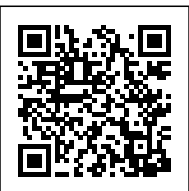


JOSEPH POPOV (HOVSEP PAPOYAN)

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Tbilisi-based famed Armenian dagger-maker Geurk (Gevork) Sarkisovich had a rival Armenian dagger maker named Joseph Popov (Hovsep Papoyan). Considered in the 1830s to be the best master of arms, he made a dagger especially for Tsar Nicholas I. Popov sold a second dagger to the tsar for 150 rubles. In 1861, Alexander II (son of Nicholas I) bought five objects from Geurk for 350 rubles. The following year the governor of Tbilisi allowed Popov to use the royal coat of arms on his products.

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