History

The Principality of Liechtenstein is one of the smallest sovereign states of Europe, the last existing member of the medieval Holy Roman Empire. It is situated between the Swiss cantons of St. Gallen (to the west) and Graubünden (to the south) and the Austrian Bundesland Vorarlberg (to the north and east), on one of the important north-south traffic routes from Austria and Germany to Switzerland and Italy.

The history of Liechtenstein is closely linked with that of the surrounding countries. Numerous excavations and archaeological finds have proved that prehistoric man already lived in some parts of this country, especially on the Eschnerberg and at Gutenberg, as early as 3 000 years B. C.

In 15 B. C. Drusus and Tiberius subdued the people of the whole region. The whole of this area including the territory of Liechtenstein then became part of the Roman Province of Raetia. One of Rome's famous roads to the north crossed the Alps by the Julier and Splügen, leading along the eastern bank of the Alpine Rhine to the Lake of Constance. Remains of Roman settlements have been found in Schaan, an important stronghold in those times, also in Triesen, Nendeln, and Schaanwald. In the days of Theoderich, a king of the Goths, the Germanic tribe of the Alemans moved in from the north and settled on both sides of the Rhine. Their speech and culture superseded that of Rome, and are still predominant today.

During the reign of the Emperor Charlemagne the province of Raetia