



**GENERALS OF THE DANISH ARMY IN THE
FIRST AND SECOND SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN
WARS, 1848-50 AND 1864: Rye, du Plat,
Schleppegrell (Helion Studies in Military History)**

Nick Svendsen

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The first half of the 19th Century was a turbulent but momentous time for Denmark. From being a sizable nation in Europe it was decimated, first in the Napoleonic Wars with the loss of Norway, then in 1864 with the loss of Schleswig-Holstein. In Denmark, as in other European countries, the call for a democratic constitution caused social disturbance, triggered initially by the February riots in Paris. The Danish monarchy, in crisis, both constitutionally and in terms of monarchical succession, continued to lay claim to their southernmost duchies and sent their armed forces to destroy the Schleswig-Holstein insurgents and then, in 1864, to defend the country against a combined Prussian and Austrian force. In this book the author examines, in great detail, three Danish generals who began their careers as officers in Norway and Russia, and who were all killed in either 1848-50 or 1864.

Olaf Rye was born in 1791 in Norway on the Bø farm in the Telemarken region. His family had served the Danish King for many years as officers. As a young officer Rye was in the Norwegian army during the wars with Sweden in 1808 and 1814 but only saw action in 1814. When Norway was ceded to Sweden after the 1814 hostilities he left Norway and went into Prussian Army service during the final minor battles of the Napoleonic wars in France. In 1816 he came to Denmark and served in the Danish Army for many years. In 1847 he had become a battalion commander. During the First Schleswig-Holstein War in 1848 and 49 he commanded a brigade successfully in several battles until he was killed in 1849 at Fredericia.

Friederich Adolph Schleppegrell was born in 1792 on a farm near Larvik in Norway. He participated in several minor actions during the war with Sweden in 1808 and 1814 as a First Lieutenant. With his fellow officers Olaf Rye and Hans Helgesen he joined the Prussian Army under Field Marshal Blucher in Belgium and France. After the Napoleonic Wars he returned to Denmark and was attached to the garrison of Ålborg until 1848, by which date he had advanced to Lieutenant Colonel. At the outbreak of the war he became brigade commander and participated in several battles during the year. In 1850 he was leading the 2nd Division into the Battle at Isted when he was killed.

Claude du Plat was born in 1809 in Copenhagen, Denmark. He became an officer and served with the Royal Guard. In 1846 he went to Russia and gained permission to join the Russian Caucasus army under General Vorontzov. He was wounded during an attack on the village of Gergabil in 1847. In 1848 he returned to Denmark to participate in the First Schleswig Holstein War and was subsequently wounded. During the 1850s he was commandant in Altona. During the Second Schleswig Holstein War of 1864 he commanded the 2nd Division during its retreat from the Dannevirke and the defense of the Dybbøl redoubts. He was killed during the Prussian attack on the redoubts 18th April 1864.

The lives of these three officers has been thoroughly researched from Danish sources. The book is well illustrated with a number of rare images and color maps. Continuing Helion's successful series of 19th

Century European military studies, this book will be produced in a limited-edition hardback printing of 500 copies (all individually numbered and signed by the author).

Nick Bernhard Svendsen was born in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1948. He graduated from Copenhagen University in 1975 as a geologist, and joined the oil industry the same year. He has since worked as an exploration geologist. His work has taken him to many regions outside Europe, including North Africa, the Middle East, America and the Far East. He has always had a keen interest in all aspects of history, and this book is a continuation of that. His interest in the Schleswig-Holstein wars results from many visits to the Royal Danish Arsenal Museum in Copenhagen, situated close to where he lived as a child. He has published a number of papers on geological subjects. This is his second book about the Schleswig-Holstein wars, his first, published by Helion in 2008, was The First Schleswig-Holstein War 1840-50. He is married and lives in Denmark.

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