

The Napoleon Series

Officers of the Anhalt Duchies who Fought in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, 1789-1815: Anhalt-Dessau, Friedrich, Hereditary Prince of

By [Daniel Clarke](#)

Friedrich, Hereditary Prince of Anhalt-Dessau was born on December 27, 1769, in Dessau, in the Principality of Anhalt-Dessau. He was the only son of Leopold III, Prince, then Duke of Anhalt-Dessau and his wife Luise Henriette Wilhelmine of Brandenburg-Schwedt—although he did have a number of half brothers and sisters from extramarital deviances. He himself married Christiane Amalie of Hessen-Homburg in June 1792 and had several children in the 1790s.

Friedrich joined the army of Prussia in 1787 as Lieutenant Colonel of the 3rd Cuirassier Regiment, Leib, or von Kospoth. A few years later he was made Colonel and commander of the regiment in 1790. During the Wars of the French Revolution, Friedrich served under Generalmajor (later Generalleutnant) Alexander Friedrich von Knobelsdorff (1723-1799) in Belgium with an allied army composed of Prussians, Austrians, British, Dutch and Hanoverians, led by Feldmarschall Friedrich Josias, Prince of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld (1737-1815). Fighting at the Battle of Raismes on May 8, 1793, the allied army defeated an attack by the French Armée du Nord commanded by general Auguste Marie Henri Picot Dampierre (1756-1793). Under general von Knobelsdorff, Friedrich helped to beat off the French diversionary attacks on the allied flanks. The next day he helped to defeat the French rearguard where some 600 of the enemy were captured. On May 23 he served on the periphery of the Battle of Famars, as the infantry in von Knobelsdorff's column attacked French entrenchments around the village of Hasnon.

For his actions Friedrich was promoted to Generalmajor, but he decided to resign from service soon afterward and returned to Anhalt-Dessau. Not participating in the workings of his father's small principality in this time of upheaval, Friedrich contented himself by helping to design in 1805 part of the Kühnau Park (Dessau-Wörlitz Garden Realm). He died about three years before his father on May 27, 1814.¹

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1 Pierer, Heinrich August, Universal-Lexikon der Gegenwart und Vergangenheit, Fourth Edition, Band 6, Altenburg, Berlagsbuchhandlung von P. A. Pierer, 1858, page 737; Siebigk, Ferdinand, Das Herzogtum Anhalt: Historisch, Geographisch und Statistisch Dargestellt, Dessau, A. Desbarat, 1867, page 268; Berghaus, Heinrich Karl Wilhelm, Geographisch-historisch-Statistisches Landbuch der Provinz Brandenburg und des Markgrathums Niederlausitz in der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts, Band 3, Brandenburg, Adolph Muller, 1856, page 462; [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 131; Fortescue, John W., A History of the British Army, Volume 4, part 1, 1789-1801, London, Macmillan and Co. Ltd, 1906, pages 103-111; Cust, Sir Edward, Annals of the Wars of the Eighteenth Century, Volume IV, 1783-1795, London, John Murray (Publisher), 1869, pages 127-129