

Charles 1519 charles
was elected german
king and



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CHARLES V FEBRUARY 24, 1500 - SEPTEMBER 21, 1558 Charles V was born on February 24, 1500 in Ghent, which today is better known Belgium. He was the oldest in the family so when his father died in 1506, he inherited the Netherlands and the Franche Comte, which was located in France but actually belonged to the Holy Roman Empire.

He gained much more land once his maternal and paternal grandfathers died. Not since Charlemagne, in the early 9th Century, had one person dominated so much land. When Charles visited Spain for the first time, he realized that he wasn't popular among the citizens. However, his fight against the muslim Turks and the German Protestants won him some acceptance. Though being accepted was a problem, controlling the finances became a much larger one. There were many times when promising military campaigns had to be broken off due to lack of money and at times it appeared that Charles didn't much mind that such actions had to be taken. In 1519 Charles was elected German King and Holy Roman Emperor.

So after his visit to Spain he went to Germany to be officially crowned king. But, he would have to wait until 1530 to become the Holy Roman Emperor. Charles was going through a lot and he soon started feeling the pressures of his obligations and to add to his pressures, he would soon be going into war with France, a big competitor and persistent enemy.

Charles V went through many wars, but his most were with France. The Valois kings fought the emperor for the leadership of Europe in general and for the domination of Italy in particular. Though in 1525 Charles's army

defeated and captured Francis I of France at the Battle of Pavia in Italy it was thought that the war was over.

But when the peace compromise was final and Francis was released, the Italian wars began again. In 1535 the Spaniards captured Milan and confirmed their domination of Italy. Finally, in stages, between 1555 through 1568, Charles V voluntarily gave up the throne.

Charles retired to a comfortable villa built next to the Monastery of San Yuste in Spain. Up until the time of his death, September 21, 1558, Charles V still used his powerful influence and interfered in the political affairs of Europe. During his reign, Spain discovered and conquered vast overseas territories including Mexico and the western part of the United States. Today one can see the impact of Spain in the architecture, art and culture found throughout the world.