

The Origins of the German Army (1914)

Abstract

Produced during the early phase of the First World War, this film titled “The Origins of the German Army” showcases Germany’s military history through a parade of soldiers in the costumes and uniforms of different eras. The parade begins showing the “ancient Germanic tribes,” continues through Charlemagne (Karl der Grosse), Frederick Barbarossa's crusades, the Thirty Years' War, Frederick the Great of Prussia, the War of Liberation (against Napoleon) and culminates in the march of Bismarck's soldiers of the wars of German unification. While on the surface this might seem just a film of a costume parade, it visualizes and presents Germany's history as an unending march of martial engagements, culminating in ever-greater victories. The film ends with “a cheer for our brave army and its glorious commanders.” The message to audiences is clear: the long history of German military successes and heroism is a deep part of being German, and German victories will inevitably continue.

Source

Intertitles:

The Origins of the German Army./
The ancient Germanic tribes./
The military campaign of Charlemagne./
Barbarossa's crusade./
The Thirty Years War./
The Age of the Great Elector./
Frederick the Great./
The Wars of Liberation 1813-1815./
Germany's Great Moment 1870-1871./
Bismarck and the Imperial troops./
A cheer for our glorious army and its brave commanders./

Source: *Des deutschen Heeres Entstehung*, Weltfilm, 1914. Bundesarchiv Filmarchiv Filmwerk ID: 21732. <https://digitaler-lesesaal.bundesarchiv.de/video/21732/659473>

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