

WOK VON ROSENBERG

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With Wok von Rosenberg, one of the most important vassals of the great Bohemian king Přemysl Otokar II, we touch upon an ever acute European problem, which up to the present day has found no definitive solution which is just to all those involved: Bohemia as the conscious homeland of its Czech and German-speaking inhabitants.

Descending from the mighty family of the Witigones, which came from the area of Vilshofen in Lower Bavaria, by way of the Upper Austrian Mühel-land, to Bohemia, and rose there in an unbelievably short time to power and influence, he combined political far-sightedness and diplomatic talent with deep insight into economic necessities and with an iron will, accompanied by great skill, to clear the land and settle his extensive landholdings. Above all, however, was his unchanging loyalty to his king, among whose closest confidants he was already counted when the latter still as margrave directed the destiny of Moravia, and whom he served later as first judex provinciae (comparable to the position of the present-day Landeshauptmann) of the young land of Upper Austria, as chief burgrave of the King-

dom of Bohemia, and finally, until his sudden death in Graz on June 3, 1262, as capitaneus, or Landeshauptmann of the Duchy of Styria.

That, however, which makes him appear so important particularly to our time that we make a special point of commemorating the seven hundredth anniversary of his death is his untiring effort to help his king build from Bohemia a Central European kingdom, which as an integral part of the Holy Roman Empire was also an integral part of the countries settled by the Slavs between the Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean.

Through the large-scale colonization and settlement, using the most modern methods of the time, that he instituted on his landed property, which stretched as far as Upper Austria, Moravia and Silesia, he played a decisive role in shaping its face up to the present. Przemysl Otokar also duly valued the services of this faithful follower, and was not stingy with bestowals of additional rich lands and the granting of important rights, as the enfeoffment with the County of Raabs in Lower Austria, for example, shows.