

Franz Ferdinand Retzlaff



Frederick II, often called Frederick the Great, used the treasury and disciplined army that his father had built up to make Prussia one of the great powers of Europe as he began his reign in 1740. In that same year, the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Charles VI of Austria, died. Maria Theresa, Charles VI's daughter, was left all the Hapsburg family properties. It was the seizing of Silesia, an Austrian province, that began the conquests of Frederick II. Maria Theresa formed an alliance between

France, Sweden, Russia, Saxony, Austria and other countries in 1756, hoping to punish Frederick for his arrogance. The ultimate result of this *punishment* is known as the Seven Years' War, along with a decisive victory for Frederick II. It was at the same time, on June 7, 1777, Johann David Christoph Retzlaff was born in Doeringshagen near Path in the province of Promorania. He was later known as a teacher who ran his own private school in Bromberg. From his grandmother he inherited a large grainery that had been destroyed during the Seven Years' War. He married Charlotte Elizabeth Ebel whose father was a townsman and owner of a distillery in Greifenhagen. During the conquests of Napoleon, the French Revolution and the abolishment of the Holy Roman Empire, Johann David Christoph Retzlaff's first son was born April 4, 1811, in Strczelno, Bromberg.



Franz Ferdinand Retzlaff would become a great educator, the same as his father. After being educated for the profession of a teacher in the Lexonsberger High Schools as a youth, he later taught in those same schools for over fifty-five years. At twenty-three, his eventful life was greatly enhanced with his marriage to Emilie Josephine Helena Swirzynski on May 19, 1834. Franz Ferdinand, in his records, tells that his wife's parents, Stanislaus and Franziska, were foresters (of the Catholic faith) and her mother's parents lived and worked a *lying* farm (in