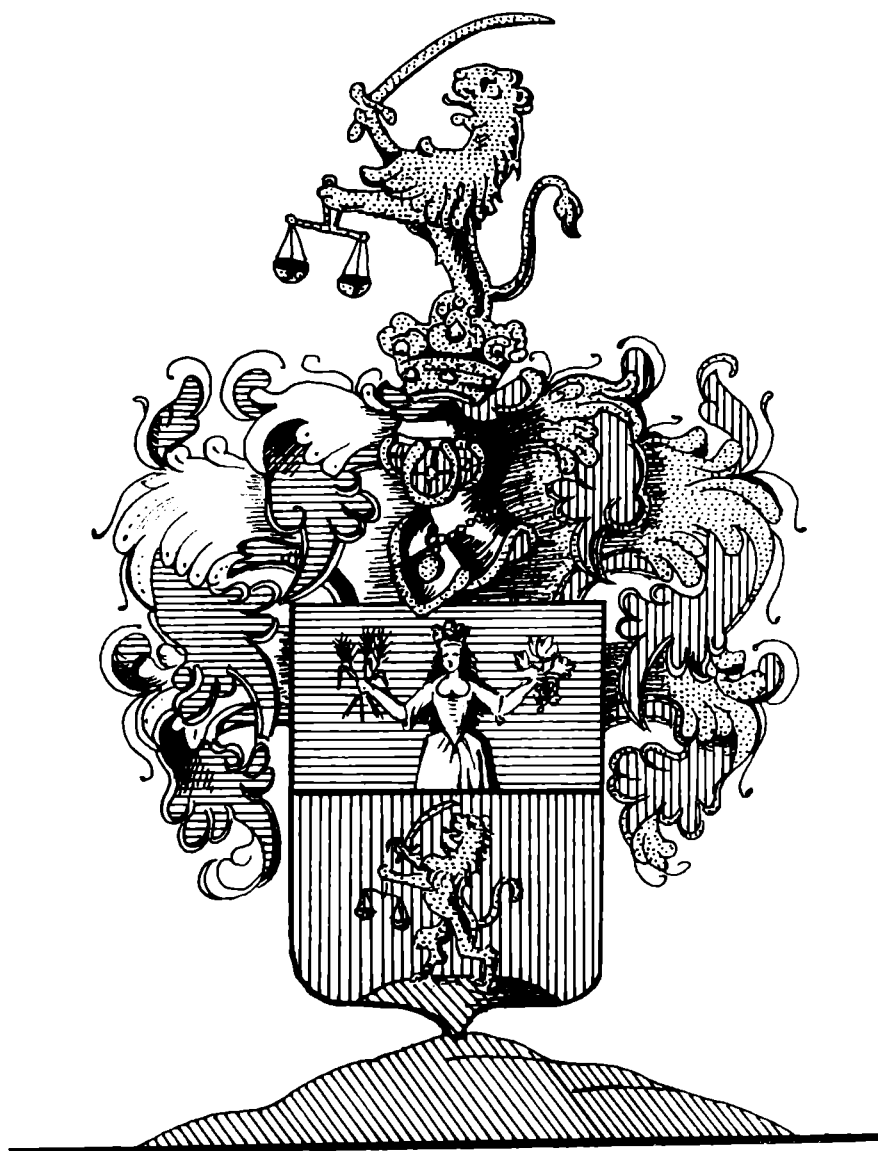
Lack of sources allows us to describe the career of Pál Kiss only in outlines. Still we can grasp some characteristic features that can be set as an example for the coming generations. The most important ones are: patriotism, courage and humanity.

*Szolnok Megyei Levéltár*

*[Translated by Klára Koltay]*



*1. Coat-of-arms of Pál Kiss.*



2. The coat-of-arms drawn by Róza Varjú.





3. The reproduction of picture of Pál Kiss painted in 1862.

Kinevezés

Mellynek országgal Kiseb-  
 Eredes, és ország parancsnok  
 és mai napot kiamitandó mag-  
 gal és alkalmával Taborok-  
 ka és sereg-parancsnokká  
 a magyar kormány nevében  
 kinevezék.

Kelt Debreczen október 28-án  
 1849

az ország kormányzója

A királyi miniszter helyett.

A házaspár Görgy n. e. anyaszentegyházai esküvői anyakönyvének kivonatát  
1854. évről

Hely. év. nap.	Esküvői	A házaspár					Tanúk	Hirdetés
		Neve	Áll.	Áll.	Áll.	Áll.		
9. febr. 18.	Görgy n. e.	Béla	45	g. n. e.	Béla	45	Agoston Béla Károly Görgy	g. n. e.
10. máj. 2.	"	Mária	21	g. n. e.	Mária	21	Béla Görgy Károly Görgy	g. n. e.
11. máj. 24.	"	Mária	16	g. n. e.	Mária	16	Béla Görgy Károly Görgy	g. n. e.

A házaspár az esküvői anyakönyvének kivonatát  
1854. évről

Janus 9. 1863.

Agoston Béla  
Károly Görgy

A házaspár  
Károly Görgy

5. The marriage register of the Karcag parish: the first entry registers the marriage of Pál Kiss and Mária Bernát.

1863.

1

Tedő B<sup>an</sup> a' típa fücedi holga.  
 bixoi revület minden város.  
 és helységekben meg lett a'z.  
 Vitya az inség bizottmány.  
 Kireden mint központba  
 volt az értekezlet, hol a' re-  
 vületi dolgozók is meg-  
 jelentek, itt helyben tagjai:  
 En, Kiss Pál, Balogh István,  
 Monori István, Hegyesi János,  
 a' két lelkes - 'a' városi mo-  
 és legkö, a' bizottmány  
 maga alarítja megmarad-  
 jelenen valakijé elnökölt.  
 2. köjöl - 's intercedit a' leveles  
 ? felelt. - Menecses és is tag-  
Véleményem e' tárgyban:  
 --- Telén csapásos időnk  
 a' már meg volt korai  
 együtt megmenekülés  
 fenyeget be minden, miert  
 keret

**KISS PÁLNÉ**, szül. berecsztszeghi **BERNÁTH MÁRIA** maga, és gyermekei **LON** és **PÁL**, valamint sógornéja **KISS ALEXANDRA** férj **JUHÁSZ JÁNOSNÉ**, úgy testére **BERNÁT ANDRÁS** nevökben is, szomorodott szívvel jelenti elfelejthatlen férjének, atyoknak, testvérének és sógorának

# KISS PÁL

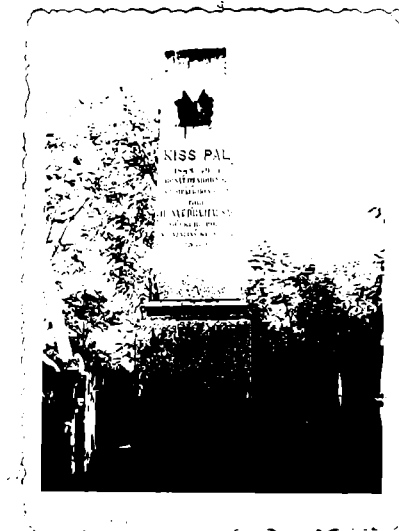
**honvéd tábornok, péterváradí vár parancsnoknak**

Élete 59, boldog házasságának 14-ik évében hroszas szenvedés után f. hó 27-én reggeli 7 órakor Pesten történt gyászos kimúltat.

A boldogultnak hültjéteteme, a görög n. e. egyház szertartása szerint f. hó 28-án 3 órakor beszenteltetvén gyászmenettel a vasúthoz kísértették, s onnan Tisza-Füredre szállíttatván f. hó 30-án a családi sírboltban fog örök nyugalomra letétetni.

Kelt Pesten, május 27-én 1867.

*Aldás hamvaira!*



7. The mourning card of Pál Kiss with a photo of the later monument.



8. The tombstone of Pál Kiss, his father-in-law, István Bernát in the Tiszafüred cemetery.