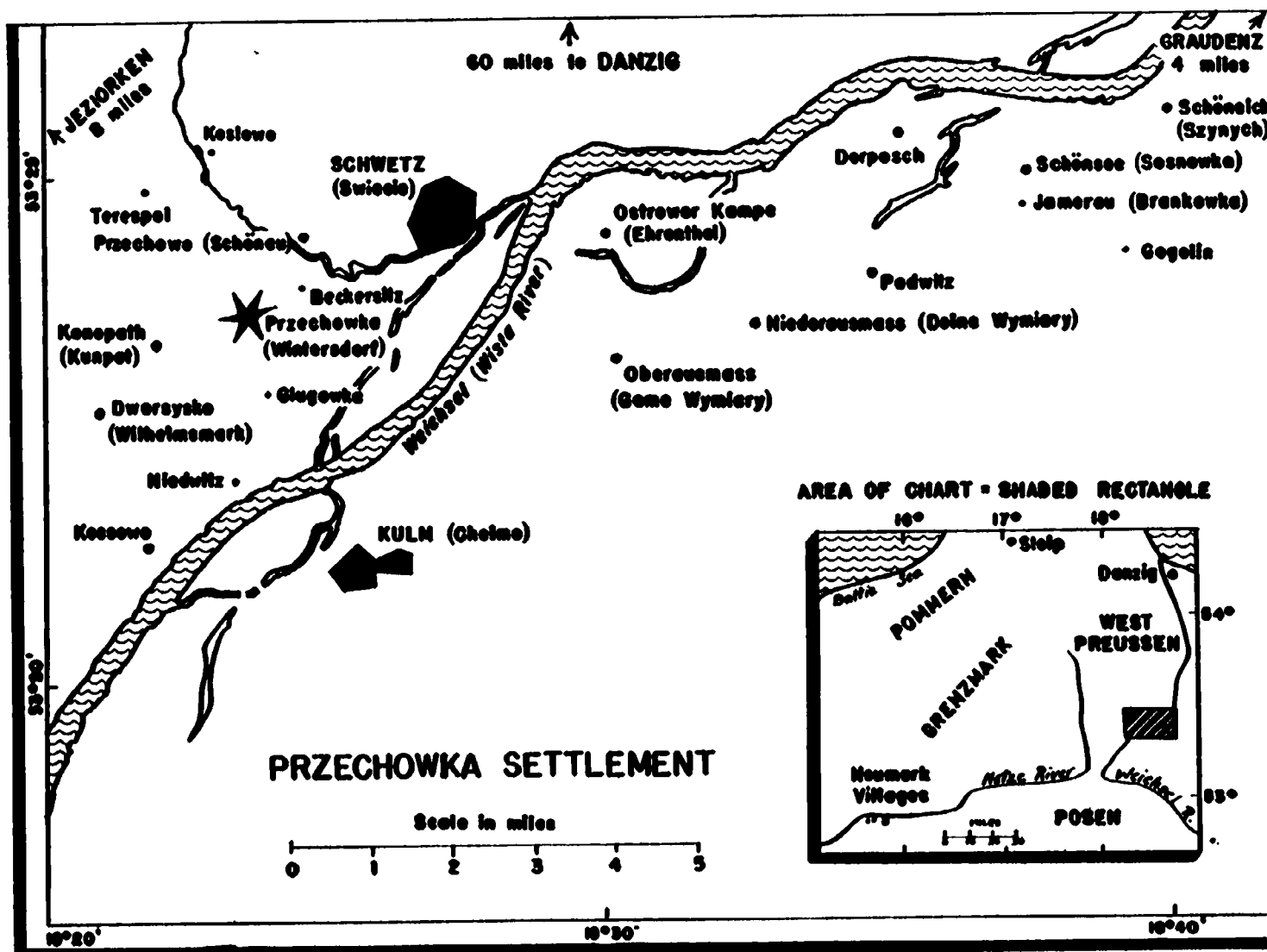


would get land of about the same soil fertility. In 1773, for which time there are some records available, each family farmed about 30 acres of land. The average family owned 2 horses, 5 head of cattle, 2 sheep and 2 pigs.

The average grain crop of a family consisted of 7 acres of rye, 4 acres of barley, 2 acres of buckwheat and one acre of peas. In the early years, each family had only one building. It contained the living quarters of the family, the barn for the horses, cows and pigs, and the storage quarters. The barn section was in the center. The living quarters at one end consisted of 2 or 3 rooms. The lease of a village usually included also items such as: the right to fish for household needs of the family, the right to select their own teacher, the right to conduct the local government of the village, and the special privilege of freedom from military service for Mennonites.

In 1763 Queen Catherine II of Russia offered the Mennonites large tracts of land for settlement in southern Russia, granting them freedom of speech, liberal local government, religious freedom, running their own school and in particular, freedom from military service. This last item appealed very much to the Mennonites, especially after 1789 when the Prussian government issued a special decree restricting the opportunity of Mennonites purchasing additional land and a little later prohibiting the Mennonites purchas-

Home of Alexanderwohl Mennonites on Vistula River, Prussia



Map of the Vistula River, where our forefathers lived in Prussia.
(Courtesy Mennonite Life)