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Posen

Also known as **"Posen, Germany", "Posen, Prussia", "Province of Posen", "Provinz Posen", "Poznan, Poland", "Grand Duchy of Poznan", "South Prussia", "Wielkopolska"**.

From the Second Partition (1793) until the end of WWI (1919), this part of the world was **a Prussian province**, except for the decade in the early 1800s when Napoleon was in control.

A Polish land, also known as 'Wielkopolska' ("Great Poland"), the area's **boundaries** have remained generally intact, being defined by the watersheds of the rivers Warthe / Warta (in the south) and Netze / Notec~ (in the north). Both rivers flow from the southeast to the northwest, the Netze emptying into the Warthe in the western neighbor of Brandenburg, which in turn empties into the Oder / Odra as it flows north to the Baltic sea.

Other **neighbors** were the Prussian provinces of West Prussia / Westpreußen (to the northeast), Silesia / Schlesien (to the southwest) and the Russian-controlled "Congress Poland" to the east.

The province received its name from its capital city Posen / Poznan~. The Prussians split the province into two **administrative parts**, giving Posen jurisdiction of the southern part and assigning Bromberg / Bydgoszcz as the administration center for the northern part.

If an ancestor stated "Posen" as the birthplace or residence, it is uncertain whether the reference was to the city ('Stadt'), its county ("Kreis"), the administrative district ('Regierungsbezirk') or the province ('Provinz').

For more information about the issues of **Germans in Poland**, refer to the FAQs.

Posen was...

Finger lakes and weavers' looms. The bleating of lambs in the spring, the chopping of trees in the forest. Rural communities, each with its own ethnic flavor, existing as a pocket in a countryside littered with ethnic enclaves. Polish Catholics, German Protestants and Jews. Serfs and nobles, colonists and merchants. Rural roads, brick houses, manor houses, distilleries, water and animal-powered mills, brickyards, peat workings, prayer barns and hopeful churches, markets in the town square, forests and mud. The Netze and Warthe rivers draining not just surface water, but the fruits of labor of a million backs, to places that were well-known but rarely seen. Oppression and tolerance. Opportunity and stagnation. A new frontier in a left-over, hand-me-down land, ravaged by war, fires and epidemics. These are some of the images that unfold as we strive to learn more about the so-very-different-world that our ancestors loved and struggled in as they strove to make life better for themselves and their children, who in turns, became us. That was the beginning of a journey so long, so complicated, that our families have forgotten the

details. Working together, we can discover the little clues that restore the lost ballads to our minds and those of our kin.
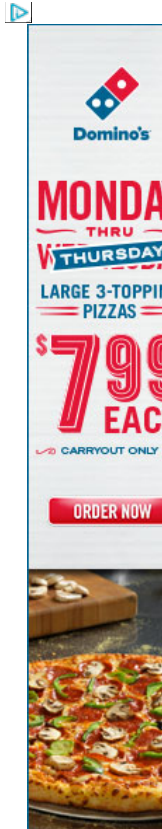
Languages and ethnicity

While this website is primarily in American English, efforts will be ongoing to provide versions in additional languages, mostly German and Polish. In references to places that have different names in other languages, the first mention on a page will normally have the alternate names listed, separated by slashes. Subsequent references will use the name in the language displayed, if possible, or in German (as that is the language of the official records for most of the period of discussion).

Special characters: Since the German diacriticals are supported in mainstream HTML, they are displayed. Polish diacritical characters however, will use the "plain text" style as used on the mailing list (the letter is followed by a tilde, 'Poznan~' for example).

A lot of useful information about Posen (especially historical) is at the wiki section of this website. This is an online genealogy reference work, where anybody can contribute and edit the material. All Posen researchers are encouraged to contribute. The 1905 gazetteer has been extracted and used to create a database of communities which are displayed in various ways in the wiki articles. Towns in the Kreis of Znin comprise the most edited family of articles. Check out the Recent Changes page to see what's new.

(Posen-DE has been canceled. A different German-language Posen list has replaced it.)

234791 visits since January 1, 2002.
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