



A virtually matching condition pair M.1895 enlisted man's Prussian Pickelhauben of the 8th Train Battalion.



Both were produced by the company, Alexander Dahl Helm-Fabric of Barmen in 1913 as deduced by the matching maker stamps and dates.

The larger of the two is a size 58, while the other is a size 57. Both have a detachable spike top for the application of a black horsehair plume mounted on a Trichter, for full dress occasions.

Both of these helmets show marginal wear and were 'souvenired' by an American Engineer officer along with other items including an M.15 helmet belonging to the same unit. As usual with pre-war helmets, the front plates have a very good quality gilded finish with burnished high points.



The larger of the two was a second garniture helmet intended for field service in the 4th Company and bears the correct marks for this. The other, a 2nd Company helmet, has only a first garniture stamp, which meant it was intended to be retained for best occasions but it was obviously not re-stamped before being sent out in the field. Both have matching Battalion and VIII corps stamps and also large 1913 date stamps. These were done in their own Company Kammers and are both therefore slightly different.



A group of five tunics, two dress belts and a cartouche pouch, one great coat, one cap and two items of paperwork, all worn by the Regimental Sergeant Major of the 1st Esquadron, 26th Wurtemberg Dragoons.

One of the tunics is a yellow-faced, cornflower blue post-1903 private purchase Waffenrock of Wachtmeister rank, having three fencing stripes on the right upper arm.

Another jacket, an M.15 Feldbluse will be discussed in a future volume.

It is quite unusual now for items of this nature to remain in large groupings, as most veterans or their family members did not keep this much of their belongings.

Two interesting letters were found tucked away in a rear skirt pocket of one of the drill jackets. The first, which was sent to the Wachtmeister on 28th July 1914 by a solicitor acting on behalf of a female client, in a case which may have later led to her filing a Dragoon for maintenance due to circumstances that came about during their liaison at a wedding reception that they both attended.

The second letter dated two days later, the 30th, from The General Staff, ordering that all leave for enlisted men and NCOs was to be cancelled immediately. This letter was an acknowledgement of impending European war, arriving two days after Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.

The cornflower blue cap is of an enlisted man/NCO issue form and has the appropriate regimental, 1st company, II garniture stamps inside.



A M.1904 private purchase light grey Mantel for mounted troops, made from good quality doeskin woollen material and bearing the rank insignia of Regimental Sergeant Major, is an impressive looking greatcoat.

The yellow facing colour collar patches have two rows of regimental NCO lace; The state of Wurtemberg had two types of this lace, the other variant, in reversed colours was used on the red collar patches of Infantry troops. The shoulder strap detail show the high quality gilded regimental cipher and the pre-war silver NCO tress nicely applied to the solid yellow strap.

The M.1900 enlisted man's light grey 'Litewka' was originally worn when the Dragoon had the rank of 'Wachtmeister', Regimental Sergeant Major; it is made from a lightweight cavalry twill material. The three chevrons on the left sleeve comply with this rank and the tunic would also have had enlisted man's shoulder straps. When the dragoon was promoted to 'Offizier-Stellvertreter', Acting Officer, he changed his shoulder straps accordingly. This rank is purely a wartime posting. The NCO lace around the edge of the straps is of good quality wartime manufactured, artificial silk.



The rank of Acting Officer was a means for the German State to give senior NCOs the rank of Officer, but only on a temporary basis, during a state of war. When the number of enlisted ranks had multiplied, due to mobilisation, this promotion filled the shortage of Officers, without watering the aristocratic bloodlines down. On reaching the rank of 'Etatsmassige Wachtmeister' as a career soldier, the hard way, he most likely would not have been keen on removing his chevrons as per regulation requirements when promoted to Acting Officer and therefore did not comply with this directive. The buttons, like the helmet furniture for this regiment, are silver. The Wurtemberg coat of arms can be seen on the large collar rank button. The shoulder strap cipher is of brass and sits over the blue centre portion and grey artificial silk NCO lace. As the collar lace was fitted before reaching this rank it is of the earlier type, silver bullion, matching the buttons. The blue central portions of these shoulder straps are only found on this style of jacket; the field service tunic and greatcoat both have solid yellow straps with lace and monograms or numbers for the rank of Offizier-Stellvertreter.