

A FINE AND SCARCE BRUNSWICK WATERLOO OFFICERS CASUALTY MEDAL, AWARDED TO A YOUNG FÄHNRICH, WHO FROM LOWLY BACKGROUND, AT AGE 15, SERVED IN RANKS OF A LIPPE-DETMOLD REGIMENT, ALLIED WITH THE FRENCH, BEFORE JOINING THE BRUNSWICK JÄGER'S IN LATE 1813. WOUNDED AT QUATRE BRAS, WHERE HIS BATTALION WERE 'SINGLED OUT FOR SPECIAL COMMENDATION WHERE THEY, ALONG WITH THE 95TH RIFLES, EFFECTIVELY STOPPED AND OUTFLANKING ATTEMPT BY THE FRENCH'. POST 1815, HE HAD A REMARKABLE RISE, SERVING IN THE LIEB (LIFE) GUARDS BEFORE IN 1826 BECOMING ORDERLY OFFICER AND THEN ADJUTANT TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, DUKE KARL II OF BRUNSWICK, GAINING THE TITLE OF BARON



BRUNSWICK WATERLOO 1815 'CARL. GRABAU. FAEHNER. 2. JAEG. BAT.'

Baron Von Wilhelm Karl Grabau was born in Magdeburg on 17 October 1797. Apparently born in 'simple circumstances', he had a remarkable career, rising through the ranks until in 1826, Duke Karl II of Brunswick appointed him his orderly officer and ennobled him.

Grabau started his military service aged 15, in 1813, joining a Lippe-Detmold Regiment, a German Principality that was allied with Napoleon. His service lasted just three months, for in November 1813, the Confederation of the Rhine was dissolved. It seems Grabau immediately joined the Duke of Brunswick Korp, for on 8 November 1813, he joined the Brunswick Light

Infantry Regiment (Jäger). Promoted Sergeant on 19 November, on 10 April 1814 he was commissioned Fähnrich, (roughly equivalent to an Ensign).

He served in the Waterloo campaign with the 2nd Jäger battalion, during which he was wounded in action at Quatre Bras. The following regarding the battalion, taken from the commanding officer's biography (his medal listed elsewhere on the website):

"Von Brandenstein went with the Brunswick troops to the Netherlands where the 2nd Jäger battalion under his command fought at the battle Quatre Bras on the 16th June 1815. Here the battalion was singled out for Special Commendation where they, along with the 95th Rifles, effectively stopped and outflanking attempt by the French. At Waterloo on the 18th the Battalion again played a laudable part, suffering 203 casualties (about a third of the combatant strength). Von Brandenstein always leading his men and an example for all was severely wounded in the evening by a Gunshot in the left kneecap and Major Koch took over the command of his unit. The Brunswick troops in general acquitted themselves well, they suffered casualties of approximately 2300 or almost a third of the Brigades strength over the two battles!"

With an 'on paper' strength of approximately 650, the 2nd Jäger battalion suffered 184 Officers and men killed and wounded at Quatre Bras and Waterloo, with an unrecorded number of missing. Only the 2nd Line Battalion suffered a higher number of casualties with 201.

On 2 March 1818, Grabau joined the Leib Battalion, being promoted 2nd Lieutenant on 8 May 1822 and on 18 January 1825, to 1st Lieutenant. On 7 April 1826, Grabau had the high honour of being appointed Orderly Officer to his Royal Highness, Duke Karl II of Brunswick and on 6 November 1827 as Karl II's Adjutant, appointed also 'a la suite' in the Leib Battalion (Life Guards). Serving on Karl II's staff, he became Wing Adjutant in November 1829, promoted Captain on 21 October 1830. Ennobled whilst in service of Karl II; having the title Baron Von Grabau, he is noted as having accompanied Karl II to London in 1830 and was deployed several times as a courier to Braunschweig and Vienna. After the fall of Karl II in September 1830, Grabau was dismissed because he was generally "disliked"; possibly for his lowly background and rise in position.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_II,_Duke_of_Brunswick

He is reported to have subsequently lived in Hamburg and died in Magdeburg on 28 August 1861

Grabau is mention numerous times in an article regarding a Duel that took place between two Officers in 1820; Grabau acting as second to one of the officers:

http://brunswick-historica.de/Das_Duellwesen_am_Beispiel_eines_Braunschweiger_Duells.pdf



Condition VF, replacement steel clip and ring. A scarce Brunswick Officer casualty medal, to an Officer with a fine service.