



**Staatsbibliothek
zu Berlin**

Preußischer Kulturbesitz

Department of Early Printed Books

The Savigny Library

Friedrich Karl von Savigny was born in Frankfurt am Main in 1779. When he was a law student he had already begun to put together a library for law, which he extended systematically. Influenced by 42 years in academics and research in the field of Roman law, Savigny increased his library by way of purchase and exchange, and he also received works as presents. His correspondence has shown that he also enlisted the help of his friends to obtain large quantities of books.

On the recommendation of Wilhelm von Humboldt, Savigny was called to the university in Berlin in 1810. When Fichte resigned as rector, Savigny became his successor in 1812. After his release as Minister of Legal Reforms in 1848 and with view to that year's political unrest, he took steps to protect the most valuable parts of his library. He turned to the director of the Royal Library, Georg Heinrich Pertz, who was also known to him as the editor of the "Monumenta Germaniae Historica". Savigny asked of Pertz that the Royal Library take care of the smallest and most valuable parts of his library, including a number of [manuscripts](#). These works were mostly sources on Roman law. It was agreed that this deposit of works would be left in the Royal Library on a permanent basis. Today, the greater part of Savigny's bequest has been distributed to various libraries or is still in private hands. The greater part – more than 10,000 volumes – was acquired from the family by the [University Library in Bonn](#) in 1959.