

= Frédéric Henri Walther =

Frédéric @-@ Louis @-@ Henri Walther ( 20 June 1761 ? 24 November 1813 ) , was an Alsatian @-@ born general of division and a supporter of Napoleon Bonaparte . He fought for France in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars .

He enlisted in 1781 and , in his 30 @-@ year career , he saw action at the major French defeats and victories in Europe . He fought in André Masséna 's Army of Switzerland , where he participated in the Winterthur and First and Second Battles of Zürich , the campaigns of 1806 against Prussia , and Napoleon 's invasion of Russia . After the Russian and Saxon campaign , while suffering from exhaustion , he contracted typhus and died in Kusel , in the Saarland . He was buried at the Panthéon , and his name is listed on the Arc de Triomphe in Paris .

= = Family = =

Walther was the son of Georges Henri Walther , a Lutheran pastor , and Marie Elisabeth Chatel of Montbéliard . He was born in Obenheim , in the Alsace region of the Bas @-@ Rhin . His cousins , Frédéric Cuvier and Georges Cuvier , were naturalists and zoologists . He married 20 @-@ year @-@ old Salome @-@ Louise Coulman on 12 April 1802 . They had two daughters , born 1803 and 1807 ; in 1810 , a third child was still @-@ born .

Initially he enlisted as a simple soldier in the Berchény Hussars . This unit was included in the 1791 reorganization , and became the 1st Regiment of Hussars . On 10 May 1792 , he received a commission as a lieutenant .

= = Military career = =

During the War of the First Coalition , he was active at the battle of Neerwinden and the campaign on the Piave River in northern Italy . During these campaigns , he proved equally adept at leading heavy or light cavalry , although some military analysts consider he was a better heavy cavalry leader . In 1793 , he was promoted to general of brigade .

In the War of the Second Coalition , he participated in the French defeats at Ostrach and Stockach in March 1799 , and served under the newly promoted Michel Ney on the forward line of defense of the Swiss city of Zürich . At the Battle of Winterthur , he directed the rear guard action covering Ney 's retreat through Winterthur , holding a key bridge cross of the T?ss River for 90 minutes against a larger Austrian force under command of Friedrich Freiherr von Hotze .

A few days later , he was present for the defeat at the First Battle of Zürich when André Masséna withdrew the entire French force across the Limmat river . In September 1799 , he was present at the Second Battle of Zürich when Masséna 's Army of Helvetia and Army of the Danube crushed Alexander Rimsky @-@ Korsakov 's Russian force ; he actively harried the fleeing Russians . He later fought at the Battle of Messkirch in 1800 .

= = = Napoleonic Wars = = =

During the War of the Third Coalition , he participated in the Ulm Campaign , in which cavalry played an essential part . He participated in French victories at Hohenlinden and later at Austerlitz , where he commanded the 2nd Dragoon Division in Marshal Joachim Murat 's Cavalry Reserve . His division was a key to Soult 's successful attack on the Russian center . He suffered wounds at both these battles and after the latter , he received le Grand Aigle de la Légion d'honneur ( Grand Eagle of the Legion of Honor ) , and appointed Chamberlain to the Emperor . Subsequently , he was decorated as a Commander of the Order of the Iron Crown , and appointed as Colonel of the Grenadiers à Cheval ( mounted grenadiers ) , of the Imperial Guard , in 1806 , a position he held until his death 1813 .

At the Battle of Eylau in February 1807 , he led his dragoons in Murat 's famous 10 @,@ 000 @-@ man cavalry charge depicted by Jean Antoine Siméon Fort , the 19th century history painter . At the

Battle of Wagram ( July 1809 ) Walther commanded four squadrons of Grenadiers à Cheval of Jean-Baptiste Bessières 's Imperial Guard Cavalry . As the battle was turning to the Austrians ' favour , Bessières launched a massive cavalry charge with the combined elements of the Cavalry Reserve Corps and the cavalry of the Imperial Guard . After a first , precipitated charge , Bessières was wounded and incapacitated , and the whole cavalry attack was suspended . Napoleon then launched a major infantry attack with Jacques MacDonald 's infantry and considerable cavalry support , including the Guard cavalry under Walther . After the battle , MacDonald accused Walther of failure to mobilize his cavalymen quickly enough and not charging when the time was right . Walther accompanied Napoleon to Russia as a commander of the light cavalry of the Imperial Guard , part of which rotated duties as Napoleon 's honor guard .

During the Saxon campaign of 1813 , Walther continued command of the Guard Cavalry , and was present at the Battle of Lützen and Battle of Dresden , as commander of the Guard cavalry . At the Battle of Teplitz ( 17 September 1813 ) , he commanded the Imperial Guard Cavalry including the dragoons , Grenadiers à Cheval , and 1st ( Polish ) and 2nd ( Dutch ) Lancers . At the Battle of Leipzig , he commanded the 3rd Division of the cavalry of the Imperial Guard : The total cavalry of the Guard included 7 @, @ 903 men and 18 guns . After refitting and resupply at Erfurt , where Napoleon had stashed a large depot of arms and ammunition , the French army continued to withdraw through western Germany , toward the Rhine .

The Battle of Hanau , 30 ? 31 October 1813 , was Walther 's last major action . He commanded the 3rd Division of the Young Guard , including the four squadrons of mounted grenadiers , the Dragoons , the Chasseurs à Cheval , and the mounted Polish Lancers ; he also had charge of Napoleon 's honor guard of five squadrons , and two field artillery battalions . By this time , Walther was suffering from exhaustion . He collapsed and died in the night of 24 November 1813 , in Kusel . Sources differ on whether he died of exhaustion or typhus , or a combination of both . His body was transported first to the cathedral in Metz and from there to Paris , escorted by a detachment of the Imperial Guard . He was buried in the Pantheon . His name appears on the Arc de Triomphe in Paris .