

## The Napoleon Series

### Officers of the Anhalt Duchies who Fought in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, 1789-1815: Anhalt-Köthen-Pleß, Heinrich, Duke of

By [Daniel Clarke](#)

Heinrich, Duke of Anhalt-Köthen-Pleß was born on July 30, 1778 in Pleß, or Pless, (Pszczyna), Upper Silesia, Prussia. He was the fourth son of Friedrich Erdmann von Anhalt-Köthen (1731-1797) and his wife Louise Ferdinande of Stolberg-Wernigerode. As such he was the middle brother between Friedrich Ferdinand (1769-1830) and Christian Friedrich (1780-1813). He was unmarried.

He joined the army of Prussia at the beginning of 1796 as a Staff Captain in one of the three Guard infantry regiments. But quickly transferred to the 32nd Infantry Regiment, von Hohenlohe, where he became a company commander. Between March and October 1805 he toured the Ukraine and Turkey, during which time he was promoted to Major to rank from August of that year.

During the disastrous 1806 campaign he predominately served at the King's headquarters, where his only notable service came in October when he was chosen to command the detachment that accompanied Queen Louise of Prussia from Erfurt to Berlin. After the war had ended and the army had been reorganized, Heinrich became the commander of Grenadier Battalion von Schuler in September 1808, before becoming a battalion commander in the 10th Infantry Regiment, 1st Silesian, in February 1809. In March 1810 he was given the honorary rank of Colonel and permission to wear the colonel's uniform of the regiment.

Taking no part in the wars of 1813-1815, Heinrich was part of the government of Upper Silesia from 1818 and later succeeded his older brother as Chef of 22nd Landwehr Regiment in 1825, having been promoted to Generalmajor on May 22 the same year. He later served as a member of the State Council for Silesia. In 1830 his older brother, Friedrich Ferdinand, Duke of Anhalt-Köthen-Pleß (1769-1830), died childless, and being the only male relative alive, he became duke of the Principality of Anhalt-Köthen. The military titles from Prussia did not stop, however, and he was successively promoted to Generalleutnant in March 1845 and General der Infanterie just before his death in November 1847. During his reign Heinrich allowed the first railway in the principality to be

built, which connected Köthen to Leipzig and Magdeburg. Heinrich died on November 23, 1847 in Köthen, in what was now the Principality of Anhalt-Köthen-Pleß.<sup>1</sup>

Placed on the Napoleon Series: August 2017

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<sup>1</sup> Montag, Reinhard, "Heinrich Herzog von Anhalt-Köthen-Pless", *Lexikon der Deutschen Generale: Die Generale der Königl. Preussischen Armee*, <http://www.lexikon-deutshegenerale.de/biografien/preussen>, accessed 09/4/2017; Siebigk, Ferdinand, *Das Herzogtum Anhalt: Historisch, Geographisch und Statistisch Dargestellt*, Dessau, A. Desbarat, 1867, pages 133-134, 137, 139, 400; [No author found] "Die Fürsten aus dem Hause Anhalt in Brandenburgisch-Preussisch Kriegsdiensten", *Zeitschrift für Kunst, Wissenschaft und Geschichte des Krieges*, Band 10 (Volume X), Berlin, Posen und Bromberg, 1827, page 135