

Hussars Force Monks from a Marienfelde Cloister to Drink to Frederick II (1758)

Abstract

After Frederick II scored a stunning victory at Roßbach against a superior force of French and imperial troops, his fame and reputation soared across Germany and in Europe as a whole. Enthusiasm for the philosopher-soldier-king earned him the epithet “the Great” and may have prompted the Prussian hussars depicted below to force monks in a monastery near Marienfelde (now in Berlin) to drink to Frederick’s health. The intimidation depicted in the scene reflects the Protestant triumphalism of the Prussian soldiers, since the Austro-Prussian rivalry was widely perceived as a confrontation between Catholicism and Protestantism. The writing on the bottom margin reads, “Long live the King of Prussia” [“Es lebe der König von Preußen”].

Source



Source: Copy of a drypoint by Christian Geyser after an etching by Daniel Chodowiecki (1726-1801), signed with the pseudonym I. Vogel, 1758.

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