

CHAPTER ONE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND PRUSSIA / GERMANY

*“Time will unveil all things to posterity;
It is a chatterer and speaks to those who do not question it.”¹*

It is somewhat naive to contemplate and publish a history of family lineage that defines a specific ancient origin. In reality, most of us who are the descendants of those who emigrated from Prussia to Wisconsin in the 1800s can only trace our family's historical existence back to the 1600s with any accuracy. Early American colonial settlers of the 1500s, who later migrated to Wisconsin, provide their descendants with an additional 100-200 years of lineage mainly because record keeping in early America was better due to the stability of the churches and the government.

Many residents of Kewaunee County, Wisconsin are descendants of immigrants of the peasant class from northern and middle Europe in the 1800s. The records of their existence do not begin until the mid- to late-1600s. Most of these remaining records were written and preserved by the clergy of the various religions that existed following The Reformation in the late-1400s and early-1500s.

Various governments that existed in northern Europe during the same period undoubtedly kept records, but they were markedly different from those kept by the Church. The people did not have the freedom of movement, as we know it, and most remained in a small area under the control of a landowner. He was not really interested in the vital statistics of his peasants except to the extent of their ability to provide him with labor and portions of their produce in the form of taxes. That balance determined his basic income, and the landowner was primarily concerned that the income remained constant or increased.

The records that resulted would not have provided the vital statistics of birth and death except in nonspecific terms. Also, government record keeping was not consistent in the northern regions of Europe. Records were usually initiated first in the heavily populated areas in and around cities where civil servants were available to generate and maintain them, and last in the rural areas. That is why civil records for Pommern and other rural areas in Prussia were not formally instituted until 1874. The records of the government, regardless of its structure – landlord or the administration imposed by the current ruler – no longer exist in great quantity, and they are very difficult to access. The constant change of government, as a result of warfare, included the wanton destruction of government records, the worst of which took place during and at the end of World War II.

Fortunately, records of the European churches were a treasured possession of the congregation, and many methods were employed to spirit them away to safety whenever the situation dictated. It is a small miracle they survived, given the many instances when they were threatened with destruction. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints took on the monumental task of preserving the records that did exist. Representatives visited the archives and microfilmed every church record book available. They now have an extensive file of most of these vital historical records that are the major source for serious genealogists. But much of the earliest chronology of family history is gone forever.

There is an industry perpetrated by charlatans who offer to provide information and/or a coat of arms to those expressing a passing interest in their heritage. The documents supplied are usually mass-produced and are only personalized with the family name. It is quite common to hear people say that their great-great-great-grandfather was an officer in the Prussian army. That, of course, would mean they were descended from extraordinary stock or even the nobility. It is certain that some small number were descendants of nobility and can more easily provide the proof because those records are more likely to have survived. However, the vast majority of those whose ancestors came from Prussia, should they choose to pursue their heritage, will be forced to admit they descended from the peasant class of people who originally settled and populated the region on or near the coast of the Baltic Sea. There is abundant proof that only the nobility had, or needed, a coat-of-arms.

The history of Prussia, regardless of the historical source used, does not and cannot specifically define the origin of any single common family. History can only tell us the many possibilities of our origin, and we must be content with that. There are many who could care less, even though they possess a strong dose of pride that the ancient culture instilled. That feeling of pride of heritage continues to diminish with each succeeding generation whose roots are now defined in a shorter term. Their country of origin is America, more specifically the United States, and that is as it should be. But the exclusion of long-term heritage leaves one only with the high expectations of a good, comfortable life, with little risk of true poverty or deprivation, and absolutely no appreciation for the sacrifices of those who gave us these seemingly endless opportunities in this great country our ancestors explored, settled, and built.

The history of Prussia that follows is not, nor is it meant to be, a definitive, all-inclusive chronology. It is meant to give the reader a broad sense of the important role Prussia and its people played in the expansion of civilization in Europe, from the earliest time to the late-1800s when Prussia became a state in unified Germany. It is specific only to the extent of important changes that would affect the lives of our ancestors and the people of Prussia. Most of all, it is intended to give the reader a realistic view of the culture that is our heritage.

THE BEGINNING

Prussia – the name commonly applied to lands along the southeast coast of the Baltic Sea – once consisted of territories that included great parts of present-day Poland and most of Germany. Prussia was an independent territory and country, distinct in many ways from the developing and evolving territories that surrounded it on the east, south, north, and west.

Much like our state of Wisconsin, the lands of Prussia were formed by glaciers. The Baltic Sea, on the north, was originally an inland lake of fresh water left behind by the melting glaciers. To the west, the glaciers ebbed northward as they melted and receded, allowing the north Atlantic Ocean to mix with the Baltic, eventually causing it to become a saltwater sea. For civilized man to live there forests had to be cleared, swamps and marshy wetlands drained, and rocks removed from the fields. Thousands of years would pass before these events took place.

The earliest inhabitants of Prussia were nomadic tribes who first reached these northern regions around 11,000 B.C. in pursuit of the retreating reindeer as the melting ice drew them ever northward. The people of these nomadic tribes had their origin in the Mediterranean area, as did all of mankind according to the scriptures and analysis of historical artifacts left behind on which the origins of the human race are based.

In Europe, there were two main centers from which the glaciers emanated and receded. One was the Alpine area and the other was the Scandinavian north. Between these two intermittent advancing and receding ice-fields was a narrow corridor in central Europe, which was not glaciated but had conditions similar to those of present-day northern Canada or the Siberian region along the Arctic. The winters were very cold and made the lands uninhabitable, but the short summers were reasonably warm. Cold-loving animals, the reindeer being one of them, moved northward during the summers, and the wandering bands of hunters followed. During this period the people lived, to a great extent, in caves and rock shelters. There is evidence that bear, mammoth, bison, deer, wolves, reindeer, many smaller animals, and winged fowl were their constant companions and served as their primary source of food. They possessed weapons in the form of a crude spear, and bow and arrow with a stone arrowhead. The walls of their caves were engraved with crude pictures of their existence. They were beginning to communicate in spoken language with different dialects from tribe to tribe. As thousands of years passed, down to about 8300 B.C., the surviving cultures settled along and around the shores of the Baltic Sea, by now an ice-dammed, freshwater lake. Over decades the climate was changing from Arctic to sub-Arctic. Dwarf birch and willow began to grow in abundance, and the grasses were of the tundra varieties.

During the period 8300 B.C. to 7800 B.C., Sweden and Norway were in the form of a huge island, and the rapidly melting ice allowed the waters of the north Atlantic and the Baltic to mix. But over the period 7800 to 6800 B.C., the land, relieved of the tremendous weight of the ice, rose and caused the Baltic Sea to once again become a freshwater body. The temperature continued to slowly rise, and the forests now consisted of birch, pine, elder, hazel, oak, elm, and lime – the last three constituting what is called the oak-mixed forest. The domestication of the dog was recorded during this period.

The period 6800 down to 5000 B.C. reveals a fundamental change in the culture of the tribal people. Although they continued to be hunters and food gatherers, they now supplemented their diet with produce from the sea. They became a fishing culture, learning the art of making dugout canoes and paddles, which indicated they had already possessed an early version of the ax. They lived on banks of rivers and shores of lakes and islands during the summer and fall, and retreated to more permanent cave or rock shelters in the winter and spring.

The next period, bringing a major change to the climate greatly affecting the way of life of the people, lasted from 5000 to 3000 B.C.. The Baltic Sea was once again connected to the North Sea when the water rose and passed over the land between southern Sweden and Denmark. The Baltic was no longer a freshwater lake. The climate became mild, warm, and moist, much warmer than it is today. The mixed-oak forest prevailed and became the dominant flora. Water continued to flow across the North Sea bed, and southern Sweden was eventually cut off from Denmark. Settlement sites along the rivers and lakes were inundated by the water, causing the people to resettle numerous times as the topography changed. They began to build huts, and their diet expanded again. It now included oysters, snails, and many different kinds of fish; birds such as duck, goose, swan, and gull; game animals such as deer and wild boar; and small animals like otter, marten, fox, bear, and beaver. It was during this period that something entirely new in the history of European culture was introduced – pottery. Prior to this, the containers were undoubtedly made of wood, leather, or woven reeds. Now they had discovered the process of shaping and baking clay to produce cooking and storage utensils. The women also began to weave cloth from wool. The people no longer lived a nomadic life and were closely bound to certain localities by the presence of their means of subsistence.

This same period also brought about another fundamental change, which greatly affected the course of history. It was the transition from food gathering to food production. Animals and plants were domesticated, agricultural villages were established, surplus food was stored, labor was divided for greater efficiency, and the class system developed. The diet changed again. With more cereal foods available the consumption of meat was reduced. Food surpluses led to trade, bartering, and exchange of goods. Commerce required transportation, causing the need for more domesticated animals to become beasts of burden. It is believed that trade caused the birth of written symbols and language so that records could be kept. With a plentiful food supply, there was a rapid increase in the population. That caused the tribes to expand into virgin territory or to take territory from others. The production of food, dependent solely on the whims of nature, created fertility

cults. Priests, rituals, and temples soon followed. From the worship of the nature gods, a great variety of local customs were developed for burials, the erection of stone monuments as places of sacrifice and worship, and the cult of the dead.

Most of these cultural changes had already taken place in Egypt and the near east. Food production had begun in the Nile River Valley as early as 6000 B.C., three thousand years earlier than in northern Europe. These early agriculturists migrated to other suitable areas, as individuals or families, possibly because of the population growth that followed the production of surplus food. As these agriculturists mixed with the food gathering peoples, they taught them the methods of cereal food production and domestication of animals. Implements of food production like the hoe, rake, sickle, and gardening tools followed.

The northern European tribes began to migrate to other territories, claiming these new lands for themselves. They moved south and west along the Baltic Sea into what is now northwest Germany, across the Baltic into southern Sweden and Denmark, and east along the Baltic. Each of these tribes, and those of other parts of the world, contributed their inventions of basic useful items that would eventually become universally adopted. Separate factions of the northern European tribes, led by adventurous chieftains, traveled further south into the Mediterranean area. During these migrations, spanning hundreds of years, these aggressive people easily spread their influence and through marriage, established new dynasties.

Although there is considerable controversy concerning the date the horse was introduced as a domesticated animal, it is generally accepted that it was first domesticated on the Asiatic steppes by nomadic people. The use of the horse by the Indo-European peoples along the Baltic was not, at first, as a beast of burden or hitched to a plow, wagon, or cart. The horse existed in a wild state in western Europe, but the use of the horse for riding and pulling war-chariots did not begin until around 1600 B.C..

Domesticated cattle were already being herded throughout the Baltic region. They were the direct descendants of the aurochs (pronounced o'roks), wild oxen that roamed Europe, Asia, and North Africa before 4000 B.C.. The aurochs originated in central Asia, then spread to Europe, China, and Africa. At first they were hunted like any wild animal and then later domesticated. They were used as beasts of burden and in many other roles in agriculture and transportation as those developed. There were many variations of the original aurochs as they would interbreed. Much later in the 1700s, British agricultural scientists conducted experiments that, through controlled breeding of specific species, developed hybrids with traits suitable for various needs, such as meat, dairy products, and for pulling and transporting loads. Perhaps the words ox and oxen were derived from the original name of the species: aurochs.

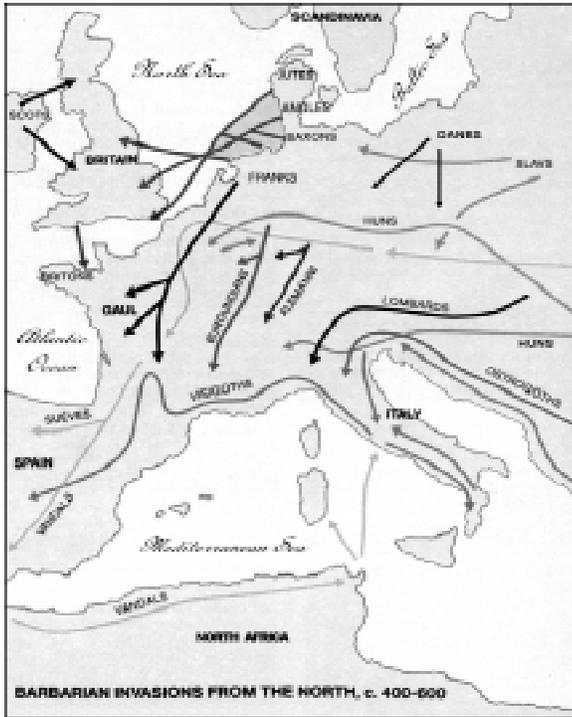
In northern Europe, between 3000 B.C. and 1200 B.C., cultural unification had taken place in the older settled areas, and the remaining culture is attributed to what is now known as Germanic people. This culture would emerge and ultimately become Prussia. Historians conclude that this ancient culture, who invaded Sweden, Denmark, and the entire area east and west along the Baltic Sea, established themselves as the ruling caste in northern Europe wherever they went, influencing the cultural development of these new regions and being influenced by the native culture.

The Bronze Age, from about 3000 to 800 B.C., so-called because of the proliferation of artifacts made from this metal during the period, brought advances to the way of life throughout the world. The Bronze Age, as it progressed down through the centuries, gave the peoples of Europe refinements of items made from bronze. The major items produced were all designed to enable the warriors of the armies to fight more effectively. Axes, daggers, dagger-axes, lance-heads, hammer-axes, swords, and razors were perfected and ornamented. Items of adornment were also produced: armbands, neck and arm rings, combs, the earliest safety pin or brooch, bronze vessels, suspension rings, and a variety of other household utensils.

The standard of living during this period was universally good for the peoples of northern Europe. The economy was simple, the climate was agreeable, and the harvests produced a surplus. It resulted in a near classless financial society as no one was very rich and no one was very poor. Advances in agricultural methods benefited everyone. Ox-drawn plows were commonly used, but threshing the ever-increasing harvest was still extremely primitive. There were hand-mills, however, to convert the grain to flour. Methods of building boats progressed rapidly, resulting in boats of greater capacity, speed, and strength. All of these advances enhanced the growth of the various tribes, causing them to begin to look to the wealthy and sophisticated southern Europe for expansion. The appearance of iron in Hittite Asia Minor would influence their decision.

The Iron Age began about 1000 B.C.. At first, iron was used only for special purposes, and bronze remained the dominant metal. The great advantage of iron over bronze was that it was much harder and durable, making it the metal of choice for weapons of war. Soon, all of the armies of the various tribes would be armed with this superior weapon, but it would be 600 B.C. before the transition began. The reason was simple. Iron was introduced to northern Europe through trade and commerce, not by invading armies.

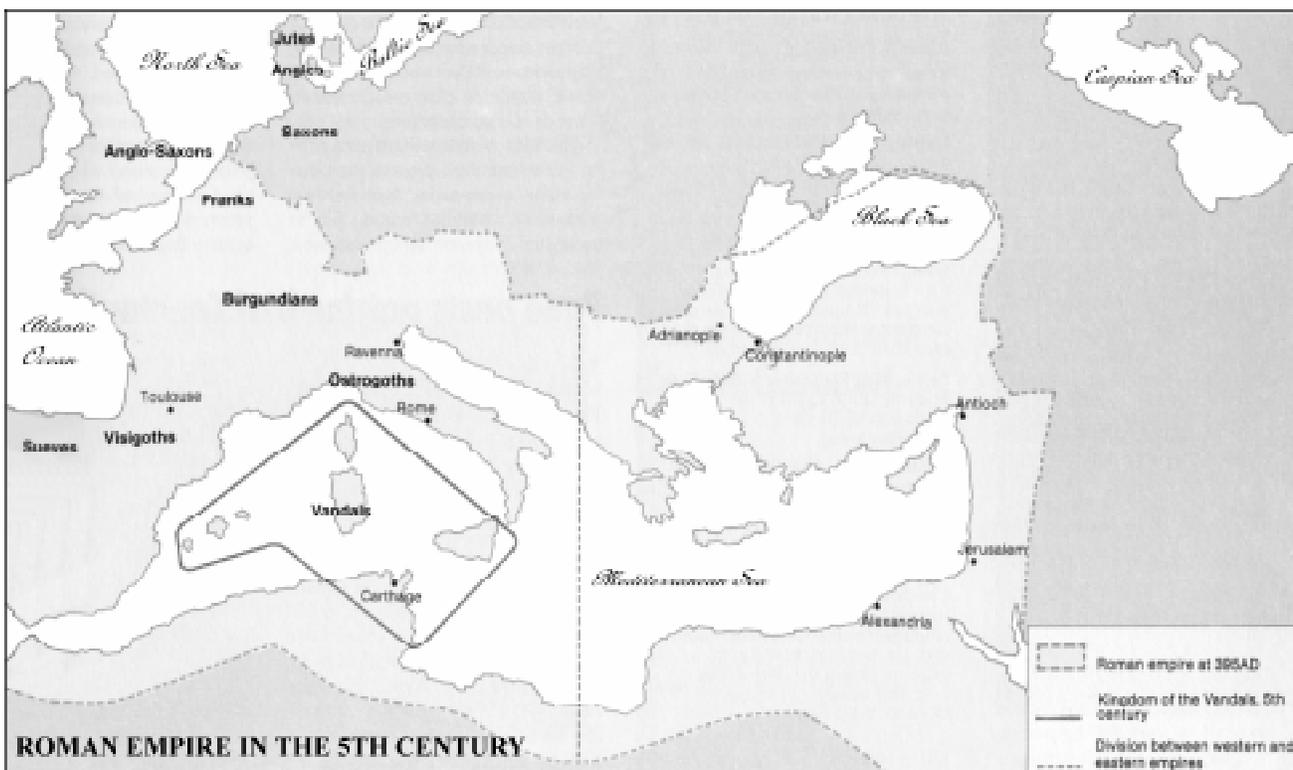
THE TRIBES EXPAND THEIR TERRITORY



The culturally unified Germanic tribes of the Baltic were initially blocked in their expansion to the south by the Illyrians on the east, and to the south and west by the Celts. The Roman Empire, not yet consolidated or at its zenith, controlled the area to the south. For the next 600 years, the Germanic people sent waves of people to the south, southeast, and southwest, and although they suffered numerous defeats, finally reached the Rhine River and controlled all the territory north of that natural barrier. They were motivated in this quest more out of survival than by the great riches of the Mediterranean region still held by the Roman Empire. The climate was beginning to change. Summers were cooler and not nearly as favorable for the production of the cereal crops or the raising of flocks and herds. Winters were becoming unpleasant, adding to the seriousness of the problem. But the major result of the changing climate was that the southern Baltic lands were gradually being flooded. The inhabitants were forced to move and were willing to relocate anywhere to survive.

The migrating tribes, beginning with the Cimbri and Teutones, initiated the conflict between the Germanic peoples and the Roman Empire in 113 B.C.. After a pause of several centuries, the Goths, Burgundians, Franks, Vandals, Saxons, Huns, Rugans, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Sueves, Lombards, Scots, Picts, Alemanni, Angles, Jutes, and Danes moved into position and were in almost continual battle between each other and with Roman elements south of the

Rhine River. The Roman Empire eventually collapsed in the west around A.D. 500 and was succeeded by a number of Germanic kingdoms. The only kingdoms able to survive were the Franks of France and the Anglo-Saxons of the British Isles. It was a very complex period in the history of Europe. Out of this relatively short period, from the fall of the western Roman Empire and the creation of the Holy Roman Empire, came the creation and development of the basis for the modern nations of Europe.



To summarize this early period of the origin of the Germanic people, the expansion of their territory, and the development of their culture, it is necessary to point out that they cannot be compared culturally to the peoples of Egypt, Greece, or Rome. The people of the tribes, occupying the region between the Vistula and the lower Niemen rivers that would later be called Prussia, belonged to the Baltic family of people along with their Latvian, Estonian, and Lithuanian neighbors. Ethnically, they were not German but Baltic. They were urban cultures and were often called barbarians by the more sophisticated peoples of Greece and Rome. They possessed neither the literature nor the art of a great urban center. They did not have the political unity to direct cultural activities along national lines. After the migrations and the fall of the Roman Empire, the people of the urban north began to acquire knowledge of foreign cultures, including the culture of Christianity. But before that, their culture was shaped by the Baltic Sea and the forests that abounded. The sea provided food – it was a highway – but it claimed many victims. Always a harsh mistress, the sea produces a dour, stubborn people. The environment also produces courage, encourages adventure, and inures to hard and arduous labor. Since the time when the Mediterranean ceased to be the center of political power on earth, all of the great empires have been based on control of sea power. The influence of the sea on the people who settled around it, was one of the fundamental reasons why it was not possible, at first, to create a unified Germanic state. The forest also had a great influence. Anyone who has lived in a pioneering settlement, in a heavily forested area, knows the enduring effect of forest upon the character of the inhabitants. It produces the conviction that the individual must depend upon his own efforts, and those efforts will tax all his strength. It also produces a feeling of isolation and aloneness, a feeling of mystery, and a feeling of oneness with nature. This close contact with the sea and the forest was indelibly impressed upon the character of the ancient Prussian people.

THE MIDDLE AGES

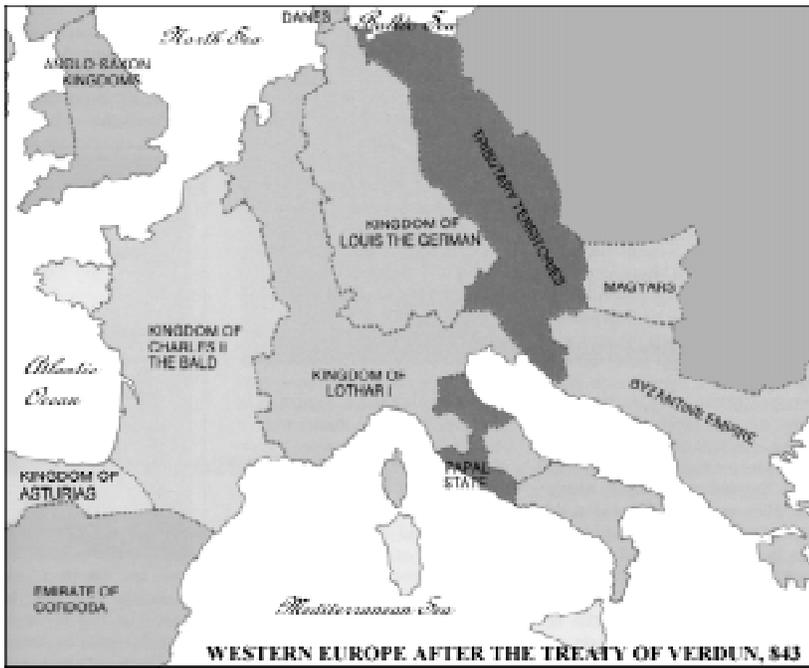
The Middle Ages, A.D. 500 to 1450, was a time when the early rulers wrestled for the establishment of control over the territories they had conquered. Religion was the basis for additional conquests, and crusades and knighthood were introduced. There were no real laws as we know them today, and injustice was settled by judicial duels when the king could not, or would not, place blame in domestic disputes. These duels were a test of innocence. It was believed that God would protect you if you were innocent, and evidence had no real bearing on the outcome. The winner of the duel, fought with a variety of weapons but usually the sword, was adjudicated innocent even if he had been the accused. If the winner was the accuser, the accused must have been guilty.

The age of chivalry was mainly confined to the southern countries of Europe. The Knights of the Templars, whose members were mostly French, and the Knights of St. John's, composed largely of English and Italian members, dedicated their lives to the service of Christ, their spiritual head. They were monks, actively serving a common purpose with the New Testament and the sword. They were easily recognized by the uniformity of their dress, the mantle with the cross, and style of life.

After the disintegration of the Roman Empire, Charlemagne (Charles the Great), the most powerful of the Frankish rulers, founded the Christian Universal Monarchy of the Franco-Roman Empire. For more than one thousand years it remained the frame of German government. The scattered German tribes, under their local rulers and customs, were loosely held together by the symbol of a common German crown, which after A.D. 911 was made elective among a small number of qualified German princes known as *electors*.

Frankish tradition demanded that Charlemagne split his empire among his sons, but all of them died except Louis (the Pious), who in 814 inherited an undivided empire. However, partitions into sub-kingdoms among Louis' sons Lothair, Louis (the German), Pepin, and Charles (the Bald) followed before Louis the Pious died in 840. Lothair succeeded as emperor, but Charles and Louis (Pepin had died in 838) formed an alliance against him and in 843, he was forced to agree to the Treaty of Verdun.





The agreement created, broadly, an idea of Germany, France, and Italy. Louis became ruler of the East Frankish kingdom (Germany) while Charles was confirmed as ruler of the West Frankish kingdom (France). Lothair remained emperor (an empty title), ruler of Italy and of a broad strip of territory between his brother's lands (Provence, Burgundy, and an area called, after him, Lotharingia (Lorraine)). Lothair's lands were the subject of dispute for centuries and until the nineteenth century, only Charles' Kingdom – France – proved viable as a single nation.

Upon the coronation of Otto the Great by the Pope in A.D. 962, the German Emperor became, simultaneously, king of Italy and Lombardy. Thus, as a Roman Emperor, he was considered the successor of the Caesars. However, in the age of feudalism and thereafter through the centuries, because of the continued

ascendancy of the territorial dukes and the ecclesiastical princes, the "First Reich" was incapable of establishing a closely-knit and effective central administration over the lands under its nominal jurisdiction. The conflict was finally solved, in favor of the territorial rulers, by agreements made between the princes from A.D. 1220 to 1231. While the emperors continued to spend their strength in the struggle with the papacy and in efforts to maintain their Italian possessions, political power remained dispersed among numerous large and small independent principalities, free cities, and church domains exposed to the never-ending shifts of dynastic power politics. Insistence on their states' rights by dynastic rulers, and the congenital aversion of the German people to a strong, centralized government prevented the emergence of a German nation-state under a common, absolute monarch.

During the period of Charlemagne's emergence and Otto's subsequent rise to power, the Wends, who were of Slavic origin, were the ruling population in the provinces along the Baltic from Lubeck to Riga. Elements of their rule occupied the territory later to become known as Pommerania and portions of the territories that would become Brandenburg and Saxony, which were neither German nor Slavic but Lithuanian. Charlemagne had not attempted conquest beyond the river Elbe. The bishoprics of Wurzburg, Mainz, Halberstadt, Verden, and Bremen-Hamburg, bordering on the territories of these tribes, had done little or nothing for their conversion from paganism. Under Otto, various dioceses were established to carry out the missionary work. At the synod of Ravenna in A.D. 967, Otto made the premature boast that the Wends had been converted.

The only personality that looms out above the monotonous level of Wendish history is Gottschalk, who was converted

in England and bound together a number of tribes in an extensive empire. He was interested in the conversion of his people, and churches and convents were built at Mecklenburg, Lubeck, Oldenburg, and other centers. But when Gottschalk was murdered in 1066, the realm fell to pieces and the Wend tribes from that time on became the object of conquest to the dukes of Poland and Saxony. Attempts to Christianize them were met with violent resistance. Wends and Germans hated one another. It would take two more centuries, through conquest and colonization, before the Wendish territories were finally brought under the control of the church.



For the people who occupied the coastal plains of the Baltic Sea, little had changed. The expansion of religion, by way of the crusades, had touched their lives from time to time, but all of those attempts to convert them had failed. They were now referred to as heathens. Still divided into various tribes, who frequently feuded with each other, they were quite capable of thwarting any attempt to subjugate them. They were renowned for their generous hospitality, their barbaric custom that a widow should not survive her husband, and the practice of burning a deceased warrior together with his slaves, dogs, and falcons. Their customs had not changed much over the thousands of years that the Germanic tribes had roamed the region. They now showed little ambition for territorial expansion, were fairly populous, and lived in groups in villages and castles. Rivers flowing into the Baltic gave access to the interior, and on land, the territory was traversed by traders. Although they constantly feuded with their neighboring tribes, they were content with their lot in life.

The original idealism of the Templars and the Knights of St. John could not be sustained indefinitely. By the end of the twelfth century, spiritual knighthood seemed almost extinct. It was at this point in time, in A.D. 1190, a new order made its appearance, one which would be called the Teutonic Order. Unlike the other orders, which came from the clergy, the Teutonic Knights were formed in Acre by German burghers: merchants from Bremen and Lubeck on the coast of northern Europe.

CONQUESTS OF THE TEUTONIC ORDER

Acre was the name of a seaport city on the Mediterranean Sea and the Bay of Acre, part of the Holy Land. The city was under siege by an army of crusaders composed of German knights. Disease had badly affected the crusaders camped on Mount Turon outside the city of Acre. The merchants from Bremen and Lubeck took pity on the plight of the crusaders and built a tent camp from the sails of their boats. They also provided beds, hospital equipment, and the funds to maintain the hospital. The leader of the merchants, a German by the name of Siebrand, obtained from King Guy, then King of Jerusalem, a grant of a plot of land in the city of Acre. When the city fell, the newly established order built a church, hospital, and dormitories for their members on the land. They then applied for recognition as a spiritual corporation of the Brothers of the Hospital of St. Mary, of the German Nation, which was granted by Pope Celestine III in 1196 and confirmed by Pope Innocent in 1199. Pope Innocent, however, insisted that the corporation become a knightly order, which would take its knightly rules from the Templars and its hospital rules from the Order of St. John.

The order of Teutonic Knights was purely a Germanic movement. It never fought any famous battles in the Holy Land nor was abundant wealth amassed like its older predecessors, which became corrupted and slowly decayed as organizations and passed into history. The order, with its close association with the German burghers, was one of the major reasons the north and northeastern areas of central Europe were colonized over the next three centuries.

Throughout its existence, the Teutonic Order consisted of three main branches: the German branch of southern and southwestern Germany including Alsace, with some possessions in Burgundy; a branch in Livonia; and the Prussian branch with its center at the Marienburg Castle. The Grand Master of the order resided in this castle and was the center of the order as a whole. The mission of the order, as it evolved, was to establish cities and towns along navigable rivers and the Baltic Sea, to conquer the heathen tribes and administer their lands, and to protect and participate in the trading ventures of northeastern Europe. In recognition of the fact that the origin of the order was a hospital, it remained dedicated to maintaining hospitals wherever the order ventured. The Teutonic Order is credited for naming the territory as Prussia and its people – Prussians.

The Teutonic Knights, men dedicated to their religion, lived a frugal life. The order consisted of both clergy and laymen who were required to dutifully attend mass and other church services. Only the knights, who were the clergy, wore a white mantle with a black cross. Their hair was closely cropped, but both the knights and laymen brothers had full beards, earning them the nickname – the bearded ones. They lived by strict rules, as an order and individually, without excess of any kind, always providing for the sick and poor. Applicants were accepted into the order but had to pass stringent requirements and solemnly vow to serve the sick, to protect the Holy Land and any other land belonging to the order, and not to leave the order without permission. They were all trained to be skilled warriors, with the knights having the role of heavy cavalry since they had more horses than the others.

The order initially led a relatively insignificant life on the periphery of medieval Europe's political and military concerns. German Emperor Henry VI took an interest in the order while planning a crusade but died before any plans were consummated. The order's rise to prominence was during the rule and reign of Henry's son, Frederick II, who recognized the potential of the order, undeterred by feudal ties and influence of civil and spiritual lords. Frederick II secured papal charters for the order, recruited prominent members, and relied heavily upon the order to provide trustworthy men for specific tasks. He also gave the Grand Master the privilege of being a member of the royal household during his visits and belonging to the inner circle of the emperor's advisers. Further, two brethren of the order were granted permanent attendance at the imperial court. It was Frederick's court and his administration that most influenced the structure of the Teutonic Order.

The first Grand Master of the order with any stature was Hermann Von Salza who was a close friend of Frederick and became his greatest confidant. Hermann was totally loyal to Frederick and was able, because of his stable judgment and

political good sense, to act as mediator between Frederick and the Papacy without losing the respect of either. Hermann used Frederick's centralized administration as a model for his own reorganization of the order, which prepared it for its main task in northeastern Germany. The order had managed to build five castles in Hungary around 1222, after King Andrew of Hungary had reluctantly presented the land to them. But the Germans and Hungarians, who had settled there, did not accept the rule imposed by the order, and the order was compelled to give it up. At about the same time, Conrad of Masovia, Duke of Poland, turned to the Teutonic Knights for help when he could not repulse the heathen Prussians from his lands along the Baltic Sea. He gave the Teutonic Knights a verbal agreement that, in return for their services, he would reward them with the territories of Kulm along the river Vistula.

Grand Master Hermann Von Salza wasted no time in securing the necessary support for this new opportunity. Emperor Frederick gave his full support and granted considerable privileges to the order when Hermann presented the matter to the Papacy. The Pope granted the Golden Bull of Rimini (a Papal decree) to the Teutonic Order in 1226, which set forth the future tasks of the order, along with a minutely defined constitution of the future state for the order in northeastern Europe. The Bull was completed before negotiations with Conrad of Masovia had been concluded, and before a single knight, bearing the white mantle with the black cross, had reached the west bank of the Vistula.

It appeared, at first, that neither the Emperor nor the Pope had given anything away since the land was yet to be conquered. But as time went on, the realization that the charter had given away unprecedented grants of lands and privileges became obvious. The order had been given all of the land it could conquer along with full territorial rights, responsible to no one. The Grand Master was granted all the privileges of a prince of the empire, including all royal privileges. If and when it conquered the territory of Prussia, the order would be free of all imperial taxes, burdens, and services. Frederick considered the future territory of the Teutonic Order to be part of the monarchy of the empire, and the task of the missionary activities was a primary task of the empire and a secondary task of the Church. When Frederick stated this as the imperial mission of the heathen conquest, he effectively negated the Papal move, which was that any new converts were to be obedient to no one except Christ and the Roman Church. The importance that the agreement was to acquire could not have been foreseen in 1226, but the stature of the order and its future were assured by the charter.

The Teutonic Knights was not the only order active in the conversion of the heathens in the northeast. The Cistercian monks had been active in this endeavor also; however, they sent missionaries – not armies. The territory around Kulm and Lobau had become Polish, but like the entire area between the Vistula and the Memel rivers, was not exclusively inhabited by Prussians but by numerous other tribes as well. The bishops of Kulm had brought in German colonists, and Christian Germans had settled along the Baltic coast under the protection of the bishops of Livonia. These settlers traded with the interior, protected by a knightly order founded by the Bishop of Riga and modeled on the order of the Templars. They were instrumental in spreading German rule, language, and culture across Courland, Latvia, and Estonia. When the Teutonic Order began their conquest of Prussia, they were immediately resented by those orders who had already been there.

Within a few years, the lands around Kulm and Lobau had been converted by the order, and by 1230, Conrad of Masovia had handed over the land. In 1231, Grand Master Hermann von Salza sent a crusading army northeast across the Vistula. Once this army gained a foothold, German boats sailed up the Vistula with supplies and building materials, and the first castles of the Teutonic Order rose out of the wilderness. By now, Herman von Salza had forged an alliance with the Cistercian monks and enjoyed the support of the various settler and merchant groups. The Prussians and other tribes did not, at first, understand the threat and presented no opposition to the building of castles. Later, when they did oppose the advancing army, they soon found they were no match for the organized and trained military force against them. In 1237, the Sword Order of the Bishop of Riga joined the Teutonic Order in the conquest. By 1239, when Hermann von Salza died, the order had secured and controlled 150 kilometers of the Baltic coast from which it could expand inland.

Over the next two decades, the Teutonic Order continued their advances into the wilderness. In 1255, Otakar, the King of Bohemia joined the crusade in Prussia, and there in Samland, in his honor, a new fortress was built and named Konigsberg. The fortress was located on the northeastern shores of the Baltic Sea. From 1241 to 1252, the Prussians conducted uncoordinated uprisings against the invaders, but the Germans were able to maintain control. The peasants and shepherds were forced to bear the heavy burdens placed on them by the order: to build castles and provide services. The priests of the order arrogantly destroyed ancient shrines and imposed the symbols of the new religion by force instead of persuasion. Then in 1261, a group of Prussian noblemen, educated in German convent schools, organized to beat their German masters with their own weapons. The danger posed by this group was recognized by one German knight, who invited the Prussian nobles to his castle and then burned it down over their heads. The flames of the castle of Lenzenberg became the rallying signal for a general uprising against the order and lasted ten dreadful years during which German rule almost collapsed. Only under the Land Marshal of the order, Konrad von Thierberg, in 1271, did the fortunes of war turn again in favor of the Teutonic Knights. It took ten more years after that before German rule was again established.

Those two decades of uprisings caused the Teutonic Knights to change their attitude toward the native Prussians. Where, before the uprising, the order had been willing to deal with the individual tribes to make treaties, to end feuds by peace agreements, they now demanded complete submission. A large part of the Prussian nobility was reduced to the status of serfs. Men were no longer free, and potentially dangerous communities were uprooted from their native villages and

relocated to new settlements. Feudal obligations were imposed on the native population in their full severity. A centralized system of administration, first introduced by Emperor Frederick II and adopted by the Teutonic Knights, was put into operation in Prussia. The natives were strictly and uniformly regulated throughout the colonial territory. The Teutonic Order established itself as the sole proprietor of all the land. Yet, at the same time, in order to attract more German immigrants, the policy pursued was positive as it related to encouraging the growth of the towns. In Prussia, religion was imposed on the population, and it was the Church established by the order. This integration of church and state, under the order, combined with increasing numbers of immigrant German farmers, traders, and burghers from the west and south, led to the rapid Germanization of Prussia by the end of the thirteenth century. By the beginning of the fourteenth century, the German language clearly dominated. Germans were forbidden to converse with their Prussian serfs in Prussian. Even in the churches sermons could only be preached in German. The sermon was read in German and then translated by an interpreter for those who could not understand. This policy of Germanization, in its most rigid form, was implemented in Prussia alone, particularly in those regions that had previously revolted. In the Baltic regions of Courland, Livonia, and Estonia (northeast of Danzig) by comparison, a German upper class dominated the native masses, but the process of integration there was far less intense. Although Germans ruled over the land, except in the towns and cities, which were largely their creation, they were unable to Germanize it.

The order had been concerned only with the conquest of Prussia, east and northeast of the Vistula River along the Baltic. The Teutonic Knights then turned their attention to the lands west of the Vistula, the Polish owned Pomerelia, later to become Pomerania. The Vistula River was no longer a natural barrier but was now a vital line of communication to Germany. The order's policy of expansion did not remain uncontested since the neighbors to the west, the Margraves (military governors) of Brandenburg, following the extinction of the Pomerellian dukes, considered themselves the rightful heirs and occupied Danzig. As a result, the king of Poland called upon the Teutonic Order again to assist him in expelling the Brandenburgers. The order quickly responded, occupied Danzig in 1308, and then demanded compensations from Poland, which it well knew Poland could not afford. They, in turn, appeased the Brandenburgers by paying them compensation for their claims to Pomerelia. Thus, the Teutonic Order acquired, besides Thorun, Kulm, and Elbing, the city of Danzig. The hostility that was created between Poland and the Teutonic Order became more serious because the heathen Lithuanians, whose rule extended as far as Kiev, resented the expansion of the order.

In the meantime, the order had moved its headquarters from Acre to Venice and then to Marienburg, situated midway between Konigsberg and Thorun. Casimir, King of Poland in the early-1300s, had married the only daughter of the King of Lithuania, but that did not diminish the efforts of the Lithuanians to wrest from the order, the control of the Vistula. During the next three decades, there was sporadic warfare between the Poles and Lithuanians and the Teutonic Order, until 1343, when the Peace of Kalisch resulted in the Poles finally giving up their claims to Pomerelia.

The Teutonic Order, however, continued its conquests through its ties to the burghers and the members of the Hanseatic Trade League (made up of seaport cities along the northwest coast of Europe, the coast of England, and the southern coast of the Baltic Sea), all of whom were dependent upon each other for survival in what was a hostile territory. Control of the Vistula and a large part of the Baltic coast turned the order into a sea power. It created its own fleet and supported by the fleets of the Hanseatic cities, pacified the Baltic Sea in 1398, conquered Gotland, and eliminated piracy along these vital arteries of commerce.

But as time went on, the Teutonic Order began to decay from within. The major factor that had held them together had been the heathen threat, but once Christianity was adopted, the order began to decline and many of their grand plans withered away into obscurity. The single lasting expression of the arts, once an important element of their dominance, was the order's architecture, which included its castles and in particular the Marienburg. The order eventually lost all of its holdings to Poland, Brandenburg, and others, and by the





mid-1500s, as a result of The Reformation, the order became a secularized institution, and Prussia a secularized state. The Teutonic Order had no influence in the formation of the state of Brandenburg-Prussia. The most important and enduring legacy of the state of the Teutonic Knights, except for the name Prussia itself, was its economic system based on large-scale agricultural production. No region within Germany could equal it, and in the centuries to come, it gave Prussia a strong economic base, which allowed its nobility to exert profound political influence, first upon the kingdom itself and then upon Germany as a whole.

COLONIZATION OF PRUSSIA

The first mention of Pomerania in history was in 1140. The territory of early Pomerania during the Middle Ages was constantly being changed by the conquests of the Teutonic Knights, Poland, Lithuania, and the Brandenburgers, and included the territory called Pomerelia previously mentioned. Generally, Pomerania can be described as the lands along the southeastern shores of the Baltic Sea, and inland, south, between the Vistula and Oder rivers. Like the area to the southwest of the Oder River, governed initially by the

Brandenburgers, Pomerania was not an agriculturally rich region as it was known, for good reason, as the Holy Roman Empire's sandbox. The coastal area was generally low and sandy and lined by a great number of lakes, separated from the sea by narrow belts of land or low sand-hills. Although generally unproductive, there were many rich alluvial tracts, particularly along the banks of the rivers and lakes, on which the growing of cereal crops would soon produce huge surpluses.

Pomerania was initially inhabited by Goths, Vandals, and Slavs. The native nobility of Pomerania and their neighbors to the south, Silesia, did not succumb to the ravishment of invasions. They embraced the teachings of early missionary orders, such as the Premonstratensians and Cistercian monks in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, mainly because these were peaceful ventures, and the orders provided exemplary models of an expansionist economic and agricultural organization. The native nobility of Pomerania called in the Germans to colonize their territory, to establish towns and villages, and introduce trade. In this way, they escaped the general policies of the Teutonic Knights – the extermination and replacement of the native population with German colonists. The population of German colonists and the, so-called, native heathens gradually integrated. It was a melting pot, intermingling not only Germans and the natives but also other immigrant groups from the Low Countries, such as Flemings, Walloons, Northern French, Englishmen, and Piedmontese. The colonists, who from the very beginning had the superior military and economic organization, naturally assumed political leadership. In Brandenburg it was the House of the Askanians, while in Pomerania it was Bishop Otto of Bamberg.

Pomerania was ruled by a series of dukes who had built on the administrative and economic organization installed by the missionary orders. The Margraves of Brandenburg, more advanced and organized, desired to gain access to the Baltic Sea, which brought them into conflict with the Danes who supported the Pomeranians. After years of conflict and warfare, the Danes were defeated in 1227, and the Askanians of Brandenburg had gained a small foothold in Pomerania. By 1250, they had also obtained Pomerania-Stettin and Uckermark, the border territory of Pomerania. In the early-1300s, the Askanians again attempted to gain control of the coastal regions of the Baltic Sea, but this time they were defeated by the Danes, and in 1320, the House of Askanian became extinct. Several interim dynasties replaced them and were strong enough to maintain control until 1411 when the Emperor of Germany sent a new Margrave, Burgraf Frederick of Nuremberg, of the Swabian House of Hohenzollern.

It was during this period that the second great outbreak of the plague, known as The Black Death, spread slowly over Europe from 1346 to 1353. (The first had been Justinian's Plague of A.D. 540 to 558. It was reported that in A.D. 543, as many as 10,000 persons in Constantinople died in a single day). Throughout the centuries, bubonic plague brought terror to the heart of man again and again, with tremendous outbreaks frequently sweeping over Asia and Europe. There was, and still is, a difference between The Black Death plague and bubonic plague. The Black Death is pneumonic, characterized by the spitting of blood, great contagiousness, and death within three days; while the bubonic is characterized by swollen lymph nodes in the neck, armpits, and groin. The bubonic type was less infectious than the pneumonic, ran a slower course, and was generally less fatal. Whichever of these two was most prevalent in the great outbreak of 1346-53, the term Black Death, which was not applied for some years after the initial outbreak, may have referred either to the color of the dying victim or to the sinister quality of the sickness. During this outbreak, twenty-five million Europeans died.



Throughout the period of colonization, whether it was in Brandenburg, Silesia, or Pomerania, the pattern was generally the same. The process began when a nobleman was granted a piece of land for which he in turn selected a *Locator*, an entrepreneur who, in return for part of the land, undertook to settle it with German farmers. The unit of area, or *Hufe*, was not a uniform measure but varied from region to region. A *Hufe* in Magdeburg was generally smaller than one in Silesia or Pomerania, and in Brandenburg it was somewhere in between. The *Locator* would receive two to four *Hufe* for his troubles, and two were automatically allocated to the church. Once the *Locator* had established the village, he usually became the head of the community for administrative purposes, the *Schulze*. The land he held was free, except for the supply of horses for the noblemen, but the rest of the farmers had to pay a tax on the ground they held, though exemptions were frequent, especially in areas where considerable toil and sweat were required to cultivate the soil.

Towns were generally founded in a similar way but on a larger scale. The settlement was put in the hands of a group of *Locators*, which often included members of the nobility. A *Locator* of a town had to pay tax, assessed on the type house he owned. It was customary to work all the surrounding fields communally, if for no other purpose than survival – people had to be able to depend upon one another. The three-field crop rotation system was also practiced. There was, of course, the common forest, water, and grazing land for the use of the whole town. During the period of colonization, these conditions of land partitionment must have been favorable to the settlers, or they would not have emigrated. Once the territory was settled and organized, and ceased to be a frontier territory with social and economic levels established, it was then that the nobility began to increase their economic and financial burdens on the peasant farmers.

HOUSE OF HOHENZOLLERN DYNASTY

When the military governor, Margrave Frederick of Nuremberg, assumed control of Brandenburg in 1411, he was faced with great difficulties. The nobility was unified against him, resulting in open warfare. In 1414, he gathered his resources and introduced artillery to the battlefield. With this new weapon, he reduced his opponent's castles to rubble, one by one, until all were subjugated. This period spelled the end of medieval knighthood as the horse and shining armor were no match for siege guns. On 20 March 1414, Frederick confronted the rebel nobility at the general assembly at Tangermünd. Some of the nobility had all their property confiscated and were reduced in status, but all of the remaining estates of the landowning nobility, clergy, and burghers proclaimed their allegiance to the Margrave.

Shortly thereafter, Frederick was given control over Pomerania, which involved him in extensive warfare with Pomerania, Mecklenburg, and Poland. Even though he eventually threw his full support behind the dukes of Pomerania during the eleven years of conflict, Frederick was defeated in 1425. As a result of the war and subsequent peace agreement forged in 1427, the Pomeranian dukes held onto their territory, while Frederick turned his attention to his possessions in Franconia where he died in 1440.

Frederick had been the first of the Hohenzollern family. His power was handed down, first to his son John, who did not have the abilities of his father, and then to his second son, Frederick II in 1437. Frederick II married a Polish princess, which

allied him to one of his greatest potential enemies. He continued the policies of government that had been his father's and was largely successful at maintaining a wary peace with his neighbors. His only son died in 1467, so the succession in Brandenburg was transferred to his brother, Albrecht Achilles.

Albrecht's reign began with the negotiation of peace with Pomerania, but he retained the lands that had been conquered by his brother. Nevertheless, it did not take long before war again broke out between Brandenburg and Pomerania over minor territories, which by 1470 he had secured. Albrecht, unlike his brother Frederick, left well-ordered finances and well-stocked stores of agricultural produce at the end of his reign. He was determined that the future of Brandenburg should not be divided by the rules of succession. He apportioned his possessions in a way that allowed his sons to rule over relatively compact territories. He was the last of the Hohenzollern princes to reign over both Brandenburg and his Franconian territories simultaneously. His successor, John, who reigned from 1486 to 1499, did not seek to broaden his territories but was the first to show signs of the growing suppression of the peasantry by the nobility. John took the side of his nobility since his economic interests were identical with theirs. His reign was also notable for the replacement of the councilors and administrators, who in previous reigns had usually been imported from the Franconian territories, by native talent from Brandenburg. Through these alterations in policy and many others that affected the economic success of Brandenburg, and later, Prussia itself, Brandenburg set the example for the rise of the modern state. All of these changes in Brandenburg would soon be overshadowed by the impact of The Reformation.

The Reformation was the name given to the movement in the religious community of western Europe in the 16th century, which resulted in the formation of the Protestant Church. For some time before The Reformation, attempts, along two distinct lines, had been made to improve the conditions within the Church, a problem attributed to its leadership. The first was through the efforts of individual men, monastic orders, and general councils. One such movement was undertaken by the Reforming Councils of Pisa, Constance, and Basel in the fifteenth century, but it was an unsuccessful effort to reform either the Church or its members. The second attempt was to form separate organizations outside of the Roman Catholic Church, such as the Albigenses and Waldenses. These early separatist movements were not very successful since they affected only a comparatively small number of the Christians of Europe. The efforts to reform the Church from within and to establish other churches outside of Roman Catholicism had not been, even moderately, successful by the end of the fifteenth century.

The Reformation began in Germany through the work of Martin Luther. A peasant by birth and a university graduate, he desired to make sure of his own salvation. He became an Augustinian monk and practiced all the austerities of the order but did not find assurance of salvation. His subsequent study of the New Testament brought him the belief that a man is not saved by works but by faith alone. That salvation by faith became the foundation of his theology. Luther became a professor in the University of Wittenburg and preached in that city. On 31 October 1517, he published his Ninety-five Theses at Wittenburg Castle church, which immediately put him into conflict with the papal authorities. There were a great number in Germany who accepted his views, and although the papacy made an effort to bring him back to the Church, it was to no avail. Because of his continued antagonism of the papacy, he was ultimately excommunicated from the Church by Emperor Charles V and banned from the empire but never actually made to leave.

Martin Luther strongly objected to having the churches that resulted from his movement termed *Lutherische* (Lutheran) on the grounds that it made it sound as though they were founded on the ideas of a man rather than on the Word of God. He also objected to the term *Protestantische* as implying that he and his followers were merely objecting to or protesting Catholic teaching. Luther preferred the term *Evangelische*, meaning Gospel. Most of the constitutions of the Lutheran churches from the sixteenth century onward called them *Evangelische*, not *Lutherische*.

The Reformation spread rapidly after 1517 but was slowed in 1524-25 by the Peasant Revolt. Disputes between Catholics and Lutherans, about the sanctity of monastic vows after Luther married, became more bitter, and war broke out. The war was settled by the Peace of Augsburg in 1555, by which it was agreed that each prince would have the sole power to decide the religion of his people. It was a result of this agreement that most of the inhabitants of Prussia, beginning in the territories of the Teutonic Order and Brandenburg, were converted to Lutheranism. Another part of the agreement was the Ecclesiastical (Church) Reservation, which contained a provision that if an ecclesiastical prince changed his religion he must also resign his office in the Church and his income from it. The agreement settled the religious question and its wars in Germany for nearly a hundred years, but was not totally satisfactory because it left no room for the growing numbers of Christians outside of the Catholic and Lutheran faiths.

Similar reform movements took place in other countries. In Switzerland, the Lutherans there had a slightly different view and became the Swiss or Reformed branch of that Church. Another group in Switzerland did not embrace neither the Lutheran nor the Reformed branch and became known as Anabaptists. In France, John Calvin emerged as the leader of the Reformed branch of Protestantism and established the Presbyterian system. The French Protestants were called Huguenots and became a political as well as a religious party. John Calvin, who fled France because of persecution, established the Reformed Church in Geneva, which then spread to other countries and was often labeled Calvinist. In England, King Henry VIII declared himself the supreme head of the Church of England when he could not get permission from the Pope to divorce his queen, Catherine. There were other sects, of lesser importance, that were a result of The Reformation, but the impact of

the changes on the lives of the people of Europe would be felt for many years.

The impact of The Reformation first affected the territory of the Teutonic Order. The Grand Master of the order, now Margrave Albrecht of Brandenburg-Ansbach, although in great sympathy with Martin Luther, took action to save the order, now in an advanced state of decay, by the secularization of Prussia. The Reformation had first affected Danzig, then Königsberg where the Bishop of Samland, George von Polentz, also a member of the Teutonic Order, gave a famous sermon in favor of the new teachings of Luther on Christmas in 1525. Albrecht made a treaty with Poland to divest himself of the office of Grand Master and turned over the state of the Teutonic Order to the crown of Poland. In return, Prussia became a secular duchy, and Albrecht became a Polish duke still in control of Prussia. Albrecht did not stop there. Upon his return to Königsberg, he announced his conversion to Lutheranism and his new title – Duke of Prussia. He revoked his vows of the Teutonic Order and married Princess Dorothea of Denmark. He decreed that the new religion of Prussia was now Lutheran, and the Prussian subjects soon found that, although Catholicism under the Teutonic rule had been severe, Lutheranism was even more so.

Visits to towns and villages were made to ensure that the new religious teachings were observed everywhere, and offenders were given severe penalties. There is no remaining evidence that the new religion was resisted, in spite of the fact that it was the Teutonic Order, the very institution that represented Catholic power, which was now spreading Protestantism. Any resurgence of Catholicism was hardly noticeable. What surprisingly did reappear were heathen customs, particularly in the area in which the Prussian native population was still in the majority.

Albrecht, Duke of Prussia, and all of his subjects were quickly banned by the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation and the Roman Catholic Church. No serious consequences resulted for Prussia, which may be attributed to the success of The Reformation as a whole. All of Prussia's neighbors, including Poland, ultimately accepted the new Prussia.

The Reformation had also succeeded in Brandenburg. There, Joachim I came to power in 1499 and remained devout to the Catholic Church but allowed the humanist currents of the late fifteenth century to flow freely. In spite of his humanist leanings, Joachim opposed the rise of Luther. His wife, Elizabeth, became a Lutheran despite all his efforts to prevent her, and when he prohibited her from participating in Lutheran communion rites, she found it necessary to escape to Saxony. When he died in July 1535, he left the territory of Neumark to his younger son, John, and the territory of Kurmark, the core of the territory, to his elder son, Joachim. Joachim II had none of the political ambitions of his father and was a mild-mannered man who liked to exhibit his wealth. He converted to Lutheranism in stages by adopting certain parts of it and avoided conflict in that way with either Catholics or Protestants, with the net effect being the Lutheranism of Kurmark. John had become very wealthy through the lending of monies and as a trader merchant. When Joachim II and John died in 1571, within ten days of each other, Joachim's son, John George, succeeded his father, and because John's heirs were daughters, he once again united the Kurmark and the Neumark territories.

John George's reign over Brandenburg was one of economic reconsolidation. He was quick to expel the moneylenders who had flourished under his father's rule and opposed the militant forces of the counter-Reformation. John George died in 1598 and was succeeded by Joachim Frederick who was already fifty-two years old. He was a very experienced administrator, and one of his first goals was to restore a working relationship with the House of Hapsburg, also spelled Habsburg, the family that ruled the German territory of Austria. His reign is distinguished by innovations in the administration of Brandenburg. Those changes had already been installed in other German principalities, but for the House of Hohenzollern, they were the formal beginnings of a central administration. Joachim Frederick brought in officials from outside who were capable of running a government of increasing complexity.

Joachim Frederick was succeeded by his son, John Sigismund, who greatly increased Brandenburg's support of the Protestant cause. John was known to eat and drink excessively causing his declining health, and that diminished his energies to rule effectively. He married Princess Anne, the eldest daughter of Albrecht II of Prussia and a close relative of the Duchess of Cleves in 1594, which ultimately established the union of Brandenburg and the Julich-Cleves territory, then a Rhineland province north of what is now the Netherlands, by the rules of succession. Princess Anne was a staunch Lutheran while John leaned toward Calvinism. That difference in religious beliefs caused numerous disputes that were widely circulated. John Sigismund converted to Calvinism in 1613, and the Reformed Church, which was a new and specifically German form of Puritanism, was to have a lasting influence on the early Hohenzollern dynasty. John died in January 1620 after handing the government over to his son, George William, in late 1619. John's reign, in spite of his weaknesses, left a legacy for Brandenburg, which shaped its fortunes for the next two-and-a-half centuries. The Hohenzollerns were now involved in the geographical extremities of northern Germany, in the northeast and the northwest. They were no longer just a central-German principality but had become a neighbor of Poland and Russia in the east and of the Netherlands in the west. Yet, the very diversity of religion in the population made it impossible for the state to insist on religious uniformity. The state adopted a policy of tolerance towards religion, and that had a distinct influence on the future of Brandenburg-Prussia.

The food supply for the peasants was enhanced in 1621 when potatoes were planted for the first time. They had been brought over from America and would change, forever, the cuisine of the European peoples.

George William was only twenty-five when he succeeded his father in 1619. He was also afflicted with poor health and was not a man of determination, foresight, and quick decision. None of these were assets when the first waves of those

ravages, called the Thirty Years' War, swept over Germany. George's first priority was to obtain the formal unification of Prussia and Brandenburg through the King of Poland. His mother, Princess Anne, complicated matters when she arranged the marriage of her daughter to King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden. George William opposed this union because the Polish King, who he was trying to convince, was at war with Sweden at the time. King Sigmund of Poland initially thought this whole plan was a conspiracy on the part of the Hohenzollern House. That put George in the unenviable position of being unable to join either the King of Sweden or the King of Poland. Sweden made large advances into Livonia in Prussia, threatening Poland. As a result, George William became the Duke of Prussia on 23 September 1621, under the same conditions as his predecessor, Albrecht, the ex-Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights. George William managed to remain neutral in the conflict between Sweden and Poland and did not support the war, then raging in Bohemia, even though his brother-in-law, Frederick V of the Palatinate, must have requested his support. Frederick V was supported by several other Hohenzollern princes. The battle of the White Mountain ended with Frederick V losing to Maximilian of Bavaria, and the supporting princes losing all of their properties. As a result of his neutrality, George was isolated from his neighbors. With war all around him, George William mustered 3,000 men to protect his neutrality, but he was too late. His possessions in northwestern Germany were occupied by imperial troops who, at first, respected the country's neutrality. When Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, arrived in force to battle the imperial troops, George was forced to take sides against the empire. From then on, Brandenburg and Prussia became a battleground of the Thirty Years' War. France entered the war in 1635. Brandenburg was overrun and was at the point of dissolution when, on 1 December 1640, at the age of forty-six, George William died.

When Frederick William succeeded his father, he was only twenty years old and had little experience in government and administration in spite of his notable ancestors. His mother, Charlotte of the Palatinate, was the sister of Frederick V, and their mother was a daughter of William of Orange. Frederick William had developed a deep admiration for Gustavus Adolphus, his uncle the King of Sweden, who had come to Brandenburg during the Thirty Years' War. When Gustavus died, Frederick William, then thirteen years old, accompanied his body on the boat taking the dead king back to Sweden. Because of the Thirty Years' War, Frederick was sent from Berlin to the fortress of Kustrin to receive his education, and then in 1634, he traveled to the Netherlands, where at Leyden he studied mathematics, Latin, history, and military tactics. He spoke German, French, Dutch, and Polish. The Dutch influence on Frederick was deep and shaped his life to a great extent. It made him sympathetic to the struggle of the House of Orange against the Catholic, Spanish, and Hapsburg Empires. When his father decided to join the war against the Swedes, he opposed that decision but was compelled to leave the Netherlands and return to Berlin where he lived a short time until the tension between he and his father caused him to go to Königsberg, Prussia. He returned to Brandenburg shortly before his father died.

The Thirty Years' War was still ravaging the territories of Prussia, Bohemia, the Palatinate, Poland, Pomerania, and Brandenburg. Most of Brandenburg was in the hands of its enemies, and the territory of Brandenburg, alone, had lost more than fifty percent of its population. Prussia, however, was the most important of the Hohenzollern territories. The Duke of Prussia, also the Governor of Brandenburg, possessed immense domains with a great number of subjects and considerable economic resources. In Prussia, a large percentage of the population had been reduced to the state of serfdom, thereby allowing the population to be taxed directly by the Hohenzollern without first asking the estate owners. This made Prussia the most important single source of revenue. Prussia, as a whole, had not suffered as much from the war as had Brandenburg, increasing its importance again as a revenue producer. The Duke of Prussia was still the vassal of the King of Poland and the king demanded his share. Frederick William had no choice but to accept that situation upon his succession.

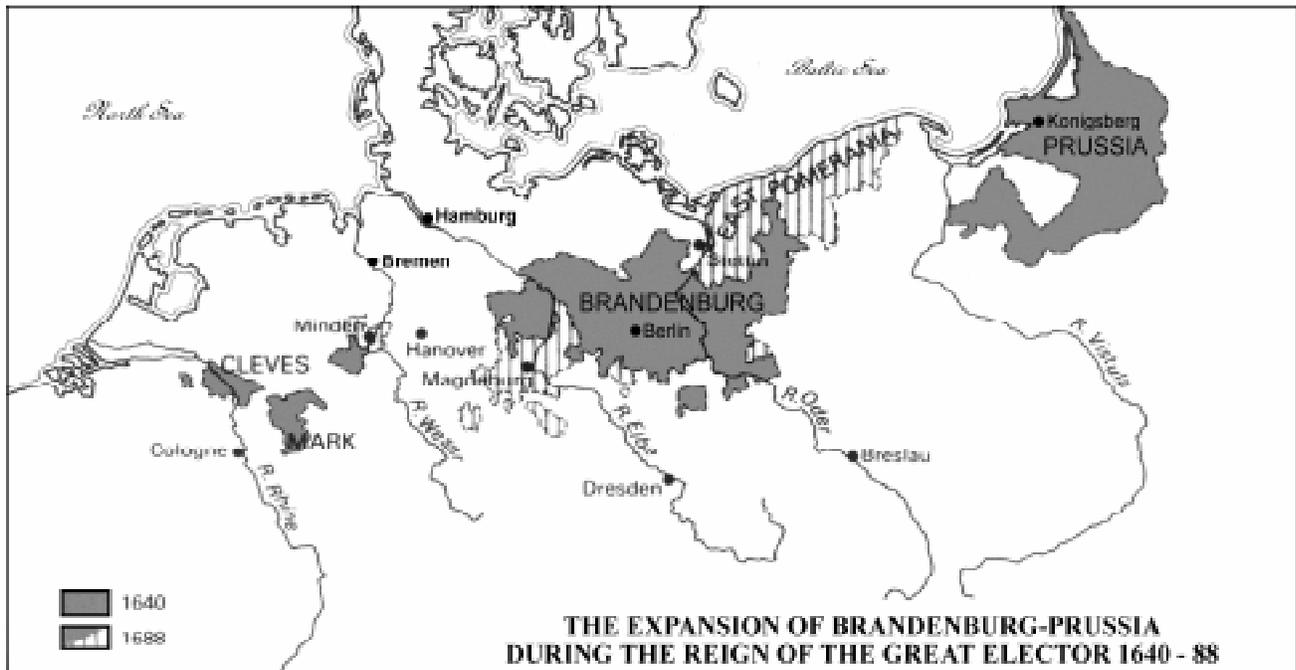
By the time of Frederick's accession, Brandenburg and the House of Hohenzollern was nearing extinction. Frederick, at least at first, relied on his mother as his advisor. She caused an analysis to be made of the problems confronting Brandenburg. In the analysis, one point was made to which Frederick paid great attention. It was the need for an effective army, for without an efficient army the House of Hohenzollern would not be in a position to pursue active politics at all but would simply remain a political objective of others. The combat value of the existing army was highly doubtful. Most of the officers and men represented the dregs of society, the scum that surfaced during the Thirty Years' War. Although the Swedes still held territories in Brandenburg, Pomerania, and Prussia they had taken during the war, Frederick forged a two-year armistice with Sweden. He never ratified it, but it was included in the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. This agreement allowed Frederick to take his time in the building of an army.

The King of Poland was alarmed with the agreement Frederick had made with the Swedes, but he was appeased when Frederick assured him that he would not allow the Swedes to use the harbors in Prussia. On 7 October 1641, the Polish King granted Frederick full power and authority over Prussia. A month later, the Prussian legislature granted Frederick the right to introduce the excise tax, which was to become one of the most important forms of taxation throughout Brandenburg-Prussia. The tax represented a form of indirect taxation by taxing consumption. Since the administration of taxation in Prussia was in the hands of the nobility, this made sure that the nobility did not suffer too much.

The nobility of the period consisted of a number of classes. The counts or earls were noble families of the highest rank. Below them were the knights, bound by feudal obligations and from which the higher nobility drew administrators. This alliance between lower and higher nobility resulted in the development and extension of demesne (manorial land actually

possessed by the lord and not held by free tenants) farming and the decline of the estate system. This evolution brought a substantial increase in the economic power of the Prussian nobility east of the Elbe River. The Great Elector, as Frederick William was called, confirmed these changes in 1653, and they remained fundamentally unchanged until the Prussian Reform Movement of the early 19th century.

The Elbe River flowed northwest from its headwaters in Bohemia to the German North Sea coast at Hamburg. The vast territories of Brandenburg, Pomerania, and Prussia lay to the east of the Elbe along the Baltic Sea and inland. The countryside east of the Elbe was made up of people falling into essentially four categories. First there were the peasants, possessing between thirty and sixty *hektares* of land (one *hektare* equals roughly 2.47 U. S. acres), whose service obligation to the local lord consisted of supplying between two and four horses and one or two agricultural laborers. Second were the cottagers,



most of whom held no more than thirty *hektares* of land, who were later compelled to render manual service. Third were the small cottagers who had little more than a small garden and supplied casual labor as well as full-time labor during harvest time. Fourth were the servants and peasants who served the lord directly and lived on, or close by, his premises. In addition to those services mentioned, the peasants also had to pay dues in cash or agricultural produce to the lord of the demesne, or domain. This peasant population was subject to the lord or the administrator of the elected council or later, royal domain. They were not allowed to leave the estate without permission of the lord and could marry only with his consent. They could not learn a particular trade without his approval. They were all subject to patrimonial justice, with all police and judiciary power over them held by the lord. Actual serfdom existed in Pomerania. The lord could do with his serfs as he wished, buying and selling them like livestock, and they had no right of appeal to any court. Towns and cities, which had lost their independence to the lord of the domain, were in a similar position with the burghers subject to feudal obligations. However, the situation that prevailed in the lands east of the Elbe was not duplicated in the territories west of the Elbe. The early social and economic development of Prussia was influenced greatly by the customs of its neighbors, Russia and Poland. In the early-17th century, the conditions in east Prussia resembled those of Poland very closely.

Frederick William, a Calvinist, was reinforced in that religious position by his earlier stay in the Netherlands. The majority of his subjects were orthodox Lutherans. In public, Frederick supported the cause of religious toleration, but in private, he selected men of his own persuasion for his closest advisors. The Lutheran clergy feared that Frederick would spread the Calvinist doctrine and militantly opposed any effort to do that. Consequently, Frederick recognized that he had to pursue a policy of religious toleration and open offices and honors to all members of the Christian religions.

The buildup of the army began in 1644, only four years after Frederick took the throne. At first, the recruiting for the army began in a secretive way as not to alarm Brandenburg's neighbors or the Swedes who still occupied much of the territory and almost all of Pomerania. The first recruits came from the region of the lower Rhine River and were used to slowly increase the garrisons in Brandenburg and Prussia. The core of the standing army was built up in Cleves because the armies there had pulled out due to the war between the Spanish and the Dutch. By 1646, about 3,000 men were garrisoned on the lower Rhine, mainly Dutchmen and Prussians. Sweden had tired of its involvement in the territories on the south shores of the Baltic and was now at war with Denmark. Needing more troops for that conquest, Sweden pulled its forces from the fortresses of Frankfurt-an-der-Oder and Krossen. They had been having a difficult time defending them against the

imperial armies still roaming the territory after the Thirty Years' War. When the Swedish troops departed, Frederick moved his army from Cleves to those locations.

The Peace of Westphalia of 1648, along with the overall decline of Sweden's prominence in the region, began the rise of Brandenburg-Prussia and the expansion of the holdings of the Hohenzollern family. Although Sweden still retained control over the mouths of the Elbe and Oder rivers, it was Brandenburg-Prussia's control *along the great length* of these rivers that proved to be most important. Frederick began a policy of opening up and expanding the existing networks of communications, especially roads and canals, allowing the export of Prussian grain into the densely populated regions of northwestern Europe. Other exports were cotton, iron, steel, cloth, and silk from the territory. It did not take Brandenburg-Prussia very long to rebound after the Thirty Years' War. By 1653, the Swedes had finally pulled their troops out of western Pomerania but remained in eastern Pomerania and still controlled the mouth of the Oder River, including the city of Stettin.

War broke out between Sweden and Poland in July 1655. Since Frederick William was still the vassal of King John Casimir of Poland, he was obliged to come to his aid. Poland, by this time, was already showing serious internal weaknesses, which would lead to its destruction a little more than a century later. Frederick tried to mediate but was met with rejection by the Swedes. He decided to abandon the Poles because he had concluded the Swedes would defeat Poland, and he would be stripped of his holdings. He was correct, as the Swedes conquered Poland and chased King John Casimir out of his country to take refuge in Silesia. Frederick was once again granted Prussia, this time from the Swedes to whom he opened the Prussian harbors of Memel and Pillau and shared the harbor revenue. In addition, he had to promise to support the Swedes with 1,500 of his own men. The following year, John Casimir returned to Poland, and with the support of a great popular movement and the church, attacked the Swedes and expelled Charles Gustavus. The Swedes, however, called on Frederick to support them and promised part of the Polish spoils. Frederick William's army participated in the battle of Warsaw on the side of Sweden, and it was over in three days. However, the Swedish victory caused Russia, under Czar Alexei, to enter the war on the side of Poland. Frederick seized this opportunity and demanded from Charles Gustavus, the revocation of the bonds of servitude and recognition of himself as duke and sovereign of Prussia. The King of Sweden agreed, and Frederick became Duke of Prussia on 20 November 1656 at the Treaty of Labiau. Shortly thereafter, the Swedes were attacked by the Danes. They demanded that Frederick take on the fight with the Poles by himself while they evacuated their troops to fight the Danes. Instead of continuing the war with Poland, Frederick negotiated a treaty that, as a condition of the end of war, Poland also recognize him as the sovereign of Prussia. The King of Poland finally agreed, and the Treaty of Wehlau of 19 September 1657 concluded the terms. A month later, the Swedes sailed with a huge fleet against Copenhagen where they met stiff resistance. Frederick William chose this moment to attack the Swedes. He led an army of 30,000 composed of Brandenburg, imperial, and Polish contingents and expelled the Swedes from Schleswig and Holstein, while the Dutch sailed a fleet to Copenhagen and broke the Swedish blockade. The French then came to the aid of the Swedes by objecting to the taking of East Prussia by Frederick. To save his country from further conflict he knew he could not win, Frederick returned the conquered lands to the Swedes, in 1660, at the Peace of Oliva.

The scattered territories, now subject to Frederick, were becoming more difficult to manage and control. A revolt by the nobility in Prussia, over the payment of taxes, was finally subdued when Frederick went to Königsberg with 2,000 men. There they captured the leader, Hieronymus Roth, who was imprisoned after his conviction on the charge of treason. The nobility was allowed to continue the operation of their domains as before, but Frederick modified the rule that only orthodox Lutherans could serve in public offices. The change allowed Calvinists to also serve in those positions. Another minor event occurred when Frederick asked the Prussian estates for more money for military purposes. The estates refused, and the most outspoken of the opponents was Colonel Christian Ludwig von Klackstein. He was captured in Warsaw, where he had taken refuge, and was returned to Prussia, tried for treason, and found guilty. He was beheaded at Memel in 1672.

Over the next decade, there were minor skirmishes with the Swedes, which decided little of value but did establish the fame of the Prussian army. During his rule, Frederick William laid the foundation of the kingdom of Prussia. When he died in 1688, he left behind the beginnings of the Prussian state, its army, its bureaucracy, and perhaps among its subjects, an awareness of future statehood and unification. One of his main domestic policies had been to attract immigrants to Prussia. During the last years of his life, his policies were fulfilled when the Edict of Nantes was revoked in 1685, allowing 20,000 French and Walloon Huguenot immigrants to settle in Brandenburg-Prussia. These immigrants possessed more highly developed commercial and industrial skills than the majority of the native population. They were also better educated and represented an asset to the commercial, industrial, and intellectual development of Brandenburg-Prussia, the value of which can never be overestimated.

FREDERICK I - FIRST KING OF PRUSSIA

The Great Elector's son and successor, Frederick I, born in 1657, has gone down in history as an ineffectual king. He did not demonstrate any of the political ambition of his father, and he mainly left the affairs of state in the hands of prime ministers. Through the marriage of his son, Prussian Elector Prince Frederick William, to one of the daughters of Emperor Leopold of Germany, he managed to secure the royal title of King in (not of) Prussia. He crowned himself king in the city

of Königsberg on 18 January 1701. Frederick I also founded the University of Halle, whose purpose was to train future administrators, and the Prussian Academy of the Arts. Another important foundation associated with Frederick I was the institute, which was later to be named the Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences. Toward the last years of Frederick's reign, the bubonic plague, this time coming from the east during the terribly cold winter of 1709, reached East Prussia, causing immense suffering and killing everyone in vast areas.

Throughout his reign, Frederick I maintained a strong and efficient army that, when deployed during the War of the Spanish Succession, showed extraordinary bravery and exemplary discipline. Frederick I died on 2 February 1713. He had lived long enough to see his grandson reach the age of one year. That grandson would be known as Frederick the Great.

FREDERICK WILLIAM I

The new king, Frederick William I, immediately ordered sweeping changes that demonstrated his appreciation for the resources of his territory, or lack of them, and initiated policies that ensured fiscal responsibility. Within weeks of his father's death, Frederick ordered drastic economy measures, which began with horse fodder. Ministers and other notables who had received fodder for twenty or even thirty horses were reduced to fodder sufficient for six. The royal stables were reduced from 600 to 120 horses. This order was followed by a military reorganization that had been his plan while still the Crown Prince. The king's guards were transformed into regiments of the army. The Swiss guards were disbanded. All that remained of the guards was one battalion, the king's own tall grenadiers, who Frederick had commanded as Crown Prince and maintained out of his personal finances. The cavalry, infantry, and artillery were all reorganized with enough money saved to increase the total number of his armies from 39,000 men to 45,000 men. Next, he reduced the salaries of the members of his court, some by seventy-five percent and some by ninety percent of their former salaries.

The motives for these measures of economy mainly came from his instruction in the Calvinist religion, taught to him by his teacher, Phillippe Rebeur, a French Huguenot refugee. Rebeur had often posed the question to Frederick if he belonged to the Lord's chosen few and whether he could then be sure that the House of Hohenzollern would be blessed with fortune, the sign of the Lord's divine benevolence. This question of Calvin's teachings, of divine predestination, was to preoccupy Frederick William throughout his life, causing him to brood and be tormented in soul-searching seclusion for hours. It resulted in his later decision to prohibit the teaching of Calvinist predestination to his children when they were being educated. It is clear that religion was behind the motivations for all that Frederick attempted to accomplish in his life, and that religion was his own brand of reformed Lutheranism. This brought about his deep conviction that even he, the king, would someday have to stand in judgment for his deeds to his maker. Some would conclude this fear made him a better ruler.

Adding to the complexity of Frederick's reign was the influence of the Pietist movement, which began as a German Puritan reaction to the Thirty Years' War. The Pietists confronted the Lutheran acceptance of the world and the submission of the individual to it. They did not oppose Luther's hope for a judgment day, but instead of a reform of only the church, the Pietists called for a reform of the world and its social institutions. Their aim was to produce responsible subjects and a society whose members, regardless of their station in life, would turn their social conscience toward the good of all. The Pietist schools were by far the most advanced in the kingdom. The king gave his approval for the graduates of these schools to enter Prussian civil service, the army, and its officer corps. As a result, Pietism produced a social and religious spirit, which characterizes the Prussia of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The Pietists, by filling the ranks of civil servants, the army, and its officers, percolated its influence and thought to the lower levels of the Prussian society. All of their efforts were directed toward maintaining and securing a reasonable existence for all members of society, even if this sometimes succeeded at the expense of the individual. The demand of unconditional, unflinching fulfillment of their duties by all – nobility, burghers, and peasants alike – led to the *later* belief by historians that Frederick William I and his son, Frederick the Great, treated their subjects like dogs. But it must also be said that they treated themselves no better. It could also be said that this period brought about the demand for human rights, yet to be fulfilled.

Frederick continued to initiate policies that reduced the powers of the nobility in both Brandenburg and East Prussia. He supported and imposed a central administration composed of the nobility and the educated middle class. This centralized monarchic state, run efficiently by a civil service, became the major achievement of Frederick William I. In an ordinance of 13 August 1713, Frederick declared all royal domains as indivisible and inalienable, a measure designed to transform the territories into a unified state. For more than a century and a half, the nobility of both territories had encroached upon the royal domain, as well as the property of the free peasants. Substantial land transfers had taken place without official registration. This may have gone unnoticed until Frederick replaced the multitude of dues and taxes, which then existed, with a single general land tax, a tax determined by the size of the holding and the quality of the soil. The new tax made it necessary to survey the lands, and in the course of the survey, it was revealed that one-third of the land holdings of the nobility in East Prussia had been illegally acquired from either the royal domain or the peasants.

Frederick continued his funding of a standing army, always increasing its size until it reached 60,000 in number near the end of his reign. He wisely decreed that recruits for the military come from both the nobility and peasants, with the nobility filling the ranks of the noncommissioned and officer positions. In this way, he ensured that all of the male citizenry was

exposed to the training and discipline of military service and later, integrated those with military service into the civil service where their training, obedience, and management skills were put to good use. The army also required a large quantity of clothing, food, and supplies to be provided on a continuing basis, which spurred the economy by producing them. The army represented a large part of the total population of the kingdom, then about two-and-a-half million, and an enormous share of the budget. The annual state budget was about seven million *thalers* with the army receiving five million on which it operated. Additional income for the state came from Great Britain, who began using the Prussian (and Hessian) army as paid mercenaries to put down the rebellion in North America. Thousands of Prussian troops were shipped to New England to take part in many of the battles of the American Revolution in the mid-1700s. Ultimately, the military tactics of the European armies were proven to be outmoded by the guerrilla tactics of the rag-tag fighters of the American colonies. When the remaining Prussian soldiers returned, they undoubtedly related their experiences in this new world, not the least of which was the vastness of the land and the myriad opportunities it presented. Perhaps that revolution fueled the fires of dissent that would manifest itself in France, Poland, Germany, and Prussia in the 1800s when Europe experienced revolutions equally as bloody.

Frederick took great pride in the re-colonization of East Prussia whose population had been decimated by the plague. Fifteen thousand Protestant immigrants settled that area after being expelled from Austria, where Catholicism was the only accepted religion, and by 1740, the population of East Prussia was back to the level it had been before the plague and famine.

Frederick William I and his son, Frederick II (The Great) did not enjoy a warm relationship, although history would confirm that the son fulfilled his father's vision for the growing empire. Crown Prince Frederick married Princess Elizabeth Christine of Brunswick-Bevern in 1733, and in 1736, they were given a family castle called Rheinsberg to live in until the Crown Prince was called to the throne by the death of his father.

When Frederick William I died in 1740, he had established himself in history as a pious and moral ruler and was known as the soldier king. By 1740, Prussia ranked twelfth among the European powers in population; fourth in terms of the peacetime conditions of its army; and in terms of the military effectiveness of its army, it was number one. Frederick had consolidated the state on an institutional framework that had as its basis, stability and conservation. The population had established a pride in the state, a factor that would soon make Prussia a European military and economic power.

FREDERICK II - FREDERICK THE GREAT

Frederick II, hereafter known as Frederick the Great, ruled from 1740 to 1786. At first, it did not seem he was much different from his father, in spite of the conflict between them. Upon taking the throne, he completely ceased all further efforts to recover royal lands, and by doing so, he formally acknowledged the right of private property of the nobility. Next, he abandoned the caution and timidity in foreign policy that had been the necessity of his father and grandfather, and during the first half of his rule, Frederick the Great truly made war the national industry of Prussia. He was a military genius who meted out defeat to the Hapsburgs by conquering Silesia from Austria in a series of wars, annexed part of Poland, and nearly doubled the size of Prussian territory.

Frederick the Great began his reign in 1740 by increasing the army by seven infantry regiments. By 1741, Prussia possessed an army of more than 100,000 men. His military prowess began soon thereafter, when he dispatched a few battalions southwest to the territory of Julich and Berg and occupied the territories. These lands had long been claimed by Prussia after having been granted them by the House of Orange. But Prussia's claim to the land was strongly contested by the Bishop of Liege. The occupying army compelled the bishop to sell the territory to Frederick the Great for the sum of 200,000 *thalers*. That was a small sum of money to Frederick, since his father had left the royal treasury awash with accumulated reserves of about eight million *thalers*.

He next set his sights on the Hapsburg owned territory of Silesia. Russia was preoccupied since the death of the Czarina, and Emperor Charles VI had died unexpectedly on 20 October 1740, leaving confusion and a void of unified leadership behind. Great Britain and Spain were at war with each other, and Poland had continued to decline as a power. The rules of succession had provided the House of Brandenburg all rights to parts of Silesia, in the 16th century (1537), after the last of the line of Piast princes died. That line became extinct in 1675, but nothing had been done to press the claims seriously. Frederick only used those claims as a ruse, along with his own when his army marched on Silesia, claiming that he was coming to the rescue of the House of Hapsburg. The years of war that resulted became the greatest bloodletting experienced by Central Europe, between the Thirty Years' War and the wars of Napoleon.

The Prussian army, with Frederick the Great commanding, began a series of wars with Austria for the territories of Silesia, which involved war with both Saxony and Bohemia lasting until 1745. These wars became known as the First and Second Silesian Wars. Tens of thousands were killed in battle during this long struggle and gave Prussia the fertile lands of Silesia that would greatly increase its economic base.

During the eleven years of peace that followed, Frederick devoted himself to revamping the domestic administration, the improvement of the army, and the writing of some of his memoirs. He encouraged agriculture, the arts, manufacturing, and commerce, reformed the laws, increased the revenues of the state, perfected the organization of his army, which had

been increased to 160,000 men, all of which contributed greatly to the improvement of the state. In his agricultural policy, he gave his support to the nobility, which provided him with his officers, but at the same time tried to ensure that the peasants would not be exploited by their masters. His reforms, which actually benefited peasants, however, remained restricted to his royal domains, within which he allowed the development of peasant estates. He considered an economically healthy peasantry essential for the welfare of the state, and the success of his policy is demonstrated by the high number of peasant immigrants he managed to attract and settle in Prussia. Between 1746 and 1756, ninety new peasant villages were founded in Pomerania alone with fifty more in the Oderbruch region, ninety-six in the Kurmark and forty in the Neumark.

A secret alliance, made in 1756 between Austria, Russia, and Saxony, was discovered by Frederick and gave him reason to fear an attack and the loss of Silesia. He immediately invaded Saxony, which started the Seven Years' War, sometimes called the Third Silesian War. During this seven-year period, the armies of Prussia fought numerous battles with the Austrians, Saxons, Bohemians, and the Russians. The fate of Prussia was frequently hanging by a thread only to be rescued by Frederick the Great, his military genius, and his dedicated soldiers. At one point, Russian troops occupied East Prussia and



Pomerania and were poised to conquer Brandenburg, when they were recalled to Russia in the confusion of the authorities after the death of the Czarina. Again, tens of thousands of soldiers died, sometimes as many as 25,000 in a one-day battle. In the Prussian territories the population was being taxed to support the war, and the recruiting of peasants as replacements had depleted the male population so severely that now those aged fourteen were taken. The Seven Years' War ended in 1763 by the Peace of Hubertusburg, and all the combatants agreed to return to the borders that existed in 1756. It had been a terrible waste of human lives and left Prussia in a near-poverty condition.

Frederick's next concern was the relief of his kingdom's suffering. He opened his storerooms to distribute, to his subjects, corn for food and for sowing. To his peasants he distributed horses for plowing, rebuilt, at his own expense, the houses that had been destroyed, established new settlements with immigrants, built manufacturing plants, and laid out canals. In 1764, Frederick founded the Bank of Berlin with a capital of eight million Prussian *thalers*. As a result of this rebuilding and re-colonization, state revenue increased dramatically, allowing Frederick to spend more than forty million *thalers* for welfare purposes alone between 1763 and 1786. By the time of his death, the state treasury had fifty-five million *thalers*. During the twenty-three years of his reign following the Seven Years' War, Frederick the Great acquired the reputation of being everywhere, of controlling everything. He visited his provinces annually to inspect his troops, his administration, and his subjects, especially those who had immigrated to Prussian territory. During the time of his reign, Frederick settled 57,475 new families on the land, in terms of population – over 300,000 people. By 1786, every fifth Prussian was a colonist.

In a treaty with Russia on 3 March 1764, Frederick the Great positioned Prussia for the first division of Poland, which would take place in 1772. Prussia received the whole of Polish Prussia (West Prussia), which had been ceded to Poland by the Teutonic Order in 1466, consisting of that part of Great Poland to the River Netz, except the cities of Danzig and Thorun. From then on, the kingdom of Prussia was divided into East and West Prussia. In West Prussia, the existing Polish administration and legal system was replaced by that of Prussia. Immigrants were encouraged to settle there and serfdom, which under Polish and Russian administrations had amounted to abject slavery, was made to conform to Prussian standards.

The Prussian government's main goal was to Germanize the Polish people and their culture, and education was one of the methods. In Prussia, the most advanced of the German states in its policies of education, the village schools remained very poor until the beginning of the nineteenth century, even though Frederick the Great had issued an order in 1763 to improve the educational system. Under those reforms, attendance at school for six hours a day was compulsory for all children between the ages of five or six and thirteen. The poor were not required to pay a fee. Teacher qualifications were defined and mandated; textbooks were to be uniform, and teachers were to grade the work of the students. Inspections being made as late as 1802 and 1803 in Cleve, a Prussian province where conditions were favorable, showed that two-thirds of the teachers were incompetent. Only a small handful had ever attended the training school established in Cleve, and they had been appointed without examination. Once appointed, the teachers did not have the time nor the textbooks for self-improvement. They all had another occupation because they were so poorly paid. The school buildings, where regular buildings for that purpose existed, were almost always in bad repair. School was often conducted in a house with a room rented for that purpose, and sometimes the teacher slept in that schoolroom. Separate classes for each grade was an exception. The single classroom, with each class in its row of chairs or makeshift desks, dictated that students would be exposed to repetitive instruction. The curriculum was extremely limited. There was a good deal of religious instruction along with the basics of reading, writing, and some arithmetic. The Bible and catechism were the main assignments for reading. Students often did not attend school on a regular basis. If those were the conditions in a progressive Prussian province like Cleve, it is not hard to imagine that the standards in a much smaller, poorer state were much worse. In spite of these poor standards, by the second half of the century large numbers of peasants could at least read and write.

The education of the children in West Prussia followed this same pattern under the new Prussian government. During the period 1772 and 1775, there were 750 new schools built, most of them in the countryside where the peasants lived. Frederick left instructions to his successor to learn the Polish language, and these instructions were followed for nearly a century. Every Prussian crown prince was required to learn Polish.

In 1778, in a dispute between Austria and Bavaria, Frederick took the side of Bavaria. When Austria refused to negotiate with Bavaria, Frederick invaded the Austrian territory of Bohemia and without a battle, brought about the Peace of Teschen on 13 May 1779. Austria consented to the union of the principalities of Franconia with Prussia and renounced the feudal claims of Bohemia to these countries. In 1780, Maria Theresa, Empress of Austria and Frederick's great antagonist, died. Her son, Joseph II, ambitious and daring, set a course for drastic domestic reforms. He wanted to improve the lot of the peasants and centralize the institutions of the Hapsburg monarchy as the Prussians had done. The Hungarians and Czechs were violently opposed, and Joseph II had to abandon many of his original intentions. Then he made another bid for Bavaria in return for the Austrian Netherlands. Frederick objected to this violation of the treaty of Teschen. Then in 1785, the League of the German Princes came into being under Frederick's leadership, and this effectively blocked any further ambitious projects of Joseph's.

A year later, on 17 August 1786, Frederick died at seventy-four years of age. No other Prussian monarch has exercised such profound influence far beyond the political sphere. During his lifetime his personality became, for many, the focal point of a reawakening of the German national consciousness. Through him, the name of Prussia exercised the magnetism that attracted so many non-Prussians to serve the Prussian state. Frederick the Great left his successor, his nephew, Frederick William II, a kingdom increased by 29,000 square miles, more than seventy million Prussian *thalers* in the treasury, an army of 200,000 men, great credit with all the European powers, and a state distinguished for population, industry, wealth, and science. One of his great achievements was that, in the most difficult circumstances, he contracted no public debts, but on the contrary, though he distributed a considerable part of his revenues in different ways among his subjects, he had a richer treasury than any monarch in Europe ever possessed. Prussia had become a dominant power in Europe. Frederick died on the eve of the French Revolution, an event that shook forever the power of kings.

Frederick the Great was succeeded by two inept kings, the first being his nephew, Frederick William II, who ruled from 1786 to 1797, and the second was Frederick William III, whose reign began in 1797 and ended in 1840. Both squandered away the special advantages they had inherited from their great predecessor.

FREDERICK WILLIAM II

Any successor of Frederick the Great was bound to be measured by the yardstick he had established and to fall short. Inevitably, he would stand in the shadow of the Great King but even more so when the successor was a man of the character of Frederick William II. He was called "the much beloved" by Berliners because of his insatiable love life, or "fat William" because of the width of his girth, as well as his truly Herculean proportions. He was the son of a younger brother of Frederick the Great, Prince Augustus William and his wife, Princess Louise Amelia of Brunswick-Bevern, the sister of Frederick's wife. Like all Prussian princes, he was required to participate actively in the profession of arms and in his early years, at least, seems to have made a good impression upon his uncle. However, this impression waned as Frederick the Great entered the autumn of his life, and he knew who his successor would be. He predicted that after his death, there would be much merry-making at court, and his nephew would squander the treasury and let the army degenerate. He further

predicted that women would rule, and the state would come to ruin. It is obvious he knew his nephew well, for that is precisely what happened over the next eleven years.

When Frederick William II ascended the throne at the age of forty-two, he was already too set in his ways to be changed by the assumption of high office. The strict regime of Frederick the Great gave way to greater flexibility, which in the course of a few years, blended into carelessness and neglect. The new king paid little attention to the affairs of state, turning those dull and mundane chores over to his ministers. Instead, he attended the theater, concerts, or spent time with his old or new mistress.

A middle class had begun to emerge in Prussia, spawned by the military, civil service, and the increasing value of land and commerce. Berlin became a flourishing center of culture and education. No longer was education a privilege of the aristocracy, but it became increasingly dominated by the intellects of the middle class. The increase of the middle class, into the bureaucracy, tended to dilute the existing noble class and raised members of the middle class to the same level as their social superiors through a shared higher education. The period between 1786 and 1806 was one in which a social, heterogeneous bureaucracy established its higher position in the state. The absolute power of the king was dramatically reduced through adoption of the Code of 1794, authored by Frederick the Great and promulgated by Frederick William II. The Code was the final phase of judiciary reform and is sometimes referred to as a constitution. It provided a number of basic rights such as protection of person and property, equality before the law, equality of the sexes, liberty of religion, the right to an education, and the pursuit of happiness, to name but a few. The Code also placed all subjects in the kingdom, including the king himself, under the laws of the state. The absolutism of royal rule was changing, and the role of the monarch was now determined by his ability to rule his subjects, not by the divine origin of his office.

In the meantime, Frederick William II had allowed his army to decline, and the power of Prussia waned. In 1791, he arranged with the emperor of Austria to support Louis XVI of France during the outbreak of revolution that had begun in 1789. Austria and Prussia had not been on friendly terms since 1740, but this new alliance would last for fifty years.

Prussian troops marched south, through Verdun, toward Paris against the French revolutionary forces. The people of the captured territories did not consider the allied invaders as their liberators and gave no support. In the end, the Prussian and Austrian armies were worn down, drained the treasury, and the war ended in 1795 by the Treaty of Basel. Frederick William ceded to France the Prussian territory west of the Rhine River. During the same period, 1792 to 1795, Prussia moved troops into Poland with Russia doing the same, each power occupying the territories it wished to annex. The Poles fought valiantly against both Prussia and Russia but were defeated, and the second partition of Poland was made with huge territories going to both Prussia and Russia in 1793. The appetite for Polish territory continued, and a third partition of Poland resulted in more land going to Russia and Prussia. These developments signaled the end of Poland as a great European power. Poland had been a buffer state between two emerging powers with great ambitions and could not prevail as a nation when those powers allied against her.

The two campaigns, in France and Poland, had affected Frederick William adversely. His health deteriorated rapidly, and a long illness forced him to seek the shelter of his castle until his death at age fifty-three on 16 November 1797. His son, Frederick William III, took the throne at age twenty-seven. He would rule Prussia, still a very large German kingdom, during a very dangerous time that would bring years of war with France.

When the nineteenth century began, most Prussians were still entrapped by the bonds of nature. The few roads that existed were not maintained, which made travel by foot or by horses very difficult. Houses were heated by wood-burning fireplaces and lighted by candles. Farmers fertilized the soil with human and animal wastes and powered their few machines with the help of domesticated animals. Generally, people still lived in structures built in time-honored ways, grouped in small villages or behind the walls of inward-looking cities. The rhythm of their lives was set by the sun and seasons in the largely agricultural society. Time was marked by church bells. Area was measured by the distance someone could walk in a day. There would be many changes during the nineteenth century, for the nation and for the people. For some, it would bring the decision to escape.

FREDERICK WILLIAM III

Frederick William III, born in 1770, spent his early formative years in the care of his great-uncle, Frederick the Great, who had already concluded that someday his grand-nephew would have the task of carrying on his policies and beliefs. He selected the teachers and instructors for the future king and issued them detailed instructions for his education. Frederick William III was very shy and could not speak without stammering, but he demonstrated a remarkable lack of preconceived ideas and an openness of mind. He admired his great-uncle very much. It was he who insured that the religious instruction young Frederick received made him tolerant of other beliefs. He was not attractive, but he was fortunate enough to meet the seventeen-year-old Princess Louise of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, and the couple was married on Christmas Eve of 1793. It was one of the few love matches within the Hohenzollern dynasty. She complemented him almost to perfection. Her liveliness compensated for his reserve, and he knew how to value it. Two years later, in 1795, the heir to the throne, the future Frederick William IV was born. Eight more children would be born to this union, among them the future William I and the future Czarina Alexandra of Russia.

No sooner had Prussia extricated itself from the struggle against revolutionary France, when another Frenchman, Napoleon Bonaparte, began his climb to power. As his power increased, Napoleon's quest for territorial expansion began the war, which enmeshed the whole of Europe and spilled over into the Baltic, the North Sea, and the Mediterranean. It was an upheaval of an unprecedented scale, which was caused, in a major way, by a revolution in the *conduct* of war. France's entire resources, economic and human, were deployed to that end. The French Revolution demolished the last institutional barriers between the individual and the state. Where once estates, guilds, and the church had been intermediaries between subjects and monarch, now the individual, the citizen, confronted the state face-to-face. Now the nation, as a whole, felt the glory of victory or suffered the burden of defeat. The relatively small armies of the past, expensive to field, were now rendered obsolete. The French revolutionary armies numbered hundreds of thousands of men who lived off the land, confiscated property, and raped and pillaged their way to every corner of Europe. Napoleon raised this development to new levels. The speed and flexibility with which he moved his massed armies had no precedent. His revolutionary army marched on the new principles that they were one nation, indivisible, and victory was inevitable.

Frederick William III maintained strict neutrality in the various alliances made by Austria, Russia, Great Britain, and others against Napoleon, but this inaction was a benefit only to Napoleon. One of the reasons for this policy of neutrality was the deplorable state of the Prussian army and the huge debt of the treasury. Frederick William II had left fifty-five million *thalers* of debts. Frederick William III paid off twenty-two million by 1806 and accumulated a reserve of an additional seventeen million *thalers*. From a military standpoint, the officer corps was over-aged, fortresses were neglected, and while the French had conducted campaigns in the dead of winter, the Prussian army had no winter coats. At the same time, the new king took steps to liberate the peasantry from bondage. In the period between 1799 and 1806 alone, 50,000 peasants were freed from all services to their lords and became free peasants but mainly on lands where the crown could exercise direct influence. It would be more difficult to carry out this process on the private estates, and that would not happen until 1850. The first nine years of Frederick William III's rule were years in which the need for reform, in many sectors of public and social life and in the economy, was identified, and what those reforms should consist of was recognized, but the will to implement them was still lacking.

In 1805, Frederick William III finally made an alliance with Russia and allied himself with Emperor Alexander I against Napoleon. The rapid campaign of 1806, by the French emperor, clearly showed how inept the Prussian army had become. On 14 October 1806, the battles of Jena and Auerstadt were fought with disastrous results for the Prussians even though they possessed superior numbers of troops. Fortress after fortress fell and by 27 October 1806, Napoleon entered Berlin. Frederick William III and his family fled beyond the River Oder, taking with them the state treasury. Russia had entered the war against Napoleon who, by 1807, had advanced across West Prussia and into East Prussia. The Prussian king was now operating from his castle in Königsberg, very near the easternmost part of his vast territories. The Russians defeated Napoleon's army on the border of Lithuania but did not follow this action aggressively. That allowed Napoleon's forces to invade Silesia and Pomerania, which were all conquered and occupied, except the fortress city of Kolberg. On 14 June 1807, Napoleon's forces defeated the Russians at Friedland, and in the ensuing armistice requested by Czar Alexander, an agreement was concluded between Napoleon and Alexander at the expense of Prussia. At the Treaty of Tilsit on 9 July 1807, Prussia lost all its territories west of the Elbe River, including the city of Magdeburg, and her Polish provinces to the Duchy of Warsaw under the King of Saxony. Prussia had been reduced to 7,311 square kilometers of land with the remaining population of four and one-half million. Napoleon formed the kingdom of Westphalia from the western Prussian provinces he had won and put his youngest brother, Jerome, on the throne there. Under the treaty, Russia suffered no losses while Prussia was to pay the bill. Napoleon stipulated that he would withdraw his occupying forces from Prussia only when the, yet to be determined, reparation payments he demanded were paid.

The Prussian Reform Movement had continued in spite of the wars with Napoleon. In fact, it was the French Revolution that made the other European powers act on the reform of the social injustices. It is important, when talking of serfdom in the eighteenth century, to be aware that this condition varied from country to country. In Russia and in Poland it was a condition of abject subjugation, just short of slavery. In Austria, before the reforms of Joseph II, it was somewhat milder. In Prussia, however, the peasant serf was a man with certain specific duties to carry out for his lord, with the right of every citizen to go to court, and a watchful bureaucracy to ensure that the landowner did not abuse his rights. The nobility readily agreed to the new reforms of a freed peasantry. They reasoned that if the protective measures, which secured the economic basis of the peasant serf and the land he held, were revoked in the name of freedom, then the land-owner could evict any number of peasants he thought necessary, consolidate his estate, and employ seasonal farm labor, when and as he needed it. This provided the basis for the economic upsurge Prussian landowners experienced after 1810. The reform decree contained provisions, which *should* have made it easier for all to buy, own, and cultivate land. That would not be achieved because the peasant, even though he had the right to freely use his own resources, could not compete with the established landlord. In the end, it was the Prussian Reform Movement that completed the unification of Prussia. On 26 December 1808, Frederick William III issued a decree that installed provincial government, under the central authorities, for the four provinces then existing – East Prussia, Pomerania, Brandenburg, and Silesia.

The reform movement also addressed the subject of education and religion. In the early-1800s, changes in the educational

system were made that provided primary education to all, regardless of position or gender, in state-operated schools. All religions were to have the same rights and duties. Jews were recognized as a religious community, like any other, and as a result, 70,000 Jews became Prussian citizens.

For Lutherans, the post-Reformation era in Prussia was a time of consolidation and theological formulation. From the late sixteenth century to the end of the seventeenth century, the dominant emphasis was on orthodoxy, that is, adherence to the doctrine that faithfully reflects the Biblical message. From 1670 to 1760, orthodoxy gave way to pietism, a movement that emphasized personal Christian living as well as social foreign missions. Since that time, the orthodoxy-pietism conflict has been a source of division among Lutherans.

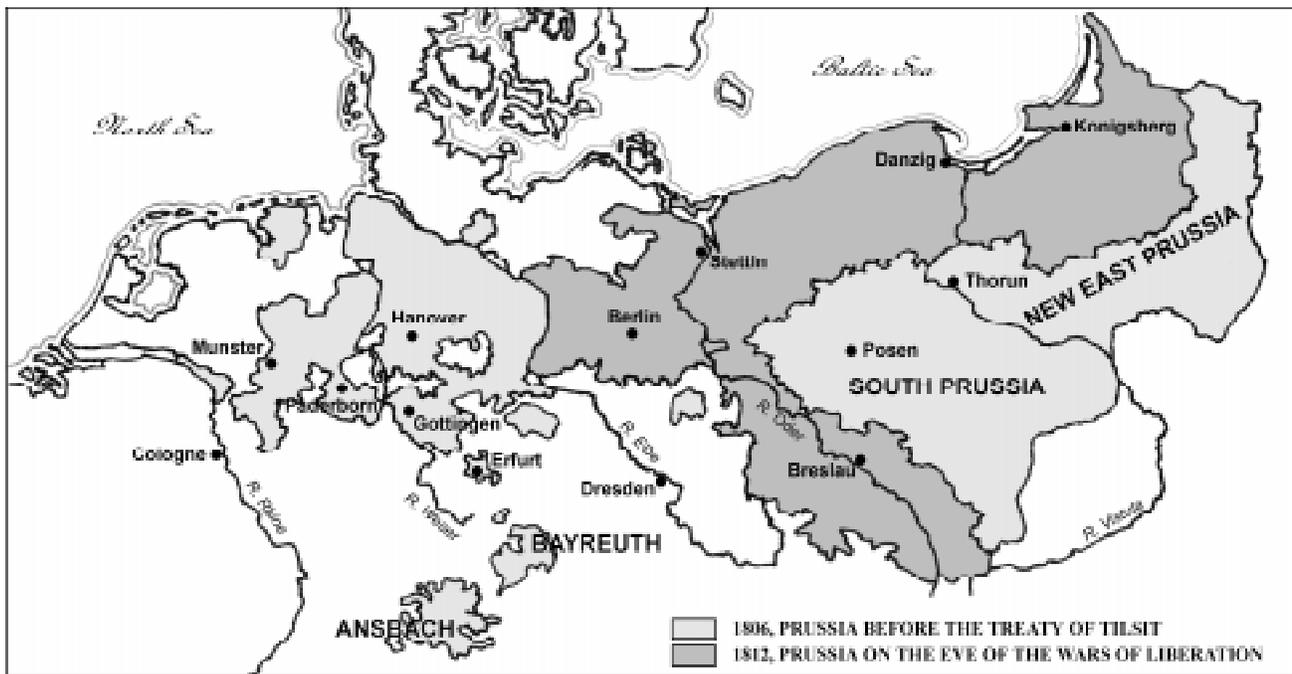
Protestant Christian denominations, those that used the name Reformed, originated during the 16th century in the work of John Calvin and Huldrych Zwingli. Reformed churches, like Lutherans, accept the Bible as the standard for belief and practice. They share with Lutherans the notion of salvation by faith. However, what is most important, both denominations believed that church and state should be kept separate, and with the king's injunction, that doctrine was invalidated. During the same time, religious reforms were prevalent in England and many other parts of Europe. The trend was to disregard the differences in the teaching and practice of the various denominations and church-bodies. From his viewpoint, Frederick William III was simply following patterns already set by other European leaders.

To add fuel to the fire, the original words for the distribution of Holy Communion were changed. The king reasoned that when both Lutheran and Reformed parishioners attended the holy sacrament at the same altar, the Lutherans could still believe they did receive the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ, invisible, but nevertheless real; while the Reformed could hold to the unscriptural teachings of Zwingli and Calvin, which in the Lord's Supper one receives merely bread and wine, and that union with Christ can only be had spiritually. All of this was part of the new appeasement policy of King Frederick William III. The king was firmly convinced that it would satisfy the religious beliefs of his subjects. However, he neglected to consider that, thereby, he provoked many Lutherans who believed God's word as expressed in the Bible. Many dedicated Lutherans protested such royal action and would rather have suffered slander, persecution, forfeiture of property, imprisonment, and even banishment, than yield to the faith-destroying edict of the king.

In the meantime, the world had expanded greatly because of the explorations financed by Spain, Portugal, France, England, Denmark, and a host of others who developed great fleets of ships. North and South America had been discovered and colonized beginning in the 1500s, which diverted the attention of those European powers so involved, from the problems at home. By 1776, the American Revolutionary War had resulted in the birth of a new nation, populated by peoples from numerous European nations, as well as others from Central America and Asia. These developments, especially the quest for freedom from suppressive governments, were recognized by European leaders as an omen for reform. The French Revolution was the result of inaction on the part of its monarch, and that created a reform atmosphere in the German states. However, the French Revolution with Napoleon at the helm, went well beyond the confines of France and ultimately met defeat because, by then, nations had developed more permanent borders and a spirit of allegiance to the country of their birth.

The Treaty of Tilsit had reduced Prussia to the role of a buffer state between France and Russia, its independence or freedom of action being severely limited. Napoleon had, at first, demanded reparation payments of 150 million *thalers*, then 120 million, and then 100 million. He would not withdraw his forces until paid. Spain, the only other united nation besides France, began a war with Napoleon to free Europe of his evil rule. This fight, which derived its impetus from a combination of national religious and other spiritual forces, quickly spread to the other countries of Europe causing great surprise for Napoleon. He was forced to transfer great numbers of his armies from Prussia to the Iberian peninsula in Spain, thereby reducing the occupying army of Prussia to a minimum. This allowed Frederick William III to return from Königsberg to Berlin. His military advisors had already initiated reforms in the officer ranks, conscription of male members of the middle class, formation of militia forces to augment the regular army, and a general conscription of the peasantry for service of five years' duration. The spirit of liberation spread throughout Europe, but Prussia could not yet ally against Napoleon. Frederick William III was obliged to accept the final offer of Napoleon – the payment of 140 million *thalers* and the occupation of three fortresses along the river Oder – and signed the Paris Treaty with Napoleon. This was followed by uprisings of German people against the occupying French army in Austria, Bavaria, Pomerania, and Brandenburg. Napoleon's army was able to suppress all of these uprisings and by 1812, had massed its forces on the Russian border.

Napoleon's army numbered 600,000 men, but only 210,000 of them were French. Through his various alliances and treaties, the second largest contingent, about 180,000 men, was supplied by the German princes. The remainder was made up of mercenaries from all over Europe. On 22 June 1812, Napoleon's forces began crossing the river Memel, the Russian frontier. The Russian forces withdrew, leaving Napoleon in a situation he had never confronted before and to which he could not adjust. Counting on his superiority in numbers, he had ignored Russia's major ally – its sheer size – and his 600,000 men were absorbed into the Russian vastness as quickly as a platoon on the Great Plains. The Russian forces tempted Napoleon deeper and deeper into the country, scorching the earth as they retreated, leaving nothing for Napoleon's army to feed on. It could be said that the Russian army allowed Napoleon to capture Moscow, but the event only ensured his defeat. Only one course of action was open to Napoleon, and that was to get out of Russia. He was attacked frequently but never could mass his army against the Russians, who withdrew quickly to fight him another day, in another place. During his withdrawal,



Russian attacks became stronger and stronger, culminating in the disaster at the crossing of the Beresina. The campaign of 1812 was more than a last campaign for Napoleon, it was the beginning of his end.

The French defeat at the hands of the Russians further fanned the flames of anti-Napoleonic sentiment in Prussia. In February 1813, an edict was issued, drafting into the military, all male citizens of the ages seventeen to twenty-four who had previously been exempted. In the same month, an alliance was concluded with Russia, and on 16 March 1813, Prussia declared war on France. The declaration produced an outpouring of donations, six and one-half million *thalers* in just a few days, and 50,000 volunteers, from all over Germany and from all social strata, joined the Prussian forces. The War of Liberation had begun.

The combined armies of Prussia and Russia met Napoleon's forces in Saxony and then withdrew to the river Spree where the war was resumed. Napoleon was surprised by the hard fighting of the Prussian army and asked for an armistice, which was concluded on 4 June 1813. The tentative peace allowed Napoleon to increase the strength of his army, but it also presented an opportunity for the allies to act. Austria, now having increased its military strength, joined the allies against Napoleon. Sweden also joined the alliance and landed an army on the shores of the Baltic, and the British sent an army commanded by General Wellington. The allies now numbered 480,000 men against Napoleon's 450,000. The armistice came to an end on 4 August 1813. The allied plan was to encircle Napoleon's central position in Dresden, but the several battles fought there were indecisive. Then the allies attacked Napoleon's forces in Leipzig, and the battle raged from 16 to 19 October 1813 and was one of the greatest battles fought in the nineteenth century. Napoleon's forces totaled 190,000 men against an allied force, which at the beginning of the battle, numbered 200,000, but at the end, when all reinforcements had arrived, 300,000. After savage street fighting in the city, the French were soundly defeated but some of their forces managed to escape. The allied armies followed, fighting their way southeast until, on 31 March 1814, they entered Paris. Napoleon abdicated the throne and left for the island of Elba.

The euphoria that followed Napoleon's abdication was short-lived. The allies met to try to realign the borders, but old rivalries created new tensions, and nothing had been decided by 1 March 1815 when the news came that Napoleon had landed at Cannes. Twenty days later he entered Paris with all the splendor of a conquering hero. Napoleon met the Prussians at Ligny where he won the first battle. The Prussians then took a stand at Ligny on 16 June 1815 where, after fighting all day, they gave up the city and retreated northeast toward the village of Waterloo. The British, under General Wellington, were already at Waterloo in defensive positions and waiting for Napoleon's army. Napoleon mistakenly believed he was going against only the British army and attacked Wellington's defensive positions. After being repulsed three times, the French forces were about to attack for the fourth time when the Prussian forces under General Blucher finally arrived and soundly defeated the French. Almost all of the French artillery was captured as well as Napoleon's carriage. The victory was complete. Napoleon had been defeated, and his career ended with his banishment to St. Helena where he would end his days.

The Congress of Vienna in 1815 established the German Confederation that reduced the several hundred German states to thirty-nine. The confederation marked a unity of purpose between Austria and Prussia that would prevail to the time of the complete unification of Germany in 1871. The kingdom of Prussia, after 1815, constituted two territorially unequal parts.

The eastern part was predominantly Protestant and the western part predominantly Catholic. The western acquisitions, especially, posed many new tasks for the Prussian state, for it was now necessary to integrate territories where the French influence had been strong and where Napoleonic reforms had been successful. Among the new territories acquired in the west, the Ruhr was still rural country of rich pastures covered by medium-sized farms, whereas the Saarland was already showing signs of industrial progress. Because of the new territories, Prussia developed a new internal organization, dividing its territories into ten provinces, later reduced to eight, with each province having its corporate autonomy and headed by an overpresident. The provinces were: Western Prussia, Pomerania, Silesia, Westphalia, Brandenburg, East Prussia, Rhineland, Lower Rhine, Saxony, and Posen. Prussia was now a nation that extended for 278,000 square kilometers and had a population of over ten million. The effect of the military reforms taken to defeat Napoleon was that for some years to come, Prussia possessed one of the most progressive and efficient military systems in Europe. Prussia, now at peace, gradually recovered from the losses she had sustained under the wise and paternal sway of Frederick William III, whose moderation contributed greatly to the maintenance of peace.

Prussia moved forward rapidly during the 1800s to build the infrastructure necessary for economic growth. The road-building program was one that received a high priority. By 1831, the total length of state-owned roads had increased to 6,794 kilometers and by 1848, to 11,852 kilometers. The introduction of the railroad was the highlight of the revolution in Prussia's transportation system. The first Prussian railroad was opened between Berlin and Potsdam in 1838. By 1844, Prussia possessed 861 kilometers of railroads and only four years later, 2,363 kilometers. Railroads led to the expansion of Prussia's steel works. The names of Alfred Krupp and August Borsig now emerged as the industrial giants of Prussia's economic future. The steam engine, which had been introduced in Prussia's westernmost province in 1753, was now providing power to Silesia's mines and forges. By 1830, Prussia had 245 steam engines with a total of 4,485 horsepower and by 1849, 1,445 steam engines with a total of 67,149 horsepower. In the newly acquired Saar provinces, where mining coal had long been established, the annual output of the state-owned mines rose from 113,689 tons in 1816, to 408,377 tons in 1844, while in those of the Ruhr, only then being developed, output increased from 388,000 tons in 1815, to 956,000 tons in 1840. Needless to say, such industrial expansion required not only a labor force of sufficient size but also skilled engineers and technicians.

Most of the workers of that period came from the peasantry who had lost their small holdings during the recent reforms. Additional workers came from the artisans who could no longer compete with the factories now producing their wares. At the turn of the 19th century, the average working day in Prussia was twelve hours, with night shifts and Sunday work being the exception. By 1828, the average had risen to sixteen or seventeen hours per day, six days a week. Children went to work at an early age until 1839, when the Prussian government decreed a minimum age of nine for working children.

The arts prospered along with industry. Sculptors and painters created fine works of arts for the monarchs who displayed them in public places. In Berlin, music also occupied a prominent place, and the theater continued to draw the elite of society. Women from the aristocracy class began to move to the fore of Berlin's intellectual society. Many outspoken and liberal educators exerted their influence in the new universities of Berlin, Breslau, and Bonn. Many of those reached the heights of their powers in Prussia. The Russian revolutionary and father of Communism, Karl Marx, might have done so too, had he not been rejected for a lectureship at Berlin University.

The revolution in France in July 1830 reverberated throughout Prussia, where the unfulfilled promise of Frederick William III for a constitution remained an issue very much alive. Although a coup attempt by the idealists had failed and the participants jailed, the social changes put forward, but not acted upon by the ratification of a constitution, were suppressed. They would resurface again in the future.

One major problem still to arise in the 1830s was the conflict between the Roman Catholic Church of Prussia's western provinces and the Prussian state. The conflict did not involve theological issues at all. Prussia had learned to live with its Catholic citizens as demonstrated by the example of Silesia, where the people of both Protestant and Catholic coexisted in relative harmony. In 1835, a new archbishop of Cologne immediately prohibited mixed Catholic and Protestant marriages, which had previously been accepted by the Catholic Church provided that the children of the marriage were brought up in the Catholic faith. Also, Catholic students at the University of Bonn were forbidden to attend lectures delivered by any professors known to be firm supporters of the Prussian state. The state reacted by removing the archbishop and imprisoning him in Minden Fortress. The Curia of the Roman Church reacted by appointing a new archbishop who supported the policies of his predecessor. He too was imprisoned and brought to Kolberg. Only after the death of Frederick William III was the proper working relationship between the Catholic Church and the Prussian state restored.

Yet another religious conflict in Prussia began in 1835 when Frederick William III, a Calvinist, decreed that the Lutheran and Reformed faiths be merged into one united church. He found it unacceptable that services of the two churches should vary with each change of Lutheran and Calvinist ministers. He also found it sad that he and his wife, a Lutheran, could not share the sacraments of the church. As king, he mandated that the two factions should henceforth worship in one united church. This action created an atmosphere of hostility and conflict and created the catalyst for those individuals who strongly opposed the merger to leave Prussia.

When the merger decree was issued, some Lutherans refused to join in the Church of the Prussian Union. These

Lutherans founded churches and called themselves *Alllutherische* or Old Lutherans. Theologically, the major differences were over the real presence in the sacrament of communion, just as they had been since the early debates between Luther and Zwingli in the 1520s. They did not represent large numbers of Prussian Lutherans, but Old Lutherans established churches in Brandenburg and Pommern, although very few in number.²

Frederick William III died on 7 January 1840. In a political testament he had written in 1827, he warned his successor not to follow every political fashion of the day or display excessive love for what was old and obsolete. He did not mention his promise of a constitution, and to the emerging force of constitutionalism, he had paid little attention.

FREDERICK WILLIAM IV

Frederick William IV, the deceased king's son, succeeded his father to the throne and was cheered by the population. They sensed it was to be a new era and had great expectations for social reform. He immediately appointed a number of liberal thinkers, which was met with approval, but he soon followed those with the appointment of his close friends to important posts, and they were conservatives. It became apparent that Frederick William IV had adopted a policy that included tolerance for opposing views. Unlike his father who had a speech impediment, Frederick William IV was known to speak excessively. His public speeches contained little that was political but instead were religious sermons. This led the liberals to conclude he was not a man of action. He also believed that he held his crown by the grace of God, a position fundamentally different from that of the early Hohenzollerns. He maintained that God had furnished the king with supernatural powers, which put him intellectually and spiritually far above anyone else, even the highest official and the closest confidant. At decisive moments, his trust in the power of divine will was responsible for his inactivity. Frederick William IV displayed an exceptional talent for drawing and architecture at an early age, developing that into a love for the arts throughout his life.

During the first years of his reign, his subjects anxiously demanded the reform of the government. At first he ignored the issue, then he stated he had no intention of honoring the promise of 22 May 1815 to govern by constitution. He associated a constitution with the event that he hated the most, the French Revolution. He did terminate the struggle with the Roman Catholic Church by reinstating the bishops who had rebelled, believing this would begin the process to again unite the Protestant and Catholic denominations. Frederick William IV was the first Prussian monarch to openly display an interest in the restoration of Germany to its medieval splendor. To him, a German Empire without an ancient ruling dynasty seemed unthinkable.

The liberal social reformers, who came primarily from the civil service, continued to clamor for the participation of the people in the affairs of the state. Increasing discontent was evident in those areas of the kingdom that did not share in the general social and economic prosperity of the period. One of these areas was Silesia, the largest textile production center in Prussia and Germany. At the time, the weavers worked at home as individuals, buying their yarn from manufacturers. The weaver had no capital so he purchased the yarn as an advance against his wages or product. But when he presented his product for payment, the selling price was depressed by the manufacturer, and the weaver received very little for his labor. The annual income of a spinner was about thirty *thalers* and a weaver, sixty *thalers*, while the subsistence level in 1843, for a family of five, required an annual income of 100 *thalers*. On 4 June 1844, the military was called in to put down a revolt by a small, but angry group of weavers in Peterwaldau and Langenbielau, Silesia. When the soldiers opened fire, eleven people were killed including some women and children. The revolt escalated, with increasing numbers of weavers and their families attacking the soldiers with sticks and stones. By 6 June, the military had reinforced their strength to four companies of troops, four pieces of artillery, and a detachment of cavalry. The villages were occupied, and over 100 weavers were arrested and transported to Breslau where they were tried and imprisoned. This incident received the sympathy of the press and subsequently, the people. It marked the beginning of political activity that would result in the long-awaited constitution.

The popular unrest was embraced by people from all social levels but was mainly spread by writers and artists. One of them, August Heinrich Hoffman von Fallersleben, professor of German language and literature at the University of Breslau, was exiled for publishing a book of satirical poems. While in exile, he wrote the song, *Deutschland, Deutschland Uber Alles*, which later became the German National Anthem. Further, a crisis in trade and commerce, accompanied by a series of bad harvests, kept the popular unrest alive. During 1847, there were several revolts in Germany, generally caused by severe economic suffering. In Berlin, markets and food stores were stormed by hungry, angry crowds. The general economic crisis again led to a crisis in Prussia's finances.

Frederick William IV did not know how to deal with the dissenters or the financial crisis, and as the pressure to act grew, he could no longer resist with inactivity. Finally on 3 February 1847, the king published a decree, which united his previously appointed provincial diets (parliaments) and their committees, which represented the states. The United Diet, a substitute for a general parliament or legislative body, comprised 237 members of the nobility, 182 representatives of the towns, and 124 representatives of the property-owner peasants. The members of this body, with the protection of the law and regardless of social standing, were given the right to criticize the king. There was also a higher, or upper house, made up of seventy princes and counts. The United Diet met for the first time in the Berlin Palace on 11 April 1847. It was also the first time that the press was allowed to be present and report the proceedings. Its first action was to demand full constitutional rights.

Revolution spread throughout Europe during 1847. In February 1848, the Second French Republic was announced following the second revolution in that country, caused by dissatisfaction over the existing corruption. Those flames of revolution quickly spread throughout Germany and Europe. In Prussia, it began on 3 March 1848 with a mass demonstration of workers in Cologne and spread throughout the Rhineland. Within three days, similar demonstrations were taking place in Berlin and other German cities and provinces. Afraid of revolution, Frederick William IV concentrated his troops in Berlin and called for another meeting of the United Diet. At the same time, he proposed a unification of the German confederation into a single state or country. In effect, it meant that Austria and Prussia would have to make the necessary compromises to bring this to fruition. He also recommended to the United Diet, the liberty of the press from censorship and the adoption of the colors of black, red, and gold as the German national colors. None of these actions did much to quell the riots taking place in Berlin. The subsequent fighting resulted in 216 killed and the formation of a militia force, by the revolutionaries, who made one of their missions the protection of the king. An amnesty was reached, and the king, on 21 March 1848, donned a black, red, and gold sash and rode through the streets of Berlin, making speeches to the masses who had assembled there. He promised he would lead the movement for German unity without any ambition towards ruling Germany himself. It should be noted that while these uprisings were spawned by laborers from the sweatshops of the large cities like Berlin, the peasants in the countryside were little affected by them, during or after.

New ministers were appointed, and they were mostly liberal. The ministers were to draft a Prussian constitution, and one of their early achievements was the creation of a Prussian national assembly elected by general and direct elections. The parliament met in May 1848 and attempted to prepare a constitution, but because the assembly included a majority of university professors, the discussions were often one-sided and very often irrelevant to the issues. Although the revolutionary fervor had begun to evaporate, the constitution was finally completed by 28 March 1849. It called for general and representative elections, but the full executive powers of the crown were retained. The new document omitted a requirement that the armed forces be sworn to the constitution. Instead, a clause was included, which stipulated that civil servants should swear loyalty and obedience to the king.

While there continued to be various movements on the unification issue, neither Austria nor Prussia could come to any agreement. Unification would mean the end to either the Hapsburg or Hohenzollern dynasties, but it was clear that Frederick William IV was the more popular of the two houses, perhaps because of the superior military forces maintained by Prussia. The issue of the constitution had been decided, and the economy once again rebounded. Steam power was now in place in all the industrialized regions; the railroad system was greatly expanded; mechanization replaced the artisan, and hand-operated looms were being replaced by mechanized looms. The number of factory workers increased twofold, while the number of factories decreased. Share-holding companies began to spread, with 102 founded between 1826 and 1850. All of these innovations and changes had transformed Berlin into a modern city.

By mid-century, more than seventy-one percent of the Prussian population still resided in the countryside, and the first improvements in farming equipment were adopted by farmers. The sickle was gradually replaced by the scythe, which allowed a harvester to work four times faster. Heavy wooden plows slowly gave way to lighter, stronger, and more mobile metal ones. Seed-sowing machines delivered the seeds to the soil in straight, even lines, outmoding the wasteful practices of haphazard hand seeding. Horse-drawn hoes were now used to cultivate the soil between rows of root crops. The era was known as the Agricultural Revolution.

The introduction of the scythe, which increased productivity, also decreased the demand for agricultural labor. Less residue remained in the fields for gleaners after the harvest, and the poor claimed lesser quantities of food from their scavenging. Also, changes in the kinds of crops grown had a profound impact on the organization of households and communities. Cereals, for instance, demanded heavy, intense physical labor, both when planted and harvested, and required a great deal of attention in between. Vegetables, on the other hand, needed more sustained and intense cultivation. As cereal crops became more popular, and men remained committed to the seasonal work patterns imposed by cereal cultivation, women also worked in the fields during the growing seasons and not just at harvest time.

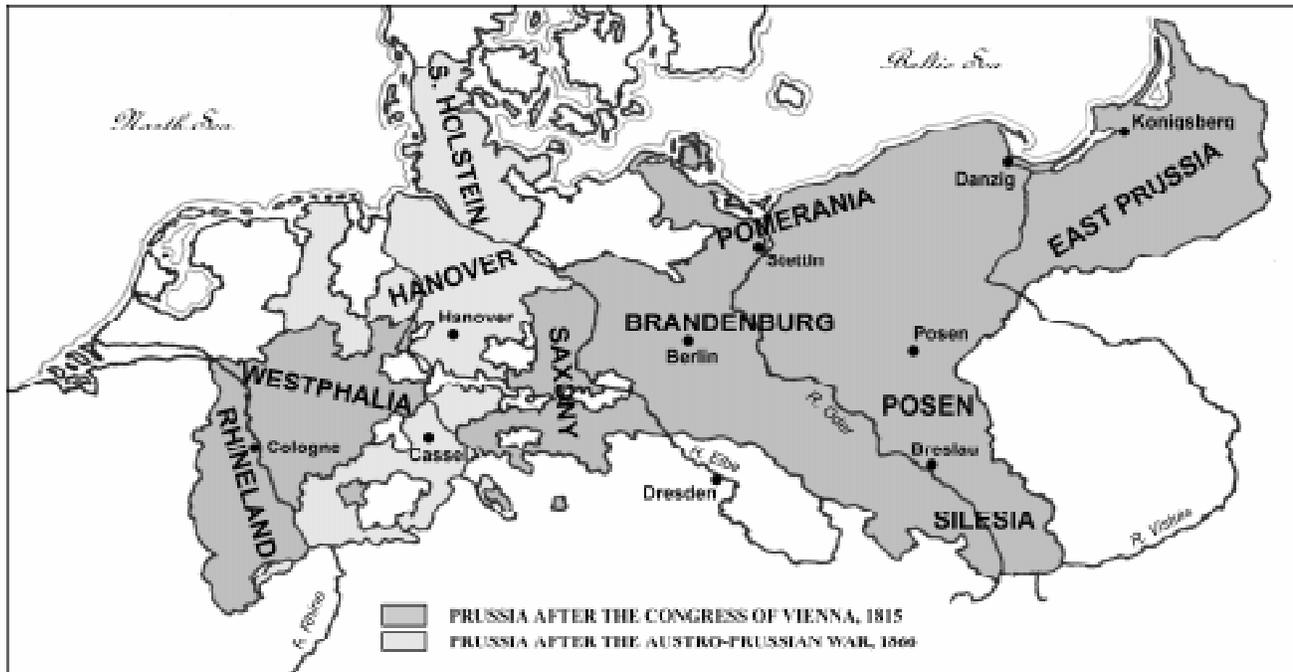
During the last phase of the reign of Frederick William IV, foreign policy issues again surfaced. The Crimean War with Great Britain and France on one side and Russia on the other, threatened to involve Prussia as well. The Prussian king pursued a policy of neutrality and through some very cautious but well thought-out negotiations, was able to keep Prussia out of the war and remain allied to the various powers in Europe. In July 1857, Frederick William IV suffered a stroke followed by several more, which impeded his speech and partially paralyzed him. Some historians have concluded he was afflicted with a mental disease, but his growing mental incapacity was a result of the strokes. He suffered for nearly four years until his death on 2 January 1861.

WILLIAM I

William I, the brother of Frederick William IV and Prince of Prussia, became the king, although he had been acting in that capacity since his brother's stroke in 1857. William I had fought against Napoleon at the age of seventeen and had remained a soldier throughout his life. He had not taken an interest in the Prussian Reform Movement except for one of its

important aspects – that of military reform. His political views were tainted by the consequences of the French Revolution and remained hostile to revolution throughout his life. William I was a firm supporter of German unification but only if the resulting German state would be under the leadership of Prussia.

William I took steps to reorganize the military forces and to rebuild them where needed. In spite of much opposition by the liberal parliament, he was able to accomplish this task and as a result, elevated Prussia's army to a level of superiority. He was aided immeasurably by his prime minister, Otto von Bismarck, who mirrored the king's conservative and military views. Together, they reversed the policy of the reform movement. Instead of basing the army broadly upon the people, making it an integral part of the nation, the relationship was reversed by turning the people into an integral part of the army.



They did away with the militia who had little professionalism or patriotism, and increased the forces with recruits for the regular army, which traditionally came from the peasantry of Prussia and who were steeped in loyalty to the crown and their landlords.

Armed conflicts with the Danes over the Schleswig-Holstein territories in 1863-64 ended after Prussian forces had clearly dominated, although allied with Austria. A peace agreement was concluded on 30 October in Vienna. The duchies of Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg were ceded by Denmark to Prussia and Austria, but that was hardly a satisfactory solution for either party. This was eventually resolved in the convention of Gastein on 14 August 1865, when Holstein was brought under Austrian administration and Schleswig under that of Prussia. It was clear this could only be a temporary solution until the larger issue – which of the powers would emerge as the sole leader of the German nation – was resolved.

Napoleon III, in April 1866, believed he could exploit a Prussian-Austrian conflict for the good of the French national interest. He demanded from Austria the territory of Venetia, in return for which he would not enter the war against Austria, now being threatened by Italy. Arguments between Austria and Prussia again ensued over the Holstein-Schleswig territories, and on 12 June 1866, diplomatic relations between Prussia and Austria were severed. Both countries were aware that any war had to be short and decisive because funds were limited. The war between Prussia and Austria began on 18 June 1866 when Prussian forces invaded and quickly occupied Hanover and Saxony. The Austrians, now fighting Italy in the south, were hard pressed to stop the Prussian army. By 18 July, the Prussian army had advanced to within nineteen kilometers of Vienna. Austria negotiated with Napoleon III without success. Peace between Austria and Prussia came on 23 August 1866. Prussia gained Schleswig-Holstein, Hanover, Kurhessen, Nassau, and other Hessian territories, as well as the city of Frankfurt. Napoleon, unable to support his demands of Austria and Prussia with military action, withdrew his claims to German territory.

Another step toward German unification was taken when the constitution of the North German Confederation was accepted on 16 April 1867. The Prussian crown was granted the presidency as an inheritable office, and it retained supreme command of the armed forces, control of the conduct of foreign policy, the right to make and to end wars, and the prerogative of appointing the federal chancellor. Except for another economic depression, which caused severe unemployment in Prussia, the period 1867 to 1870 passed quietly. The southern German states concluded separate peace agreements with Prussia after they failed at attempts to create a federation equal to the North German Confederation. They began to lean heavily on Prussia, especially in regards to military matters. The treaties even included that, in case of war, the command of

their armies would be turned over to Prussia. By doing this, the armies of the southern German states were streamlined to conform to the Prussian military standards.

Napoleon III disrupted the peace once again on 19 July 1870, when he declared war on Prussia. This time, however, not Prussia alone but Germany, as one nation, rose to the occasion. The German forces, divided into three armies according to previously prepared military plans, quickly moved into position along the northern and central borders of France. They crossed through Alsace and marched toward Metz, inflicting defeat on the French army along the way. Napoleon surrendered on 2 September 1870, along with 100,000 French soldiers at Sedan. The war, however, was not over. Another revolution in Paris, Lyons, Bordeaux, and Marseilles deposed Napoleon, and a provincial government took up the fight. Metz surrendered on 27 October, and the German forces moved toward and encircled Paris. The French capitulated on 24 January 1871. In the Treaty of Frankfurt that concluded the war, France ceded Alsace-Lorraine, including Metz, to Germany and would pay five billion *francs* to Germany, one billion dollars at the time, over a period of three years.

William I was now approached by south German politicians to discuss their entry into the North German Confederation, or the creation of a new federal state. William supported the idea but did not want to be the leader of the new state. Weeks of deliberations and debates ensued over the *title* of the president of the new federation. King Ludwig II of Bavaria wrote William I, appealing him to accept the position. That persuaded William to accept the title of German Emperor (Kaiser), and the formal proclamation of the German Empire took place on 18 January 1871, in the Hall of Mirrors of the Versailles Palace in Paris, exactly 170 years after Prussia had become a kingdom.

There were thirteen provinces in Prussia at the time of the federation: Brandenburg, East Prussia, Hanover, Hesse-Nassau, Hohenzollern, Pomerania, Border Province (Posen), Rhineland, Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein, Silesia, Westphalia, and West Prussia. Alsace-Lorraine was later added by annexation from France.

The unification of Prussia and Austria, into the single nation of Germany, made it the most powerful state on the continent. It was also the most populous. Between 1871 and 1914, the population of Germany rose from forty-one million to sixty-seven million. By comparison, in the same period, the French population grew only three million, from thirty-seven to forty million. The growth of the German population was both a result of, and further incentive toward, the industrial revolution, which began in full force in 1871. But the hectic three-year boom, which followed unification, fueled mostly by the billions received from France, soon ended. During the next twenty years, the economy moved forward at a slower pace and was one of the reasons that two-and-a-half million Germans migrated overseas, mainly to the United States, during the period 1871-95.

Over the centuries, Prussia had become a great military power, engaging in wars and increasing its territorial borders with conquered land. It rose from a collection of small tribal states, principalities, and dukedoms and was finally unified with its German neighbors, the Austrian and the Holy Roman Empires, as a single nation in 1871. Prussia remained the dominant military power and economic engine of Germany until the end of World War I. After that, it was largely an administrative element of Germany. Prussia was completely and officially abolished by the Allied Control Council, on 25 February 1947, by its Law No. 46, which formally dissolved the state of Prussia and ceded much of the land back to Poland.

Nature created the lands of Prussia much like the United States and, more specifically, Wisconsin. The glaciers shaped the land and created large bodies of water adjacent to the territories first settled. The ancient native tribal dwellers were conquered and replaced by colonies of pioneering immigrants, who cleared the land and tilled the soil. Control of the territories, which later evolved into states and nations, caused constant strife and changes in the boundaries and in the culture of the people. Millions died in the process, not from old age, but as a result of wars, disease, and the lack of the most basic, sanitary practices that, today, are taken for granted.

None of our ancestors were aware that their life was a miserable existence. Since they could not see into the future, they accepted what life dealt them. Hindsight is a great advantage. That is why historians write of the terrible conditions, of all types that existed before their time, but it is from a modern perspective and not representative of the feelings of the peoples who lived it. In order for us to understand the lives of our ancestors, we must keep a perspective that only considers the historical events up to the period in which they lived. To do otherwise is a disservice to those who came before us, because it makes them into poor, wretched souls. On the contrary, they were proud, honorable people, who did what they could to improve their lives, generation after generation. Our lives, from a historical perspective, are the beneficiaries of their struggles. Maybe it has always been this way, but it seems there is little appreciation, respect, and admiration for the masses of people who toiled under those few who became historically famous.

In conclusion, one last thought bears mentioning. The basic unit to which all humans belong is the family. The ancient tribes were made up of a number of families who were closely related. The pride of the tribe was derived from the family, who collectively endured life. When the tribes melted into the populations of kingdoms, countries, states, and nations, the pride of the tribe diminished, leaving only the family, once again, as the basic unit. More and more, as time goes on in our mobile society, the pride and cohesiveness of the family unit have also diminished. Historians, many years in the future, will have to record the effects and changes, if any, on the societies and cultures that exist today.

