

## König Ludwig II und die bayerischen Schlösser / Bavarian Castles

### Ludwigs Kindheit / Ludwig's childhood

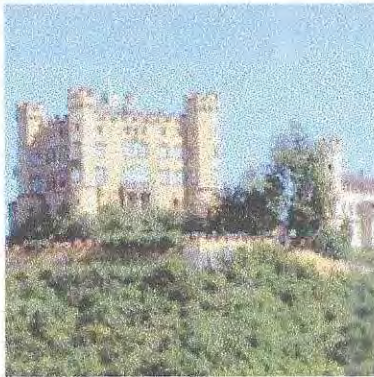
Ludwig's upbringing as a child and his life as an adolescent until the age of 15, was spent at Hohenschwangau Castle.

1. He spent the major part of his youth and boyhood at the castle, which had a great effect upon his life.
2. His favorite toys weren't toy soldiers, but a set of bricks.
3. He was surrounded by legends of ancient Germany.
4. He also spent time in Munich at Nymphenburg Palace.
5. He and his brother were raised strictly, with an emphasis on duty.
6. His parents, Maximilian II and Marie of Prussia, kept themselves at a distance.

#### Hohenschwangau Castle

As a child, King Ludwig II often spent the summer months with his parents at Hohenschwangau Castle.

"Here in my beloved Hohenschwangau I am having a splendid time, I am taking advantage of the fine weather we are at last having to go for many long rides in the surrounding countryside", wrote the young Ludwig to his governess in 1867. His father, King Maximilian II, had acquired the castle when he

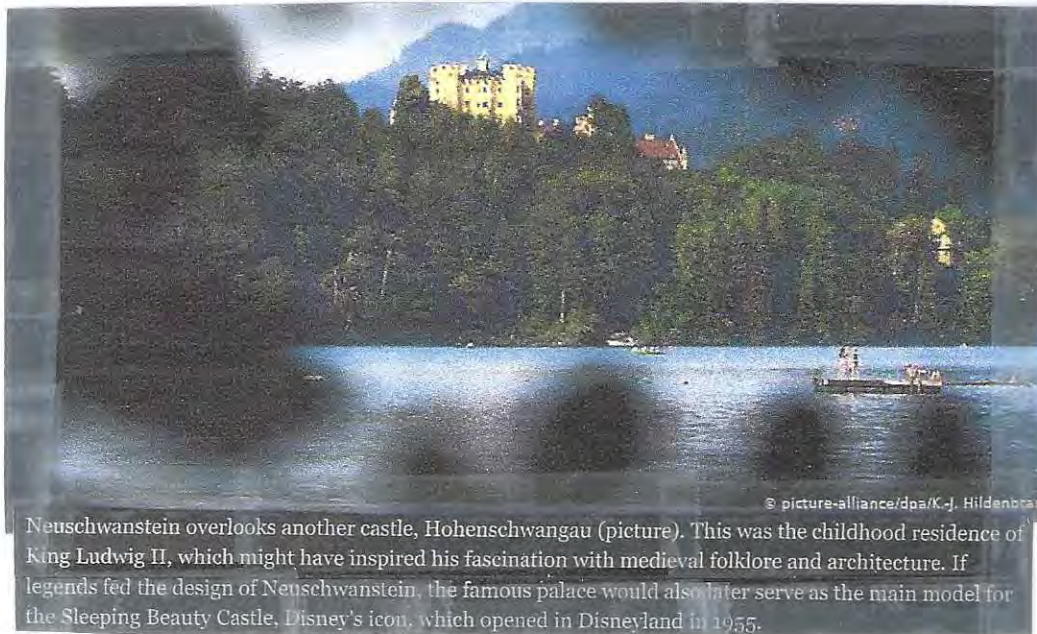


Ludwig II spent his childhood at Hohenschwangau Castle.

was crown prince and had it rebuilt in the romantic, neo-Gothic style. Ludwig, already living in a fantasy world as a child, was fascinated by the numerous frescoes illustrating various legends and stories. He was particularly attracted by the depictions of the knights of Schwangau, the former owners of the castle. Their heraldic animal, the swan, also became one of Ludwig's favourite creatures.

It also had a great effect upon the life of Maximilian's eldest son, Ludwig, who became king upon the death of his father in 1864. Born at Nymphenburg Palace in Munich, Ludwig II was a dreamer and not a statesman. He spent most of his boyhood, surrounded by the legends of ancient Germany, at Hohenschwangau. His favorite toys were not toy soldiers, but a set of bricks. Inheriting his father's Romanticism and his grandfather's and namesake's architectural skill, the boy dreamed not of building empires, but of building castles.

#### Childhood dreams



Neuschwanstein overlooks another castle, Hohenschwangau (picture). This was the childhood residence of King Ludwig II, which might have inspired his fascination with medieval folklore and architecture. If legends fed the design of Neuschwanstein, the famous palace would also later serve as the main model for the Sleeping Beauty Castle, Disney's icon, which opened in Disneyland in 1955.