Little Door to the 23rd of December

Today's the last day before Christmas, at least here in Germany. I might consider doing one for the 25th too. However, today we will focus on a place my grandma and grand-grandma once called their home: East Prussia, or Königsberg to be precise.

Due to the limitation here, we will stick to a short summary of the history; to me it is still important as it is my historic identity (part of my national identity: German). Historic because it was once part of Germany, and in history this region will remain in order to rest for good.

Linguistically, the name <u>Prussia</u> is of Baltic origin. The Teutonic Order, however, exterminated the ancient inhabitants called Prusi (who lived in an area between Vistula and Neman River).

- 📖 1308: The Knights conquer the Polish province of Pomorze.
- 📖 1466: Poland recovers Pomorze
- 📖 1525: Royal Prussia becomes a secular duchy.
- 📖 1657: <u>Treaty of Wehlau</u>, freed Royal Prussia from Polish suzerainty
- 📖 1701: The Elector of Brandenburg, <u>Friedrich III.</u> (1657-1713) becomes king in Prussia.
- 📖 1815: The name 'East Prussia' was given to the easternmost province of Prussia, the boundaries remained unchanged until the First World War (36,995 km² / 14,284 miles²).
- 📖 1919: Treaty of Versailles – the Memel (Klaipėda) territory was taken from Germany and incorporated into Lithuania in 1924, the district of Soldau (Dzialdowo) given to Poland and the regency of Marienwerder (Kwidzyn) joined East Prussia. The Polish corridor and Danzig separated it territorially from Germany.
- 📖 1945: Partition of East Prussia – southern part was given to Poland, the northern part to the Soviet Union and the Klaipėda territory reincorporated into Lithuania.

Assimilation of the Old Prussians (Prusi) also occurred:
"During the 13th century, the Old Prussians were conquered by the Teutonic Knights, and gradually assimilated over the following centuries. The former German state of Prussia took its name from the Baltic Prussians, although it was led by Germans who had assimilated the Old Prussians; the old Prussian language was extinct by the 17th or early 18th century."
(<u>Academic Dictionaries and Encyclopaedias</u>)