



The steamer Radetzki relates to one of the most epic events in the history of Bulgaria – the April Uprising in 1876, which triggered a sequence of events leading to the liberation of Bulgaria from the 5-decade suppression of the Ottoman rule. This is a monument of the bravery and sacrifice of the rebel detachment of Hristo Botev - a passionate revolutionary and great poet, who work in exile for the liberation of the motherland. Even though the news of the suppressed uprising had reached Botev and his party of 205 men could hardly make a difference, the idea of living without taking participation in the long-awaited fight for freedom was intolerable. On May 16th 1876, disguised as agrarian workers, the members of the detachment boarded the Austro-Hungarian steamer Radetzki seized control of it. After that Botev presented the political motives of his act before the captain of the steamer, Dagobert Engländer, and the passengers. The civilized manners of the Bulgarian revolutionary made a great impression to all the people that were present aboard the ship. Radetzki reached the Bulgarian coast near Kozloduy, where Botev's party descended and headed to Vratsa to engage in the fight with the Ottoman bashi-bozouks. All his life, Botev inspired his followers and comrades with his passion for liberty and rights and finally his turn had come to fulfill his oath and die for them. His memory shall never be forgotten. The inscription chiselled on the granite rock by which he was killed reads: "Your prophecy has come true - you live on!" Nowadays, the air raid sirens throughout all Bulgaria are being switched on for a few minutes on every June 2, at exactly at noon. Bulgarians stand up to honour the ones who have fought and died for their country.