

The Forefathers of North Carolina Pioneer Andreas Killian Addendum number 12, Page 9, 2 March 2012

Additional information

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and four heads of sovereign states called *Kürfürsten* (Prince Electors). In 1356, Emperor Charles IV issued a decree, called the Golden Bull of 1356⁶, changing the way candidates were elected.

It should be noted that after the Holy Roman Emperor was elected, his power and revenues were generally not affected. His power base and revenues still came from his own local principality or dukedom. The local rulers provided troops under their own command in cases of external threat.

In 1648, four years before Andreas' father was born, the number of *Kürfürsten* was increased to eight.

The *Kürfürsten* in the time of the Kilians from 1648 to 1732 were the:

- King of Bohemia.
- Margrave of Brandenburg.
- Count of Palatinate on the Rhine.
- Duke of Saxony.
- Duke of Bavaria (until the kingdom of Bavaria was created in 1806).
- Archbishop of Cologne.
- Archbishop of Mainz.
- Archbishop of Trier.

These regional rulers controlled their communities under a feudal system. The highest in the Bavarian noble hierarchy before 1806 was the *Herzog* (Duke). He in principle owned everything, all land and villages. He gave land *in fief* to the noble next in rank who was a *Graf* (Count) and the count gave part *in fief* to barons under him. In this particular region where the Kilians lived the noble under the Duke of Bavaria was the *Margraf* of Ansbach, (Margrave or Marquis). A Margrave ranked slightly above a count, because he was a count with the added responsibility of protecting a *Mark* (a Marche, or a border area).

In fief was not outright ownership, but was holding land at the pleasure of the overlord, giving the overlord part of the revenues and providing men in case of military conflict. Most of the peasants who worked the land were *Leibeigene* (serfs). A *Leibeigene* labored on the land in exchange for his family's subsistence and protection. In Bavaria, 70% of the farmers were *Leibeigene* who were virtually the personal property of the landholder. They could neither leave the land, nor marry without the landowner's permission. Land owned and operated by the church and its representatives was managed in a similar way. The Dukedom of Bavaria finally abolished *Leibeigene* in 1783 and it was written into the new kingdom's constitution in 1808. The state of Württemberg later abolished it in 1817.

During the period covered in this book, there were nine Holy Roman Emperors, all from the House of Habsburg, a powerful European dynasty who reigned for more than six centuries: