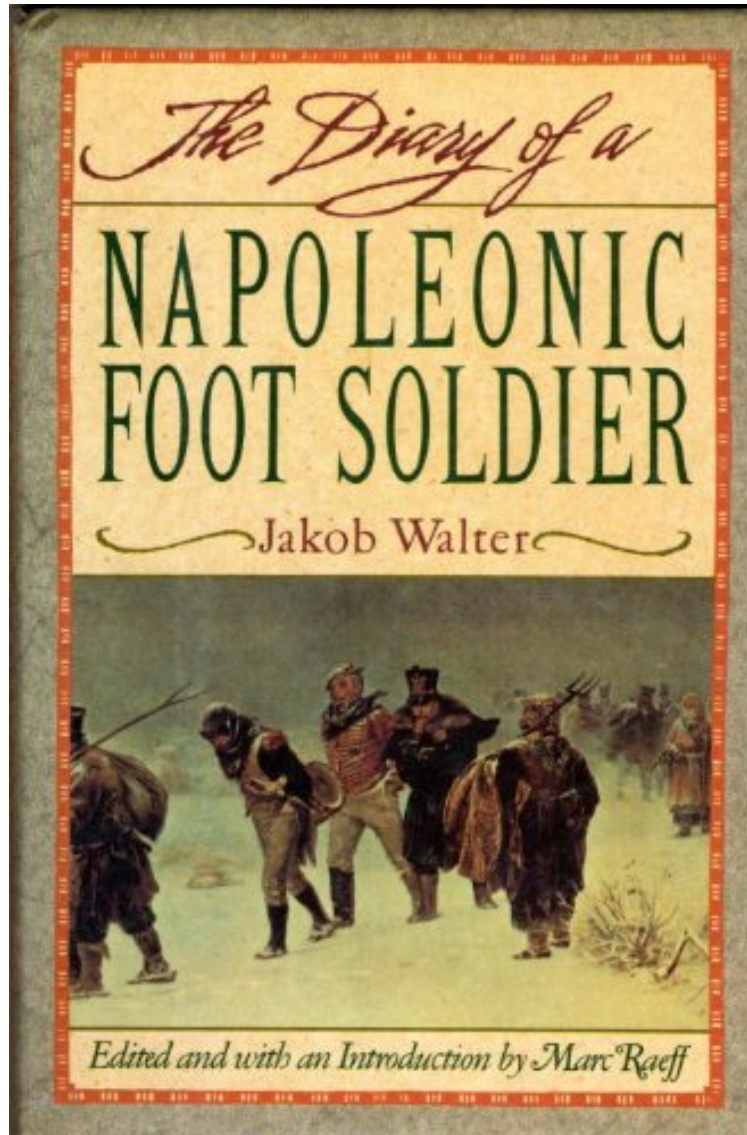


[Free and download] DIARY OF A NAPOLEONIC FOOTSOLDIER

DIARY OF A NAPOLEONIC FOOTSOLDIER

Von Jakob Walter

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Von Jakob Walter : DIARY OF A NAPOLEONIC FOOTSOLDIER before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised DIARY OF A NAPOLEONIC FOOTSOLDIER:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen2 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. a quick read that's worth itVon Ein KundeThis diary reads very fast, maybe not so much because it's a small book with large-ish text but more because it is written with surprising skill-- surprising considering the author was a Napoleonic "foot" soldier, a non-officer (i.e. a common man that most likely had little access to a "quality" education). Walter himself

mentions that many of the people he meets on his journey to Moscow are without any schooling whatever, even the simplest of religious teachings, and that many children can not read or write. That realization obviously attests to Walter's own level of learning compared to the average citizen, and Walter's writing is obviously well above that level -- even if it does not approach genius -- making this work very accessible. What I appreciated most about this diary was the point of view, that of the poor, starving, battered, exhausted soldier in the ranks, which serves as a definite counterpoint to a commanding officer's battlefield or campaign memories. Reading an account by a Napoleonic general's aide on the building of bridges to cross a river during the Moscow retreat and reading Walter's impression of the same event is quite enlightening. The general's experience, one of honor, valor and sacrifice, seems worlds away from Walter's experience of horror, squalor and pointless death. Without placing one account or type of account above the other in terms of "rightness," I view it as extremely valuable to be exposed to both. Still, as interesting as this work is, it is necessary to point out that many, very many, of Walter's observations and assertions, particularly those involving his own motives, are questionable. The simple fact that the work was written some years after the wars -- which in itself seems to dissuade the use of the word "diary" -- allows for error in judgment and interpretation, but it seems that Walter is given to rationalization of hard actions and building up the correctness and moral certitude of his own character. In other words, this book, like all books, I suppose, should be read with circumspection. Also, I enjoyed the account of the Moscow retreat most out of any section of the book, and I saw the added letters at the end as the least useful. It does have some valuable background in the introduction, but as it really lacks a sweeping account (and why should it have it?) this book should make up a small portion of a larger study of the Napoleonic Wars.

2 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Interesting perspective from a common footsoldier... Von Ein Kunde Obviously the reader below my comments have no idea of what was like being someone who have little education and being conscripted to a foreign army on an insane path of conquest of Russia by a human being many Europeans and Englishs considered as "The Little Monster", aka Napoleon. This footsoldier was just a man who just observed the long journey of the Grande Armee, taking only what he knew and understood without any intellectual pretentious babbles commonly founded in other books written by highly educated scholars and researchers. The book was the perspective of a simple soldier jotting notes based on his casual observations. So it's worth reading it. I think this reader below should take a lesson in history for himself.

0 von 3 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. this book stinks! Von Ein Kunde this book is impossiable to read it has horriable reading words and its to hard for anyone under the age of 20 to read so i would rcommend that you never read this book cause it really does stink so dont waste a penny on buying this book because it really and truely sucks. it has no meaning once so ever and take my word on it dont even think about reading this book cause all youll be doing is wasting your own time when you could be reading a good book! Thanks!

Kurzbeschreibung A grunts-eye report from the battlefield in the spirit of *The Red Badge of Courage* and *All Quiet on the Western Front* the only known account by a common soldier of the campaigns of Napoleons Grand Army between 1806 and 1813. When eighteen-year-old German stonemason Jakob Walter was conscripted into the Grand Army of Napoleon, he had no idea of the trials that lay ahead. The long, grueling marches in Prussia and Poland sacrificed countless men to Bonapartes grand designs. And the disastrous Russian campaign tested human endurance on an epic scale. Demoralized by defeat in a war few supported or understood, deprived of ammunition and leadership, driven past reason by starvation and bitter cold, men often turned on one another, killing fellow soldiers for bread or an able horse. Though there are numerous surviving accounts of the Napoleonic Wars written by officers, Walters is the only known memoir by a draftee, and as such is a unique and fascinating document a compelling chronicle of a young soldiers loss of innocence as well as an eloquent and moving portrait of the profound effects of war on the men who fight it. Professor Marc Raeff has added an Introduction to the memoirs as well as six letters home from the Russian front, previously unpublished in English, from German conscripts who served concurrently with Walter. The volume is illustrated with engravings and maps, contemporary with the manuscript, from the Russian/Soviet and East European collections of the New York Public Library. Honest, heartfelt, deeply personal yet objective, *The Diary of a Napoleonic Foot Soldier* is more than an informative and absorbing historical document it is a timeless and unforgettable account of the horrors of war.

From Kirkus sAs France's empire expanded during its postrevolutionary era, Napoleon began requiring vassal states to supply troops for his acquisitive causes. Among those caught in the conscription net was Jakob Walter, a young German stonemason who marched with the Corsican usurper's foreign legions on three campaigns (including the disastrous invasion of Russia) between 1806 and 1813--and who left an ex post facto memoir of his military service, which surfaced as a treasured family heirloom in America's Midwest during the Depression and was first published by the Univ. of Kansas in 1938. Human interest apart, Walter's stolid and narrowly focused account of his life as a soldier is longer on curiosity than historical value. Drafted in 1806, at age 18, to fight against Prussia, he was recalled in 1809 for a war with Austria and in 1812 when Napoleon moved his 600,000-man Grand Army into the heart of Russia. Walter's recollections of this catastrophic expedition, from which barely

25,000 returned, represent the longest and most absorbing portion of his narrative. Totally disinterested in the geopolitical implications of either the advance on or retreat from Moscow, the author bears oddly detached witness to the hardships and dangers endured by the bootless offensive's survivors. Nor did Walter much care about the outcomes of the battles in which he fought. Indeed, the main concerns of the author and his comrades seem to have been getting enough to eat in a country with few agricultural resources, avoiding crippling wounds, and returning safely home. Absent big-picture perspectives and contextual detail, Walter's recollections amount to little more than an intriguing footnote to 19th-century military history. The text includes an appendix with six unrelated letters home (unearthed by a Soviet researcher in 1978) from six Westphalian conscripts serving in the Grand Army, plus 20 bw engravings (not seen). -- Copyright 1991, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. From Library Journal More memoir than diary, this slim volume contains the reminiscences of a young German conscript into the army of Napoleon in the campaigns of 1806, 1807, 1809, and 1812-13. As such, it represents one of the few historical documents that portray the life and death of common soldiers of the period. As the army fought its way back and forth across Eastern Europe, young Walter encountered Poles, Russians, Jews, and other groups, and his descriptions of his interactions with these "others" illuminates attitudes and prejudices of German troops of the period. The firsthand description of the retreat of a starving army from Moscow and the attendant breakdown of discipline and morale will interest military historians as well. Walter's book is reminiscent of Guy Sajer's World War II memoir *The Forgotten Soldier* (LJ 12/15/70) and should be popular with a similar audience; it belongs in libraries with Napoleonic history or fiction collections.-- Stanley Planton, Ohio Univ. Chillicothe Lib. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc.