

## **Prussia**

Prussia is a former name of a region in Northern Europe along the river Vistula and bordering on Baltic Sea. On the West Side Prussia bordered on Poland and on the East it bordered on Russia.

Prussia was an independent German speaking state from 17<sup>th</sup> century until 1918 when it became an enclave of Germany. The Treaty of Versailles in 1919 made Germany surrender West Prussia to Poland. The free corridor was created from Germany through Poland to join Germany with Prussia. Hitler occupied Poland in 1939 and thus joined Prussia with Germany for the duration of the war. In January 1945 Russians invaded East Prussia. Russia always wanted to have East Prussia because it borders on the Baltic Sea.

West Prussia was annexed by Poland. Russians wanted to cleanse East Prussia of German people and settle it with Russians. They resettled many East Prussian German residents to Siberia and along the Ural. Many Germans escaped to the West because they did not like to live under Soviet regime.