

Potsdam Grenadiers. He ruled his army with a rod of iron, and attached the utmost importance to drill of a very stiff and formal kind. The army was fed at first by voluntary enlistment, but in 1733 a system of universal liability to service was established, though with many exemptions. The class distinctions which were so marked a feature of Prussian society down to 1807 were rigidly observed in the army. The officers were all drawn from the native nobility, or Junkers. In training this army the king was largely assisted by the famous Prince Leopold of Dessau, commonly known as 'the Old Dessauer', who had served under Prince Eugene at Blenheim and Malplaquet, and had helped to train Marlborough's infantry. But despite the care lavished upon it, Frederick William made little use of his army in furthering the interests of his kingdom. It remained for his son to employ it for the purposes of aggression and aggrandizement.

Frederick William I married Sophia Dorothea, the sister of the English King George II, whose electorate of Hanover adjoined the province of Brandenburg.

On the death of Frederick William I in 1740 he was succeeded by his son Frederick II, better known as Frederick the Great, the most celebrated of the Hohenzollerns, and one of the greatest generals of modern times. In the same year the Emperor Charles VI also died, leaving the crown of Austria, in accordance with an arrangement of long standing, to his daughter Maria Theresa, a beautiful and spirited princess. Frederick at once invaded Silesia, the valley of the upper Oder, which was a part of Maria's inheritance. England, France, and Bavaria joined in, and the Silesian war became the war of the Austrian Succession. But Frederick was playing entirely for his own hand—all that he