



# GRANHOLM GENEALOGY



## Finland/Sweden Historical Wars



## INTRODUCTION

This book describes the historical times of the wars and battles when Finland was still a part of Sweden. It precedes the history of when Finland became independent, which is in the book [“Finland’s Independence, the Birth”](#). I have not included all battles but enough to give a picture of how we have almost constantly been at war. It is also about our relatives at those times. In most cases I mention a person only once, although that person has been part of many other battles. Many of the persons are the Swedish and Finnish rulers and officers when Sweden was a major European power.

The following words from the “*Tales of Ensign Stål*” by Runeberg illustrate the accomplishments of these heroes in the poem set to music in the “*March of the Björneborgers*”. The poem mentions just four battlefields. In this book I have listed many more from the First Crusade almost 900 years ago to the brief fight in 1854 at Halkokari in my hometown Gamllakarleby in Finland.

*“Sons of fathers brave who bled  
On Poland’s sand on Narva’s moor,  
At Leipzig, Lützen, never stinting.  
Think not Finland’s might is dead,  
Still with hostile blood a battlefield is red.”*

You can listen to this message our distant relatives send us, their descendants and relatives at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ypwjJedZPIg> and see some the war scenes at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=54YSkW4sJU4&feature=related>

Some of the persons described are our direct ancestors, most are distant cousins from common ancestors. I have indicated how they are related to us. The descriptions of the battles, wars and persons are deliberately brief but an internet link is provided for additional information. The information is mainly from Wikipedia. In a few cases I have included some information in Swedish, when not found in English.



Lars Granholm  
Adamstown, MD, USA  
April 2012

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## First Swedish Crusade

**First Swedish Crusade** is a legendary military expedition presumably in the 1150s that has traditionally been seen as the conquest of [Finland](#) by [Sweden](#), with pagan [Finns](#) converting to [Christianity](#). According to the legend, the crusade was conducted by King [Eric IX of Sweden](#). [Bishop Henry](#) of [Uppsala](#) accompanied him and remained in Finland later to become a martyr there.

*Bishop Henry baptizes the Finns at the spring of Kuppis*



The mid-12th century was a very violent time in the northern Baltic sea, with Finns and Swedes in frequent conflicts with [Novgorod](#); there may have been a Swedish military expedition against Finland. In the [First Novgorod Chronicle](#) there is a story that in 1142 a Swedish "prince" and bishop accompanied by a fleet of 60 ships plundered just three Novgorodian merchant vessels somewhere "on the other side of the sea", obviously being after something more important.

The bishop's killer was called [Lalli](#). Lalli's wife Kerttu falsely claimed to him that upon leaving the manor, their ungrateful guest Henry, travelling around on his own in the middle of winter, had without permission or recompense, through violence, taken food for himself and hay for his horse. This is supposed to have enraged Lalli so that he immediately grabbed his skis and went in pursuit of the thief,

finally chasing Henry down on the ice of Lake [Köyliönjärvi](#). There he killed him on the spot with an axe.

Lalli took the bishop's hat from his decapitated head and cut off the bishop's finger to take his ring. The hat became fused to Lalli's head and when he tried to remove it, it tore his scalp off with it. When Lalli tried to remove the bishop's ring from his finger, it likewise tore his finger off. Afterward, Lalli drowned in the lake Köyliönjärvi. Per the bishop's last wish, his body parts were collected by his servants and transported with oxen. Where the oxen stopped became the site of the first church in Finland.

*Lalli killing Henry. A romanticized drawing from the 19th century.*





# Eric IX of Sweden

*Casket of Eric the Saint in [Uppsala Cathedral](#).*



**Eric "IX" of Sweden**, (d. May 18, 1160) was a [Swedish king](#) c.1155 – 1160. No historical records of Eric have survived, and all information about him is based on later legends that were aimed at having him established as a saint.

He was a rival king, from 1150, to [Sverker the Elder](#) who had ascended the throne c.1130 and was murdered 1156, after which Eric was recognized in most or all provinces. Eric's reign ended when he was murdered in [Uppsala](#). He is said to have been murdered by Emund Ulvbane, an assassin who was hired by people working for the Sverker dynasty, in order for them to regain the control of the kingdom, or

alternatively by [Magnus Henriksson](#), another claimant, who is said in some sources to have succeeded him briefly as king. Swedes believed a miracle occurred at Eric's death: a fountain was said to have sprung from the earth where the king's head fell after being chopped off.

According to legends, Eric did much to consolidate Christianity in his realm and spread the faith into [Finland](#). In an effort to conquer and convert the Finns, he allegedly led the [First Swedish Crusade](#) against the native Finns and persuaded an English [Bishop Henry](#) of [Uppsala](#) to remain in Finland to evangelize the natives, later becoming a martyr there.

Eric was accosted by the rebel Swedish nobles near Uppsala at Östra Aros as he was leaving church after hearing Mass on Ascension Day. He was thrown to the ground from his horse, tortured, ridiculed, then beheaded.

The king was buried in the church of Old Uppsala, which he had rebuilt around the burial mounds of his pagan predecessors. In 1167, his body was enshrined and his relics and regalia were transferred to the present cathedral of Uppsala, built on the site of Eric's martyrdom, in 1273.

Saint Eric is portrayed in art as a young king being murdered during Mass with the bishop Henry of Uppsala. Uppsala Cathedral has a selection of late medieval paintings depicting Eric and Henry of Uppsala.

## ***Archaeological evidence***

According to the legend, King Erik the Saint was slain while he attended the mass at the ecclesia Sancte trinitatis – Trinity church – at Mons Domini. The current Trinity church in Uppsala was founded in the late 13th century and cannot be the church where Eric was slain. In an effort to elucidate this early history of the cathedral and Mons Domini, archaeologists examined a large part of the cathedral with ground-penetrating radar (GPR). The results from this investigation confirmed the existence of an older building beneath the cathedral, in all the details corresponding with the outline of a 12th century Romanesque church, which implies that the cathedral is the site of the earlier Trinity church.

## Second Swedish Crusade

The **Second Swedish Crusade** was a [Swedish](#) military expedition to areas in present-day [Finland](#) by [Birger jarl](#) in the 13th century. As a result of the crusade, Finland became permanently part of Sweden for the next 550 years.

### *Year of the crusade*

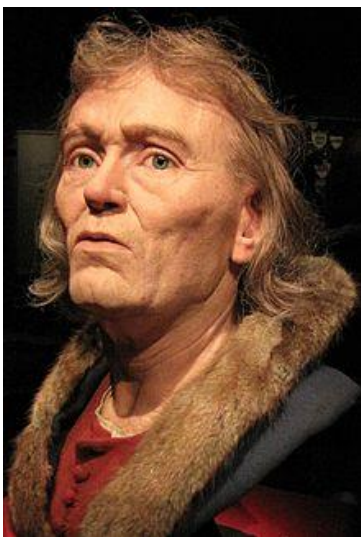
According to [Eric's Chronicle](#) from the 1320s, the crusade took place between the death of King [Eric XI of Sweden](#) in 1250 and [Birger jarl](#) getting elevated to the position of [jarl](#) in 1248. The so-called "[Detmar Chronicle](#)" of [Lübeck](#) from around 1340 confirms the expedition with a short note that Birger jarl submitted Finland under Swedish rule. From other sources, Birger jarl is known to have been absent from Sweden in winter 1249-50. Later on, [the conquest of Finland was redated](#) to 1150s by the official Swedish legends, crediting the national saint [King Eric](#) for it.

Sweden's sudden determination to take over Finland has not been explained, but for one reason or another Finland was high on Birger Jarl's agenda. Finland became an integrated part of Sweden since there was a lot of exchange between the regions, especially via the Åland archipelago. During those days, it was easier to travel by sea than by land. Birger Jarl seems to have headed for Finland just after having both crushed the [Folkung](#) uprising of 1247-1248 and finalized the [Treaty of Lödöse](#) with Norway earlier in the summer of 1249.

As an unexpected side effect, the expedition seems to have cost Birger the Swedish crown. As King Eric died in 1250 and Birger was still absent from Sweden, the rebellious Swedish lords selected Birger's under-aged son [Valdemar](#) as the new king instead of the powerful jarl himself.

From 1249 onwards, sources generally regard Finland as a part of Sweden. Diocese of Finland is first listed among the Swedish dioceses in 1253. In Russian chronicles, the first reliable mention of Finns being a part of Swedish forces is from 1256.

## Birger Jarl



**[Birger Jarl](#)** (c. 1200 – 21 October 1266), or **Birger Magnusson**, was a [Swedish](#) statesman, [Jarl of Sweden](#) and a member of the [House of Bjelbo](#), who played a pivotal role in the [consolidation of Sweden](#). Birger also led the [Second Swedish Crusade](#), which established Swedish rule in [Finland](#). Additionally, he is traditionally attributed to have founded the Swedish capital, [Stockholm](#) around 1250.

In 1249, Birger succeeded in ending a decades-long period of hostilities with Norway. As a part of the [Treaty of Lödöse](#), he also managed to marry off his daughter [Rikissa](#), then only 11-years old, to [Haakon Haakonsson the Young](#), the eldest son of King [Haakon IV of Norway](#). Presumably later that year, Birger led an expedition to [Finland](#), later dubbed as the [Second Swedish Crusade](#), which permanently established the Swedish rule in Finland. On King Eric's death in 1250, Birger's son [Valdemar](#) was elected as the new king while Birger acted as regent, holding the true power in Sweden until his death.

*A reconstruction of Birger jarl's face using forensic techniques as displayed at the [Museum of Medieval Stockholm](#)*

## Third Swedish Crusade

The Third Swedish Crusade was a [Swedish](#) military expedition to [Karelia](#) in 1293, an area controlled by [Novgorod](#). As the result of the attack, [Vyborg Castle](#) was established and western Karelia remained under Swedish rule for over 400 years. The construction of the fortress started in 1293 by orders of [Torkel Knutsson](#), the [Lord High Constable of Sweden](#) who made in 1290s a so-called [crusade](#) to [Karelia](#), the so-called [Third Finnish Crusade](#), actually aimed against Russians, i.e. [Novgorod](#).

*Vyborg Castle 1840*



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Torkel\\_Knutsson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Torkel_Knutsson)

## Torkel Knutsson

*Statue of Knutsson in Vyborg, Russia.*



**Torkel (Tyrgils or Torgils) Knutsson**, known well as *Marshal Torkel*, (?–1306) of [Aranäs](#), was [constable](#) and virtual ruler of [Sweden](#) during the early reign of King [Birger Magnusson](#) (1280–1321).

Torkel hailed from an old noble family of [West Geatish](#) ancestry and was related to the [Folkungs](#), the royal family, and like them, he had a lion in his coat of arms. He was first mentioned in 1282, and in documents from 1288, he is mentioned as a [knight](#) and a member of the [privy council \(riksråd\)](#).

When king [Magnus Ladulås](#) died, Torkel became [regent](#) for the underage king Birger, being the highest state official and because Magnus' foreign-born widow, [Hedwig of Holstein](#), was not trusted to such powerful position yet.

When [Tavastland](#) had been attacked by the [Republic of Novgorod](#), in 1292, marshal Torkel led the [third Swedish crusade](#) against Novgorod, in 1293 and conquered parts of [Karelia](#), where he founded the stronghold of [Viborg](#). In 1299-1300, he led an attack against the [Novgorodians](#), and on the [Neva River](#), he founded the fortress of [Landskrona](#)



# Rötger Ingesson Jägerhorn af Spurila

**Jägerhorn af Spurila** is a noble family, registered with number 114 in the [Swedish House of Nobility](#) and number 5 in the [Finnish House of Nobility](#). Members of this family live in Finland, Sweden, France and the USA.



The family is of ancient [Swedish nobility](#) (*frälse*) from [Paimio](#) in [Finland Proper](#). [Squire](#) Nisse Pedersson is regarded as the most likely first head of the family. He held tax exempt property (frälsejord) in Loppis of Paimio, which was subject to the kings general reduction in 1396 which decision was executed in Finland 1405. Nisse Pedersson sealed a property transaction in 1399. His son Peder Nilsson participated in a summons of the nobility in Turku in 1439. His son, squire Nils Pedersson of Hevonpää is mentioned 1464; he wears a hunting horn in his seal 10 March 1471. His son, squire Peder Nilsson of Hevonpää, was married to the daughter of Klas Henriksson ([Horn of Kankas](#)), member of the [privy council](#) and [lawspeaker](#), and Kristersdotter [Frille](#). Peder Nilsson was acting as the first lawspeaker in a land court in Kemiö of Finland Proper [1500](#).

Peder Nilsson of Hevonpää's grandson's grandson, Colonel Christer Classon of Spurila had his family introduced in the Swedish House of Nobility when the House was established by [Gustavus II Adolphus](#) in 1625. Colonel Classon's son Johan Henriksson of Spurila was a page of Gustavus II Adolphus until the king's death in the [battle of Lützen \(1632\)](#). The Jägerhorn af Spurila family was assumed in the knights class of the Swedish nobility in 1778, and it was introduced in the Finnish House of Nobility in 1820 with number 5.



This family is so old that it is impossible to establish the time of [ennoblement](#) with certainty. However, the forefathers of this family have truthfully explained that the first head of the family was called **Rötger Ingesson**, whom king [Eric IX](#) or Eric the Holy as he is called, took as his squire due the handsome appearance, unseen strength and manhood, during the king's visit in Finland in the 1150s. The king took this man with him when returning to Sweden. This Rötger Ingesson was in 1160 commanding a group of cavalry during a fight between the Swedes and the Danes and was carrying a signal horn of that time. When attacking the Danes with great force making them retreat, he blew the sound of victory, which made the Danish Army flee trembling with fear. The Danes left its conqueror valuable treasures with which the "Danish church" [Danmarks kyrka](#) close to Uppsala was built and Rötger Ingesson was henceforth called Jägerhorn.

# Battle of Lihula

**Battle of Lihula** was fought between invading [Swedes](#) and [Estonians](#) for the control of a castle in [Lihula](#), [Estonia](#) in 1220. The exact date remains uncertain, though some historians suggest that the battle took place on August 8. The event is described in the [Chronicle of Henry of Livonia](#) and the [Livonian Rhymed Chronicle](#).

Swedish troops, initially led by King [John](#), had earlier in 1220 invaded the western coast of Estonia, an area not yet conquered by the [Teutonic Knights](#). The Swedish army took the Lihula stronghold and set up a small garrison. Swedish [jarl Charles the Deaf](#) (Swedish:*Karl Döve*) and bishop [Karl Magnusson](#) of [Linköping](#), both from the powerful [House of Bjelbo](#), also remained in the castle.

On August 8, a combined [Oeselian](#) and [Rotalian](#) army encircled the castle at dawn. The castle was set ablaze in the course of the fierce battle that ensued. Swedish troops tried to make their way out, but they were killed on site except for a few soldiers that succeeded in escaping to [Tallinn](#), which was held by Denmark. The jarl, the bishop, and almost 500 other Swedes were killed, leaving no Swedish presence in Estonia at all.

The short-lived Swedish attempt to gain foothold in Estonia was motivated by the quickly [advancing Danish and German crusaders](#) who had been able to conquer most of the area in the early 13th century. Defeat in the Battle of Lihula discouraged the Swedish expansion to Estonia for more than 300 years, and the country was left for the Teutonic knights, German bishops and Denmark to divide. In the meantime, Sweden focused on [Finland](#) and the [permanent conflict with Novgorod](#). It was not until 1561 that Sweden succeeded in establishing its rule in Estonia.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles\\_the\\_Deaf](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_the_Deaf)

## Charles the Deaf

**Charles the Deaf** ([Swedish](#): *Karl Döve*) from the [House of Bjelbo](#) was the [jarl](#) of [Sweden](#) during 1216–1220. His father was magnate [Bengt Snivil](#). He was the brother of [Magnus Minnesköld](#) and jarl [Birger Brosa](#) and father of jarl [Ulf Fase](#). Charles died at the [Battle of Lihula](#) in [Estonia](#) August 8, 1220.



The seal of Charles, discovered in the early 1990s, is dated to the end of the 12th century and thus the oldest preserved personal object in [Swedish history](#). Personal seals were normally broken to pieces at the death of the owner in order to prevent later abuse, and the intact seal of Charles is therefore unique. The [Swedish Museum of National Antiquities](#) bought it in 2001 for [SEK](#) 800,000.

# Swedish–Novgorodian Wars

**Swedish–Novgorodian Wars** were a series of conflicts in the 12th and 13th centuries between the [Republic of Novgorod](#) and medieval [Sweden](#) over control of the [Gulf of Finland](#), an area vital to the [Hanseatic League](#) and part of the [Varangian-Byzantine trade route](#). The Swedish attacks against [Orthodox Russians](#) had religious overtones, but before the 14th century there is no knowledge of official [Crusade bulls](#) issued by the [Pope](#).

Scandinavians enjoyed trade- and other relations with Novgorod from the [Viking Ages](#) onwards. Merchants from [Gotland](#) had their own trading house, [Gutagård](#), and the S:t Olof church in Novgorod. There were also isolated Scandinavian raids on Novgorod. [Eiríkr Hákonarson](#) raided Ladoga in 997, followed by his brother [Sveinn Hákonarson](#) in 1015. After [Yaroslav I](#)'s marriage to [Ingegerd of Sweden](#) in 1019, Ladoga was made

a [jarldom](#) in the orbit of [Kievan Rus](#). It was ruled by [Ragnvald Ulfsson](#), father of King [Stenkil](#). There were dynastic marriages between Russian and Scandinavian royal families e.g Stenkil's granddaughter Christina married [Mstislav of Novgorod](#), upon whose death in 1132 [Novgorod](#) seceded from [Kievan Rus](#).



The major turning point into more permanent conflict between Sweden and Novgorod arrived with Sweden's firmer organization into the Catholic church in the 12th century and papal requests for crusades against lands controlled by the [Orthodox](#) church.

*The fortress of Ladoga was built in stone in the 12th century and rebuilt 400 years later.*

The 12th century is poorly documented in Sweden, and Russian documents are fragmented. From the surviving sources, however, it seems evident that the newly founded republic and Sweden drifted into hostilities that could not be permanently settled ever again.

According to the [First Novgorod Chronicle](#), the Swedish troops attacked the Novgorod merchants somewhere in the [Baltic Sea](#) region and killed 150 Novgorodians in 1142. It is the first known case of hostilities between Sweden and Novgorod. In 1164, a strong Swedish fleet approached Ladoga but was soundly defeated with most of its ships captured by Novgorod.

It is also claimed that Novgorodians and their [Karelian](#) allies launched [pirate](#) raids against mainland [Sweden](#) during the 12th century. During one of such raid, as a legend has it, they brought to Novgorod the [doors](#) of the [Sigtuna](#) cathedral as a prize. However, there is no certainty on the background of the destroyers of Sigtuna. Swedish sources call them just "heathens" and Novgorodian sources say no word about the event, which would be least expected had they conducted it. Swedish sources also claim that [Jon jarl](#) spent nine years fighting against Novgorodians and Ingrians at the end of the 12th century. These expeditions are not documented in Russian sources.

As early as 1328, Sweden was encouraging settlers to take over the northern coast of the [Gulf of Bothnia](#), which was defined by the treaty as Novgorod's possession. When [Karelians](#) rebelled against Novgorod in 1337, King [Magnus Eriksson](#) sent his troops in their support, managing to briefly occupy [Korela Fortress](#). Next year, Novgorod besieged Viborg but an armistice was soon agreed upon.



*The round tower served as the gate to the Korela fortress*



**Korela Fortress** ([Finnish](#): *Käkisalmen linna*, [Swedish](#): *Kexholms slott*), at the town of [Priozersk](#), was founded by the [Karelians](#) who named the place *Käkisalmi*.

It was first mentioned in a [Novgorodian](#) chronicle of 1143 as *Korela*. Indeed, archeological digs have revealed a layer belonging to the 12th century. [Swedish](#) chronicles first reported of the settlement of *Keksholm* in 1294.

The king attempted yet another fruitless attack in 1350. In the same year, the [Black Death](#) broke out in Northern Europe, effectively ending further hostilities.

Later skirmishes were more sporadic. Sweden's attempts to control the Gulf of Bothnia provoked Novgorod to start construction of a castle near the [Oulu River](#) delta in the 1370s. Sweden replied by establishing [their own castle](#) nearby. Novgorod assaulted it in 1377, but was unable to take it. In the following year, [Pope Gregory XI](#) intervened and issued a crusade bull against Novgorod. Soon afterwards the Russians retreated from Ostrobothnia, leaving it for the Swedes.

Hostilities between the two powers were renewed in 1392 and 1411. However, Sweden had, by then, become a member state in the quarrelsome [Union of Kalmar](#), and was preoccupied by the Scandinavian power struggle for the entire 15th century. The last conflict took place in 1445, several decades before Novgorod was absorbed into [Muscovy](#). Novgorod's demise did not result in peace, however, and conflict continued between [Russia](#) and Sweden until the early 19th century.

# Magnus IV of Sweden

Seal of Magnus IV of Sweden



**Magnus Eriksson** (spring 1316 – 1 December 1374) as **Magnus IV** was king of [Sweden](#) (1319–1364), including [Finland](#), as **Magnus VII** King of [Norway](#) (1318–1355), including [Iceland](#) and [Greenland](#), and also ruled [Scania](#) (1332–1360). On 21 July 1336 Magnus was crowned

In 1336 he married [Blanche of Namur](#), daughter of Count Jean of [Namur](#) and Marie of Artois, a descendant of [Louis VIII of France](#). As a wedding gift Blanche received the province of [Tunsberg](#) in

Norway and [Lödöse](#) in Sweden as fiefs. They had two sons, Eric and Haakon, plus at least three daughters who died in infancy and were buried at [Ås Abbey](#).

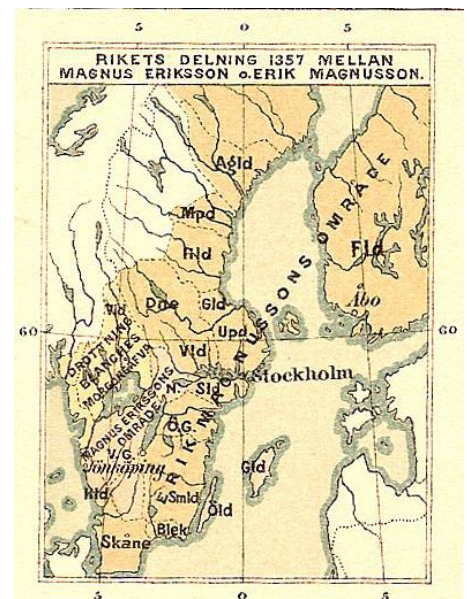
On 12 August 1323, Magnus concluded the first [treaty](#) between Sweden and Novgorod (represented by Grand Prince [Yury of Moscow](#)) at [Nöteborg](#) where [Lake Ladoga](#) empties into the [Neva River](#). The treaty delineated spheres of influence among the Finns and Karelians and was supposed to be an "eternal peace", but Magnus' relations with Russia were not so peaceful. In 1337, religious strife between Orthodox Karelians and the Swedes led to a Swedish attack on the town of [Korela](#) (Keksholm) and [Viborg](#), in which the Novgorodian and Ladogan merchants there were slaughtered. A Swedish commander named Sten also captured the fortress at Orekhov. Negotiations with the Novgorodian mayor Fedor were inconclusive and the Swedes attacked Karelians around Lake Ladoga and [Lake Onega](#) before a peace was concluded in 1339 along the old terms of the 1323 treaty. In this treaty, the Swedes claimed that Sten and others acted on their own without the consent of the king.

*Queen Blanche by Albert Edelfelt.*



Queen Blanche is remembered for the song: "Rida rida ranka, hästen heter Blanka" ("Ride ride ranka, the name of the horse is Blanka"), which can be seen at the famous historical painting by Edelfeldt of her and her son, where it is illustrated.

*Historic map of when Sweden was divided between Magnus Eriksson and Erik Magnusson during 1357*



# Battle of the Neva

**Battle of the Neva** was fought between the [Novgorod Republic](#) and [Swedish](#) armies on the [Neva River](#), near the settlement of [Ust-Izhora](#), on July 15, 1240. The purpose of the Swedish [invasion](#) was probably to gain control over the mouth of the Neva and the city of [Ladoga](#) and, hence, seize the most important part of the [Trade Route from the Varangians to the Greeks](#), which had been under [Novgorod](#)'s control for more than a hundred years. The battle was part of the medieval [Swedish-Novgorodian Wars](#).

*Alexander Nevsky Fighting the Swedes*



After a long pause in open hostilities, Swedes undertook an attack against Novgorod in 1240. Only source of information on the attack is the First Primary Chronicle written 100 years after the attack. The attack has been speculated to have been led by [Birger Magnusson](#), (Birger Jarl) who was elevated to the position of [jarl](#) in 1248. The only enemy leader named by the chronicle was "Spiridon" who was killed in the battle. Attempts to identify Spiridon with Birger have been made. Soon after their fleet entered the mouth of the [Neva River](#), the Swedes were roundly defeated in the famous [Battle of the Neva](#) by a young prince, [Alexander of Novgorod](#), who would later be given the [epithet](#) "Nevsky" to memorialize this victory.

All references to the battle of the Neva are famously missing from the Swedish sources. This could have resulted from Sweden's utter defeat, but the reasons may be more complicated than that.

From then on, Sweden moved its interest to Finland. Its troops did not return to Neva before the end of the 13th century, when it had gained solid control of Finland. Earlier, Swedes had also tried to establish a bridgehead in [Estonia](#), [in vain](#).

Apart from Ladoga, Novgorodian interests clashed with Sweden's in [Finland](#), a country which Russian forces sacked on [numerous occasions](#) from the 11th century onward. The raid in winter 1226-1227 led to heavy losses on the Finnish side. A Finnish retaliatory raid against Ladoga in 1228 ended in disaster, contributing to the Finns' subjugation by the Catholic Swedes during the [Second Swedish Crusade](#) in 1249. Seven years later, the Novgorodians devastated Swedish Finland again.

In the early 14th century, military tensions escalated and the two powers were continually at war. In 1311, the Novgorodians devastated central [Finland](#), where the Swedes had recently built [a new castle](#). In response, a Swedish fleet embarked towards Ladoga and set that trade emporium on fire. Three years later, the



[Karelians](#)' discontent with Novgorod's rule broke out into the open, as they killed Russian governors and sought for help in Sweden. After several months of hostilities, Karelia submitted to Novgorod's authority again.

In 1318, Novgorod attacked [Turku](#) in southwestern Finland, burning the city and the [cathedral](#) as well as the episcopal castle in [Kuusisto](#). Four years later, they besieged [Viborg](#) and founded [Oreshek](#), an important fortress dominating the entrance to [Lake Ladoga](#).

*[Oreshek](#), one of fortresses built by the Novgorodians to contain the Swedish expansion.*



# Dano-Swedish War (1470–1471)

The **Dano-Swedish War** was the first war between [Denmark](#) and [Sweden](#). The Danes invaded Sweden by sea, but were defeated early at the [Battle of Brunkeberg](#), in which King [Christian I of Denmark](#) was wounded by a cannon ball. The Danish invasion was repelled, and the Swedes were independent from the [Kalmar Union](#).

Queen [Margaret I of Denmark](#) created the [Kalmar Union](#) ([Finland](#), [Denmark](#), [Norway](#), and [Sweden](#)) under her rule. Sweden soon wanted out. [Sten Sture](#) proposed the Swedish Empire, which included [Sweden](#) and [Finland](#), and himself as the ruler. [Christian I of Denmark](#) saw the formation of Sweden a threat to his legitimate rulership of Sweden, and decided to use the formation of Sweden as an excuse to wrest it back.

King Christian I had 3 000 Danish troops and 2,000 allied Germans. Sture had only about 400 troops in his army, and the Danish could easily pick a fight. In late July 1471, the fleet of 76 Danish Ships with the 5,000 troops set out from [Copenhagen](#) harbor to land in southern Sweden. Sture and [Nils Bossom Sture](#) went to central Sweden to gather as much men they could for the defense of Stockholm. The Danish fleet would have to face the murderous flow of the archipelago that blocked off Stockholm, but managed, possibly with the help of a hired Swedish pilot, to anchor between K  pplingeholm and Wolf's Island (Varg  ) just across the water from [Stockholm Castle](#). Christian decided that a siege would take too long, so he landed in southern Sweden instead. Sten Sture awaited the Danes, now with 10,000 levied peasants.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Brunkeberg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Brunkeberg)

## Battle of Brunkeberg

*Sture enters Stockholm, victorious.*



In May 1471, [Sten Sture the Elder](#) had been elected as viceroy of Sweden by the [Privy Council](#). Advocating Swedish [secession](#) from the [Kalmar Union](#), *Herr Sten* as he was known, had garnered large support. In particular his followers were to be found among the peasantry. On October 10, 1471, Sten Sture and [Nils Bossom Sture](#) lead their troops north to the area which is [H  torget](#) in Stockholm today, near [Brunkeberg](#) after which the battle was named. Sten Sture's battle plan was to trap Christian's troops in a vice; Sten would attack from the west, Nils from the east, and [Knut Posse](#) would strike out from the

city itself.

Nils flanked Christian's Army, and delivered a knockout blow. In Sten's sector, he kept on charging again and again, and managed to break through. In the ensuing battle, Christian was hit in the face by musket fire. Losing several teeth, he was forced to retire from battle. The decisive turn of battle in favor of Sture's side occurred when Nils' troops broke out of the forest north of the ridge, as Posse's troops attacked from the city. This cut off a contingent of Danish troops at the Klara monastery north of the town. Posse was killed when a German or Danish soldier hit his head with an axe. However, the Danish were in retreat. However, Sten's troops destroyed the makeshift bridge Christian's troops had built, causing many to drown. The battle ended a victory for Sten Sture.

Sture had cemented Swedish freedom. Christian's Denmark still held Iceland, Denmark, and Norway after the war. The two nations that were formed were [Sweden](#) and [Denmark–Norway](#). [Margaret of Denmark, Queen of Scotland](#) died in 1486, Christian in 1481, and Sture in 1503.

# Sten Sture the Elder

**Sten Sture the Elder** (**Sten Sture den äldre**; 1440–December 14, 1503) was a [Swedish](#) statesman and [regent](#) of [Sweden](#) from (1470–1497 and 1501–1503).

He was born around 1440, the son of Gustav Anundsson of the [Sture](#) family and Birgitta Stensdotter Bielke, half-sister of the future [Charles VIII](#). He was married to [Ingeborg Tott](#), niece by marriage of [Magdalen of Sweden](#), in 1467; she was a renaissance personality interested in theology and science and seemed to have had some importance in the intellectual development during his reign, but the marriage remained childless. According to genealogical research, Sten Sture's father descended from King [Sverker II of Sweden](#).



*Sten Sture monument in Uppsala*

Sture came to power after the death of [Charles VIII](#) and consolidated his position through the victory of Brunkeberg. For a quarter of a century he ruled Sweden making the regency almost an office in its own right. He was supported by the [peasantry](#) and the lower nobility, wisely playing them out against the high-ranked nobility and managing a clever act of balance towards the Danish demands of reunion.

At the [Battle of Brunkeberg](#) in 1471, he triumphed against Swedish and [Danish](#) forces in the support of [Christian I](#). This victory elevated Sture to the position of a national savior.

In 1493, the Danish and Norwegian king, [Hans](#), concluded an alliance with [Ivan III of Russia](#) against Sten Sture. From 1495 to 1497, Sten successfully repelled a Russian invasion of [Finland](#). However, he subsequently fell out with the majority of the Swedish nobility, most prominently [Svante Nilsson](#), and the Swedish [council of the realm](#) declared him to be deposed as regent on 8 March 1497.

## *Second regency*

In the ensuing war, Sten was supported by peasant forces, but they were defeated by King John, who invaded Sweden in July the same year. On 6 October, Sten surrendered to King John in Stockholm and was reconciled with him. John was crowned King of Sweden, and Sten was given the highest position of authority in Sweden below the King. However, during the next rebellion against the Danes in 1501, he again took office as regent, leading the Swedish struggle for independence until his death.

His closest relatives and heirs were his deceased sister's, the House of [Vasa](#). His great-nephew the future King [Gustav I of Sweden](#) had been born a few years before Sten's death. At the time, however, none of them were members of the experienced political elite of Sweden. Regent Sten was succeeded by his colleague from the [Privy Council of Sweden](#) and former enemy Svante Nilsson as regent.

## *Trivia*

An underground restaurant in Stockholm, close to the [Royal Palace](#) is named after Sten Sture. In 1792 it was a prison, where the murderer of King [Gustav III of Sweden](#) was jailed before his execution.

## Nils Bossom Sture

**Nils Bossom Sture** (1426–1494) was a Swedish noble and supporter of [Sten Sture](#)'s reign as [King of Sweden](#). He is famous for his flanking movement to surprise [King Christian I of Denmark](#)'s army at the [Battle of Brunkeberg](#) in [1471](#). He died as a politician in the Swedish government in Stockholm, a proud man.

Nils Sture traveled to central Sweden to recruit more Peasant Militia and Provincial Knights as Sten was doing. When he had recruited enough men, he joined [Knut Posse](#) and Sten near Stockholm. Posse was to attack from Stockholm to the east of the Danish Army. Sten was to launch the juggernaut at the Danish front, and Nils was to attack using a flanking movement. All of the Swedes were in position, and when the time came, the battle unfolded. Nils inched around the Danish Army, but Sten was having trouble. Nils had to hurry to save the Swedish Army. His attack nailed Christian's Army, and the Danish Army was smashed. The three Swedish Generals won against the Danish, but Posse was mortally wounded and died in Stockholm. Nils switched to politics after the war, and his death was at peace.

## Knut Posse

**Knut Jönsson Posse** was a [Swedish](#) general remembered for his surprise attack on the Danish Army at the [Battle of Brunkeberg](#) (1471). Some sources claim the wounds were mortal, but he lived until March 25, 1500.

### *Military career*

General [Sten Sture](#) ordered Posse to load the Stockholm Garrison onto boats to ready a surprise attack on [Christian I of Denmark](#)'s Danish and German Army. His order were to attack the Danes in the rear, at St. Klara. The Danes would then be attacked on three sides: Sten Sture would attack from the south, [Nils Sture](#) would flank the Danes and attack from the rear, and Posse would attack the Danes from the east flank near St. Klara. The Danish were completely surprised by Posse's attack. Soon after the battle started, Christian I sent more troops to reinforce the St. Klara position. The Danish Armies were no match for Posse's men, whom he led from the front. Posse's legs were hit by several Danish arrows. A German or Danish knight is supposed to have fractured his skull with a battle axe, and he was carried back to Stockholm. That is where some sources claim that he died of his wounds.



# Russo-Swedish War (1495–1497)

The **Russo-Swedish War of 1495–1497** was a result of an alliance between [Ivan III of Russia](#) and [Hans of Denmark](#), who was waging war against the [Sture](#) family of [Sweden](#) in the hope of regaining the Swedish throne. It is believed that Hans promised to concede some stretches of Finnish lands to the Russian monarch, although he did not bother to honour the agreement after he had been crowned King of Sweden at the close of the war.

Pursuant to the agreement, Ivan III sent Princes [Daniil Shchenya](#) and Vasily [Shuisky](#) to lay siege to the Swedish castle of [Viborg](#). The siege lasted for three months and ended when a castellan set his supply of powder on fire, thus "scaring the [Muscovites](#) out of their wits", as the Swedish records. The following year Russian generals [Vasily Kosoy](#) and [Andrey Chelyadnin](#) severely devastated Swedish [Finland](#) as far as [Hämeenlinna](#) (Tavastehus). Another detachment sailed along the shore, forcing the Finns into subservience.

[Sten Sture the Elder](#), who was then at [Turku](#) (Åbo), was enraged at the news of the Russian expedition and sent [Svante Nilsson](#) with 2,000 men to take [Ivangorod](#), a new fortress which Ivan III had built to protect Russian [Ingria](#) against [Livonian Knights](#). The fortress was taken without difficulty, but — as it was impossible to defend it for a considerable period of time — Svante Nilsson proposed to hand it over to the Knights, an offer which they declined. Thereupon the Swedes set the fortress ablaze and sailed home.

After the Swedish throne fell to Hans of Denmark, hostilities were suspended until [1508](#), when Sweden and Russia ratified a peace treaty for 60 years. Although the war yielded no tangible results to any of the belligerents, both countries corroborated the peace settlement in 1513 and 1524.

## The Viborg Explosion

*Olaus Magnus included the Viborg blast in his 1536 Carta marina.*



The memory of the immense explosion in the [Viborg Castle](#) on 30 November 1495 survived in Finnish, and Russian, folklore. Probably some of the following stories are later inventions. A contemporary popular poem narrates the story of this blast.

The defence of Viborg was led by its castellan, Lord [Knut Posse](#). Russian invaders were just about to conquer the town. According to folklore, Knut Posse had caused the blast with some sort of exploding mixture. Other stories allege that the phenomenon was a figure shown against the sky and depicted for example the X-formed [cross of St. Andrew](#).

There are different opinions of the historicity and the real events of this phenomenon. There were only a couple of thousands soldiers on the Swedish side and defenders attempted to recruit peasants to add to their number. The first Russian attacks were successfully repelled, but in late November, the Russians attacked with all their forces. The battle seemed lost. The attackers had succeeded in reaching tops of walls and several towers were in their power. After that, something happened which caused Russians to retreat.

30 November is the feast of [St Andrew](#) and they thought the saint was protecting the town, making them halt the attack.

## Svante Nilsson (regent of Sweden)

**Svante Nilsson** (1460 – 2 January 1512) was a [Swedish](#) statesman and regent of [Sweden](#) 1504 – January 2, 1512. He was born around 1460 as the son of Nils Bosson of the family of Natt och Dag (whose mother was of [Sture](#) family). He never himself used the name Sture, but his son later took the great-grandmother's name because of its prestige and tradition of preserving the Swedish independence. He became a member of the [Privy Council of Sweden](#) no later than 1482, but acted in opposition to his distant kinsman [Sten Sture the Elder](#), going as far as supporting [John of Denmark](#). Unwillingly he then switched sides and supported Sten Sture in overthrowing the king, which at the death of Sten Sture led to him self being elected regent. His resignation was demanded by the [Privy Council of Sweden](#) in the summer of 1511, but in practice he remained in power until his death on January 2, 1512.



*Seal of Svante Nilsson*

His first marriage (1490–1495) with [Iliana Gädda](#), produced the son [Sten Sture the Younger](#).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Bogesund](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Bogesund)

## Battle of Bogesund

The **Battle of Bogesund** was an important conflict in the campaign of [Christian II](#) to gain power over [Sweden](#). In 1520, Christian's army of mercenaries had landed in Sweden, seeking to consolidate Christian's powers over Sweden within the [Kalmar Union](#) and to unseat the rebellious Swedish viceroy [Sten Sture the Younger](#). On the ice of lake [Åsunden](#) near [Bogesund](#), Christian's army led by [Otte Krumpen](#) was intercepted by a force led by Sten Sture.



*The Death of Sten Sture the Younger on the ice of lake Mälaren*

Little is known of the details of the battle. At an early stage, a cannonball ricocheted off the ice, hitting Sten Sture in the leg and killing his horse. Deprived of their leadership, Sture's forces (mostly armed peasants) fell into disarray and fled. Sture himself retreated towards Stockholm, but died of his wounds on the ice of lake [Mälaren](#) on February 5.

The anti-union resistance was continued by Sture's widow [Christina Gyllenstierna](#) and ultimately [Gustav Vasa](#).

# Sten Sture the Younger

**Sten Sture the Younger** ([Swedish](#): *Sten Sture den yngre*), Lord of Ekesjö (1493 – February 3, 1520), was a Swedish statesman and regent of [Sweden](#), under the era of the [Kalmar Union](#).

*Sten Svantesson Sture, the altar in Västerås cathedral*



He was born in 1493, as the son of regent [Svante Nilsson](#), a descendant of the [Sture](#) of Ekesjö family, and [Iliana Gisladotter Gädde](#), heiress of [Ulvåsa](#).

At the death of his father, the regent Svante, young Sten was only 18 years old. High Councillor [Eric Trolle](#) was chosen as regent by the council—he supported union with Denmark. However, young Sten utilized the castles and troops fiefed to him by his late father and made a coup. After Sten promised to continue union negotiations with Denmark, the High Council accepted him as regent instead of Trolle.

In reality, lord Sten's purpose was to keep Sweden independent of Denmark. He took the Sture name, heritage from his great-grandmother, because it symbolized independence of Sweden as reminder of Sten Sture the Elder, his father's third cousin.

Regent Sten knew that sooner or later, a war with [Hans of Denmark](#) (died 1513) and his son and successor [Christian II](#) would be inevitable.

Therefore he in 1513 agreed to a truce with Russia.

A conflict arose between Regent Sten and archbishop [Gustav Trolle](#), son of [Eric Trolle](#). The archbishop claimed more autonomy for the church. Regent Sten had the archbishop deposed and imprisoned.

Finally, Christian II started an invasion of Sweden. Regent Sten was mortally wounded at the [battle of Bogesund](#) on January 19, 1520, in the last part of [Christian II of Denmark](#)'s war against Sweden, and died on the ice of lake [Mälaren](#) on his way back to [Stockholm](#).

Christian II was enthroned in Sweden and archbishop Gustav had his revenge against supporters of Sture and against those who deposed the archbishop: he listed those enemies and accusations against them, dubbing them as heretics. King Christian had those accused executed at the [Stockholm bloodbath](#) in late 1520, including Sten Sture's corpse which was desecrated as a heretic's (burnt at the stake).

His marriage to [Christina Gyllenstierna](#), great-granddaughter of King [Charles VIII](#), in 1511 produced the son [Svante Stensson Sture](#), later elevated to be 1st [Count Sture](#), [Count](#) of [Stegeholm](#). In 20th century, his distant direct descendant, Sibylla of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha married the [Hereditary Prince Gustaf Adolf](#), and with Sibylla's son, the present King [Carl XVI Gustav of Sweden](#), Sten Sture the younger's blood returned to the Swedish throne.



# Stockholm Bloodbath

Avbild i form av ett [kopparstick](#) finns bevarat, utfört av [Dionysius Padt-Brugge](#) för [Magnus Gabriel De la Gardie](#) 1676.



Kopparsticket av Blodbadstavlan i okolorerat tryck.

Stockholm visas mot väst med nuvarande [Södermalm](#) till vänster och nuvarande [Norrmalm](#) till höger.

The **Stockholm Bloodbath**, or the **Stockholm Massacre** (Swedish: **Stockholms blodbad**, Danish: **det stockholmske blodbad**), took place as the result of a successful [invasion](#) of [Sweden](#) by [Danish](#) forces under the command of King [Christian II](#). The bloodbath itself was a series of events taking place between November 7 and November 9 in 1520, climaxing on the 8th, when around 80-90 people (mostly [nobility](#) and [clergy](#) supporting the [Sture party](#)) were [executed](#), despite a [promise](#) by King Christian for general [amnesty](#).

The Stockholm Bloodbath was a consequence of conflict between Swedish pro-unionists (in favour of the [Kalmar Union](#), then dominated by Denmark) and anti-unionists (supporters of Swedish independence), and also between the anti-unionists and the Danish [aristocracy](#), which in other aspects was opposed to King Christian. The anti-unionist party was headed by [Sten Sture the Younger](#), and the pro-unionist party by [archbishop Gustavus Trolle](#).

King Christian, who had already taken measures to isolate Sweden politically, intervened to help Archbishop Trolle, who was under [siege](#) in his [fortress](#) at [Stäket](#), but he was defeated by Sture and his peasant soldiers at [Vedila](#), and forced to return to Denmark. A second attempt to bring Sweden back under his control in 1518 was also countered by Sture's victory at [Brännkyrka](#). Sture was mortally wounded at the [Battle of Bogesund](#), on January 19. The Danish army, unopposed, was approaching [Uppsala](#), where the

members of the Swedish [Riksdag](#) had already assembled. The senators agreed to render homage to Christian, on condition that he gave a full [indemnity](#) for the past and a guarantee that Sweden should be ruled according to Swedish laws and custom. Sture's [widow](#), Dame [Christina Gyllenstierna](#), was still resisting in [Stockholm](#) with support from the peasants of central Sweden, and defeated the Danes at Balundsås on March 19. Eventually, her forces were defeated at the [Battle of Uppsala](#) on Good Friday, April 6.

In May, the Danish fleet arrived and Stockholm was attacked by land and sea. Dame Christina resisted for four months longer, finally surrendering on September 7, on the condition that an amnesty would be granted. On November 1, the representatives of the nation swore [fealty](#) to Christian as [hereditary king](#) of Sweden, though the law of the land actually provided that the Swedish crown should be [elective](#).

## ***Massacre***

On November 4, Christian was [anointed](#) by [Gustavus Trolle](#) in the [Storkyrkan](#) (the "grand church" in Stockholm), and took the usual [oath](#) to rule the kingdom through native-born Swedes only. A [banquet](#) was held for the next three days.

On November 7, the events of the Stockholm bloodbath began to unfold. On the evening of that day, Christian summoned many Swedish leaders to a private conference at the palace.

At dusk on November 8, Danish soldiers, with lanterns and torches, entered a great hall of the royal palace and took away several noble guests. Later in the evening, many others of the king's guests were imprisoned. All these people had previously been marked down on Archbishop Trolle's [proscription](#) list.

The following day, November 9, a council, headed by archbishop Trolle, sentenced the proscribed to [death](#) for being [heretics](#); the main point of accusation was their having united in a pact to depose Trolle a few years earlier. However many of them were also leading men of the Sture party and thus potential opponents of the Danish kings. At noon, the anti-unionist [bishops](#) of [Skara](#) and [Strängnäs](#) were led out into the [great square](#) and [beheaded](#). Fourteen noblemen, three [burgomasters](#), fourteen town [councillors](#) and about twenty common citizens of Stockholm were then [hanged](#) or decapitated.

The executions continued throughout the following day (November 10). According to the chief executioner Jörgen Homuth 82 people were executed.

It is said that Christian also took revenge on Sten Sture's body, having it dug up and burnt, as well as the body of his little child. Sture's widow Dame Christina, and many other noble Swedish ladies, were sent as prisoners to Denmark.

If the intention behind the executions had been to frighten the anti-unionist party into submission, it proved wholly counterproductive. [Gustav Vasa](#) was a son of [Erik Johansson](#), one of the victims of the executions. Vasa, upon hearing of the massacre, travelled north to the province of [Dalarna](#) to seek support for a new revolt. The population, informed of what had happened, rallied to his side. They were ultimately able to defeat Christian's forces in the [Swedish War of Liberation](#).



# Gustav Trolle

**Gustav Eriksson Trolle** (1488–1535) was [Archbishop of Uppsala](#), Sweden, in two sessions, during the turbulent [Reformation](#) events.

After returning from studies abroad, in [Cologne](#) and [Rome](#), he was in 1513 elected [vicar](#) in [Linköping](#). One year later he became Archbishop of Uppsala. In 1515 he got into an argument with the Swedish regent [Sten Sture the Younger](#), who spread the rumour that he was allied with the King [Christian II of Denmark](#). True or not, it resulted in Trolle being removed from his office and put under siege in the archbishops mansion [Almarestäket](#) at lake [Mälaren](#). In the winter of 1517, Almarestäket was demolished by orders from the Swedish government.

The Danish threat grew stronger, and Trolle was among those who spoke in favour of the Danish King. In 1520, [Christian II of Denmark](#) entered Sweden, and Trolle was rewarded by being reappointed Archbishop of Uppsala. He crowned Christian King of Sweden on November 4, 1520. This, and subsequent events, supports the notion of the two having made a deal previous to Christian's conquest of Sweden.

Gustav Trolle presented a list of antagonists who had caused him to suffer and who had ordered the demolition of Almarestäket. King Christian gathered several people (some sources say 100, other say 20), and had them executed at the so called [Bloodbath of Stockholm](#) on November 10, 1520. The details and death toll are uncertain, for Christian himself wanted the public execution to have as strong effect as possible, and later, King [Gustav I of Sweden](#) is likely to have boosted the figures to support his Danish War.

After a few years of feuds, Trolle was mortally wounded in a battle at [Øksnebjerg](#), on [Fyn](#), Denmark, 1535. He was buried at the cathedral in [Schleswig](#).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swedish\\_War\\_of\\_Liberation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swedish_War_of_Liberation)

# Swedish War of Liberation

*Gustav Vasa addressing the [Dalecarlians](#) in [Mora](#).*



The **Swedish War of Liberation** (1521–23), [Swedish](#): *Befrielsekriget*, was a civil war in which the Swedish nobleman [Gustav Vasa](#) successfully deposed the Danish king [Christian II](#) as regent of the [Kalmar Union](#) in [Sweden](#). The war started in January 1521 when Gustav Vasa was appointed "hövitsman" over Dalarna. After Gustav Vasa sacked the mine of [Kopparberget](#) and the city of [Västerås](#), more men joined his army. In 1522, the [Hanseatic](#) city of [Lübeck](#) allied themselves with the Swedish side. After the capture of Stockholm in June 1523, Sweden was effectively liberated and, on June 6,

Gustav Vasa was elected to King of Sweden in the city of [Strängnäs](#). By September, [Swedish Finland](#) was also liberated. By the [Treaty of Malmö](#) signed on September 1, 1524 Sweden [seceded](#) from the Kalmar Union.

The **Kalmar Union** is a [historiographical](#) term meaning a series of [personal unions](#) (1397–1523) that united the three kingdoms of [Denmark](#), [Norway](#) (then including [Iceland](#), [Greenland](#), the [Faroe Islands](#) and, prior to their annexation by Scotland in 1471, [Shetland](#) and [Orkney](#)), and [Sweden](#) (then including [Finland](#)) under a single [monarch](#), though intermittently and with a population fewer than 3 million.



# Sigrid Eskilsdotter (Banér)

**Sigrid Eskilsdotter (Banér)** (died 1528), was a Swedish noble, the mother of the Swedish regent [Christina Gyllenstierna](#) and the maternal grandmother of King [Gustav Vasa of Sweden](#).

## Biography

Sigrid Eskilsdotter was the daughter of Eskil Isaksson (Banér) and Cecilia Haraldsdotter (Gren). She was married twice and was by 1495 twice widowed and very wealthy. Her daughter Christina was the consort of the Swedish regent in 1512-1520 and the leader of the Stockholm resistance against Denmark in 1520. Sigrid was present at the coronation of king Christian II in Stockholm 4 November 1520. She was captured and imprisoned during the [Stockholm Bloodbath](#). Sigrid and her daughter Christina were the only two women sentenced to death during the Bloodbath, but in neither case was the sentence carried out. Sigrid was sentenced to be sewn into a sack and drowned at sea, but the execution was interrupted when she agreed to bequeath all her assets to the monarch. Together with her daughters Christina and Cecilia, and her granddaughters as well as a large group of Swedish noblewomen, Sigrid was taken to [Blåtårn](#) in Denmark in 1521. Her daughter Cecilia and two of her granddaughters died in prison, but Sigrid was allowed to return to Sweden in 1523, where her grandson was now king.

**Blåtårn** (in English: *Blue Tower*) was a tower at the royal Danish palace of [Copenhagen Castle](#) in Copenhagen, Denmark. The tower was used as a [prison](#) and has been known as such in history. It existed from at least the late 15th century until 1731.

It is not known when the tower was built, but it is known to have existed during the reign of King [John I of Denmark](#) (reign 1481-1513).

*Blåtårn.*



Many famous people was imprisoned in Blåtårn during its history. In the 1520s, a large number of Swedish prisoners were taken here after the Swedish rebellion against Denmark and the following declaration of Swedish independence, notably the famous heroine [Christina Gyllenstierna](#) and the female members of the Swedish king Gustav's family. Its perhaps most known prisoner was [Leonora Christina Ulfeldt](#), who was imprisoned here between 1663 and 1685, during which she wrote her famous autobiography *Jammersminde*.

## Famous prisoners of Blåtårn

- [Margareta Eriksdotter \(Vasa\)](#) sister of king [Gustav I of Sweden](#).
- [Cecilia Månsdotter](#) mother of king [Gustav I of Sweden](#).
- [Sigrid Eskilsdotter \(Banér\)](#) grandmother of king [Gustav I of Sweden](#).
- [Christina Gyllenstierna](#), the defender of [Stockholm](#)
- Märta Eriksdotter (Vasa) sister of king [Gustav I of Sweden](#).
- Emerentia Eriksdotter (Vasa), sister of king [Gustav I of Sweden](#).
- [Torben Oxe](#),
- [Knud Pedersen Gyldenstjerne](#), councillor of state
- [Joachim Rønnev](#), bishop
- [Leonora Christina Ulfeldt](#), daughter of king [Christian IV of Denmark](#)

# Christina Gyllenstierna

**Christina** (*Kristina* or *Kerstin*) **Nilsdotter** of Fogelvik, Heiress of [Tullgarn](#) (1494/5 – January 1559), was the wife of the [Swedish](#) regent [Sten Sture the Younger](#), and after his death, leader of resistance to [Christian II of Denmark](#). In her lifetime she was called *Lady Kristina* (Swedish: *Fru Kristina*), but later was referred to as "**Kristina Gyllenstierna**" because of the house of [nobility](#) to which she belonged.

Gyllenstierna was a great-granddaughter of King [Charles VIII of Sweden](#) through her father, a younger son of Christina Karlsdotter Bonde, for whom she was named. In 1511, she was married to Sten Svantesson partly to strengthen his political position.

She was from a family of Danish origin. Her grandfather Erik Eriksen of Demstrup ("Gyldenstjerne") was Danish, but became acquainted with Sweden, because the two realms were united in the [Kalmar Union](#). When Sweden and Denmark began to fight over control of the Union, Erik allied with the Swedish claimant, Charles VIII. As reward, Charles's daughter, the heir of Fogelvik, was married to him and he ultimately became the High Steward of Charles' court.

Gyllenstierna's mother was [Sigrid Eskilsdotter \(Banér\)](#) of Venngarn, Heir of Lindholm; so Christina was the half-sister of [Cecilia Månsdotter](#) of Eka, mother of the future king [Gustav I](#), through her mother's other marriage. Her father was Niels Eriksen, Lord of Tullgarn (also written Nils Eriksson, and surnamed "Gyllenstjerna" by later historians). Her family belonged to the highest Swedish nobility of this "Regency" era.

During this period, Sweden was governed almost continuously by "Regents", first for the infant son of Charles VIII, and then simply in opposition to Danish authority under the Union. Sten's father [Svante Nilsson](#) was Regent from 1504–1512. At his death, Sten, then only 18, became Regent. He took the name "Sture" in honor of a previous Regent.

It is likely that Gyllenstierna acted as political advisor to her spouse. The couple was regarded as king and queen in all but name.<sup>1</sup> In 1519, Peder Månsson, Bishop of Västerås, expressed his surprise in a letter from Rome to the Abbess of Vadstena Abbey that Sture and she were not yet crowned. The same year, the authorities of Stockholm referred to Christina as "Our Dear Princess"

*Gyllenstierna as defender of Stockholm in a modern statue at the Royal Palace there*



In 1520, Sven was killed in battle against Christian II of Denmark, and the [Privy Council of Sweden](#) submitted to Christian II.

Gyllenstierna took command of the Swedish forces and held out stoutly at [Stockholm](#). The peasantry of central Sweden, roused by her patriotism, flew to arms and defeated the Danish invaders at Balundsås on March 19 and were only with the utmost difficulty finally defeated at the bloody battle of [Uppsala](#), on April 6. Gyllenstierna was now elected "King" by ten councillors of state in Uppsala which however never has been recognized officially.

In May the Danish fleet arrived, and Stockholm was besieged by land and sea. But Gyllenstierna resisted valiantly for four months longer. She surrendered on September 7 after great starvation and suffering in the city. She took care to exact beforehand an amnesty of the most explicit and absolute character for all acts of resistance to Denmark. King

Christian promised, that "Everything from the past will be forgotten", that she would be granted the fief Tavastehus in Finland and that neither she nor her family would be punished.

During all this, [Anna Eriksdotter \(Bielke\)](#) defended and commanded the city of [Kalmar](#) in the same fashion.

### ***After the defeat***

On November 1, Christian crowned himself king of Sweden and invited the nobility to great festivities to celebrate the coronation. At a grand ball, he even danced with Gyllenstierna. The festivities lasted for three days.

On November 7, Christian summoned the Swedish nobility to a meeting. Lady Christina, as well as several other influential women, were also invited. When they arrived, the doors were shut and guards set in place. Christian accused them all of deposing the pro-Danish [Archbishop Gustav Trolle](#). He specifically accused Sten Sture as responsible for this, and directed his accusation toward Gyllenstierna. She stepped forward and stated that the king could not punish them for this, nor could he accuse her late spouse and her for having performed the deposition alone: everyone in the room had signed the bill of deposition, the removal of Archbishop Trolle had been a part of the rebellion, and Christian had pledged amnesty to everyone involved in the rebellion.

"We have proof," she added, "the document is here." At this, the document with the signatures of everyone supporting the deposition of the Archbishop was brought forward. But Christian had found a loophole, which the Swedes had overlooked. The deposition of a bishop was also a crime against the church - [heresy](#) - and the king had no authority to pardon them for that. So he could punish them without violating his pledge.

Christian then took his revenge, known as the [Stockholm Bloodbath](#). Christina's brother Erik Nilsson, Lord of Tullgarn, was executed by beheading, as were many other Swedish magnates. Gyllenstierna inherited Tullgarn, little benefit as it then did her. Her husband's remains were exhumed and burned publicly at the stake as a heretic.

Gyllenstierna was declared a great traitor and rebel, and as such King Christian called upon her and publicly asked her to choose: which did she prefer, to be burned at the stake or to be buried alive? Confronted with this choice, she was unable to reply and fainted with horror. After this, Christian was advised to spare her life. To save her life, she ceded a large part of her property to Christian. Gyllenstierna's mother Sigrid was sentenced to be drowned (the only woman condemned to death), but avoided execution by surrendering all her estates.

Gyllenstierna, her mother, her half sister and other noble ladies of Sweden were imprisoned in the feared and infamous [Blåtårn](#) ("Blue Tower") of [Copenhagen Castle](#). She had the company of her two little sons in the prison.

However, Danish rule in Sweden was soon overthrown by [Gustav Vasa](#), and in 1523 the Danes themselves deposed Christian. In 1525, the two countries made peace and Gyllenstierna was released to return to Sweden. At this time, she received a proposal of marriage from [Søren Norby](#), Grand Admiral of Denmark, which she turned down. It was rumored that she had intended to marry Norby as a means to gain the Swedish throne for herself and her children. Gustav Vasa interrogated her about this, but she denied it.



## Russo-Swedish War (1554–1557)

The **Russo-Swedish War of 1554–1557**, considered a prelude to the [Livonian War](#) of 1558–1583, arose out of border skirmishes. It ended when the parties agreed on a truce in the [Treaty of Novgorod \(1557\)](#).

The relation between [Sweden](#) and [Russia](#) was not the best. [Ivan IV of Russia](#) did not consider the Swedish king [Gustav I](#) his equal and refused to negotiate with Swedish ambassadors in person. Ivan made the king's ambassadors confer with a governor of [Novgorod](#) rather than receive them in the [Moscow Kremlin](#) as could have been expected between equals. The tsar responded to Gustav's remonstrances: *Ask your merchants and they will tell you that Novgorod's suburbs are larger than your Stockholm and that Novgorod's governors are descended from sovereign rulers of great empires, whereas your parents sold oxen at a market several decades ago.*

Despite the tense relations between the two regents, a state of peace was the general situation during most of King Gustav's reign, as agreed on in the [Treaty of Novgorod \(1537\)](#). At least in theory, because every now and then, Russians crossed the border to Swedish Finland to plunder, and probably vice versa.

In March 1555, there was a distinct change of state, when Russia mounted an organized attack with up to 20,000 soldiers. With its initially 1,000 men, Finland could not stand against the invading troops, but soon, reinforcements consisting of 3,700 [infantrymen](#) and 250 [cavalrymen](#) arrived from Sweden. The Finnish nobility had also been engaged in the war, contributing with its cavalry.

The goal of the Swedish-Finnish troops was to conquer [Oreshek](#) (Swedish: *Nöteborg*), [Kexholm](#) and [Kaporie](#). The siege of Oreshek was badly planned by the Swedish side and failed since the Russians had destroyed the areas surrounding the town and the Swedish troops had insufficient supplies to be able to maintain the siege until the town surrendered. While admiral Johan Brigge besieged and bombarded Oreshek, the Swedish diplomats tried to find support for their cause in [Livonia](#), [Poland-Lithuania](#) and [England](#).

Early the following year, 1556, Russia made a new attack, this time with an army almost 20,000 men strong. The attack was aimed at the town of [Vyborg](#), and the Swedish troops were unlikely to withstand an army of that considerable size. However, after a few days of pillaging in the area around Vyborg, the Russian forces left. The reason for this has not been made clear. Conceivable reasons might be bad discipline or a raging disease among the Russian soldiers. Perhaps was never the aim to conquer Vyborg, only to ravage the areas surrounding the town as a demonstration of power.

# Gustav I of Sweden

**Gustav I of Sweden**, born **Gustav Eriksson** of the [Vasa noble family](#) and later known as **Gustav Vasa** (12 May 1496 – 29 September 1560), was [King of Sweden](#) from 1523 until his death.

Gustav I portrayed in 1542



He was the first monarch of the [House of Vasa](#), an influential noble family which came to be the [royal house](#) of Sweden for much of the 16th and 17th centuries and the first dynasty to rule by law as hereditary monarchs of Sweden. Gustav I was elected [regent](#) in 1521 after leading the [Swedish War of Liberation](#) against [Christian II of Denmark](#), the leader of the [Kalmar Union](#) who controlled most of Sweden at the time.

Since the end of the 14th century, Sweden had been a part of the [Kalmar Union](#) with Denmark and Norway. The Danish dominance in this union occasionally led to uprisings in Sweden. During Gustav's childhood, parts of the Swedish nobility tried to make Sweden independent. Gustav and his father Erik supported the party of [Sten Sture the Younger](#), regent of Sweden from 1512, and its struggle against the Danish king [Christian II](#). Following the battle of [Brännkyrka](#) in 1518, where Sten Sture's troops beat the Danish forces, it was decided that Sten Sture and king Christian would meet in [Österhaninge](#) for negotiations. To guarantee the safety of the king, the Swedish side sent six men as hostage to be kept by the Danes for as long as the negotiations lasted. However, Christian did not show up for the negotiations, violated the deal with the Swedish side and took the hostages aboard ships carrying them to [Copenhagen](#).

In 1519, Gustav Eriksson escaped from Kalø. He fled to the Hanseatic city of [Lübeck](#) where he arrived on 30 September. How he managed to escape is not certain, but according to a somewhat likely story, he disguised himself as a [bullocky](#). For this, Gustav Eriksson got the nicknames "King Oxtail" and "Gustav Cow Butt", something he indeed disliked. When a swordsman drank to His Majesty "Gustav Cow Butt" in Kalmar 1547, the swordsman was killed.

While staying in Lübeck, Gustav could hear about the development in his native Sweden. He could notice that Christian II mobilised to attack Sweden in an effort to seize the power from Sten Sture and his supporters. In 1520, the forces of king Christian were triumphant. Sten Sture died in March, but some strongholds, including the Swedish capital Stockholm, were still able to withstand the Danish forces. Gustav left Lübeck on a ship, and was put ashore south of [Kalmar](#) on 31 May.

It seems Gustav stayed pretty inactive the first months back on Swedish soil. According to some sources, Gustav received an invitation to the coronation of Christian. This was to take place in the newly captured Stockholm in November. Even though king Christian had promised amnesty to his enemies within the Sture party, including Gustav Eriksson, the latter chose to decline the invitation. The coronation took place on 4 November and days of festivities in a friendly spirit followed. When the celebration had lasted a few days, the castle was locked and the former enemies of king Christian were imprisoned. Accusations against the old supporters of Sten Sture regarding heresy were brought forward. The following day the sentences were announced. During [Stockholm Bloodbath](#), as the events became known as, close to 100 people were executed on [Stortorget](#), among them relatives of Gustav Eriksson. His father, Erik Johansson, and nephew, Joakim Brahe, were two of the executed. Gustav himself was at the time staying at Räfsnäs close to [Gripsholm Castle](#)

# Livonian War

The **Livonian War** (1558–1583) was fought for control of [Old Livonia](#) in the territory of present-day [Estonia](#) and [Latvia](#) when the [Tsardom of Russia](#) faced a varying coalition of [Denmark–Norway](#), the [Kingdom of Sweden](#), the [Union](#) of the [Grand Duchy of Lithuania](#) and the [Kingdom of Poland](#).

*Siege of Narva by the Russians in 1558*



During the period 1558–1578, Russia dominated the region with early military successes at [Dorpat](#) (Tartu) and [Narva](#). Russian dissolution of the [Livonian Confederation](#) brought Poland–Lithuania into the conflict while Sweden and Denmark both intervened between 1559 and 1561. [Swedish Estonia](#) was established despite constant invasion from Russia and [Frederick II of Denmark](#) bought the old [Bishopric of Ösel–Wiek](#), which he placed under the control of his brother [Magnus of Holstein](#). Magnus attempted to expand his Livonian holdings to establish the Russian

[vassal state Kingdom of Livonia](#), which nominally existed until Magnus' defection in 1576.

In 1576, [Stefan Batory](#) became King of Poland as well as Grand Duke of Lithuania and turned the tide of the war with his successes between 1578 and 1581, including the joint Swedish–Polish–Lithuanian offensive at the [Battle of Wenden](#). This was followed by an extended [campaign through Russia](#) culminating in the long and difficult [siege of Pskov](#). Under the 1582 [Truce of Jam Zapolski](#), which ended the war between Russia and Poland–Lithuania, Russia lost all its former holdings in Livonia and Polotsk to Poland–Lithuania. The following year, Sweden and Russia signed the [Truce of Plussa](#) with Sweden gaining most of [Ingria](#) and northern Livonia while retaining the Duchy of Estonia.

In 1564, Sweden and Russia agreed the [Treaty of Dorpat](#), whereby Russia recognised Sweden's right to Reval and other castles, and Sweden accepted Russia's patrimony over the rest of Livonia. A seven-year truce was signed between Russia and Sweden in 1565. [Eric XIV of Sweden](#) was overthrown in 1568 after he killed several nobles in the [Sture Murders](#) of 1567, and was replaced by his half-brother [John III](#).

Both Russia and Sweden had other problems, and were keen to avoid an expensive escalation of the war in Livonia. Ivan IV had requested the return of John's wife, [Catherine Jagellonica](#) to Russia, supposedly afraid that John would die while incarcerated by his brother. In July 1569 John sent a party to Russia, led by [Paul Juusten](#), [Bishop of Åbo](#) which arrived in [Novgorod](#) in September, following the arrival in Moscow of the ambassadors sent to Sweden in 1567 by Ivan to retrieve Catherine. Ivan refused to meet with the party himself, forcing them to negotiate instead with the Governor of Novgorod. The Tsar requested that Swedish envoys should greet the governor as 'the brother of their king', but Juusten refused to do so. The Governor then ordered an attack on the Swedish party and that their clothes and money be taken, they be deprived of food and drink and be paraded naked through the streets.

During the early 1570s, King John III of Sweden, faced a Russian offensive on his positions in Estonia. Reval withstood a Russian siege in 1570 and 1571 but several smaller towns were taken by Russian forces. The Russian advance concluded with the sacking of [Weissenstein](#) (Paide) in 1573 where, after its capture, the occupying forces roasted some of the leaders of the Swedish garrison alive, including the commander. This triggered a retaliatory campaign by John centred on Wesenberg, to which the army departed in November 1573 with [Klas Åkesson Tott](#) (the Elder) in overall command and [Pontus de la Gardie](#) as field commander. There were also Russian raids into Finland, including one as far as [Helsingfors](#) (Helsinki) in 1572. A two-year truce on this front was signed in 1575.

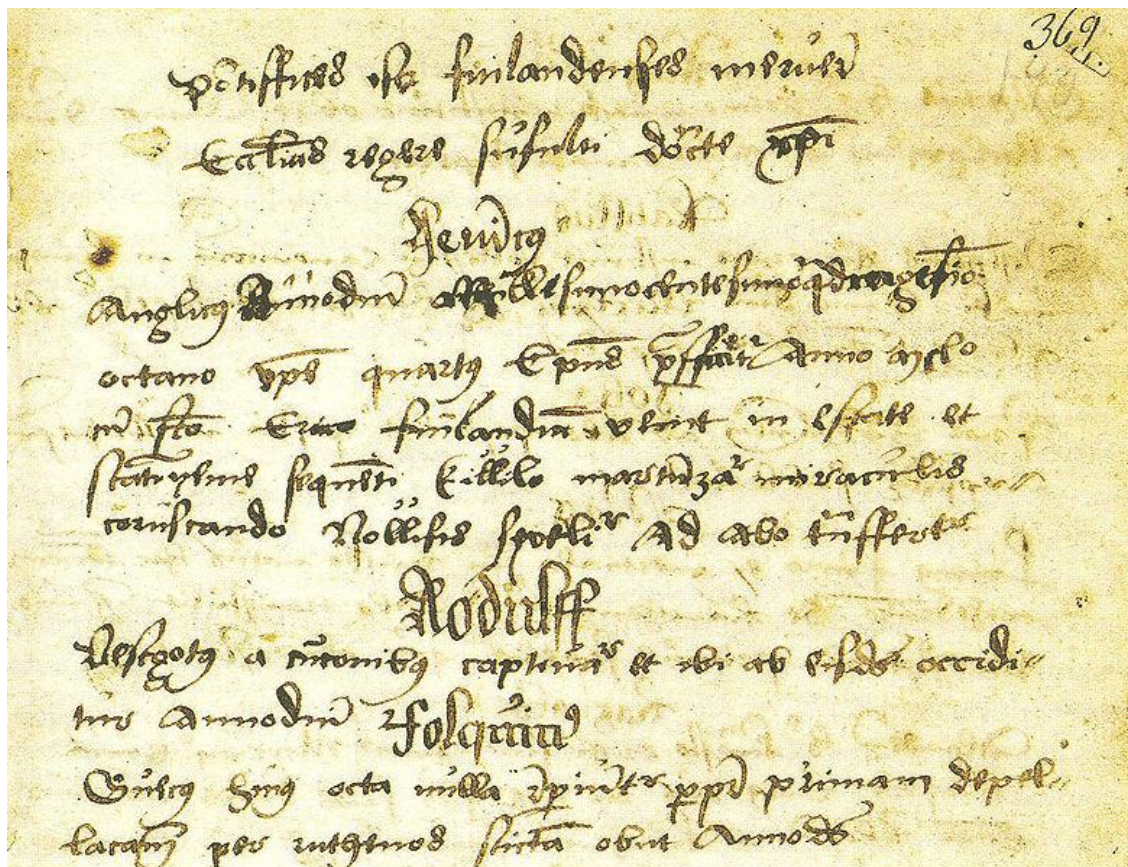


## Paulus Juusten

Paavali, as he was known before [ecclesiastical](#) career, was initially schooled at the Viipuri School of Latin. His parents, burgher Pietari Juusten and his wife Anna, owned their townhouse near the Blackfriars' monastery at [Viipuri](#). The street bore the name Juusteninkatu until the town centuries later was ceded to [Soviet Union](#). His parents seemingly died in c 1530 due to [the plague](#). The orphan Paavali was sent to Turku, to study 1534-1536 at the Turku school. He was recruited to lecture as an assistant to the head teacher, bishop [Martti Skytte](#). The bishop ordained Paulus as a priest in 1540, before he turned 24 that was the regularly required age for [ordination](#).

### Religious career

Juusten was acting headmaster of the Viipuri school 1541-1543, after which the bishop sent him to Germany, to study in several universities. He succeeded [Mikael Agricola](#) as headmaster of [Turku cathedral school](#) in 1548. He was member of the diocese chapter in 1553 and in 1554. In 1554 he was appointed as the inaugural bishop of [Viipuri](#), a new diocese. He was consecrated as bishop by [Botvidus Sunonis](#), [bishop of Strengnes](#), a carrier of the [Apostolic Succession](#). In 1563 he succeeded as [bishop of Turku](#). The king sent bishop Juusten as ambassador to Russia in 1569, where tsar [Ivan IV the Terrible](#) kept him as a prisoner for over two years. Some sources claim that he received [ennoblement](#) from the king after his return in c 1573. The year he died, Paulus consecrated [Laurentius Petri Gothus](#) as archbishop of [Uppsala](#). He was buried at the [Cathedral of Turku](#). Juusten authored the Finnish-language [catechism](#) (1574) and the Chronicle of Finnish bishops, "Chronicon episcoporum Finlandensium".



## Siege of Wesenberg (1574)

*Wesenberg / Rakvere Castle today*



The **Siege of Wesenberg** (Rakvere, Rakovor) was an abortive [Swedish](#) siege of the [Russian](#)-held town of [Wesenberg](#) in [Estonia](#) from January through March 1574, during the [Livonian War](#). The siege is infamous for a brawl and subsequent combat between [German](#) and [Scottish](#) mercenaries within the besieging army, which claimed the lives of about 1,500 Scots. Wesenberg was seized in a renewed Swedish assault in 1581.

[John III](#), king of Sweden since 1568, faced a Russian offensive on the Swedish positions in Estonia during the early 1570s. Reval withstood a Russian siege in 1570 and 1571, but several smaller towns were taken by Russian forces. The Russian advance was concluded by the sack of [Weissenstein](#) (Paide) in 1573. After the capture, the Russian forces roasted alive some of the leaders of Weissenstein's Swedish garrison, including its commander, triggering John III to mount a retaliatory campaign with Wesenberg being the main objective.

The campaign started in Reval, where Sweden had concentrated her troops, including between 4,000 and 5,000 Scots. Already in 1572, John III had requested that [Archibald Ruthven](#) recruit Scottish co-patriots to reinforce his Livonian army. Ruthven had raised 3,000 infantry and 760 cavalry, who arrived in Swedish [Älvsborg](#) in June and July 1573. They were split up into small units and marched to Sweden's eastern coast. Overdue pay caused some mercenaries to delay their march, pillage the countryside, and revolt against Ruthven. Upon their arrival in [Stockholm](#) and ports in [Östergötland](#), they were joined by another 300 Scottish cavalry and shipped to Reval, where they arrived in September and joined with Swedish and [Finnish](#) regulars as well as German mercenaries, primarily consisting of cavalry and artillery. In November, the army left for Wesenberg, under the overall command of [Klas Åkesson Tott](#) (the Elder) and field command of [Pontus de la Gardie](#). The march was again delayed by the Scottish troops, who demanded to be paid a month in advance, causing de la Gardie to sell part of his jewelry to satisfy their claims.

Thus, the besieging forces were demoralized. In addition, supplies ran out and tensions grew after the German faction blamed the failures on a lack of Scottish support. On 17 March 1574, a brawl between German and Scottish mercenaries occurred, triggered by insults and/or unpaid ale in the canteen. First, a German officer tried to intervene, but when he was unsuccessful and the brawl turned into an open fight, de la Gardie, Tott and Ruthven arrived to the scene in person. They were however likewise attacked and fled, with Ruthven suffering severe injuries.

When the commanders had fled the scene, Scottish mercenaries overwhelmed the German artillery, seized the guns and took aim at the German cavalry. The German cavalry charged, hit by Scottish artillery fire on their way, and cut down the Scots. The result was 30 dead Germans and 1,500 dead Scots

As a consequence, John III of Sweden removed Tott from overall command in Livonia and replaced him with de la Gardie. Furthermore, the king would not again start an expedition relying heavily on mercenaries, and was hindered by starting any offense at all by the investigation of the Wesenberg incident and a few subsequent trials in Reval throughout 1574. Ivan IV seized the initiative until the [Battle of Wenden \(1578\)](#) turned the war's tide. In 1580, Sweden took [Kexholm](#), and in the winter of 1580/81, Pontus de la Gardie led a Swedish army over the frozen Gulf of Finland, captured Wesenberg, turned to Narva which was taken on 6 September with the whole population slaughtered by the assailants, and until the end of 1581 sacked the last Russian strongholds in Estonia.



## Battles of Wenden (1577–1578)

*Ruins of Cēsis (Wenden) Castle today*



The **Battles of Wenden** were a series of battles for control of the stronghold of [Wenden](#) (Cēsis, Võnnu), in present-day [Latvia](#), fought during the [Livonian War](#) in 1577 and 1578. [Magnus of Livonia](#) besieged the town in August 1577, but was deposed and replaced by Russian forces under tsar [Ivan IV](#) who eventually sacked town and [castle](#) in what became a symbolic victory. Lithuanian forces however re-captured the stronghold in November, and beat back a Russian counter-attack in February 1578.

In October, the Russian army again laid siege, but was destroyed by a smaller Swedish-German-Polish relief force. This marked the turning point in the Livonian War, shifting the initiative from the [Tsardom of Russia](#) to [Sweden](#) and [Poland-Lithuania](#). It also marked the end of the [Kingdom of Livonia](#), which collapsed when [Magnus](#) retired to [Courland](#). The sack of Wenden was a huge symbolic victory for Ivan. Of his opponents in the [Livonian War](#), [John III of Sweden](#) only controlled [Reval](#) (Tallinn).

In 1570 and 1571, [Ivan IV "the Terrible" of Russia](#) faced internal disputes, culminating in the slaughtering of [Novgorod](#)'s inhabitants and the burning of [Moscow](#) by the [tartars](#). Yet, he was able to recover and resume his campaigns in the [Livonian War](#) in 1572. [A Swedish counter-offensive in 1574 failed](#). Ivan IV had introduced a new strategy, relying on tens of thousands of native troops, [cossacks](#) and tartars, instead of a few thousand skilled troops and mercenaries, as practiced by his adversaries. [Swedish](#) forces were sieged in [Reval](#) (Tallinn).

John III and Stephen Báthory allied against Ivan IV in December 1577, after the latter had concluded the [Danzig War](#). Already in November, Lithuanian forces had started an offensive from the south and captured [Dünaburg](#). A Polish-Swedish force took the town and castle of Wenden in early 1578. Russian forces tried to re-take the town in February, but failed.

What followed was a Swedish offensive, targeting [Leal](#) (Lihula), [Lode](#), [Hapsal](#) (Haapsalu), [Pernau](#), [Dorpat](#) and [Novgorod](#). In September, Ivan responded by sending in an army of 18,000 men, who re-captured [Oberpahlen](#) (Pöltsamaa) from Sweden and then marched on Wenden.

Upon their arrival at Wenden, the Russian army laid siege to the town. An allied relief force consisting of 5,500 to 6,000 German, Polish and Swedish soldiers confronted the Russians on 21 October. First, the Russian cavalry was defeated and driven off in open field, then the Russian infantry, still entrenched for the siege, was routed or taken prisoner. Russian casualties were severe, and among the captives, there were several high-ranking [boyars](#). More than twenty [siege guns](#) and large numbers of horses were captured, enabling the whole Swedish infantry to ride back to Reval.

Wenden was to remain the only occasion of a Swedish-Polish-Lithuanian collaboration in battle, as the alliance fell apart in the following years.



# Eric XIV of Sweden

**Eric XIV**, [Swedish](#): *Erik XIV* (13 December 1533 – 26 February 1577) was [King of Sweden](#) from 1560 until he was deposed in 1568. Eric XIV was the son of [Gustav I](#) (1496–1560) and [Catherine of Saxe-Lauenburg](#) (1513–35). He was also ruler of [Estonia](#), after its conquest by [Sweden](#) in 1561.



While he has been regarded as intelligent and artistically skilled, as well as politically ambitious, early in his reign he showed signs of mental instability, a condition that eventually led to [insanity](#). Eric suffered from [schizophrenia](#). Some scholars claim that his illness began early during his reign, while others believe that he became sick after the [Sture Murders](#).

Eric, having been deposed and imprisoned, was most likely murdered. An examination of his remains in 1958 confirmed that he probably died of [arsenic poisoning](#).

In domestic politics, Eric's ambitions were strongly opposed by the [Swedish nobility](#), including his half-brother, the later [John III of Sweden](#) (1537–92). John was the [Duke of Finland](#) and was married to a Polish princess, which made him friendly with Poland. John pursued an expansionist policy in Livonia (now Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) which led to contention between the brothers. In

1563, John was seized and tried for [high treason](#) by Eric's order.

Unlike his father, who had been satisfied with ruling an independent state, Eric tried to expand his influence in the [Baltic region](#) and in [Estonia](#), making Sweden a great power. This expansionism resulted in a clash with his cousin, [Frederick II of Denmark](#) (1534–88). Most of Eric XIV's reign was then dominated by the [Livonian War](#) and the [Scandinavian Seven Years' War](#) against Denmark (1563–70), during which he successfully repelled most Danish attempts at conquest, but was unable to keep his own conquests.

From 1563 onwards, his insanity became pronounced; his rule became even more arbitrary and marked by violence. In 1567, suspicious of high treason, he killed several members of the [Sture](#) family ([Sture Murders](#)), Eric himself stabbing Nils Sture. The King probably thought of the killing as an execution rather than murder.

*Painting of Erik XIV stabbing Nils Sture (Uppsala Castle exhibit)*



Erik remained in a state of madness for half a year, cared for by Karin Månsdotter, whom he married in the summer.

After the Sture homicide, John was imprisoned and Eric's conflict with the nobility came to its climax. In the fall of 1568, the dukes and the nobles rebelled, and Eric was [dethroned](#). He was then imprisoned by Duke John, who took power.

# John III of Sweden

**John III** ([Swedish](#): *Johan III*, [Finnish](#): *Juhana III*) (20 December 1537 – 17 November 1592) was [King of Sweden](#) from 1568 until his death. He was the son of King [Gustav I of Sweden](#) and his second wife [Margaret Leijonhufvud](#). He was also, quite autonomously, the [ruler](#) of [Finland](#), as *Duke John* from 1556 to 1563. In 1581 he assumed also the title [Grand Prince of Finland](#).

John III portrayed in 1582.



He was the second son of [Gustav Vasa](#) (1523–60). His mother was [Margareta Leijonhufvud](#) (1514–51), a Swedish noblewoman. As a [Duke of Finland](#), he opposed his half-brother [Eric XIV of Sweden](#) (1560–68) and was imprisoned in 1563. After his release from prison, probably because of his brother's insanity (see [Sture Murders](#)), John again joined the opposition, deposed Eric and made himself the king. His important ally was his maternal uncle [Sten Leijonhufvud](#), who at deathbed was made [Count of Raseborg](#). Shortly after this John executed his brother's most trusted counsellor, [Jöran Persson](#), whom he held largely responsible for his harsh treatment while in prison.

John further initiated peace talks with Denmark and Lübeck to end the [Scandinavian Seven Years' War](#), but rejected the resulting [Treaties of Roskilde \(1568\)](#) where his envoys had accepted far-reaching Danish demands. After two more years of fighting, this war was concluded without many Swedish concessions in the [Treaty of Stettin \(1570\)](#). During the following years he successfully fought [Russia](#) in the [Livonian War](#), concluded by the [Treaty of Plussa](#) in 1583, a war that meant a [Swedish](#) reconquest of [Narva](#). As a whole his foreign policy was affected by his connection to [Poland](#) of which country his son [Sigismund III Vasa](#) was made king in 1587.

In January 1569, John was recognized as king by the same [riksdag](#) that forced Eric XIV off the throne. But this recognition was not without influence from John; Duke Karl received confirmation on his dukedom without the restrictions of his power that the [Arboga articles](#) imposed. The nobilities' power and rights were extended and their responsibilities lessened.



Grave monument to King John III, located over his family crypt at Upsala Cathedral

John was still concerned about his position as king as long as Eric was alive. The fear of a possible liberation of the locked up king worried him to the point that in 1571 he ordered the guards to, in any suspicion of liberation attempt, murder the captured king. It is possible this is how his life ended in 1577.

John III was reported like his father in propaganda, with repeated claims to have "liberated Sweden" from the "bloodhound" [Christian II](#), as well as rescuing the population from the "tyrant" Eric XIV; also violent, hot tempered and greatly suspicious.

# Northern Seven Years' War

The **Northern Seven Years' War** (also known as the *Nordic Seven Years' War*, the *First Northern War* or the *Seven Years War in Scandinavia*) was the war between [Kingdom of Sweden](#) and a coalition of [Denmark–Norway](#), [Lübeck](#) and the [Polish–Lithuanian union](#), fought between 1563 and 1570. The war was motivated by the dissatisfaction of King [Frederick II of Denmark](#) with the dissolution of the [Kalmar Union](#), and the will of King [Eric XIV of Sweden](#) to break Denmark's dominating position. The fighting continued until both armies had been exhausted, and many men died. The resulting [Treaty of Stettin](#) was a stalemate, with neither party gaining any new territory.

*Frederick II of Denmark attacking Älvsborg, 1563*



## Context

The Danish-ruled Nordic [Kalmar Union](#) lasted on and off from 1397 to 1523, until it finally collapsed following the continued Swedish resentment of Danish domination.

A successful rebellion in 1471 led to Swedish victory at the [Battle of Brunkeberg](#), which established a powerful anti-Union movement under the leadership of the [Bonde–Sture](#) nobles. In 1520, [Christian II of Denmark](#) reconquered Sweden and took a bloody revenge on the anti-Union faction at the [Stockholm Bloodbath](#). More than 80 noble men and ladies, including leading citizens of [Stockholm](#), were executed, but the result severely backfired on Christian II. The violence elicited strong reactions in Sweden for years to come and the Union was broken by the successful [Swedish War of Liberation](#) from 1521 to 1523. Christian II was condemned by the Pope, and he [abdicated](#) in 1523.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Action\\_of\\_30\\_May\\_1564](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Action_of_30_May_1564)

## Action of 30 May 1564 by Gotland

This battle took place on 30–31 May 1564 between the islands of [Gotland](#) and [Öland](#), between a fleet of Allied ships, the Danes under [Herluf Trolle](#) and the Lübeckers under [Friedrich Knebel](#) [\(de\)](#), and a Swedish fleet of 23 or more ships under [Jakob Bagge](#) [\(sv\)](#). It was an Allied victory.

Only some of the ships on each side were involved, the rest being unable to help due to the wind. On 30 May *Fortuna* was damaged and *Lange Bark* sunk, but on 31 May *Mars* was boarded by *Byens Løffue*, *Engel* and *Fuchs* before catching alight and exploding, killing most of its crew and 300 boarders. Jakob Bagge and his Second, [Arvid Trolle](#) [\(sv\)](#), were taken prisoner. Swedish casualties apart from in this ship were 101. Fleming took over the fleet and sailed it back to [Älvsnabben](#) , while the Danes sailed to [Copenhagen](#).



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Action\\_of\\_4\\_June\\_1565](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Action_of_4_June_1565)

## Action of 4 June 1565 by Öresund

This battle took place on 4 June 1565 between an Allied fleet of 33 Danish and Lübecker ships, under Trolle, and a Swedish fleet of perhaps 49 ships, under [Klas Horn](#) ([sv](#)). Afterward, the Danes retired to [Køge Bay](#), south of [Copenhagen](#), where Trolle died of his wounds on 25 June. His Second, [Jørgen Brahe](#), died of fever on 28 June.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Action\\_of\\_4\\_June\\_1565](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Action_of_4_June_1565)

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[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Action\\_of\\_7\\_July\\_1565](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Action_of_7_July_1565)

## Action of 7 July 1565 by Bornholm

This battle in the [Northern Seven Years' War](#) took place on 7 July 1565 and was a victory for a Swedish fleet of 49 ships, under Klas Horn, over a combined Danish and Lübecker fleet of 36 ships, under Otto Rud.

The Danish *Dans Christopher* was sunk and Trolle drowned but some of her survivors boarded and captured the small Swedish ship *St Goran*. The Swedish *Grip* was rammed and sunk by a larger Lübeck ship, which also sank as a result. After the Swedish ship *Gyllende Lejon* caught fire the fleets scattered, leaving the Danish flagship, *Jegermesther*, unsupported and she was captured at about 9:30 pm. After this the Allies returned to Copenhagen, and the Swedes to Dalarö. Swedish vice-admiral [Sten Sture](#) and his captain, Baner, were killed.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Action\\_of\\_26\\_July\\_1566](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Action_of_26_July_1566)

## Action of 26 July 1566 East of Öland

The battle that took place on 26 July 1566 during the [Northern Seven Years' War](#) and was a slight victory for a Swedish fleet over a combined Danish and Lübecker fleet. It began just east of [Öland](#) and the Allied fleet eventually retreated toward [Gotland](#).

Two days after the battle a storm sank fourteen of the Allied ships while they were anchored near [Visby](#), drowning around 5900 men. The Swedish fleet, further out to sea, returned to port with some damage.

On July 25, Horn discovered the Allied Danish–Lübeck fleet at the northern tip of Öland, headed for Gotland. Horn, who had a headwind, decided to avoid battle, but when the wind turned he started the battle on the morning of 26 July. A few more losses did not affect either fleet, when a sudden wind made it impossible for the Swedish navy to continue its pursuit of the Danish fleet, which was anchored to the

Gotland coast to bury the Danish vice-admiral Christopher Morigsen on hallowed ground after his death from a cannon ball.

At that point a storm broke out, lasting three days. The Swedish navy, which was at sea, survived without major losses, other than having had to fell the main mast of the *Hector*, and was able to flee to Älvsnabben by 6 August. The Allied fleet however was thrown against the coast of Gotland, and 12 Danish and 3 Lübeck vessels were smashed, and most of the ships' crews, numbering around 5000, were drowned, with only around 1400 surviving ashore.

[http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Klas\\_Kristersson\\_Horn](http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Klas_Kristersson_Horn)

## Klas Horn (1517-1566)



**Klas Kristersson Horn** var en svensk amiral av finländsk härkomst. Han föddes omkring år [1517](#) i [Åminne](#). Han deltog i [sjuårskriget](#) mellan Danmark och Sverige [1563-1570](#), där han vann en avgörande seger över den danska flottan den [7 juli 1565](#) och den [26 juli 1566](#) vann han över en kombinerad dansk-lübecksk flotta nära [Öland](#). Han dog den [9 september](#) samma år i [pesten](#). Gift (1551-01-03) med Kerstin Krumme (1532-1611).

Denne Klas Horn var son till [hövitsmannen](#) och [fogden](#) på [Åbo slott](#) i [Finland](#) [Krister Klasson \(Horn\)](#) d.ä. till [Åminne](#) och [Ingeborg Siggisdatter Sparre](#). Han var troligen född på släktgården [Åminne](#).

Sin tidiga skolning fick Klas Horn som [page](#) hos [hertig Filip I](#) i [Pommern](#) och sedan som [hovjunkare](#) hos svenske kung [Gustav Vasa](#). 1550 blev han häradshövding för södra Finland och Raseborgs län. Under [Stora ryska kriget](#) utnämndes han 1555 av kung [Gustav Vasa](#) till befälhavarna i armén och följde på hösten samma år med [Jakob Bagge](#) på dennes tåg mot [Nöteborg](#). 1556 blev han en av [ståthållarna](#) på [Viborg](#)

och året efter [kommendant](#) i [Viborgs län](#). På denna post fick han tillfälle att skaffa sig kännedom om de [estländska](#) förhållandena och blev 1560 svenskt sändebud i det landet. År 1561 sändes han av kung [Erik XIV](#) till [Reval](#) (numera [Tallinn](#)), där han övertalade stadens invånare och adeln i landskapen [Harrien](#) och [Wierland](#) att i juni inordna sig under Sverige. Samma år omtalades han som kung Eriks "[rådsförvandt](#)" och erhöll vid konungens kröning samma år [friherrlig](#) värdighet. Efter att ha grundlagt det svenska väldet söder om [Finska viken](#) fortsatte han under den närmaste tiden att framgångsrikt verka för dess utvidgning. 1561 biträdde han som rådgivare den nyutnämnde [ståthållaren](#) i Reval [Lars Fleming](#). I Estland skildes 1562 militär och civil förvaltning och Klas Horn övertog den militära ledningen. Samma år erövrade han [Padis](#) och [Wittenstein](#).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Axtorna](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Axtorna)

## Battle of Axtorna

The **Battle of Axtorna** was fought October 20, 1565 at Axtorna, a little village today in [Falkenberg Municipality](#), [Halland County](#) in western [Sweden](#).

*Old Danish propaganda image of the battle*



The [Danish](#) commander [Daniel Rantzau](#) had been forced to yield the fortress [Varberghus](#) to the Swedes on September 15, 1565, after they had taken [Ny Varberg](#), then [Halland's](#) largest city. Rantzau received the news that a Swedish army of superior strength led by [Jacob Henriksson Hästesko](#) was approaching from the east forced him to move his forces toward [Falkenberg](#). Rantzau had decided to commit to combat since the Swedish force had just arrived from its march and hadn't rearranged into a militarily cohesive unit.

The Danes won as a consequence of Rantzau's superior tactics and he became renowned as a great general after the battle. But despite the victory and the capture of the Swedish [artillery](#), the Danish host had incurred great losses while large portions of the Swedish army had not been involved in the battle.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clas\\_%C3%85kesson\\_Tott](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clas_%C3%85kesson_Tott)

## Clas Åkesson Tott

**Clas Åkesson Tott** (c. 1530–1590) was a military [Field Marshal](#) (1572) and member of the [Privy Council of Sweden](#) (1575).

In the [Russo-Swedish War \(1554–1557\)](#), he was the [rittmeister](#) of the cavalry [squadron](#) *Upplandsfanan*. He became responsible for the enlistment of army personnel in [Finland](#), in 1563. At the [Battle of Axtorna](#), in 1566, he was taken as prisoner of war, but he was released in 1569. As the [commander-in-chief](#) of [Estonia](#) (1572–1574), he defeated the Russians at the [Battle of Lode](#) in 1573, before he was displaced by [Pontus de la Gardie](#) due to the disastrous outcome of the [Siege of Wesenberg \(1574\)](#).

He became the [stadtholder](#) of [Finland](#) in 1576, but he fell out of grace with [John III](#) which led to his losing his titles in 1589 and his membership in the Privy Council.



## Pontus De la Gardie



**Pontus De la Gardie** (ca. 1520 – 5 November 1585) was a [French nobleman](#) and general in the service of [Denmark](#) and [Sweden](#).

He was born **Ponce De La Gardie** in [Russol](#) ([Aude](#)), [Languedoc](#), as a son of [Jacques De la Gardie](#) and [Catherine de Sainte-Colombe](#). As a youngster, he wanted to become a priest and was educated in a [monastery](#). He changed his mind however, and left Languedoc to become a [mercenary](#) in the service of Denmark. De la Gardie was promoted to officer and was in charge of a regiment of mercenaries. In [1565](#), during the [Northern Seven Years' War](#), he was captured by Swedish troops at [Varberg](#), and changed allegiance to Sweden. De la Gardie quickly became a favourite of [John III of Sweden](#) and in 1569, after only four years in the Swedish service, he received noble status. In 1571, he was created a baron and was given [Ekholmen Castle](#).

After [Clas Åkesson Tott](#)'s resignation as the supreme commander of the Swedish forces in [Finland](#) and [Estonia](#) as a consequence of the [Siege of Wesenberg \(1574\)](#) during the [Livonian War](#), de la Gardie took over Tott's office. De la Gardie's skills combined with the fact that Sweden's enemy

Russia had to transfer troops to defend against Polish attacks further south led to considerable military success for Sweden during the following years. In the fall of 1580, [Karelia](#) was conquered. De la Gardie led his troops over the frozen [Gulf of Finland](#) to capture the fortresses of [Wesenberg](#) (Rakvere) and Tolsburg (Toolse). In September 1581, Narva was taken after a storming that had been preceded by a massive bombardment. 4,000 soldiers and civilians were killed, pointing out the fact that De la Gardie was not only a skillful warrior, but a cruel and hard commander as well. De la Gardie and his Swedish troops went on to capture the fortress of [Ivangorod](#) and several other fortresses that autumn. In 1582, the war with Russia was ended and Sweden got to keep the conquests made in Karelia and [Ingria](#), but had to withdraw from Livonia.

De la Gardie was the most renowned military commander in Sweden during the 16th century and has been credited with much of the country's military success in the 1580s. An example of his ingenuity was the strategy of using zigzag shaped [saps](#) during the siege of Narva, a new technique at the time.

De la Gardie drowned in the [Narva River](#) and is buried in [St Mary's Cathedral of Tallinn](#).

# Russo-Swedish War (1590–1595)

The **Russo-Swedish War of 1590–1595** was instigated by [Boris Godunov](#) in the hope of gaining the territory of the [Duchy of Estonia](#) along the [Gulf of Finland](#) belonging to [Sweden](#) since the previous [Livonian War](#).

As soon as the [Truce of Plussa](#) expired early in 1590, a large [Russian](#) army led by Godunov and his sickly brother-in-law, [Fyodor I of Russia](#), marched from [Moscow](#) towards [Novgorod](#). On 18 January they crossed the [Narva River](#) and laid siege to the Swedish castle of [Narva](#), commanded by [Arvid Stålbom](#). Another important fortress, [Jama](#) (Jamburg), fell to Russian forces within two weeks. Simultaneously, the Russians ravaged [Estonia](#) as far as [Reval](#) (Tallinn) and [Finland](#) as far as [Helsingfors](#) (Helsinki).

On 25 February, the local Swedish governor [Klas Henriksson Horn](#) was compelled to sign an [armistice](#), which obliged Sweden to surrender the territories won by the. This peace settlement displeased [John III of Sweden](#), who sent a fleet to take hold of [Ivangorod](#), but this attempt to besiege the fortress was checked by a Russian castellan. Matters then remained quiet until summer 1591, when the Swedes struck against [Gdov](#), capturing a local governor, Prince Vladimir [Dolgorukov](#).

The other war theatre was [Eastern Karelia](#), where the Swedes sacked [Kola](#) and other Russian settlements bordering the [White Sea](#). A raiding party led by Finnish peasant chief [Pekka Vesainen](#), destroyed the [Pechenga Monastery](#) on December 25, 1589, killing 50 monks and 65 lay brothers. He then turned his troops to [Kola Fjord](#) but could not manage to destroy the Kola Fortress due lack of men. Instead he captured and burned [Kandalaksha](#) (Kantalahti) and a small Russian settlement in [Kem](#). Again, due lack of men, he could not capture the [Solovetsky Monastery](#) on the [Solovetsky Islands](#).

Godunov's government gradually overcame these setbacks, as Prince [Volkonsky](#) was sent to pacify Karelia, while the noblest Russian generals — [Bogdan Belsky](#) and Prince [Trubetskoy](#) — devastated Finland. Sweden, in May 1595, agreed to sign the [Treaty of Teusina](#). The treaty restored to Russia all territory ceded in the [Truce of Plussa](#) of 1583 to Sweden except for [Narva](#). Russia had to renounce all claims on Estonia, including Narva, and Sweden's sovereignty over Estonia from 1561 was confirmed.

The [Pechenga Monastery](#) ([Finnish](#): *Petsamon luostari*) was for many centuries the northernmost [monastery](#) in the world. It was founded in 1533 at the influx of the [Pechenga River](#) into the [Barents Sea](#), 135 km west of modern [Murmansk](#), by [St. Tryphon](#), a monk from [Novgorod](#).

Inspired by the model of the [Solovki](#), Tryphon wished to convert the local [Skolts](#) to Christianity and to demonstrate how faith could flourish in the most inhospitable lands. His example was eagerly followed by other Russian monks. By 1572, the Pechenga Monastery counted about 50 brethren and 200 lay followers.

Six years after St. Tryphon's death in 1583, the wooden monastery was raided and burnt down by the Swedes. It is said that the raid claimed the lives of 51 monks and 65 lay brothers, bringing the history of Tryphon's establishment to an end. This revenge raid was carried out by a Finnish peasant chief [Pekka Antinpoika Vesainen](#) on December 25, 1589, and was part of the [Russo-Swedish War](#) of 1590 - 1595.

As the Russian colonization the Pechenga Monastery was restored at its original location in 1886. Prior to the [Russian Revolution](#), it consisted of the Upper Monastery, commemorating the graves of Tryphon and 116 martyrs of the 1589 raid, and the new Lower Monastery, overlooking the [Pechenga Bay](#).

The [stauropegic](#) monastery continued to flourish when Pechenga became part of Finland in 1920. At the end of the [Continuation War](#) in 1944 the [Moscow Armistice](#) granted Petsamo to the Soviet Union. The brethren [were evacuated](#) to the [New Valamo Monastery](#), where they kept their autonomy until 1984 when the last of them died at the [age of 110](#).

# Arvid Stålbarm the Younger

**Arvid Stålbarm**, actually **Arvid Eriksson (Stålbarm) till Lindö i Tenala** (c. 1540 or 1549 – May 1620, was a [Swedish](#) noble and soldier from the [Finland](#)-based [Stålbarm](#) family. In his early career, Arvid Stålbarm served as a captain in the [Swedish navy](#). Later, he was promoted [admiral](#), governor in [Narva](#) and Finland, and during the [War against Sigismund](#) led Finnish forces loyal to [Sigismund](#) against the latter's opponent and successor duke [Charles of Södermanland](#), the later king Charles IX. Stålbarm was taken prisoner and condemned to death in the [Åbo bloodbath](#) (1599) and again in the [Linköping bloodbath](#) (1600), but both times was spared from execution and remained in prison.

In 1602, during the [Polish–Swedish War \(1600–11\)](#), he was released to command the Swedish forces in [Livonia](#), who by then were in a precarious state and position. Stålbarm received ambiguous orders and

unable to turn the tide. After a major defeat in September 1604, Charles removed him from the command, and Stålbarm was again tried and condemned to death in the spring of 1605. He was, however, again spared, and spent the rest of his life as Charles' prisoner at Gripsholm.

Arvid Eriksson till Lindö i Tenala was born into the [Finland-Swedish Stålbarm](#) family around the years 1540 or 1549. He was the son of Erik Arvidsson Stålbarm, died 1569, son of the elder Arvid Eriksson Stålbarm and Christina Knutsdotter) and Beata Nilsdotter Grabbe. On 9 July 1569 he married Elin [Fleming](#) a daughter of [Herman Fleming](#) and Gertrud Håkansdotter Hand.

Stålbarm was *häradshövding* (chief administrator of a [härad](#)) in [Nyslotts \(Savonlinna\) län](#) in 1583. He served in the Royal Swedish navy as a captain, and was promoted admiral of the Finnish navy in 1588. In 1590, at the beginning of the [Russo-Swedish War \(1590–1595\)](#), he was appointed supreme commander in [Narva](#), where he became governor in 1592. In addition, he became *häradshövding* of [Sexmäki \(Sääksmäki\)](#) in 1593 and of [Savolax \(Savonia\)](#) in 1594. In the same year, king [Sigismund](#) confirmed Stålbarm as his governor in Narva and also appointed him commander of all forces in Finland and [Livonia](#), after he had made Stålbarm his envoy to the [Russian tsardom](#) already in 1593. Upon the death of *översteamiral* (supreme admiral) [Clas \(Klaus\) Fleming](#) in 1597, he was given supreme command over the naval and land forces in Finland by king Sigismund and became governor of "all Finland." During the [War against Sigismund](#), he supported Sigismund against his adversary duke [Charles of Södermanland](#).

In 1598, Sigismund planned to plunge Charles in a two-fold attack, with Sigismund attacking him from the south and Stålbarm's forces from Finland and [Uppland](#) attacking from the north. Three days before Stålbarm arrived in [Stockholm](#), however, Sigismund had already been forced to agree to an unfavourable truce in the [Treaty of Linköping](#) of 28 September, after Charles had won the upper hand in the [Battle of Stångebro](#). Stålbarm retreated to Finland without the Uppland troops, who defected to Charles, Sigismund retreated to [Poland-Lithuania](#) and never returned, and Charles, who had already detained the leading loyalists at [Linköping](#), subsequently cleared the western parts of the Swedish kingdom of his opponents before he started a campaign to control the remaining loyalist strongholds in the east.

Together with [Axel Kurck](#) (Kurk), Stålbarm commanded the forces in Finland, but was taken prisoner after Charles' forces had conquered the loyalist strongholds there in September and October 1599. Along with other opposition members, Stålbarm was sentenced to death by a jury assembled from thirty-seven of Charles' followers in Åbo, but together with Kurck was spared from [decapitation](#) during the subsequent [Åbo bloodbath](#) of 10 November. Instead, Stålbarm and Kurck were transferred first to [Stockholm](#) and later to Linköping, where they were again tried and sentenced to death by a jury of 155 men during the [riksdag of the estates](#) of March 1600. Both were already led to the execution site in what became known as the [Linköping bloodbath](#), but their execution was postponed and Stålbarm remained Charles' prisoner until 1602.



# Cudgel War

The **Club War** (also **Cudgel War**, [Finnish](#) *Nuijasota*, [Swedish](#) *Klubbekriget*) was a 1596/97 peasant uprising in the kingdom of Sweden against exploitation by nobility and military in what is today [Finland](#). The name of the uprising derives from the fact that the peasants armed themselves with various blunt weapons, such as [cudgels](#), [flails](#) and [maces](#), as they were seen as the most efficient weapons against the heavily armoured enemies. The yeomen also had swords, some firearms and two cannon at their disposal. Their opponents, the troops of [Clas Eriksson Fleming](#), were professional, heavily armed and armoured men-at-arms.

The peasants took up residence in [Nokia](#) Manor and won several skirmishes against small cavalry forces, but were decisively defeated by [Clas Fleming](#) on January 1–2, 1597. A field battle had ensued at Nokia, which ended indecisively; the men-at-arms could not break the fortified positions of the yeomen nor could the yeomen defeat the men-at-arms at open. Clas Fleming then attempted a stratagem, promising the yeomen to leave their positions should they give their leaders up to Fleming. The yeomen obliged. Once they had surrendered their leaders, Clas Fleming ordered an all-out assault against the yeomen, who had left their positions. The yeomen were massacred in heaps. Their commander-in-chief, [Jaakko Ilkka](#) managed to flee, but was captured a few weeks later and beheaded with four other yeoman leaders at church of Ilmajoki. A second wave of insurgents suffered a decisive loss at [Ilmajoki](#) in the [Battle of Santavuori](#) on February 24. In total almost 3000 people died in the rebellion.

The insurgents were mostly Finnish peasants from Ostrobothnia, Northern Tavastia, and Savo. Tired of the hardships of the [Russo-Swedish War of 1590–1595](#), they were disappointed to find out that they were still required to provide food, transport, and lodging for a sizable army even after the [Treaty of Tyavzino](#). The insurgents also complained that soldiers abused the system of taxation by taking by force more than to which they were legally entitled. The events can also be seen as a part of a larger power struggle between [King Sigismund](#), whom Fleming powerfully supported, and [Duke Charles](#), who expressed sympathy for the peasants' cause but was unable to intervene militarily.



In his groundbreaking work *Nuijasota, sen syyt ja tapaukset* (1857–1859), historian and prominent [fennoman](#) [Yrjö Sakari Yrjö-Koskinen](#) saw the peasants as fighting for freedom and justice. [Albert Edelfelt](#)'s *Poltettu kylä* (1879) depicts a woman, a child, and an old man hiding behind a rock as a village burns in the background. The poet [Kaarlo Kramsu](#) praised the insurgents and lamented their defeat in patriotic poems such as *Ilkka*, *Hannu Krankka*, and

*Santavuoren tappelu*, published in *Runoelmia* (1887). After the [Finnish Civil War](#), the debate has centered around an interpretation that emphasizes Duke Charles's role in inciting the revolt, as found in [Pentti Renvall](#)'s *Kuninkaanmiehiä ja kapinoitsijoita Vaasa-kauden Suomessa* (1949); and an explanation that stresses the roots of the rebellion in class conflict, as argued by [Heikki Ylikangas](#) in *Nuijasota* (1977).

# Klaus Fleming

Baron **Clas Eriksson Fleming** ([Finnish](#): *Klaus Fleming*) (1535, [Parainen](#), [Finland](#) – April 13, 1597, [Pohja](#), Finland) was a Finnish-born member of the [Swedish nobility](#) and [admiral](#), who played an important role in [Finnish](#) and [Swedish history](#) during the [rise of Sweden as a Great Power](#). He was a trustee of Swedish kings [John III](#) and [Sigismund Vasa](#).

In 1569 Fleming became a member of the [Privy Council](#), in 1571 he was made [Lord High Admiral](#) and in 1590 [Lord High Constable](#). As the Governor of [Finland](#) and [Estonia](#) he carried the duties of the highest authority of Finland and Estonia for the [Swedish realm](#), next only to the king of Sweden. He was a strong supporter of the legitimate king of Sweden [Sigismund Vasa](#) and for that an enemy of the [duke Charles of Sudermania](#).

Fleming's father - a grandson of [Björn Ragvaldsson](#) - was the Councilor of State [Erik Fleming](#) (1487-1548), also a remarkable man and King [Gustav Vasa](#)'s [favourite](#). Fleming's sons were executed in the [Åbo Bloodbath](#) of 1599.

According to legend, Charles found the body of his old adversary Clas Fleming (commander in Finland before Stålarms and Kurck, died 1597) in a coffin in Åbo castle's chapel, where Charles pulled his beard saying "If you were alive now, your head would not be very secure." The legend inspired a painting by [Albert Edelfelt](#) in 1878, which is currently exhibited in the [Ateneum](#) museum, Helsinki.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ebba\\_Stenbock](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ebba_Stenbock)

## Ebba Stenbock

*The regent duke Charles (later king Charles IX) insulting the corpse of Klaus Fleming in the presence of Ebba Stenbock. Albert Edelfelt's painting, 1878.*



**Ebba Gustavsdotter Stenbock** (died 1614, [Finland](#)) was a Swedish [noble](#). She was the acting [governor](#) in [Turku](#) in 1597, in the period between the death of the former governor, her spouse, and before the instalment of the successor. She was imprisoned for political reasons. The sister of queen [Katarina Stenbock](#), she married [Clas Eriksson Fleming](#), (1530-1597), governor of [Finland](#), in 1573

She was noted for her fearless conduct toward Duke Charles. Her spouse was one of the strongest supporters of [Sigismund III Vasa](#) and opposed to [Charles IX of Sweden](#). After his death, Charles conquered [Turku Castle](#) from his widow Ebba Stenbock after the [Cudgel](#)

[War](#). Fleming was still not buried, and, according to [legend](#), Charles had the coffin opened to reassure himself that Fleming was indeed dead. After having identified the face of Fleming, he was to have pulled Fleming's beard with the words: "If you had been alive, your head would not have been safe", upon which Ebba Stenbock replied: "If my late husband was alive, Your Grace would never have been here."

Ebba Stenbock was placed in house arrest with her daughters, and later taken to Stockholm, where she was imprisoned. Her son, Johan Flemming, was executed in Turku in 1599.

# Åbo Bloodbath

The **Åbo Bloodbath** of 10 November 1599 was a public execution in the [Finnish](#) town of [Åbo](#) (Turku), then part of the [Kingdom of Sweden](#), in the context of the [War against Sigismund](#) and the [Club War](#). Sweden was by then in the final phase of a civil war, with one faction supporting king [Sigismund III Vasa](#), who also was [king and Grand Duke](#) of [Poland-Lithuania](#), and another faction supporting [duke Charles of Södermanland](#), the later Charles IX, Sigismund's paternal uncle. After [winning the upper hand](#) in the dispute, Charles crushed the last resistance to his rule, particularly in Finland, while Sigismund had already retreated to Poland.

The forces opposing Charles in Finland were led by [Arvid Stålbarm](#) and [Axel Kurck](#) (Kurk), who both became Charles' prisoners after the surrender of [Åbo castle](#) and further strongholds. Together with other prisoners, including two sons of Finland's previous commander [Clas \(Klaus\) Fleming](#), they were tried by a jury speedily assembled from Charles' followers, and sentenced to death. Fleming's sons and twelve others were then beheaded in Åbo's Town Hall square, while Stålbarm and Kurck were sent to [Linköping](#) where they were tried and condemned again along with other captured opposition leaders. Yet, Stålbarm and Kurck also survived the subsequent [Linköping bloodbath](#).

## *Trial and executions*

After the [Battle of Stångebro](#) had decided [the war](#) between [duke Charles](#), regent of [Sweden](#), and the Swedish king [Sigismund III Vasa](#) in Charles' favor, several fortresses in the east of the [Swedish kingdom](#) were still held by members of the noble opposition to duke Charles, who were loyal to the deposed king and/or had pursued anti-peasant actions in the [Club War](#), where Charles had sympathized with the peasants. These last strongholds of the opposition, commanded by [Arvid Stålbarm](#) and [Axel Kurck](#) (also Kurk), included [Åbo](#), [Helsingfors](#) (Helsinki) and [Viborg](#), all of which were subsequently taken in the course of Charles' Finnish campaign in the second half of 1599. When Charles' forces besieged Åbo, the defendants surrendered when assured by Charles that in the inevitable trial after the siege, they were to be tried by a diet of the estates.

Charles however quickly assembled a court of thirty-seven jurors loyal to him, and an indictment was ready by 7 November. Among the judges were the nobles Count [Mauritz Leijonhufvud](#), Count [Magnus Brahe](#), [Svante](#) and [Nils Turesson Bielke](#) of [Salstad](#), and admiral [Joakim Scheel](#); also the burghers Mickel Krank, Nils Torkelsson, Rantala Hans and Klas Thomasson. The tribunal sentenced to death a number of the indicted on 9 November.

Fourteen of those were executed on 10 November in Åbo's Town Hall Square, where they were led in a procession from their prison in [Åbo castle](#). The first to be beheaded was [Johan Fleming](#), son of [Clas \(Klaus\) Fleming](#), whose last words according to [Yrjö Koskinen](#) were a farewell to his friends and a statement about his innocence and the bloodthirst of duke Charles. [Michael Roberts](#) says that Charles "*permitted himself the private luxury*" of executing Johan in person. While this is not mentioned by Koskinen, he nevertheless reports a dispute between Johan and Charles before the executions took place, where Johan had upset Charles by remaining loyal to "his god and his king." Koskinen also says that Johan's half-brother [Olof Klasson](#) wanted to follow Johan immediately to have their blood mixed, but that he was not permitted to do so as his execution was scheduled to be the fifth.

Arvid Stålbarm and Axel Kurck, who had likewise received death sentences, were instead carried to [Linköping](#) only to be tried again in what led to the [Linköping bloodbath](#), where they were again condemned to death but reprieved.



# Kurki of Laukko

The **Kurki** or **Kurck** family, also known as the family of **Laukko**, (other versions of the name: Korke, Kurki, Kurke) is a mediievally-originated Finnish noble family that produced several historically prominent persons. It is documented in the late 14th century.

Colonel **Axel Kurck 1555-1630** was a soldier whom revolting **Cudgel men (nuijamiehet)** wanted to make their chief, but he did not consent. Axel became later military governor of the entire Finland.

[http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Axel\\_J%C3%B6nsson\\_Kurck](http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Axel_J%C3%B6nsson_Kurck)

## Axel Jönsson Kurck

**Axel Jönsson Kurck** (skrev sig själv Kurke) till Aniela, född **1555** och död **30 maj 1630**, var en svensk och finsk militär och inflytelserik adelsman.

Kurck var son till **Jöns Knutsson Kurck d. ä.** och hans andra hustru Ingeborg Tönnesdotter Tott. 1578 var han fänrik vid finländska adelsfanan, och 1581 var han befördrad till löjtnant. År 1582 utsågs Kurck till slottsloven på **Koporie slott** i **Ingermanland**. 1583 var han ryttmästare vid finska adelsfanan, och 1585 var hanryttmästare för de finska hovmän som Nils Olofsson före honom kommenderat. Kurck sändes 1586 att närvara vid fredsmötet i **Narva** 1586. 1587 utsågs han till häradshövding över Övre **Satakunta**, och 1590 blev han häradshövding även över **Vemo härad**. 1593 blev Kurck utnämnd till ståthållare på Narva slott, och 1596 blev han lagman över Karelska landssagan. Han blev av **Sigismund** 20 november 1598 utnämnd till krigsöverste över trupperna i hela Finland. 29 augusti 1599 besegrades han i ett slag i S:t Mårtens socken av hertig **Karls** trupper, och tvingades efter kapitulationen på **Viborgs slott** 22 september samma år att ge sig fången. Han var en av dem som av domstolen i **Linköping** dömdes till döden, men benådades på avrättningsplatsen och sändes i stället som fånge till **Gripsholms slott**. Han frigavs 16 september 1602, och blev generalkrigsöverste samma år den 9 december. Han fick 1604 i uppdrag att i Österbotten uppbära de medel som ständerna i **Norrköping** beviljat. 1607 erhöll Kurck **Karleby socken** i förläning, men miste sin förläning 1612. Han var fältöverste även under ryska tioåriga kriget, och deltog i Helsingfors lantdag 1616.

Kurck var gift två gånger, första gången med Carin Boije af Gennäs, och andra gången med Kerstin Hansdotter (av Lepas-släkten).

Han skall på Gripsholms slott tillsammans med **Arvid Eriksson (Stålmarm) d.y.** ha låtit rista följande inskrift på en vägg i Griptornet:

*"Anno 1600 den 3 Aprilis Bleffüe wij här insatte, Troo Gudh i alle tingh, Arffwid Ericksonn Till Lindöo och Peytz, Gud wett min lycka, Axel Korck Till Aniela, Wij haffue setted för vår troohett och lydett för våre synder, kome här uth den..."*

**LG note:** Anna Johansdotter Fleming (d. 1545, 12<sup>th</sup> great-grandmother)

Hon gifte sig med (1) **Olof Pedersson Lille (Wildeman)** , Slottsfogde. Genom äktenskapet övergick Tjusterby gård till släkten Wildeman.

Hon gifte sig med (2) **Matts Larsson Poitz**, Länsfogde i Borgå. Han var hemma från Borgå Tervik och bölev avrätta i Stockholm före 1555. (Samma som Peytz ovan?)

# Linköping Bloodbath

**The Linköping Bloodbath** ([Swedish](#): *Linköpings blodbad*) on [Maundy Thursday](#) 20 March 1600 was the public execution by beheading of five Swedish nobles in the aftermath of the [Battle of Stångebro](#) (September 1598) and the *de facto* deposition of the [Polish and Swedish](#) king [Sigismund III Vasa](#) as [king of Sweden](#). The five were advisors to [Catholic](#) Sigismund and/or political opponents of the latter's uncle and adversary, the Swedish regent [Duke Charles](#).

## *Detention, trial and execution*

King Sigismund had earlier been crowned the rightful king of Sweden after giving assurances that he would not act to aid the Catholic cause in Sweden during those late sixteenth century years of mounting religious turmoil during the [counter-reformation](#). He violated the agreement, setting off civil war in [Sweden](#). After trying to manage the Swedish situation from afar, Sigismund invaded with a mercenary army after receiving permission from the Polish legislature, and initially was successful. The turning point of his Swedish campaign was the [Battle of Stångebro](#) on 25 September 1598, also known as the Battle of Linköping, where Sigismund got trapped in an unfavourable position and had to agree to a truce with Charles. One of Charles' conditions for the truce was the handing over of [Swedish privy counsellors](#) from Sigismund's camp. Sigismund complied.

Most prominent among these Swedish senators was the Chancellor of Sweden, Erik Sparre. While Charles did not detain Sigismund as well, he forced him to agree to the [Treaty of Linköping](#) and to agree that their dispute would be settled by a future [Riksdag of the Estates](#) in [Stockholm](#). Sigismund retreated to the port of [Kalmar](#), but instead of sailing to Stockholm, he took his sister [Anna](#), left for [Danzig](#) in the [Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth](#) and never returned to Sweden again. Charles then crushed the remaining military opposition from forces loyal to Sigismund and those nobles who had previously taken control of [Finland](#) in the [Club War](#). During these campaigns, some nobles were tried, executed or detained. Executions, including the so-called [Åbo bloodbath](#), were carried out through [decapitation](#) or [impalement](#), Charles himself executed a son of his adversary [Clas Fleming](#).

When in March 1600 a riksdag met in [Linköping](#), Charles, who was meanwhile created omnipotent ruler of Sweden and had repeatedly been offered the Swedish crown, set up a court to try his remaining prisoners. The court, headed by [Axel Leijonhufvud](#) and [Erik Brahe](#), consisted of 155 members, with Charles himself being the prosecutor. Tried were six nobles captured in Stångebro and two Finnish nobles captured later, including [Arvid Stålbom](#), who in 1598 had intended to aid Sigismund in Stångebro, but aborted the action when his army had reached Stockholm from Finland only after Sigismund had accepted the beforementioned truce. The other Finnish noble, [Axel Kurck](#), was sentenced to death along with Stålbom in Finland already, but the verdict had been suspended to again try them in Linköping. These eight noblemen were eventually sentenced to death, but three of them were pardoned.

# Gustaf Banér

*Gustaf Banér*



**Gustaf Banér** (May 19, 1547–March 20, 1600) was a Swedish nobleman and member of the [Privy Council of Sweden](#).

Gustaf Axelsson Banér was born at [Djursholm Castle](#), the son of the Privy Council Axel Nilsson and Margareta Pedersdotter (Bielke). Gustaf Banér studied at the [University of Rostock](#), took part in the insurgence against King [Eric XIV](#) and he was appointed member of the Privy Council in 1569 by King [John III](#). He remained favoured by King John for a long time and was entrusted with several diplomatic missions, such as the royal election in [Poland](#), in 1587, when King John's son [Sigismund III](#) was elected.

He was then appointed as [stadtholder](#) in [Reval](#), where there was a meeting in 1589 during which there was a rupture between Banér and the members of the privy council on the one side and King John III on the other.

In 1592, when Sigismund III had succeeded John III as the [king of Sweden](#), Banér initially supported [Duke Charles](#) in his power struggle against Sigismund. Banér's ambition was to ensure more power for the [high nobility](#) in the government. When the duke's actions had led to a rupture with most of the members of the Privy council, Banér escaped to [Denmark](#) from where he tried to incite a Swedish rebellion.



He joined King Sigismund III upon his arrival in Sweden in 1598, but after the [Battle of Stångebro](#), Banér was handed over to King Charles. Banér was one of five noblemen sentenced to death and executed in [Linköping](#). This event, at the main square of Linköping on March 20, 1600, became known as the [Linköping Bloodbath](#).

He was married on October 8, 1581 to Kristina Svantesdotter Sture (1559-1619), daughter of the Privy Council and Riksmarsalken, [Svante Sture](#) the Younger (1517–1567). Her mother was [Märta Erikdotter Leijonhufvud](#) and thus she was a first cousin to King Eric XIV, King John III and King [Charles IX of Sweden](#). Gustav and Kristina had a total of 14 children.

*Last farewell to Gustaf Axelsson Baner when he is beheaded in Linköping Square*



# Polish–Swedish wars

The **Polish–Swedish Wars** were a series of wars between the [Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth](#) and [Sweden](#). Broadly construed, the term refers to a series of wars between 1563 and 1721. More narrowly, it refers two particular wars between 1600 and 1629. These are the wars included under the broader use of the term:

- the 16th century conflict sometimes referred to as the [Livonian War](#) (1558–1583)
- the [War against Sigismund](#), in 1598
- the [war of 1600–1629](#) (sometimes considered a part of the larger trans-European [Thirty Years' War](#)) which was twice interrupted by periods of [truce](#) and can be divided into:
  - the [war of 1600–1611](#)
  - the [war of 1617–1618](#)
  - the [war of 1621–1625](#)
  - the [war of 1626–1629](#)

# War against Sigismund

**The war against Sigismund** (*Kriget mot Sigismund*) was a war between Duke Charles, later King [Charles IX](#) and [Sigismund](#), King of [Sweden](#) and [Poland](#). Lasting from 1598 to 1599, it is also called **War of Deposition against Sigismund**, since the focus of the conflicts was the attempt to depose the latter from the throne of Sweden. The war eventually resulted in the deposition of Sigismund, with Duke Charles taking over the government and later also acceding to the throne.

When [King John III](#) died in 1592 his son Sigismund, King of [Poland](#) since 1587, acceded to the Swedish throne. Then conflicts arose. Duke Charles, the oldest living son of [Gustav Vasa](#), did not approve the accession of Sigismund, his nephew and a Catholic, to the government of a realm that could just as well be his.

After Sigismund had been crowned King of Sweden February 19, 1594, he decided that no [Parliaments](#) (*riksdagar*) could be summoned without the King's consent. Despite this, Charles summoned a Parliament at [Söderköping](#) in autumn 1595, at which he managed to get his will through. The Duke was appointed [Regent](#) with "the advice of the Council", meaning that he was to govern Sweden together with the [Privy Council](#) during the King's absence from the Realm. Soon afterwards, the nobility of [Finland](#), led by the Sigismund-appointed Governor, [Klaus Fleming](#), rejected these decisions. They sympathised with the King and considered Charles a rebel. As a counterattack, Charles instigated a rebellion against Fleming, the [Cudgel War](#), among the farmers in [Ostrobothnia](#).

In February 1598 Sigismund assembled an army consisting of merely 5,000 men. A larger army had been proposed, but had been dismissed since Sigismund expected Swedish forces to join him, and also did not want to come into conflict with them.

The advisers and the King expected military support from [Finland](#) and [Estonia](#) (homes of the Swedish gentry formerly commanded by [baron Klaus Fleming](#)). They also wanted help from [Denmark–Norway](#) and pro-Sigismund parts of Sweden. The diplomat Laski was dispatched, but Denmark did not show any interest.

Hence, a coordinated attack by the Finns and Sigismund's Polish soldiers could not be undertaken. The Finnish soldiers, commanded by Governor [Arvid Eriksson \(Stålarb\)](#), landed in [Uppland](#) one week ahead of Sigismund's landing. Duke Charles was on his way to [Kalmar](#) when the Finns invaded Uppland. He immediately rode towards [Stockholm](#) to defend the city.

The morning of September 25, 1598 the armies clashed in a major engagement at the [Battle of Stångebro](#). Duke Charles won a decisive victory which forced Sigismund to agree to harsh terms. Charles demanded that the King send home his entire army, but that he himself was to stay and await a Parliament. Also, a number of Swedes who had sided with Sigismund were captured.

Sigismund was officially deposed from the throne of Sweden by a Parliament held in Stockholm on July 24, 1599. In February 1600, Duke Charles summoned the Estates of the Realm to Linköping. The Estates elected Duke Charles as King [Charles IX of Sweden](#). The consequences for those who had supported Sigismund were devastating. The most prominent among them were killed by the new King, in what was called the "[Linköping Bloodbath](#)".

During the winter and spring of 1600, Charles also occupied the Swedish part of Estonia, as the castle commanders had shown sympathies towards Sigismund. This occupation led to the [Second Polish-Swedish War](#).

# Battle of Stångebro

The **Battle of Stångebro** or **Battle of Linköping** took place at [Linköping, Sweden](#) on September 25, 1598, and effectively ended the [personal union](#) between Sweden and the [Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth](#), that had only existed since 1592. In the battle, an army of ca 8,000-12,000 commanded by [Duke Charles](#) defeated a mixed force of ca 5,000-8,000 consisting of an invading army of [mercenaries](#) in the king's employ and diverse but poorly co-ordinated supporting Swedish noblemen's forces commanded by King of both [Sweden](#) and the [Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth](#) [Sigismund III Vasa](#), who was acting to maintain and restore his [personal union](#) against anti-Catholic forces in Lutheran Sweden.



The battle was the beginning of the seven decades long [Polish-Swedish Wars](#), which eventually destroyed the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, at the time, arguably the largest [nation state](#) in Europe. Like the [Thirty Years' war](#) which also involved Sweden, under the surface, the dynastic struggles were rooted firmly in religious strife between [Protestants](#) and [Roman Catholics](#).

Sigismund was captured during the battle, but as the Polish-Lithuanian crowned head of state, allowed to return to the commonwealth. He'd engendered the civil war by violating his pledge to not interfere in religious matters in Sweden, nor to further the Catholic [cause](#) in Sweden.

## Background

When King [John III of Sweden](#) died in 1592, his son Sigismund inherited the throne, despite his [Catholic](#) upbringing and despite already being King of Poland-Lithuania. However, he was refused coronation unless he agreed to the conditions of a clerical convention in [Uppsala](#), making Sweden decisively [Protestant](#). The debate was resolved in 1594, and freedom of religion was proclaimed, although only Protestants could hold high offices. The [Swedish nobility](#) also sought greater freedom and privileges. They were not granted these, but in the absence of the king, who spent most of his time in [Poland](#), Sweden was to be ruled jointly by the [Privy Council](#) and Sigismund's uncle, Duke Charles. At the [Riksdag](#) in [Söderköping](#), summoned against the will of the king, Duke Charles was elected [regent](#) in the king's absence. This was protested by Sigismund and those nobles loyal to him (mostly found in [Finland](#) after the king's governor, [Klaus Fleming](#), had put down a [peasant uprising](#) there).

Duke Charles sought to end the conflict by military means, but gained little support within the Privy Council. The new Riksdag he summoned at [Arboga](#) in 1597 – again despite the king's orders – saw few participants, and only one from the Privy Council. Even so, he did not receive support for military action, but initiated it nonetheless. Parts of southern Sweden were taken. Several of the Privy Council members fled to Poland to convince Sigismund to take counteraction.

During the summer of 1598, Sigismund's fleet took back [Kalmar](#) and continued northward. The force won a battle against the troops of Duke Charles at [Stegeborg](#) but soon found itself encircled and retired to



Linköping. The support Sigismund had counted on from the Swedish people did materialize to some extent, splitting the Swedish armed forces in two hostile fractions.

## ***The battle***

Stångebro is an area around two old bridges over the river [Stångån](#), *Stora Stångebro* and *Lilla Stångebro*. Today it is a central part of Linköping, but in the 16th century the city did not extend east of the river. When the forces of Duke Charles approached from the east on the morning of September 25, Sigismund's army charged out of the city and met them at these bridges. A thick [fog](#) was instrumental at hiding the troop movements from their respective enemies. Both armies included small sections of [cavalry](#).

The duke was the first to attack. He won a quick victory at Stora Stångebro and moved over his troops to Lilla Stångebro, where Sigismund's forces had reached the eastern shore and defended a good position. The duke's forces retired up a hill, where severe fighting followed. Sigismund's cavalry did not engage in this fight, which led to a certain victory for Duke Charles.

At this point, Sigismund asked for a [truce](#), which was accepted. According to propaganda from Duke Charles, his losses were light, only ca. 40 dead and slightly more than 200 wounded while King Sigismund lost 2,000 soldiers, many of them drowned in the river while they retreated.

## ***Aftermath***

In negotiations after the battle, Charles demanded that Sigismund to send home his troops and surrender the Privy Council members loyal to him, and that the king himself stay to attend the Riksdagen. Sigismund chose to leave the country instead, sailing back to Poland, but surrendering the Privy Council members in question.

Soon, only Kalmar was held by the king's people. When it fell on May 12, 1599, Duke Charles had control over the entire country. When he asked the Riksdagen at Linköping in 1600 for support as regent, it answered by proclaiming him king. He did not begin to use the title himself however, under the name [Charles IX](#), until 1603. This Riksdagen also appointed a court to judge those aristocrats who had fought with Sigismund in the battle. Eight were sentenced to death; five of the executions were carried out. This event, at the main square of Linköping on March 20, 1600, is known as the [Linköping Bloodbath](#).

With Sigismund's loss of the Swedish crown, the [Swedish-Polish personal union](#) was dissolved. A deep conflict between Sweden and Poland emerged; the nations would clash many times during the [Polish-Swedish War](#), not to be resolved until the [Great Northern War](#). Also, most remaining Catholic elements of Swedish society were wiped out, and Sweden became one of the foremost advocates of Protestantism, not least important during the [Thirty Years' War](#).

# Charles IX of Sweden

**Charles IX of Sweden** also **Carl**, [Swedish](#): *Karl IX* (4 October 1550 – 30 October 1611) was [King of Sweden](#) from 1604 until his death. He was the youngest son of [King Gustav I of Sweden](#) and his second wife, [Margaret Leijonhufvud](#), brother of [Eric XIV](#) and [John III](#), and uncle of [Sigismund I/III](#), king of both Sweden and [Poland](#).



It was due entirely to him that Sigismund *as king-elect* was forced to confirm the resolutions at the [Uppsala Synod](#) in 1593, thereby recognizing the fact that Sweden was essentially a [Lutheran](#) Protestant state.

Necessity compelled him to work with the clergy and people rather than the gentry; hence it was that the [Rikens ständer](#) (Riksdag) assumed under his regency government a power and an importance which it had never possessed before. In 1595, the Riksdag of [Söderköping](#) elected Charles regent, and his attempt to force [Klas Flemming](#), governor of [Österland](#) (Finland of the day), to submit to his authority, rather than to that of the king, provoked a civil war. Charles sought to increase his power and the king attempted to manage the situation by diplomacy over several years, until fed up, Sigismund got permission from the Commonwealth's legislature to pursue the matters dividing his Swedish subjects, and invaded with a mercenary army.

Technically Charles was, without doubt, guilty of high treason, and the considerable minority of all classes which adhered to Sigismund on his landing in Sweden in 1598 indisputably behaved like loyal subjects. In the events that followed, despite some initial successes, Sigismund lost the crucial [Battle of Stångebro](#), and was captured himself, as well as forced to deliver up certain Swedish noblemen who were named traitor by Charles and the Rikens ständer.

*Statue of Charles IX in Karlstad.*



Finally, the Riksdag at Linköping, 24 February 1600 declared that Sigismund abdicated the Swedish throne, that duke Charles was recognized as the sovereign. He was declared king as **Karl IX** (anglicized as Charles IX). Charles's short reign was one of uninterrupted warfare. The hostility of Poland and the breakup of [Russia](#) involved him in two overseas contests for the possession of [Livonia](#) and [Ingria](#), while his pretensions to claim [Lapland](#) brought upon him a war with [Denmark](#) in the last year of his reign.

## Polish–Swedish War (1600–1611)

This conflict between the [Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth](#) and Sweden can trace its roots to the [War against Sigismund](#), where [Sigismund III Vasa](#), at one time king of both the Commonwealth and Sweden, lost the throne of Sweden during the [civil war](#) (1597–1599). Few Commonwealth troops participated in this conflict, and it is mostly regarded as a Swedish civil war, not part of the Polish-Swedish wars. After early stalemate, Sigismund was defeated in the [Battle of Stångebro](#) in 1598 and by 1599, Sigismund was dethroned by his uncle, [Duke Charles](#) and forced to retreat to the Commonwealth. This also spelled the end of the short-lived [personal union](#) between Poland and Sweden (the [Polish-Swedish union](#)).

In 1601 Lithuanian [hetman Jan Karol Chodkiewicz](#) and Polish [chancellor Jan Zamoyski](#), recalled from Moldavia, arrived in [Lithuania](#) to fight the Swedish incursion, which now threatened not only the Estonia promised by Sigismund, but older Polish territories south of it. Chodkiewicz and Radziwiłł defeated the Swedes in the first major open battle of this war at Kokenhusen (modern [Koknese](#)) in early 1601 (see [battle of Kokenhausen](#)). Soon afterwards, Jan Zamoyski, fresh from his victory against the Moldavians, came in to help against the Swedes, with 12,000 men, and 50 artillery pieces, 15 of which were classified as heavy. Charles was unable to deal effectively with such an army and was forced to retreat. However, during the retreat he left sizable numbers of defenders at various captured fortresses in Livonia. Zamoyski now took to siege warfare instead of chasing the retreating King, soon capturing [Wolmar](#) (Valmiera) and [Fellin](#) (Viljandi, Felin). By 1602, the Swedes were only left with control of [Reval](#) (Tallinn, Talin, Rewl), Pernau ([Pärnu](#), Parnau, Parnawa), Hapsal ([Haapsalu](#), Hapsalu) and Dorpat ([Tartu](#)). However, Zamoyski, now 60 years old, had fallen ill and Chodkiewicz took command and laid siege to Dorpat. At Wesenberg ([Rakvere](#)), he defeated a Swedish reinforcement force under [Arvid Eriksson Stålar](#) sent to relieve the Swedish troops in Dorpat. The town surrendered in April 1603.

Chodkiewicz was appointed acting commander in chief of Lithuania forces after Zamoyski's return south in 1602 (Zamoyski would never return to lead the armies, his health deteriorated and he would die in 1605). Chodkiewicz, despite inadequate supplies and little support from the Commonwealth [Sejm](#) ([parliament](#)) and King [Sigismund III Vasa](#), brilliantly distinguished himself, capturing fortress after fortress and repulsing the duke of [Södermanland](#), afterwards [Charles IX](#), from [Riga](#), however Reval, Pernau, and Narwa ([Narva](#), Narew) remained under Swedish control. In 1604 he captured Dorpat, defeated the Swedish generals near Weissenstein (nowdays [Paide](#)) (often winning against superior odds, like at Weissenstein where he had only 2300 men and defeated a 6,000 man Swedish force; Chodkiewicz wrote in his memoirs this was a decisive battle and one of his greatest victories, with Polish-Lithuanian losses 81 dead, 100 wounded and Swedish losses approaching half of their army).

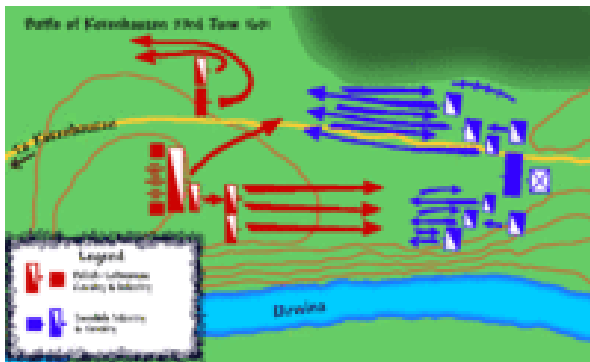


# Battle of Kokenhausen

The **Battle of Kokenhausen** was a major battle opening the [Polish–Swedish War \(1600–1611\)](#). It took place on the 23 June 1601 near [Koknese](#) in [Livonia](#) (now in [Latvia](#)). In the battle, Polish forces defeated the Swedish relief force and captured the besieging force, relieving the Polish garrison. The battle is notable as one of the greatest victories of the [Polish hussars](#), who defeated their numerically superior [Swedish](#) adversaries.

The Polish relief army under [Krzysztof Mikołaj "the Thunderbolt" Radziwiłł](#) arrived around 11 May and in turn started to besiege the Swedes; it grew from under 1,000 to over 4,000 by mid-June. At the same time, other Polish detachments reinforced nearby Polish strongholds and harassed the Swedish units. The Swedes decided to prioritize the relief of the Koknese siege force. A Swedish relief force of about 5,000 under [Carl Gyllenhielm](#) arrived on the morning of 23 June and attempted to break the Polish encirclement.

*The battle*



The field of battle was raised along its edge with the Daugava for some one and a half kilometers to a width of about half a kilometer with the side nearest the river being steep and falling more gently towards the field.

Gyllenhielm had about 900 [infantry](#), 4000 [cavalry](#) and 17 [cannons](#). Radziwiłł left about 500 infantry with orders to maintain the siege, and took the field with the rest (around 3,000 men, of which some 400 were infantry, 1000 [Polish hussars](#), and 9 cannons).

Poles first broke the Swedish right flank, and then defeated the Swedish counterattack. Both the hussar charges and artillery fire proved decisive in this engagement.

The Poles lost about 200 men, the Swedes - 2,000 (including almost all of their infantry). After the battle, the 2,000 strong Swedish force besieging the Koknese castle, which took no part in the battle, surrendered to the Poles. Swedish siege artillery was also captured.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl\\_Gyllenhielm](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Gyllenhielm)

## Carl Gyllenhielm

*Carl Carlsson Gyllenhielm, by Jacob Heinrich Elbfas* •



Baron **Carl Carlsson Gyllenhielm** (1574–1650) was a [Swedish](#) soldier and politician. He was appointed [Field Marshal](#) in 1616, [Privy Councilor](#) in 1617, [Governor General](#) of [Ingria](#) in 1617 and [Lord High Admiral](#) in 1620. He was an illegitimate son of Duke Carl, later King [Charles IX of Sweden](#), and Karin Nilsdotter, the daughter of a clergyman from [Östergötland](#). His descendants are now located in Sweden and the United States.

## De la Gardie Campaign

The **De la Gardie Campaign** refers to the actions of a 15,000-strong Swedish military unit, commanded by [Jacob De la Gardie](#) and [Evert Horn](#) in alliance with the [Russian](#) commander [Mikhail Skopin-Shuisky](#) against the [Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth](#) in the [Polish–Muscovite War \(1605–1618\)](#). The campaign was a result of an alliance between [Charles IX of Sweden](#) and [Vasili IV of Russia](#), made in [Viborg](#) in 1609, whereby the latter promised to cede the [County of Kexholm](#) to Sweden.

The combined Russo-Swedish forces set out from [Novgorod](#) late in 1609 and marched towards [Moscow](#), relieving the [Siege of Troitse-Sergiyeva Lavra](#) on their way. They dispersed the supporters of [False Dmitry II](#), who maintained an alternative court in [Tushino](#) near Moscow and challenged the authority of Vasily IV. In the aftermath, some of the Tushino boyars summoned [Wladyslaw IV](#) to lay his claim to the Russian throne, while Skopin-Shuisky was poisoned at the behest of his uncle and rival, Prince [Dmitry Shuisky](#).

When arrived to Moscow in early 1610 this Swedish-Finnish army unit suppressed the rebellion in Moscow organised against Tsar and took control over Moscow.

In June 1610, De la Gardie and Dmitry Shuisky departed from Moscow in order to lift [Żółkiewski's Siege of Smolensk](#). The campaign ended with most of [De la Gardie's](#) forces being destroyed by the Polish hetman [Stanisław Żółkiewski](#) at the [Battle of Klushino](#) in 1610. The De la Gardie Campaign can be considered a prelude to the [Ingrian War](#).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Klushino](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Klushino)

## Battle of Klushino

The **Battle of Klushino** (**Battle of Kluszyn**) was fought on 4 July 1610, between forces of the [Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth](#) and [Grand Duchy of Moscow](#) during the [Polish-Muscovite War](#), part of Russia's [Time of Troubles](#).

*Battle of Klushino*



Commonwealth forces numbering about 4,000 men (of which about 80 percent were the famous 'winged' [hussars](#)) under [Hetman Stanisław Żółkiewski](#) defeated a numerically superior force of about 35,000 - 40,000 Muscovites under [Dmitry Shuisky](#), [Andrew Golitsyn](#) and [Danilo Mezetski](#), including about 5,000 - 10,000 [mercenary](#) units temporarily allied to Muscovy, under the command of [Jacob De la Gardie](#), mostly Finnish and Swedish.

Commonwealth forces surrounded the enemy two camps (Muscovite and foreign mercenaries had separate ones). Further, the mercenaries who took positions in the forest were

surrounded as well. However, the Muscovite fortified camp, filled with some still unbloodied troops (outnumbering the exhausted Commonwealth force) was a serious obstacle.

Żółkiewski then tried [negotiations](#) and succeeded in that regard brilliantly. Abandoned by the Muscovites, the foreign mercenaries entered negotiations with the Commonwealth troops and eventually surrendered, having reached satisfactory conditions. They were allowed to withdraw under the condition that they would not enlist with the Muscovite state against the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth again. Several hundred mercenaries chose to switch sides, enlisting with the Commonwealth army.

# Battle of Kirchholm



*A 1630 painting by Pieter Snayers*

The **Battle of Kirchholm** (27 September 1605, or 17 September in the [Old Style](#) calendar then in use in Protestant countries) was one of the major battles in the [Polish-Swedish War of 1600-1611](#). The battle was decided in 20 minutes by the devastating charge of Polish-Lithuanian [cavalry](#), the [Winged Hussars](#). The battle ended in the decisive victory of Polish-Lithuanian forces, and is remembered as one of the greatest triumphs of Commonwealth cavalry.

The Swedish [reiters](#) were beaten back on both wings and the infantry in the centre was attacked from three sides simultaneously. Quickly, with Swedish horsemen running back into their own infantry, the Swedes were in panic, and the whole army collapsed in flight. It was at this point that the Swedes suffered their heaviest casualties.

The fighting lasted barely 20 to 30 minutes, yet the Swedish defeat was utter and complete. The army of [Charles IX](#) had lost at least half, perhaps as much as two-thirds, its original strength. The Polish-Lithuanian losses numbered only about 100 dead and 200 wounded, although the Hussars, in particular, lost a large part of their trained battle horses.

As in all crushing victories in this period, the larger part of the Swedish losses were suffered during the retreat, made more difficult by the dense forests and marshes on the route back to [Riga](#). The Lithuanians and Poles spared few. Polish-Lithuanian casualties were light, in large part due to the speed of the victory. During the hussar's charges it was the horses that took the greatest damage, the riders being largely protected by the body and heads of their horses.

*After the battle of Kirchholm by Januarius Suchodolski*



After the defeat, the Swedish king was forced to abandon the [siege](#) of [Riga](#) and withdraw by ship back across the [Baltic Sea](#) to [Sweden](#) and to relinquish control of northern [Latvia](#) and [Estonia](#). However, the Commonwealth proved unable to exploit the victory fully because there was no money for the troops, who had not been paid for months. Without pay they could not buy food or fodder for their horses or replenish their military supplies, and so the campaign faltered. An additional factor was the large number of trained horses lost during the battle, which proved difficult to replace.

A truce was eventually signed in 1611, but by 1617 war broke out again, and finally in 1621 the new Swedish king, [Gustavus Adolphus](#),

landed near [Riga](#) and took the city with a brief siege, wiping away - in Swedish eyes - much of the shame suffered at Kirchholm.



# The Siege of Pskov

By the 14th century, the town functioned as the capital of a [de-facto sovereign republic](#). Its most powerful force was the merchants who brought the town into the [Hanseatic League](#). Pskov's independence was formally recognized by Novgorod in 1348. Several years later, the [veche](#) promulgated a law code (called the Pskov Charter), which was one of the principal sources of the [all-Russian law code](#) issued in 1497.

For Russia, the [Pskov Republic](#) was a bridge towards [Europe](#). For Europe, it was a western outpost of Russia and a subject of numerous attacks throughout its history.

The [Pskov Krom](#) (or Kremlin) withstood twenty-six sieges in the 15th century alone. At one point, five stone walls ringed it, making the city practically impregnable. A local school of [icon-painting](#) flourished, and local masons were considered the best in Russia. Many peculiar features of [Russian architecture](#) were first introduced in Pskov.

*Siege of Pskov* by [Stefan Batory](#), by [Karl Brullov](#)



In 1510, the city fell to [Muscovite](#) forces. The deportation of noble families to [Moscow](#) is a subject of [Rimsky-Korsakov's](#) [opera](#) [Pskovityanka](#) (1872). As the second largest city of the Grand Duchy of Moscow, Pskov still attracted enemy armies. Most famously, it withstood a [prolonged siege](#) by a 50,000-strong [Polish](#) army during the final stage of the [Livonian War](#) (1581–1582). The king of Poland [Stefan Batory](#) undertook some thirty-one attacks to storm the city, which was defended mainly by civilians. Even after one of the city walls was broken, the Pskovians managed to fill the gap and

repel the attack. "It's amazing how the city reminds me of Paris", wrote one of the Frenchmen present at Batory's siege.

# Evert Horn af Kanckas

**Evert Horn** (June 11, 1585 – July 30, 1615) was a [Swedish](#) soldier. He was born in [Haapsalu](#). He was appointed Governor (*Ståthållare*) of [Narva](#) in 1613, and [Field Marshal](#) in 1614. He was killed by a bullet during the early days of the Swedish siege of [Pskov](#).

*Evert Horns och hans maka Margareta Finckes sarkofag i Åbo domkyrka*



**Evert Karlsson [Horn af Kanckas](#)**, född [11 juni 1585](#) på [Hapsals](#) slott, [Estland](#), död [30 juli 1615](#) vid Pskov, Ryssland, svensk militär, [ståthållare](#) i [Narva](#) 1613, [fältmarskalk](#) 1614. Son av riksrådet [Carl Henriksson Horn](#) af Kanckas och Agneta von Dellwig, bror till fältmarskalken [Gustaf Karlsson Horn](#) och far till fältmarskalken [Gustaf Evertsson Horn](#),

Liksom bröderna [Gustaf Karlsson Horn](#), [Henrik Horn](#) och [Klas Horn](#) hade Evert Horn fått en vårdad uppfostran och ansågs efter tidens fordringar för lärd. Det fält, där han företrädesvis utmärkte sig, var dock krigets. Han anställdes tidigt i krigstjänst, men framträdde först egentligen i [Gustav](#)

[II Adolfs](#) krig med [Ryssland](#). På det mest lysande sätt införlivade han här sitt namn i och med det [De la Gardieska fälttåget](#). Han steg inom ovanligt kort tid från överstelöjtnant till [generallöjtnant](#) och general[ståthållare](#) över [Narva](#), [Ivangorod](#), [Jama](#) och [Koporie](#) samt slutligen [1614](#) till [fältmarskalk](#). Dödsjuten vid ett av [ryssarna](#) verkställt utfall ur [Pskov](#) den [30 juli 1615](#). Han begravdes i konungens närvaro i [Kankaskoret](#) i Åbo domkyrka 25 februari 1616. I kapellet över hans grift uppsattes hans i striderna vunna segerfanor.

Tapper och modig i striden, ägde Evert Horn tillika [fältherrens](#) förmåga att beräkna och ordna samt utvecklade en människokärlek, större än den, man i allmänhet finner hos dessa tiders krigare. När han [1609](#) hade intagit [Staraja Russa](#), under De la Gardies tåg mot [Moskva](#), föll en mängd fångar, synnerligen kvinnor, i hans hand och dessa hade otvivelaktigt varit förlorade, om inte Horn tagit dem under sitt beskydd och räddat dem undan de segrande krigarnas våldsamheter.



Alltid utsatte han sig för de största farorna och var jämt den främste bland förtrupperna, så att De la Gardie skrev hem "att ehuru alla under kriget förhållit sig som ärliga karlar, så var det dock herr Evert, som gjort det mesta till saken."

Emellan båda dessa stora män utvecklade sig också ett förhållande, som hör till de vackra dragen i bådas historia. Inte en skymt av avund fläckar nämligen vänskapen mellan De la Gardie och Horn, och när illviljan hotade den förre med ofärd, togs han i försvar och räddades av den senare.

# Ingrian War 1610 -1617

The **Ingrian War** between [Sweden](#) and [Russia](#), which lasted between 1610 and 1617 and can be seen as part of Russia's [Time of Troubles](#), is mainly remembered for the attempt to put a Swedish duke on the Russian throne. It ended with a large Swedish territorial gain in the [Treaty of Stolbovo](#) which laid an important foundation to Sweden's [Age of Greatness](#).

## *Prelude*

During Russia's [Time of Troubles](#), [Charles IX of Sweden](#) sent an expeditionary corps under [Jacob De la Gardie](#) to capture the Russian fortress of [Old Ladoga](#). On hearing about their arrival to [Ingria](#), the [Novgorodians](#) asked the king to install one of his sons — [Carl Filip](#) or [Gustavus Adolphus](#) — as their monarch and on this understanding submitted the city to De la Gardie.

[Vasily IV of Russia](#), besieged in [Moscow](#) by the [Tushino](#) gang and driven to despair by the [ongoing Polish intervention](#), then entered an alliance with Charles IX, who was also [waging war against Poland](#). The tsar promised to cede [Korela Fortress](#) to Sweden in recompense for military support against [False Dmitry II](#) and the Poles. Thereupon De la Gardie joined his forces with the Russian commander [Mikhail Skopin-Shuisky](#) and marched from Novgorod towards [Moscow](#) in order to relieve the tsar.

Sweden's involvement into the Russian affairs gave [Sigismund III Vasa](#) a pretext to declare [war on Russia](#). The Poles engaged the combined Russo-Swedish forces [at Klushino](#) and destroyed most of the Russian force; the Swedish mercenaries taking part in the [De la Gardie Campaign](#) (July 1610) surrendered. The battle had serious consequences for Russia, as the tsar was deposed by [boyars](#) and the Poles occupied [the Kremlin](#).

## *Fighting*

In the meantime, Gustavus Adolphus succeeded to the Swedish throne. The young king decided to press his brother's claim to the Russian throne even after the Poles had been expelled from Moscow by a patriotic uprising of 1612 and [Mikhail Romanov](#) had been elected a new tsar.

While the Swedish statesmen envisaged the creation of a Trans-Baltic dominion extending northwards to [Archangelsk](#) and eastwards to [Vologda](#), De la Gardie and other Swedish soldiers, still holding Novgorod and Ingria, saw the war as a reaction for their forces not receiving payment for their succour during the [De la Gardie Campaign](#).

In 1613 they advanced towards [Tikhvin](#) and laid a siege to the city, but were repelled. The Russian counter-offensive failed to regain Novgorod, however. The Russian tsar refused to commit his troops to battle and the war lumbered on until 1614, when the Swedes captured [Gdov](#).

The following year they laid siege to [Pskov](#) but Russian generals Morozov and Buturlin held their own until 27 February 1617, when the [Treaty of Stolbovo](#) stripped Russia of its access to the [Baltic Sea](#) and awarded to Sweden the province of [Ingria](#) with the townships of [Ivangorod](#), [Jama](#), [Koporye](#) and [Noteborg](#). Novgorod and Gdov were to be restituted to Russia.

As a result of the war, Russia was [denied access to the sea](#) for about a century, despite its persistent efforts to reverse the situation.



# Jacob De la Gardie

Field Marshal and Count **Jacob Pontusson De la Gardie** ([Reval](#), 20 June 1583 - [Stockholm](#), 22 August 1652) was a [statesman](#) and a [soldier](#) of the [Swedish Empire](#).

Jacob De la Gardie in 1606



He commanded the Swedish forces in [Russia](#) and against the [Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth](#). He also served as one of the five [regents](#) jointly ruling Sweden during the minority of [Queen Christina](#).

Jacob [De la Gardie](#) was born in [Reval](#) (today [Tallinn](#)), [Estonia](#) (then part of the [Swedish Empire](#)), as a son of [Pontus De la Gardie](#) and [Sofia Johansdotter Gyllenhielm](#), the illegitimate daughter of king [John III of Sweden](#). His mother died giving birth, and his father perished two years later in [Narva](#). Jacob was raised in [Finland](#) (then part of [Sweden proper](#)) by his grandmother [Karin Hansdotter](#), the mistress of king John III.

As a young adult, De la Gardie was held prisoner in [Poland](#) for four years, together with [Carl Gyllenhielm](#). After being released, De la Gardie took part of the [Dutch Revolt](#) as a volunteer.

During the [Polish-Russian War \(1605-1618\)](#), Sweden signed an alliance with tsar [Vasili IV of Russia](#) in 1609. Sweden promised to send troops to the tsar and gained, in return, the [County of Kexholm](#). De la Gardie was put in command of the Swedish force, which consisted of mostly mercenaries, but Swedish and Finnish soldiers as well. This campaign, which eventually took De la Gardie and his troops all the way to Moscow, is known as the [De la Gardie Campaign](#). It ended with a devastating defeat at the Battle of Klushino in the summer of 1610, from which De la Gardie had to retreat.

Not long thereafter, the [Ingrian War](#) between Sweden and Russia was initiated, during which De la Gardie played a significant part militarily. In 1617, De la Gardie became the chief Swedish negotiator at the [Treaty of Stolbovo](#) that ended the Ingrian War, whereby [Sweden](#) was able to secure important territorial concessions from Russia, effectively [closing off Russia from access](#) to the Baltic Sea.

After 1621, De la Gardie took part in the [Polish-Swedish War](#) against his mother's half-brother King [Sigismund III of Poland](#) (former king of Sweden) in [Livonia](#), but he was recalled after serving as commander in chief between 1626 and 1628.

The city of [Jakobstad](#) in Finland is named after him.



## Trivia

- During the De la Gardie Campaign, the Finnish soldiers nicknamed their commander *Laiska-Jaakko* ("Lazy Jacob"). This name is still widely remembered in Finland.
- Due to his campaign in 1610, the fighting unit consisting of Swedish and Finnish soldiers remain the only ones that have occupied Moscow as victors.

## Polish–Swedish War (1621–1625)

Having signed the [Treaty of Stolbovo](#) ending their [Ingrian War](#) with [Russia](#) in 1617, the Swedes under king [Gustav II Adolf](#) (Gustavus Adolphus, hailed as saviour of [Protestant](#) Europe) [expanded their gains in their previous war](#) with the [Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth](#), in the disputed [Livonia](#) region, taking [Dünamünde](#) and [Pernau](#) in 1617. Then, when the truce from that war expired in November 1620, Gustav Adolf succeeded in taking the city of [Riga](#) after a few weeks of siege. The Commonwealth, occupied by a serious war with [Ottoman Empire](#) (battles of [Cecora](#) and [Chocim](#)) was unable to send significant forces to stop Gustav Adolf, and was forced to sign a truce favorable to Sweden. The Commonwealth was forced to cede [Livonia](#) north of the Dvina (Düna) river, and retained only a nominal control over Riga. A new [truce in Mitau](#) ([Jelgava](#), Mitawa) was signed and lasted from November 1622 to March 1625.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish%E2%80%93Swedish\\_War\\_\(1626%E2%80%931629\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish%E2%80%93Swedish_War_(1626%E2%80%931629))

## Polish–Swedish War (1626–1629)

The **Polish–Swedish War of 1626–1629** was the fourth stage (after 1600–1611, 1617–1618, and 1620–1625) in a series of conflicts between [Sweden](#) and [Poland](#) fought in the 17th century. It began in 1626 and ended four years later with the [Truce of Altmark](#) and later at [Stuhmsdorf](#) with the [Treaty of Stuhmsdorf](#).

The first encounter in this war would be near [Wallhof](#), [Latvia](#), where a Swedish force of 4,900 men under [Gustavus II Adolphus](#) ambushed and took by surprise a Polish-Lithuanian force of 2,000 men under [Jan Stanisław Sapieha](#), Polish-Lithuanian casualties amounted to between 500 and 1000 dead, wounded or captured and their commander collapsed from a mental illness after this defeat.

*Gustav II Adolf in battle of Dirschau in 1627*



In May 1626 Gustav Adolf began the surprising invasion of [Prussia](#). Gustav's fleet (over 125 ships) landed in [Ducal Prussia](#) near [Piława \(Pillau\)](#) with over 8,000 soldiers (including 1,000 cavalry) came as a surprise to the [Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth](#) and despite his relatively small forces, Gustav Adolf acting with the support of the neutral [Duchy of Prussia](#), under the duke and [Elector of Brandenburg](#), quickly captured - usually without fighting - 16 of the coastal Prussian towns, who opened their gates to the Lutheran forces, who were fighting against the Catholic forces of the [Counter-Reformation](#). Gustav Adolf did not manage to capture the largest prize: the city of Danzig ([Gdańsk](#)), which as a [Hansa](#) city was self-reliant and kept its own military and fleet. Gustav Adolf wanted to prepare his army for another attack on Danzig, and he increased his forces to over 22,000. The Commonwealth received no support from its

[vassal](#), Ducal Prussia. Near the town of [Gniew](#) in a battle on the 22–30 September 1626 Gustav with 8150 infantry, 1750 cavalry and 74 cannons managed to stop an attacking Polish army of 11,000 men led by King Sigismund. Sigismund withdrew and called for reinforcements from other parts of the country.

Hetman [Stanisław Koniecpolski](#)'s forces (4,200 light [cavalry](#), 1,000 [dragoons](#), 1,000 infantry) moved to Prussia with amazing speed. Strengthened by other units, he had 10,000 men against over 20,000-strong



Swedish force. Using the tactic of [maneuver warfare](#), with small mobile units striking at the enemy's communication lines and smaller units, he managed to stop the Swedish attack and force the units under [Axel Oxenstierna](#), who also attempted to avoid battles with an overwhelming concentrated forces of Koniecpolski, into a defense. For a short time the war became a stalemate.

On 7–8 August, battle with the Swedish forces (10,000 men including 5,000 infantry) took place near the [swamps](#) of the river Mottlau ([Motława](#)). The battle ended when Gustav Adolf was once again wounded and the Swedes retreated.

On 2 February, Poland suffered a defeat at [Górzno](#) (or Gurzno), where a Swedish army of 8,000 men encountered a Polish army of 3,000 men under the command of [Stanisław Potocki](#). Sweden lost 30 dead and 60 wounded, while Poland suffered 700 dead or wounded and 600 captured.

The Sejm decided to increase the funds for the war after the battle of [Górzno](#). The Imperial Catholic [Holy Roman Empire](#) sent help to the Commonwealth in the form of units under [field marshal Hans Georg von Arnim-Boitzenburg](#) and [Ernst Georg Sparr](#). An imperial corps under [Albrecht von Wallenstein](#) also cooperated in [Pomerania](#) with Koniecpolski in 1629. Nonetheless, Koniecpolski was forced to withdraw Commonwealth forces from many strategic Polish strongholds he had set up in [Prussia](#).

In time, hetman Koniecpolski managed to recapture Putzig Pautzke (now [Puck](#)). Another battle took place on 17 June 1629 at [Honigfeld](#)(t) or Honigfelde near [Stuhm/Sztum](#) (by Polish writers described as [Trzciana](#) (or Trzcianka). The Swedes attacked in the direction of [Graudenz](#) (Grudziądz), were stopped, and retreated to Stuhm ([Sztum](#)) and Marienburg ([Malbork](#)). Koniecpolski attacked the rear guard led by [Johann Wilhelm von Salm](#), count of Rhine and the Wilds, and destroyed it. He also repelled a counterattack by Swedish [raitars](#), who were pushed in the direction of [Pułkowice](#), where another counterattack was led by Gustav Adolf with 2,000 cavalymen. This counterattack was also stopped, and the Swedish forces were saved by the last reserve units led by field marshal [Herman Wrangel](#), who finally managed to stop the Polish attack. Swedish losses were heavy, especially in the cavalry regiments. Gustav Adolf said after the battle "I have never been in such a bath". 600 Swedes were killed, including the count Johann Wilhelm and the son of Wrangel, and 400 - 500 were captured, as well as 10 artillery guns and 15 Swedish banners. Polish losses were under 200 killed and injured.

*The Swedish army bombarding the fortress of Dunamunde*



The stalemate at Honigfeld was still not followed by [Sigismund III](#) giving in to a truce, who wanted to sign a truce only under the condition of Gustav Adolph denouncing the crown of Sweden. Sigismund III never gave up, trying to regain the Swedish crown and his son [Wladislaw IV](#) continued it. Despite all of Koniecpolski's brilliant efforts, a ceasefire in [Stary Targ](#) ([Truce of Altmark](#)) on 26

October 1629 was in favour of the Swedes, to whom Poland ceded the larger part of [Livonia](#) with the important port of [Riga](#). Swedes also got the right to tax Polish trade moved through the Baltic (3.5% on the value of goods), kept control of many cities in Royal and [Ducal Prussia](#). Remaining ships of the Commonwealth fleet were transferred to Sweden. The Swedes only failure was their inability to capture the important port of Danzig. Gustav Adolf's biographer, Harte, noted that the king was furious "*that a pacific commercial rabble should beat a set of illustrious fellows, who made fighting their profession*". Nonetheless, Swedes now controlled almost all Baltic ports, with the exception of Danzig, Putzig Pautzke, [Königsberg](#) and [Liepāja](#) (Libau). This would be the closest Sweden ever got to realising its goal of making the Baltic Sea 'Sweden's inner lake'.



# Per Brahe the Younger

Count **Per Brahe the Younger** (February 18, 1602 – September 2, 1680) was a [Swedish](#) soldier and statesman. He was a [Privy Councillor](#) from 1630 and [Lord High Steward](#) from 1640.

[Lord High Steward of Sweden](#)



Brahe was born on the island of [Rydboholm](#) (now in [Österåker Municipality](#)) in [Uppland](#). He was the grandson of [Per Brahe \(the elder\)](#) (1520–1590), one of [Gustavus Vasa's](#) [Privy Councillors](#), created count of [Visingsborg](#) by [Eric XIV of Sweden](#), known also as the [continuator](#) of [Peder Svart's](#) chronicle of Gustavus, and author of *Oeconomia* in 1585, a manual for young noblemen. Per Brahe the younger, after completing his education by several years' travel abroad, became in 1626 chamberlain to [Gustavus Adolphus](#), whose lasting friendship he gained.

He fought with distinction in [Prussia](#) during the last three years of the [Polish War](#) (1626–1629) and also, as colonel of a regiment of horse, in 1630 in Germany. After the death of Gustavus Adolphus in 1632 his military yielded to his political activity. He had been elected president or [Lantmarskalk](#) at the [Riksdag](#) of 1629, and in the following year was created a [Privy Councillor](#). In 1635 he conducted the negotiations for an armistice with [Poland](#) ([Treaty of Stuhmsdorf](#)).

In 1637–1640 and again in 1648–1654 he was [Governor General](#) in [Finland](#), to which country he rendered inestimable services by his wise and provident rule. He reformed the whole administration, introduced a postal system, founded ten new towns, improved and developed commerce and agriculture, and very greatly promoted education. In 1640 he opened the [Royal Academy of Turku](#), of which he was the founder, and first chancellor.

Still today the expression "Kreivin aikaan", or "at Count's Time" in the [Finnish language](#) means "at the correct/good time". The base of his [statue](#) in [Turku](#) bears the inscription "I was well pleased with the land and the land with me".

After the death of [Charles X of Sweden](#) in 1660, Brahe, as [Lord High Steward](#), became one of the regents of Sweden for the second time (he had held a similar office during the minority of Christina, 1632–1644), and during the difficult year 1660 he had entire control of both foreign and domestic affairs. He died on September 2, 1680, at his castle [Bogesund](#) in [Uppland](#). He also held the castles [Visingsborg](#) at [Visingsö](#) and [Brahehus](#) on the mainland by [Gränna](#), where during his lifetime he had held more than regal pomp.

The town of [Raahe](#) ([Swedish](#): *Brahestad*) is named after him.

# Herman Wrangel

*Herman Wrangel.*



**Herman Wrangel** (1584 or 1587 – December 11, 1643) was a [Swedish](#) soldier and politician of [Baltic German](#) extraction. He was appointed [Field Marshal](#) in 1621, [Privy Councillor](#) in 1630, and [Governor General](#) of [Livonia](#) in 1643. He was also the father of [Carl Gustaf Wrangel](#).

## Battle of Wallhof

**Battle of Wallhof** ([Latvian](#): *Valles kauja*, (7 January 1626), was a battle fought between Sweden and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in which a Swedish force of 3,100 men (2,100 of them cavalry) with 6 guns under [Gustavus II Adolphus](#) ambushed and took by surprise a Polish-Lithuanian force of 7,000 men with 3 guns under [Jan Stanisław Sapieha](#), Polish-Lithuanian casualties amounted to between 500 and 1000 dead, wounded or captured and their commander collapsed from a mental illness after this defeat.

In the battle Gustavus Adolphus reformed tactics with close cooperation between infantry and cavalry was tried for the first time. It was also the first time the Swedish cavalry succeeded to withstand the Polish cavalry.

# Battle of Oliwa

The naval **Battle of Oliwa**, also **Battle of Oliwa** or **Battle of Gdańsk Roadstead**, took place on 28 November 1627 during the [Polish-Swedish War](#) outside [Gdansk](#) harbour near Oliwa ([Oliwa](#)), a village outside of Gdansk. It was the biggest and the last naval battle of the [Polish royal navy](#), but it brought a victory over a Swedish squadron.

[Gustavus Adolphus](#) (1594–1632) has been considered one of the most successful Swedish kings in terms of success in warfare. When *Vasa* was built, he had been in power for more than a decade. The [navy](#) was in poor shape and Sweden was embroiled in a [war with Poland](#), and looked apprehensively at the development of the [Thirty Years' War](#) in present day Germany. The war had been raging since 1618 and from a [Protestant](#) perspective it was not successful. The king's plans for a Polish campaign and for securing Sweden's interests required a strong naval presence in the Baltic.

*A painting of the brutal Battle of Oliwa, in which Sweden lost two large ships; the flagship Tigern captured and Solen scuttled by its own crew during a Polish boarding attempt. The commanding admirals on both sides were killed during the battle.*



The navy suffered several severe setbacks during the 1620s. In 1625, a squadron cruising off the [Bay of Riga](#) was caught in a storm and ten ships ran aground and were wrecked. In the [Battle of Oliwa](#) in 1627, a Swedish squadron was outmaneuvered and defeated by a larger Polish force and two large ships were lost. *Tigern* ("The Tiger"), which was the Swedish admiral's flagship, was captured by the Poles, and *Solen* ("The Sun") was blown up by its own crew when it was boarded and near capture. In 1628, three more large ships were lost in less than a month; admiral [Klas Fleming](#)'s flagship

*Kristina* was wrecked in a storm in the [Gulf of Danzig](#), *Riksnnyckeln* ("Key of the Realm") ran aground at Viksten in the southern archipelago of Stockholm and, perhaps most inopportunately for the Swedish crown, *Vasa* foundered on its maiden voyage. The Swedes had a longer tradition of seamanship, while the Polish navy was newly formed.

The Polish fleet of ten ships, commanded by admiral [Arend Dickmann](#) in the galleon *Sankt Georg* (*Święty Jerzy*), was anchored at Gdansk roadstead, while the Swedish squadron of six ships sailed from the direction of the [Hel Peninsula](#). The Poles weighed anchor and rushed towards the Swedes, who did not expect such reaction. The battle soon split into two encounters.

The Polish flagship *Sankt Georg*, supported by a smaller ship *Meerweib* (*Panna Wodna*), attacked the Swedish *Tigern*, flagship of admiral **[Nils Stiernsköld](#)**. The ships stuck together and the Polish marines fought their way onto and captured *Tigern*. Meanwhile the Polish vice admiral's ship, the small galleon *Meerman* (*Wodnik*) attacked the larger *Solen* ("The Sun"). As a result the captain of *Solen* blew his ship up rather than allowing it to be captured. The remaining four Swedish ships escaped and a pursuit failed. Both admirals were killed in the battle.

The battle was propagated widely by the Polish court. There also appeared a saying, that: "the sun set at noon that day", referring to the scuttling and subsequent sinking of one of the Swedish ships.



# Nils Göransson Stiernsköld

**Nils Göransson Stiernsköld**, född [12 juni 1583](#), död [18 november 1627](#) (stupad), var en [svensk militär](#), [riksråd](#) och [amiral](#). Han var son till [Göran Claesson Stiernsköld](#) och far till [Claes Nilsson Stiernsköld](#).

Tillsammans med sin far fördes han år 1598 som fånge till [Polen](#), men återfick snart friheten och deltog som hertig [Karls page](#) i kriget i [Livland](#) åren 1600 - 1601. Efter att sedan ha tjänat under [Morits av Oranien](#) och i den kejserliga hären kämpat mot turkarna återkom han till Sverige och deltog i Karl IX:s livländska fälttåg år 1605. 1608 blev han [ståthållare](#) på [Dünamünde](#), som han under ett år försvarade mot polackerna. År 1610 deltog han i det [ryska kriget](#) varvid han skadades svårt och blev beroende av kryckor under tre år. Trots detta deltog han i Kalmar [kriget mot Danmark](#), vilket började år 1611. I slutet av det året fick han ansvaret för försvaret av [Ryssby](#) skans. 1612 blev han befälhavare över armén i [Småland](#). 1613 blev han ståthållare på [Jönköpings slott](#) och överste för armén i [Västergötland](#), [Småland](#) och [Öland](#). Dessa befattningar innehade han fram till 1617 då han blev riksråd. Samma år åkte han till Livland där han intog [Pernau](#) och blev dess ståthållare. 1619 återkom han till Sverige och utsågs till generalståthållare på [Älvsborg](#), generallandsherre i [Västergötland](#) och [Dalsland](#) samt krigsöverste i [Västergötland](#). Dessa ämbeten innehade han till år 1625, då han av okänd anledning föll i onåd hos kungen och flydde till [Holland](#). Han återvände och försonades med [Gustav II Adolf](#). 1626 blev han ståthållare över [Dorpat](#) och dess län och 1627 utsågs han till ståthållare i [Pillau](#). Därifrån förflyttades han och utnämndes till [amiral](#) över en svensk flotta utanför [Danzig](#). Vid [slaget på Danzigs redd](#) (Oliva) den 18 november 1627 stupade han i striden.

# Clas Fleming (admiral)

*Clas Larsson Fleming.*



**Clas Larsson Fleming** (1592-1644) was an [admiral](#) and administrator involved in the development of a formal management structure for the Royal Swedish Navy under King [Gustav II Adolf](#) and Queen [Christina](#). He was the son of Lars Hermansson Fleming, the governor of [Åbo](#) in present-day [Finland](#). He was born in March 1592 at [Askainen](#) in Finland and began his military career in the army, as a [cornet](#) in the Field Marshal's Guards Company. In 1620 he began his naval service as a [vice admiral](#) and [rear admiral](#), and served as the commander of a number of squadrons and fleets in the following years. He was away from [Sweden](#) with the navy for most of the campaigning seasons in the 1620s, but returned to [Stockholm](#) in the winters. Admirals were also administrative officers, and Fleming became a central figure in the administration of naval procurement. When the office of *holmamiral*, the official responsible for managing the state dockyard and arsenal in Stockholm, fell open in 1625, it was not filled for six years, but Fleming essentially fulfilled the duties of the office. During this period the dockyard was not under direct Crown control but was leased by private entrepreneurs, the Dutch brothers Henrik and

Arendt [Hybertsson](#). The Hybertsson brothers built the large warship [Vasa](#), which sank on its maiden voyage on 10 August 1628. Fleming had been involved in the negotiations of the original contract and in maintaining Crown control over the entrepreneurs, and was present at a demonstration of the ship's lack of stability about a month before the ship sailed.

In the 1630s, Fleming went to sea less and took on a variety of civil administrative tasks. He presided over the Crown's accounting office and was a member of the Royal Council. From 1634 until his death he was the first governor-general of Stockholm, an office created under the Form of Government instituted in that year. As part of his duties he was involved in the planning of the city of Stockholm and the moving of the navy's dockyard from its original home on what is now [Blasieholmen](#) to the island of [Skeppsholmen](#), which remained the main Stockholm naval base until the later 20th century. He was instrumental in organizing the expedition to establish the Swedish colony in [North America](#), [New Sweden](#), in modern [Delaware](#), in 1637.

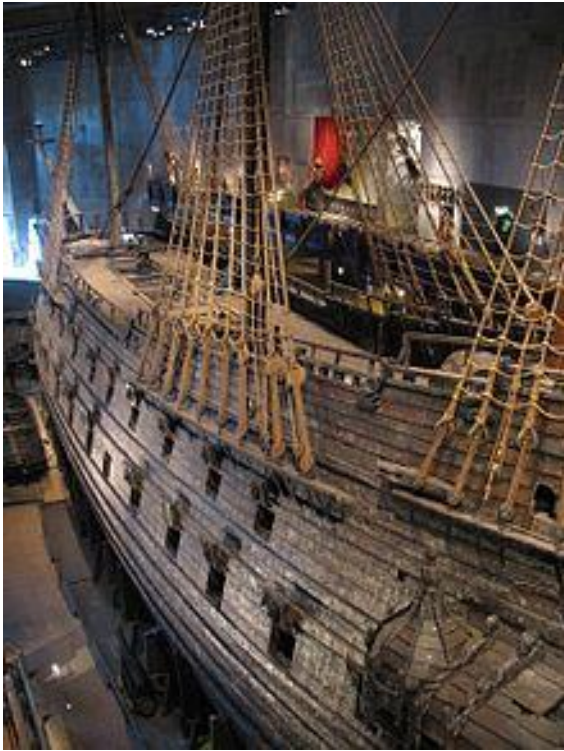
He was also an industrialist, and in the 1630s established an ironworks at Vira, which produced weaponry for the Swedish armies in the [Thirty Years War](#). The ironworks still exists, as a museum of 17th-century technology.

He returned to a major sea command in 1644, during Torstensson's War with [Denmark](#). He commanded the ships sent to attack the Danish fleet and land troops on the southern Danish coast, and on 1 July, directed the Swedish forces in the Battle of Kolberger Heide, in which the [Danish fleet](#) prevented the Swedish landing. He was killed in action several weeks later, on 27 July 1644, on board his flagship, *Scepter*, near [Kiel](#).

He is remembered as one of the ablest administrators in the history of the Swedish navy, and is in many ways a typical example of the type of aristocrat who served the Swedish Crown during the period of Sweden's imperial expansion.

## Vasa Construction

*Vasa's port side.*



Shortly before *Vasa* was ordered, work at the Stockholm shipyard was led by Antonius Monier, with Dutch-born [Henrik Hybertsson](#) as hired shipbuilder. On 16 January 1625, Henrik and his brother, Arendt Hybertsson (de Groote), took over the shipyard and soon signed a contract to build four ships, two larger with a [keel](#) of around 41 meters (135 ft) and two smaller of 33 meters (108 feet).

After a few years, the shipyard ran into economic problems, delaying the construction of the contracted ships. At the same time, the [Swedish navy](#) lost 10 ships in a single storm, and the king sent a worried letter to Admiral [Klas Fleming](#), asking him to make sure that Henrik hurried the construction of the two smaller ships. Along with the letter, the king sent measurements for the ship, which was to have a keel of 37 meters (120 ft). That gave Henrik Hybertsson new problems, because the measurements ordered by the king fell between those of the larger and smaller vessels in the original contract, and the timber had already been cut. In a new letter, on 22 February 1626, the king again demanded that his measurements for the new ship be followed. Hybertsson never

saw *Vasa* completed; he fell ill in late 1625, one year into construction, and died in the spring of 1627. The supervision of the shipbuilding was given to Hybertsson's assistant, Henrik 'Hein' Jacobsson, also a Dutch immigrant.

*Vasa's* hull was complete enough to be launched in 1627, probably during the spring. After this, work most likely began on finishing the upper deck, the sterncastle, the [beakhead](#) and the rigging. Sweden had still not developed a sizeable sailcloth industry, and material had to be ordered from abroad, some from France but also from Germany and the [Low Countries](#). The sails were made mostly of [hemp](#) and partly of [flax](#). The rigging was made entirely of hemp imported from [Latvia](#) through [Riga](#). The king visited the shipyard in January 1628 and made what was probably his only visit aboard the ship.

*A model showing Vasa's hull cross section, illustrating the shallow keel and two gun decks.*



In the summer of 1628, the captain responsible for supervising construction of the ship, Söfring Hansson, arranged for the ship's stability to be demonstrated for the Vice Admiral responsible for procurement, Klas Fleming, who had recently arrived in Stockholm from Prussia. Thirty men ran back and forth across the upper deck to start the ship rolling, but the admiral stopped the test after they had made only three trips, as he feared the ship would capsize. According to testimony by the ship's master, Göran Mattson, Fleming remarked that he wished the king were at home. Gustavus Adolphus had been sending a steady stream of letters insisting that the ship put to sea as soon as possible.



# Thirty Years' War

The **Thirty Years' War** (1618–1648) was fought primarily in what is now [Germany](#), and at various points involved most countries in Europe. It was one of the longest and most destructive conflicts in [European history](#). The conflict lasted, unceasing, for 30 years, making it the longest continuous war in modern history.

A major impact of the Thirty Years' War was the extensive destruction of entire regions, denuded by the foraging. Episodes of famine and disease significantly decreased the populace of the German states, [Bohemia](#), the [Low Countries](#) and [Italy](#), while bankrupting most of the combatant powers.

*A cavalry battle circa 1640*



*A model of a section of a pike and shot formation from the Thirty Years' War on display at the Army Museum in Stockholm.*



Some within Ferdinand II's court did not trust Wallenstein, believing that he sought to join forces with the German Princes and thus gain influence over the Emperor. Ferdinand II dismissed Wallenstein in 1630. He was to later recall him after the Swedes, led by King [Gustaf II Adolf \(Gustavus Adolphus\)](#), had invaded the Holy Roman Empire with success and turned the tables on the Catholics. His contributions made Sweden the continental leader of Protestantism until the [Swedish Empire](#) ended in 1721.

Gustavus Adolphus, came to aid the German Lutherans, to forestall Catholic aggression against their homeland, and to obtain economic influence in the German states around the Baltic Sea. In addition, Gustavus was concerned about the growing power of the Holy Roman Empire. From 1630 to 1634, Swedish-led armies drove the Catholic forces back, regaining much of the lost Protestant territory. During his campaign he managed to conquer half of the Imperial kingdoms.

Swedish forces entered the [Holy Roman Empire](#) via the [Duchy of Pomerania](#), which served as the Swedish [bridgehead](#) since the [Treaty of Stettin \(1630\)](#). Gustavus Adolphus allied with [France](#) in the [Treaty of Bärwalde](#) (January 1631). France and Bavaria signed the secret [Treaty of Fontainebleau \(1631\)](#), but this was rendered irrelevant by Swedish attacks against Bavaria. At the [Battle of Breitenfeld \(1631\)](#), Gustavus Adolphus's forces defeated the Catholic League led by General Tilly. A year later they met again in another Protestant victory, this time accompanied by the death of Tilly. The upper hand had now switched from the league to the union, led by Sweden. With Tilly dead, Ferdinand II returned to the aid of Wallenstein and his large army. Wallenstein marched up to the south, threatening Gustavus Adolphus's supply chain. Gustavus Adolphus knew that Wallenstein was waiting for the attack and was prepared. Wallenstein and Gustavus Adolphus clashed in the [Battle of Lützen \(1632\)](#), where the Swedes prevailed, but Gustavus Adolphus was killed.

# Hakkapeliitta

*Hakkapeliitta featured on a 1940 Finnish stamp*



**Hakkapeliitta** ([Finnish](#) pl. *hakkapeliitat*) is a historiographical term used for a [Finnish](#) light [cavalryman](#) in the service of King [Gustavus Adolphus](#) of [Sweden](#) during the [Thirty Years' War](#) (1618 to 1648). Hakkapeliitta is a 19th century Finnish modification of a contemporary name given by foreigners in the [Holy Roman Empire](#) and variously spelled as Hackapelit, Hackapelite, Hackapell, Haccapelit, or Haccapelite. These terms were based on a [Finnish](#) war cry *hakkaa päälle* (English: Hack on them; [Swedish](#): *hacka på*), commonly translated as "Cut them down!"

The *hakkapeliitta*-style cavalry was first used during the [Polish-Swedish Wars](#) of the late 16th century. In the early 17th century the cavalry led by the Field Marshal [Jacob De la Gardie](#) participated in campaigns against [Poland](#) and [Russia](#). The Hakkapeliitta cavalry men led by Field Marshal [Gustaf Horn](#) were vital to the Swedish victories in [Germany](#) during the Thirty Years' War.

The Hakkapeliitta were well-trained [Finnish](#) light [cavalrymen](#) who excelled in sudden and savage attacks, [raiding](#) and [reconnaissance](#). The greatest advantage of the fast and lightly armored Hakkapeliitta cavalry was its [charge](#). They typically had a [sword](#), a [helmet](#), and leather armor or a breastplate of steel. They would attack at a full [gallop](#), fire the first pistol at twenty paces and the second at five paces, and then draw the sword. The horse itself was used like another weapon, as it was used to trample enemy [infantry](#).

The [horses](#) used by the Hakkapeliitta were the ancestors of the modern [Finnhorse](#); despite their small size they were strong and durable.

## Organization

The Swedish army then had three cavalry [regiments](#) from Finland:

- [Nyland and Tavastehus County](#) Cavalry Regiment (Swedish: *Nylands och Tavastehus läns kavalleriregemente*)
- [Åbo and Björneborg County](#) Cavalry Regiment (*Åbo och Björneborgs läns kavalleriregemente*)
- [Viborg and Nyslott County](#) Cavalry Regiment (*Viborgs och Nyslotts läns kavalleriregemente*)

Their most famous commander was [Torsten Stålhandske](#) (surname meaning "steelglove"), who was commissioned as a lieutenant-colonel with the [Nyland and Tavastehus Cavalry Regiment](#) in 1629 and led it for the first time in the Thirty Years' War.

The original provincial regiments (*landskapsregementen*) had been raised by splitting the old Grand regiments (*Storregementen*, also "Land regiments" (*landsregementen*), organized by [Gustavus Adolphus](#) at the end of the 1610s, forming 21 infantry and eight cavalry regiments as written in the Swedish [constitution](#) of 1634.

## ***Famous battles***

The main battles in which the Hakkapeliitta took part during the Thirty Years' War were:

- [Breitenfeld](#) in 1631
- [Lech](#) in 1632
- [Lützen](#) in 1632
- [Nördlingen](#) in 1634
- [Leipzig](#) in 1642 (also known as the *Second Battle of Breitenfeld* or the *First Battle of Leipzig*)
- [Jankau](#) in 1645
- [Lens](#) in 1648

200 Hakkapeliitta were also part of the army which King [Karl X Gustav](#) of Sweden led across the frozen Danish straits in the winter of 1658, which enabled him to conquer [Skåneland](#) from [Denmark](#) in the [Treaty of Roskilde](#).

Despite popular Finnish belief, the Hakkapeliitta were not particularly well-known on the [Central European](#) battlefields; Finns are rarely mentioned in Central European sources of the time. Nonetheless, during the era of the [Swedish Empire](#) of the 17th century, the Finnish cavalry was constantly used in [Germany](#), [Bohemia](#), [Poland](#) and [Denmark](#). Parts of the cavalry were stationed in [Estonia](#) and [Livonia](#).

[Aulis J. Alanen](#) described the Finnish cavalry:

"Our [Finnish] Hakkapelites cannot have been any sort of fine representatives. I should mention a parade of the [Gustaf Adolf](#) troops in the Thirty Years' War, while the king still lived. At first went the blue, yellow, green etc. mercenaries of the regiment in their flashy gear. Then came, clothed so-so, bridles and baldricks repaired with [birch](#) bark and cord, legs hanging from the backs of their small, shaggy horses, [cutlasses](#) dragging on the ground, a troop of hollow-cheeked but stern-eyed men. When the Dutch [ambassador](#) inquired who they were, the last rider, a fat German [Quartermaster](#) [*kuormastovääpeli*] in charge of the cargo proudly replied "The royal [Life Guards](#); Finnish, [pärkkele](#)!".



# Torsten Stålhandske

*The mausoleum of Torsten Stålhandske and his wife in the Cathedral of Turku in Finland.*



The son of Torsten Svensson (Stålhandske), a noble military officer of Swedish ancestry from Western Götaland, and Carin Lydiksdotter Jägerhorn, of Finnish nobility from southern Finland, Torsten Stålhandske married Kristina [Horn](#) in 1643. Albeit a short man, he was exceptionally strong; when a captured enemy officer, particularly a [Pole](#) or an [Austrian](#) was led into the Swedish camp, he would shake their hands so hard that blood would appear under their fingernails in what he called "an honest Swedish handshake". Hence, his nickname.

Stålhandske started his military career as a [squire](#) to Patrick Ruthwen, with whom he had a task of recruiting military in Scotland. He followed [Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden](#) to [Prussia](#), as an [Ensign](#) in his Personal guard in 1626. In the same year he was promoted to the rank of [Major](#) in the Regiment of Arvid [Horn](#). In 1627 he joined the cavalry led by [Åke Henriksson Tott](#).

In 1629 he was promoted to [Lieutenant-colonel](#) in the [Nylands och Tavastehus Cavalry regiment](#), leading Finnish horsemen, also known as [Hakkapeliitat](#), for the first time into the [Thirty Years' War](#). At the [Battle of Breitenfeld](#) (1631) they rode with the right wing personally led by King Gustavus Adolphus. In 1632 he was promoted to the rank of [Colonel](#). At the [siege of Nuremberg](#) he assaulted the "invincible warriors" of Austrian Colonel Cronberg and, thanks to his mighty and successful charges, largely determined the outcome of the Battle of [Lützen](#), where Gustavus Adolphus was killed, the battle was nonetheless won.

In June 1634, Stålhandske was wounded at the Battle of [Hamelin](#). In 1635, a [Major-general](#), he joined the main army led by [Banér](#). At the [Battle of Wittstock](#) he personally captured 35 flags and, at a critical juncture of the battle, forced the enemy to flee. Similarly, he distinguished himself at the Battle of [Chemnitz](#) as well as in [Silesia](#), where he defended his positions during the whole year of 1640 against [Count Mansfeld](#).



Finally, in April 1642, he joined his forces with [Torstenson's](#) Army and took part in the Second [Battle of Breitenfeld](#) (also known as the First Battle of [Leipzig](#)), where he was seriously wounded. In May he was appointed general in Chief of the Cavalry. In 1643 Stålhandske followed [Torstenson](#) in [Bohemia](#). In 1644 he crushed a hostile army corps in the [Jutland](#), but then fell ill and died in [Haderslev](#) on 21 April 1644.

Torsten Stålhandske's [mausoleum](#) can be seen in the [Cathedral of Turku](#) ([Finland](#)).

## Siege of Stralsund (1628)



*Contemporary colored engraving*

The **Siege of Stralsund** was a siege laid on [Stralsund](#) by [Albrecht von Wallenstein](#)'s [Imperial Army](#) during the [Thirty Years' War](#), from May to 4 August 1628. [Stralsund](#) was aided by [Denmark](#) and [Sweden](#), with considerable [Scottish](#) participation. The siege ended Wallenstein's series of victories, and contributed to his downfall. The Swedish garrison in Stralsund was the first on German soil in history. The battle marked the *de facto* entrance of Sweden into the war.

[Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden](#) was since 1626 involved in the [Polish-Swedish War](#), with Poland allied to the Holy Roman Empire. In this war, Scotsman [Alexander Leslie](#) started his career in Swedish service as commandant and governor of [Pillau](#) in [East Prussia](#). Gustavus Adolphus had made plans to intervene in the Holy Roman Empire, of which the [Riksdag](#) commission approved in the winter of 1627/28.

After the unsuccessful siege, Wallenstein headed to nearby [Wolgast](#), to fight [a final battle with Christian IV](#): Danish troops had landed in the area and occupied the island of [Usedom](#), and had taken the town of Wolgast on 14 August without fighting. On 22 August, Wallenstein retook the town.

*Gustavus Adolphus' landing in Pomerania, 1630*



Also in August, Swedish chancellor [Axel Oxenstierna](#) came to Stralsund, and offered negotiations to Wallenstein. The latter however refused. The inability to take Stralsund was to become one of the obstacles which led to Wallenstein's temporary dismissal in 1630.

When Gustavus Adolphus' invaded Pomerania in June 1630, he used his bridgehead in Stralsund to clear the flanks of his landing forces. Bogislaw XIV concluded an alliance with the Swedish king in the [Treaty of Stettin](#) in July.



# Battle of Breitenfeld (1631)

The **Battle of Breitenfeld** or **First Battle of Breitenfeld** (sometimes **First Breitenfeld** and in older texts **Battle of Leipzig**), was fought at the crossroads villages of [Breitenfeld](#), , and [Seehausen](#), approximately five miles northwest of the walled city of [Leipzig](#) on September, 1631. Breitenfeld represented the Protestants' first major victory of the [Thirty Years War](#).

*Contemporary etching of troop disposition at the beginning of the Battle of Breitenfeld (1631).*



The Protestant victory ensured that the German states would not be forcibly reconverted to [Roman Catholicism](#). The victory further confirmed Sweden's [Gustavus Adolphus](#) of the [House of Vasa](#) as a great tactical leader and induced many Protestant [German states](#) to ally themselves with Sweden against the [German Catholic League](#), led by [Maximilian I, Elector of Bavaria](#), and the [Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II of Austria](#). At issue was the larger problem

of imperial rule versus princely autonomy: at its most basic, the argument was over the nature of power and authority in the [Holy Roman Empire](#).

The Swedish phase of the 30 Years War began with the Swedish landing at Peenemünde. The Swedish campaign in central Europe gained control of great deal of territory. There were 3 major battles: Breitenfeld, the [Battle of Lech](#), and the [Battle of Lützen](#). France was Sweden's ally and paid most of the Swedish campaign expenses. This marked a major shift away from a religious-based conflict, as the French were also Catholic.

When he had planned this invasion in 1629, after peace with Poland, with money in his pocket, and promises of French subsidy, Gustav ruled an orderly and loyal country; he possessed reserves of war material; and he had at his command an effective, well disciplined fighting force made up of recruits from Sweden and Finland and thus theoretically loyal to him.

Sweden's entrance into the war was considered a minor annoyance to the Catholic League and its allies; his only battles to this point had been inconclusive ones, or fought against generals of modest military ability, such as at Honigfeld, a minor affair in eastern Prussia against Imperial troops under [Hans Georg von Arnim-Boitzenburg](#) to aid [Sigismund III](#) of Poland-Lithuania, which ended in Fall 1629 with the [Truce of Altmark](#).

Consequently, when Gustav Adolph and his force of 13,000 landed at [Peenemünde](#) in 1630, the Imperial Commander of the [German Catholic League](#), [Tilly](#), did not immediately respond, being engaged in what seemed to be more pressing matters in northern Italy. Gustav's sole ally was the city of [Stralsund](#).

*"Gustavus Adolphus at the Battle at Breitenfeld", painting in the Musée historique de Strasbourg.*



At the same time, the Protestant princes showed little interest in attaching themselves to the Swedish cause; Gustavus opted for "rough wooing." In the ensuing months, his troops moved south into Brandenburg, taking and sacking the towns of [Küstin](#) and [Frankfurt an der Oder](#). It was too late and too far to save one of Gustav's "occupied" allies, [Magdeburg](#), from a horrific sack by imperial troops, which began on May 20, and in which a major portion of the population was murdered and the city burned. Over the next few months, Gustav consolidated his bridgehead and expanded across northern Germany, attracting support from



German princes but mostly building his army from mercenary forces along the way. By the time he reached the Saxon border, his force had expanded over 23,000.

The combined Swedish-Saxon forces were oriented to the north of Leipzig centered around hamlet of Podelwitz, facing southwest toward Breitenfeld and Leipzig. The battle began around mid-day, with a two hour exchange of artillery fire, during which the Swedes demonstrated [firepower](#) in a rate of fire of three-to-five volleys to one Imperial volley.

Tilly was ordering his infantry to march ahead diagonally to the right, looking to roll up the Swedish line on its abandoned left flank, Gustavus reordered his second line, under the capable and steady General [Gustav Horn](#), into an array at a right angle to the front, in a maneuver known as *refusing the line*. With this maneuver, the Swedish line developed a strong angle, anchored in the new center under General [Lennart Torstenson](#), whose men were able to deliver an artillery barrage with an overwhelmingly high rate of fire for the era. Tilly's right flank cavalry preceded his infantry across the field. Except for his musketeers, the infantry had yet to engage. Tilly's seventeen [Tercios](#) could only angle across the field. Tercios cannot turn easily, owing to the length of pikes extending through the faces of the essentially square formations. As they advanced obliquely, it left the Swedish right uncovered and free.

While this was taking place, the Swedish cavalry re-formed, and, preceded by the Finnish light cavalry ([Hakkapeliittas](#)), which Gustavus led personally, attacked across the former front to capture the Imperial artillery, followed in short succession by Banér's heavy cavalry and three regiments of infantry. This not only freed the Swedish field guns from an ongoing artillery duel, but allowed Gustavus's cross-trained cavalry to turn the captured Imperial guns upon Tilly's seventeen own Tercios, now outflanked and badly out of position. Gustavus' soldiers redeployed the captured artillery into a new line and angled so it could fire on the Catholic forces. Its position lay slightly to the rear of the Catholics on what had become the extreme right flank of a developing infantry battle. The unwieldy Catholic infantry was trapped in a crossfire of grazing artillery balls which were aimed to bounce and careen into the rank and files between knee and shoulder height—killing and wounding dozens with each ball. With these guns cutting into one end of Tilly's line, and the Swedish center showing no signs of breaking, the exchange of gunfire soon wore down the Imperial troops, and their lines ground to a halt against Horn's infantry.

After several hours of punishment, nearing sunset, the Catholic line finally broke. Tilly himself was injured twice by a so-called "piece of battle"—artillery propelled debris. Although the first time he remounted his horse, the second wound was more severe; unconscious, he was carted off to safety under the cover of night during the ensuing retreat, which quickly became a rout as the Catholic forces reached the nearby woods. The totally demoralized Imperial and Catholic League force effectively lost all cohesion with the fall of night, and the desertion rate was consequently higher than the battle losses themselves. In effect, Gustav had entirely destroyed the only army the Catholics had in the field, placing the Imperial side on the defensive.

## Gustav's military innovations

*Gustavus's victory at Breitenfeld*



His success against the well-trained Imperial and League forces at Breitenfeld endorsed Gustav's linear tactics. In traditional battle tactics, the cavalry lined up on either side of the primary infantry force, theoretically protecting its flanks, but in actuality, cavalry would attempt to drive off the opposing force, leaving the infantry's flank exposed. Gustav mixed infantry heavily weighted with musketeers among the cavalry in their "starting positions" on the flanks. As opposing cavalry attacked, the musketeers could pick them off, long before the cavalryman's pistols could be useful. The thinner pike wall sufficiently prevented breakage of the line, but it could also be easily shifted, to allow Gustav's cavalry to pass through. Normally detached infantry would be easily run down, but by being placed in the midst of the cavalry, if the opposing force did charge, they would do so right into the Swedish cavalry's own pistols.

# Battle of Rain

The **Battle of Rain** (also called the **Battle of the River Lech** or **Battle of Lech**) was fought on April 15, 1632, as part of the [Thirty Years' War](#). The forces involved in this conflict were 40,000 [Swedish](#) troops under [Gustavus Adolphus](#) and 25,000 [Catholic League](#) troops under [Count Johan Tzerclaes of Tilly](#). It was the second meeting between the two legendary generals (see [First Breitenfeld](#) when Tilly received the first setback of his long and storied career) and like at Breitenfeld, Tilly lost when Gustavus forced the River Lech under the cover of his superb artillery, and as there, Tilly was wounded several times and fell during the battle and was carried from the field by his men, (who called him *Father Tilly*), — only this time, he would not recover from his wounds.



Gustavus had a bridge of boats constructed across the [Lech river](#) near the city of [Rain](#) through the night prior to the battle, and in the morning sent three hundred [Finnish Hackapelite](#) troops across the river under fire. The Hackapelites dug earthworks for batteries which then protected the rest of Gustavas' army as they crossed the river. As soon as his army had crossed the river, Gustavus immediately and successfully stormed the hill. Tilly was shot in the leg early in the battle and was moved to the rear. Maximilian I ordered an immediate retreat to save the now leaderless army, leaving most of the Catholic League's baggage and artillery in the field. The army itself may only have escaped destruction due to a storm and high winds blocking roads in the night that followed.

The battle is, however, more interesting from a tactical point of view rather than from its outcome, as the elaborate plan of Gustavus Adolphus to catch the entire Imperial army by complex maneuvering was prevented when Tilly was mortally wounded in the battle, resulting in the early retreat of the Imperial army. The Swedish battle plan consisted of two major elements:

1. A strong feint attack by a portion of the Swedish infantry with heavy artillery support against Tilly's strongly fortified center behind the river Lech. The Swedish force succeeded in establishing and fortifying its position on a small island or peninsula close to the Imperial side of the river. From this position, it was able to repel a series of fierce Imperial counterattacks despite being outnumbered.
2. As the Imperial army got tied up in desperate attempts to eliminate the Swedish bridgehead, the Swedish cavalry with no opposition or attention from the enemy was able to cross the river 10 km south of the Imperial left wing. From this position they intended to outflank the entire Imperial army and thus catch it in a position with the river and the Swedish infantry at its front and the Swedish cavalry in its rear and on its flanks.

With Tilly mortally wounded, the morale of the Imperial army quickly dissolved and the army withdrew before the arrival of the Swedish cavalry. Thus, Tilly's death possibly saved his army from annihilation. Nonetheless, both armies suffered considerable losses (3,000 on the Imperial side, 2,000 on the Swedish), mostly due to frontal attacks and counterattacks against fortified positions with strong natural defenses.

The battle of Lech proves more than the [Battle of Breitenfeld](#) the innovation of Gustavus Adolphus' tactical imagination. The disciple of Gustavus Adolphus, [Johan Banér](#), also employed a similar battle plan four years later in the [battle of Wittstock](#).

# Battle of Jankau

The **Battle of Jankau** or **Jankov**, one of the bloodiest of the [Thirty Years' War](#), was fought on 24 February 1645 in southern [Bohemia](#), some 50 km southeast of [Prague](#), between the army of [Sweden](#) and that of the [Holy Roman Empire](#).

*The Battle of Jankov, Copper engraving*



The army of [Matthias Gallas](#) was returning from a defeat in Holstein with General [Lennart Torstenson](#) and the Swedish army in pursuit. In order to protect the rich Bohemian lands from a Swedish invasion the emperor sent a large portion of his Hungarian force to reinforce the defense of Bohemia. General Hatzfeld was given the command of the retreating army and reinforced it by adding new enlistments. General Gotz arrived with his army and the Bavarians sent General Werth and colonel Spork to further reinforce the army, giving it a total strength of 16,000.

## Battle

Both sides had around 16,000 men. No quarter was given to either side, which would result in a complete victory for the Swedes. The Swedes had superior and more mobile artillery, thus giving them the ability to react quickly to changes on the battlefield. Only 7,000 of the combined Austrian Bavarian imperial army escaped the slaughter. The majority of the army was either killed or captured when the Imperial center was surrounded, including the Imperial armies commander-in-chief Hatzfeld. Between 4,000 and 5,000 prisoners were taken.

## Aftermath

Upon hearing about the defeat at Jankau the emperor [Ferdinand II](#) retreated further towards the [Upper Palatinate](#) near Regensburg. He sent out calls to all of his estates of his dominions for fresh troops. The Emperor even offered Maximilian of Bavaria parts of Silesia and Bohemia as collateral in case conceding was the only option. Bavaria's continuation of hostilities with France meant that Emperor Ferdinand II could no longer count on Bavarian troops. The emperor had sent a request to the papacy for a subsidy to raise more troops. The papal throne changed hands and Pope Innocent the X took over. He was unfriendly towards the Habsburgs; the pope gave no aid to the emperor. The emperor was forced to rely upon his own resources. The victory at Jankau opened up the way to Prague and Vienna. By April Torstensson was within thirty miles of Vienna, laying siege to the city of [Brunn](#). Torstensson and his army did not make it to either Prague or Vienna in 1645. By late December the Swedish army had been worn out by the constant fighting.



# Siege of Nuremberg

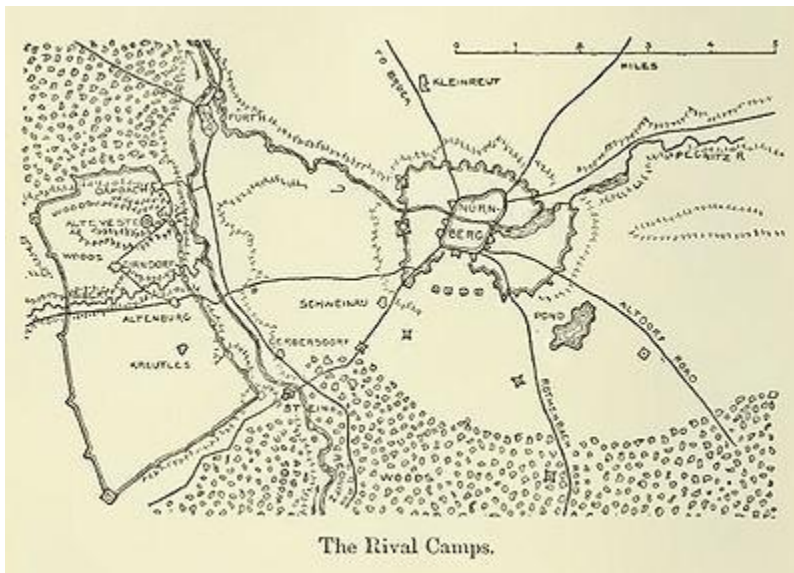
The **Siege of Nuremberg** or **Siege of Nürnberg** was a battle campaign that took place in 1632 about the Imperial City of [Nuremberg](#) during the [Thirty Years' War](#).

In 1632, rather than face the numerically superior [Imperial](#) army under the command of [Albrecht von Wallenstein](#), [Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden](#) ordered a tactical retreat into the city of [Nuremberg](#). Wallenstein's army immediately started to [invest](#) Nuremberg and laid [siege](#) to the city, waiting for hunger and [epidemics](#) to cripple the Swedish force.

It proved difficult for the besiegers to maintain the siege because the city was large and needed a large force to man the [circumvallation](#). In Wallenstein's camp, there were 120,000 soldiers, 50,000 horses, 15,000 women, and 15,000 servants. Foraging to supply such a large static besieging force proved to be extremely difficult.

Four [Saxon](#) regiments and troops from the Rhine numbering around 50,000 troops with 6,000 cannon reinforced the 70,000 regular troops and 30,000 Nuremberg militia already deployed by Gustavus Adolphus.

With poor sanitation and inadequate supplies, both sides suffered from hunger, [typhus](#) and [scurvy](#). To try to break the deadlock, the forces under the command of Gustavus Adolphus attacked the entrenchments of the imperial army's circumvallation in the [Battle of the Alte Veste](#) but failed to break through. Eventually, the siege ended after eleven weeks when the [Swedes](#) and their allies withdrew. Through a combination of disease, hunger and battle fatalities, about 10,000 inhabitants of Nuremberg and 20,000 Swedish and allied forces died. The Imperial army suffered about 20,000 dead. [Austria](#) was saved for the short term, but the engagement was not decisive.



# Battle of the Alte Veste

The **Battle of the Alte Veste** was a significant battle of the [Thirty Years' War](#). In the late summer of 1632 the army of Swedish King [Gustavus Adolphus](#) had been besieged by [Albrecht von Wallenstein](#) at [Nürnberg](#). The successes of Gustavus Adolphus over [General Tilly](#) forced [Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II](#) to recall [Albrecht von Wallenstein](#) into military service from retirement. Wallenstein was unmatched in his ability to raise troops within a few weeks and with fresh army he took to the field. The Imperial Army's ranks swelled as Wallenstein moved to trap the Swedes at their stronghold of Nürnberg. Repeatedly Gustav Adolf formed for battle and challenged Wallenstein to come out of his fortified camp, but he refused. As the supply situation worsened, the impetuous King attacked the Imperial camp at the Alte Veste "Old Fortress" -- a derelict castle atop a wooded hill that would then allow the Swedish guns to dominate the Imperial camp. The Imperials were prepared with trenches and an [abatis](#) that stymied the Swedish advance. When the vaunted brigades faltered, much of the cavalry was sent in dismounted. Wallenstein saw an opportunity to strike a blow and sallied his cavalry and cut down many of the exhausted troops. Only the Swedish cavalry reserve was able to avert a complete disaster. The Swedes had been defeated. Commander of Swedish artillery [Lennart Torstenson](#) was taken prisoner and locked up for nearly a year at [Ingolstadt](#). Gustav Adolf received reinforcements days later and Wallenstein left camp and moved north.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lennart\\_Torstenson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lennart_Torstenson)

## Lennart Torstenson

**Lennart Torstenson**, [Count](#) of [Ortala](#), [Baron](#) of [Virestad](#) (17 August 1603 – 7 April 1651), was a [Swedish Field Marshal](#) and [military engineer](#).

*Lennart Torstenson painted 1648 by unknown artist*



### *Early career*

He was born at [Forstena](#) in [Västergötland](#) - he always wrote his name *Linnardt Torstenson*. His parents were [Märta Nilsdotter Posse](#) and Torsten Lennartson, Lord of Forstena, who was supporter of king Sigismund and, for awhile, the commandant of [Älvsborg Fortress](#). Young Lennart's parents fled to exile in the year of his birth because his father had confessed to being loyal to the deposed Sigismund. Lennart was taken care of by relatives - his father returned to Sweden only when Lennart was around twenty. His paternal uncle Anders Lennartsson was [Lord High Constable of Sweden](#) and trusted by [Duke Charles](#), but he fell at the [Battle of Kirkholm](#) in 1605.

At the age of fifteen he became one of the pages of the young King [Gustavus Adolphus](#) and was allowed to observe the Livonian war, such as the conquest of Riga in 1621. At the age of twenty, he made his grand tour, getting to know foreign countries. In January 1626, he was at the battle of Wallhof as an ensign. He also served during the [Prussian](#) campaigns of 1628 and 1629. It is told that at one battle Gustavus Adolphus sent Torstenson with an order to one of the officers. On his way Torstenson noticed that the enemy had changed

position and altered the King's orders. Gustavus noticed the new development. When Torstenson returned he told Gustavus what he had done. The King first raised his hand as if to strike Torstenson but changed his mind and said, "Lennart, this could have cost you your life, but maybe you are better suited to be a general than a page at the royal court." Shortly thereafter, in 1629 Torstenson was put in charge of the Swedish [artillery](#), which under his guidance contributed greatly to the victories of [Breitenfeld](#) and [Lech](#). The same year he was taken prisoner at [Alte Veste](#) and imprisoned for nearly a year at [Ingolstadt](#). Under [Johan Banér](#) he served with distinction at the [Battle of Wittstock](#) and during the defence of [Pomerania](#) in 1637 and 1638, as well as at the [Battle of Chemnitz](#) and the raid into [Bohemia](#) in 1639. Illness, contracted during his imprisonment, compelled him to return to Sweden in 1641, where he was made a member of the [Privy Council](#).

## Generalissimo

*Torstenson 1642*



The sudden death of Banér in May 1641 recalled Torstenson to [Germany](#) as [generalissimo](#)<sup>[citation needed]</sup> of the Swedish forces and [Governor General](#) of [Pomerania](#). He was at the same time promoted to the rank of [Field Marshal](#). In 1642 he marched through [Brandenburg](#) and [Silesia](#) into [Moravia](#), taking all the principal fortresses on his way. On returning through [Saxony](#) he crushed the imperial army at the second [Battle of Breitenfeld](#) on October 23, 1642. In 1643 he invaded Moravia for the second time, but was suddenly recalled to invade [Denmark](#), when his rapid and unexpected intervention paralysed the Danish defence on the land side, though Torstenson's own position in

[Jutland](#) was for a time precarious owing to the skilful handling of the Danish fleet by [Christian IV of Denmark](#). In 1644 he led his army for the third time into the heart of Germany and routed the imperials at the [battle of Jüterbog](#) on November 23. At the beginning of November 1645 he broke into Bohemia, and the victory of [Jankau](#) on February 24, 1645 laid open before him the road to [Vienna](#). Yet, though one end of the [Danube](#) bridge actually fell into his hands, his exhausted army was unable to penetrate any further and, in December the same year, Torstenson, crippled by [gout](#), was forced to resign his command and returned to Sweden in the early summer of 1646. In 1647 he was created a [count](#). From 1648 to 1651 he ruled all the western provinces of Sweden, as [Governor-General](#). On his death at [Stockholm](#) on April 7, 1651 he was buried solemnly in the [Riddarholm Church](#), the Pantheon of Sweden. Torstenson was remarkable for the extraordinary and incalculable rapidity of his movements, though very frequently he had to lead the army in a litter, as his bodily infirmities would not permit him to mount his horse. He was also the most scientific [artillery](#) officer and the best and most successful [engineer](#) in the [Swedish army](#).

## Family

Torstenson was married in 1633 to Baroness [Beata De la Gardie](#) (1612–1680), daughter of the Privy Councillour [Johan De la Gardie](#) (1582–1640) and Katarina Kristersdotter Oxenstierna (-1625). They had a son, [Anders Torstenson](#), who also served as a Privy Councillour and Governor-General.

In 1653, after Torstenson's death, Beata De la Gardie was married to [Per Brahe the Younger](#).



# Battle of Lützen (1632)

The **Battle of Lützen (1632)** was one of the most decisive battles of the [Thirty Years' War](#). It was a Protestant victory, but cost the life of one of the most important leaders of the Protestant alliance, [Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden](#), which caused the Protestant campaign to lose direction.

## *Prelude to the battle*

Two days before the battle, on 14 November (in the Gregorian calendar, 4th in the Julian calendar) the [Roman Catholic](#) general [Wallenstein](#) decided to split his forces and withdraw his main headquarters back towards [Leipzig](#). He expected no further move that year from the [Protestant](#) army, led by the Swedish king Gustavus Adolphus, since unseasonably wintry weather was making it difficult to camp in the open countryside; however, Gustavus Adolphus' army marched out of camp towards Wallenstein's last-known position and attempted to catch him by surprise, but his trap was sprung prematurely on the afternoon of 15 November, by a small force left by Wallenstein at the [Rippach](#) stream, about 5–6 kilometres south of Lützen. A skirmish delayed the Swedish advance by two or three hours, so that when night fell the two armies were still separated by about 2–3 kilometres (1–2 miles).

Wallenstein had learned of the Swedish approach on the afternoon of 15 November. Seeing the danger, he dispatched a note to General [Pappenheim](#) ordering him to return as quickly as possible with his army corps. Pappenheim received the note after midnight, and immediately set off to rejoin Wallenstein with most of his troops. During the night, Wallenstein deployed his army in a defensive position along the main Lützen-Leipzig road, which he reinforced with trenches. He anchored his right flank on a low hill, on which he placed his main artillery battery.

## *The day of battle*

Morning mist delayed the Swedish army's advance, but by 9 AM the rival armies were in sight of each other. Because of a complex network of waterways and further misty weather, it took until 11 AM before the Protestant force was deployed and ready to launch its attack.

Initially, the battle went well for the Protestants, who managed to outflank Wallenstein's weak left wing. After a while, Pappenheim arrived with 2,000–3,000 cavalry and halted the Swedish assault. This made Wallenstein exclaim, "Thus I know my Pappenheim!". However, during the charge, Pappenheim was fatally wounded by a small-calibre Swedish cannonball. At the same time, Pappenheim's counterattack collapsed. He died later in the day while being evacuated from the field in a coach.

## **Gustavus' Adolphus' disappearance and death**

The cavalry action on the open Imperial left wing continued, with both sides deploying reserves in an attempt to gain the upper hand. Soon afterwards, towards 1 PM, Gustavus Adolphus was himself killed leading a cavalry charge on this wing. In the thick mix of gun smoke and fog covering the field, he was separated from his fellow riders and killed by several shots. His fate remained unknown for some time. However, when the gunnery paused and the smoke cleared, his horse was spotted between the two lines, Gustavus himself not on it and nowhere to be seen. His disappearance stopped the initiative of the hitherto successful Swedish right wing, while a search was conducted. His partly stripped body was found an hour or two later, and was secretly evacuated from the field in a Swedish artillery wagon.



Meanwhile, the veteran infantry of the Swedish center had continued to follow orders and tried to assault the strongly entrenched Imperial center and right wing. Their attack was a catastrophic failure—they were first decimated by Imperial artillery and infantry fire and then ridden over by Imperial cavalry charging from behind the cover of their own infantry. Two of the oldest and most experienced infantry units of the Swedish army, the 'Old Blue' Regiment and the Yellow or 'Court' Regiment were effectively wiped

out in these assaults; remnants from them streamed to the rear. Soon most of the Swedish front line was in chaotic retreat. The royal preacher, Jakob Fabricius, rallied a few Swedish officers around him and started to sing a psalm. This act had many of the soldiers halt in hundreds. The foresight of Swedish third-in-command 'Generalmajor' [Dodo zu Innhausen und Knyphausen](#) also helped staunch the rout: he had kept the Swedish second or reserve line well out of range of Imperial gunfire, and this allowed the broken Swedish front line to rally.

## **Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar**

By about 3 PM, the Protestant second-in-command [Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar](#), having learned of the king's death, returned from the left wing and assumed command over the entire army. He vowed to win the battle in retribution for Gustavus or die trying, but contrary to popular legend tried to keep the king's fate secret from the army as a whole. (Although rumours were circulating much earlier, it was only the following day that Bernhard collected his surviving officers together and told them the truth.)

The result was a grim struggle, with terrible casualties on both sides. Finally, with dusk falling, the Swedes captured the linchpin of Wallenstein's position, the main Imperial artillery battery. The Imperial forces retired back out of its range, leaving the field to the Swedes. At about 6 PM, Pappenheim's infantry, about 3,000–4,000 strong, after marching all day towards the gunfire, arrived on the battlefield. Although night had fallen, they wished to counterattack the Swedes. Wallenstein, however, believed the situation hopeless and instead ordered his army to withdraw to [Leipzig](#) under cover of the fresh infantry.

# Battle of Nördlingen (1634)

The **Battle of Nördlingen** was fought on 27 August ([Julian calendar](#)) or 6 September ([Gregorian calendar](#)), 1634 during the [Thirty Years' War](#). The [Roman Catholic Imperial army](#), bolstered by 18,000 [Spanish](#) and [Italian](#) soldiers, won a crushing victory over the combined [Protestant](#) armies of [Sweden](#) and their German-Protestant allies (Heilbronn Alliance).

After the failure of the [tercio](#) system in the first [Battle of Breitenfeld](#) in 1631, the professional Spanish troops deployed at Nördlingen proved the tercio system could still contend with the deployment improvements devised by [Maurice of Orange](#) and the late [Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden](#).

*The Battle of Nördlingen by Cornelis Schut. Oil on canvas*



After the Protestant victory in the [Battle of Lützen](#) two years before, the Swedes failed to follow up their victory due to the death of their king, [Gustavus Adolphus](#). As a result, the Imperial forces had begun to regain the initiative. In 1634 a Protestant Saxon and Swedish army had invaded Bohemia threatening the Habsburg core territories.

The future [Holy Roman Emperor](#), [Ferdinand of Hungary](#), decided to attack the Protestant territories in Southern Germany to draw the main Swedish and German armies away from Bohemia. Both sides were aware that Spanish reinforcements under his cousin, the [Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand](#), were en-route from their dominions in [Northern Italy](#). The Spanish army had marched through the Stelvio Pass trying to open a new "Spanish Road", and take their Commander to his Governorship of the Spanish Low Countries.

The Protestant commanders decided they could not ignore the threat and combined their two largest armies near Augsburg on July the 12th, the Swabian-Alsatian Army under [Gustav Horn](#) and the so called Franconian Army under [Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar](#). Both armies were named after their main operation area and belonged to the Heilbronn Alliance (Sweden's German-Protestant allies under the directorate of the Swedish chancellor Axel Oxenstierna). They were mainly consisting of German ("the Blue brigade") and some Scottish mercenaries ("the Green brigade") with a few national Swedish/Finnish regiments (mostly cavalry) and one national Swedish infantry brigade ("the Yellow brigade").

The Protestants proved unable to prevent the fall of Regensburg to Ferdinand of Hungary and desperately pursued him westwards in an effort to prevent the merger of the two Habsburg armies. On 16 August the [Cardinal-Infante](#) crossed the [Danube](#) at [Donauwörth](#). Despite their best efforts the Protestant armies were still behind when Ferdinand and the Imperials set down to besiege the town of Nordlingen, in [Swabia](#) and await the Cardinal-Infante who arrived before the city on the 2nd September - three days before the Protestants.

## Battle

The cousins, Ferdinand and Ferdinand, prepared for battle, ignoring the advice of the more experienced generals, such as the Imperial general [Matthias Gallas](#). Most of the generals felt a full engagement against two of the most experienced Protestant commanders was reckless and unlikely to have a positive outcome. However the cousins were supported by the Count of Leganés, the Spanish deputy commander. He appreciated that the Catholic army was significantly superior in numbers and had at its core the highly



trained professional Spanish Infantry who had not been present at previous Swedish victories over the Imperials.

Bernhard and Horn also prepared for battle, although this may not have been a mutual decision. Bernhard felt that whatever the odds an attempt must be made to relieve Nordlingen. Horn seems to have been reluctant to do so given the ragged state of the Protestant armies. Both commanders seem to have underestimated the numerically superior enemy forces. This may have been due to incorrect reports, or disbelieving those they had received. Whatever the reason Horn and Bernhard estimated that the Spanish reinforcements numbered only 7,000, not 21,000, added to the 12,000 Imperials this gave the Habsburgs a considerable superiority over the 26,000 Protestants.

During the battle, almost anything that could go wrong went wrong for the Protestant forces. This was due to the strong defensive efforts of the Spanish infantry, the feared "Tercios Viejos" (Old [Tercios](#)), mainly those commanded by [Fuenclara](#), [Idiáquez](#), and Toralto. Fifteen Swedish assaults by Horn's right wing, consisting of the brigades Vitzthum, Pfuel and the Scots Brigade (Colonel Gunn), supported by the brigade of Count Thurn (Black and Yellow Regiment) on the hill of Albuch, were repulsed by the Spaniards with



the decisive support of [Ottavio Piccolomini](#)'s Italian cavalry squadrons, under direct orders of another Italian commander, the loyal servant to the Spanish Crown, Gerardo di Gambacorta di Linata. On the left of the Protestant line the left Swedish wing under Bernhard of Weimar and the Imperial-Bavarian troops had avoided closing with each other, until late in the battle.

*The Battle of Nördlingen by Jacques Courtois.*

The Imperial commanders observed the weakened condition of Bernhard's troops, who had been sending large numbers of reinforcements to assist the Swedish troops. They ordered an advance by the Imperial troops which resulted in the quick collapse and rout of the weakened Swedish left wing infantry brigades. Pursuit of Bernhard's troops threatened to cut off any escape route of the Swedish units, who also promptly broke, turning into a panic stricken mob and leaving their side of the field to the Spanish troops of the [Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand](#).

Gustav Horn af Björneborg was captured, his army was destroyed, and the remainder of the Protestants who successfully fled to [Heilbronn](#) were only a remnant of those engaged.

*The Victory of the Two Ferdinands Peter Paul Rubens (1635)*



The battle was one of the most crushing defeats the Protestants sustained during the war. With its army substantially reduced, Sweden would lose its predominant role in the German area.

In the long term, the battle proved to be just another twist in the complicated war. It ensured that a triumph of the Swedish led Protestants powers, would not occur. This enabled the Counter-Reformation to preserve its gains against the Reformation in central [Europe](#). That said, the victory did not lead to an overall Catholic-Habsburg victory, as the Spanish and Imperialist forces would suffer serious setbacks later in the war. Ultimately, the

defeat of the Swedish forces at [Nordlingen](#) was largely responsible for French, not Swedish, goals taking precedence at the negotiations; with a significant effect on the political map of the Empire.

# Gustav Horn, Count of Björneborg

Count **Gustav Horn af Björneborg** (October 22, 1592 – May 10, 1657) was a [Swedish/Finnish](#) soldier and politician. He was the youngest son of Field Marshal Carl Horn and Agneta von Dellwig, born while his father was imprisoned in [Örbyhus Castle](#), after the defeat against the Russians.



He was born of the Finnish [noble family Horn of Kankas](#), and was appointed member of the [Royal Council](#) in 1625, [Field Marshal](#) in 1628, [Governor General](#) of [Livonia](#) in 1652 and [Lord High Constable](#) since 1653. In the [Thirty Years' War](#) (1618–1648), he was instrumental as a commander in securing victory at the [Battle of Breitenfeld](#), in 1631. He was High Councillor of the realm in 1625, elevated to the rank of [field marshal](#) in 1628, and sometimes commander-in-chief of Swedish forces in Germany during [Thirty Years' War](#). After the war, he served as Governor-General of [Livonia](#) 1652, President of War department and Lord High Constable in 1653. In 1651, [Queen Christina](#) created him Count of Björneborg.

As colonel, Gustav Horn took part in siege of [Riga](#) in 1621 and was seriously wounded. He led troops which conquered [Tartu](#) in Livonian [Estonia](#). With baron Johan [De La Gardie](#), he led defense of Livonia against [Poland](#) in late 1620s. Already at the age of 35, he was elevated to the rank of field marshal, by king [Gustav II Adolf](#), also known as *Gustavus Adolphus*.

## *Command of Swedish Forces in the Thirty Years War*

When the king decided to join the war in Germany (1630), he appointed Gustav Horn as his second in command. At the [battle of Breitenfeld](#) in 1631, Horn prevented the Imperial force, under [Tilly](#), from flanking the main body of the Swedish army after their Saxon allies fled the field. Next Horn led troops in Upper (southern) [Franconia](#) and conquered, among others, [Mergentheim](#), the town of the [Teutonic Order](#), and bishopric of [Bamberg](#), then to [Bavaria](#) with the king. Horn was sent to lead troops in [Rhineland](#), where he occupied [Koblenz](#) and [Trier](#), and even continued to [Swabia](#).

After the death of king Gustav II Adolf in the field at Lützen in November 1632, field marshal Horn and general [John Banér](#) were appointed to the overall command for Swedish forces in Germany. Gustav Horn's father-in-law, the Chancellor Oxenstierna, took the leadership of the civil government.

When Horn had to combine his troops with those of [Bernhard of Weimar](#), all their co-operation failed, and they were given separate directions.

After [Wallenstein](#)'s death 1634, Horn took some areas in Swabia: in spring 1634, his troops were unsuccessful in taking the imperial city of [Überlingen](#), which would have been a rich and valuable prize. In late August/early September 1634, his forces, and those of Bernard of Saxony, were crushed at the [battle of Nördlingen](#) by combined Habsburg and Spanish forces. Horn was taken prisoner and held by Catholic army in [Burghausen Castle](#) until 1642. He was exchanged for three imperial generals.

In 1651 he received [Pori](#) as his [county](#) and the castle of [Marienburg](#), already earlier donated to him, was erected into a [barony](#). Horn served then as [Governor-General](#) in Livonia, and as Lord [High Constable](#) of the "empire", becoming thus Lord President of the War Department.

# Battle of Wittstock

The **Battle of Wittstock** took place during the [Thirty Years' War](#) (1618-1648). It was fought on 24 September ([Julian calendar](#)) or 4 October ([Gregorian calendar](#)) 1636. A Swedish-allied army under general [Johan Baner](#) decisively defeated a combined [Imperial-Saxon](#) army, led by [Count Melchior von Hatzfeld](#) and the Saxon Elector [John George I](#). Baner was helped by Swedish Count [Lennart Torstenson](#) and Scottish professional soldiers.

*Wittstock, about 95 km northwest of Berlin*



The Holy Roman Emperor, with his Saxon and [Roman Catholic](#) allies, was fighting for the control of northern Germany against the Swedes and an alliance of Protestant princes opposed to Habsburg hegemony. The Swedes were also allied to the French, but they played no part in the battle. The Imperial main army was screening the Swedish army behind the Elbe while a smaller army under General Klitzing was overrunning Brandenburg. Field Marshal Johan Baner commanding the main Swedish army was joined by Field Marshal [Alexander Leslie](#) commanding the Army of the Weser which comprised German, Scottish and (at least one) English regiments. Together they crossed the Elbe with a surprise march and met their opponents in the

forested hilly landscape slightly south of Wittstock.

The Imperial army was larger in strength than the Swedish army, but at least one-third of it was composed of Saxon units of questionable quality. The Swedish artillery was considerably stronger, leading the Imperial commanders to maintain a largely defensive position on the hill tops.

The Imperial forces decided to wait for the Swedes on a range of sandy hills, the Scharfenberg. A part of the Imperial front was further defended with six ditches and a wall of linked wagons. Their commanders waited for some time for the Swedish troops to appear on the open fields to their front. Instead, the Swedish army was turning the Imperial left flank, moving behind the cover of a series of linked hills. The Imperial troops were forced to redeploy their lines to set up a new front.

The battle was begun by small forces detached in detail to secure the hills. The Swedes, under Baner and Leslie had problems moving up reinforcements through marshy ground, but battle was eventually joined along a wide front.

Baner and Leslie had detached one-fourth of the army under General James King, General John Ruthven and General Torsten Stålhandske to take a long detour around the Imperial right flank. They found the traverse difficult leading Baner's troops to take heavy casualties. Alexander Leslie moved six of his regiments to his relief taking heavy casualties in the process with the Scottish and English regiments being particularly badly mauled. Nonetheless they were able to relieve Baner in time for King's cavalry to finally outflank the Imperial troops causing a rout. Now attacked on two fronts, the Imperial forces, having lost all their artillery, retreated under the cover of dusk in full rout. In the accounts of the battle preserved in National Archives of Sweden, Johan Baner accredits the victory to Field Marshal Leslie. Leslie, in his personal correspondence to the Swedish Chancellor, Axel Oxenstierna, was clearly horrified at the losses sustained by his army and implies that there had been disagreement about the wisdom of Baner's tactics. Nevertheless, Wittstock was a resounding victory for the Swedish forces and corrected any delusions harboured by the Imperialists that they were a spent force after the earlier [battle of Nordlingen](#).



# Johan Banér

**Johan Banér** (23 June 1596 – 10 May 1641) was a [Swedish Field Marshal](#) in the [Thirty Years' War](#).



Johan Banér was born at [Djursholm Castle](#) in [Uppland](#). As a four year old he was forced to witness how his father, the [Privy Councillour Gustaf Banér](#), and uncle, [Sten Axelsson Banér](#) (also a Privy Councillour), were executed at the [Linköping Bloodbath](#) in 1600. They were accused of high treason by King [Charles IX](#) because of their support of King [Sigismund](#). And though it was the father of King [Gustavus Adolphus](#) who had Banér's father executed the two men developed a strong friendship from an early age, mostly because Gustavus Adolphus reinstated the Banér family soon after his coronation.

Entering the [Swedish Army](#) in 1615 when he participated in the Swedish siege of [Pskov](#) during the [Ingrian War](#), Banér proved himself to be an exceptionally brave young man. He served with distinction in the wars with [Russia](#) and [Poland](#), and had reached the rank of [Colonel](#) by the age of 25.

In 1630, Gustavus Adolphus landed in [Germany](#) and as one of the king's chief subordinates, Banér served in the campaign of north Germany, and at the first [Battle of Breitenfeld](#) he led the right wing of Swedish cavalry.

At the unsuccessful assault on [Albrecht von Wallenstein](#)'s camp at the [Alte Veste](#), Banér received a wound, and soon afterwards, when Gustavus marched towards [Lützen](#), was left in command in the west, where he was opposed to the imperial general [Johann von Aldringen](#). Two years later, as Swedish field marshal, Banér, with 16,000 men, entered [Bohemia](#) and, combining with the Saxon army, marched on [Prague](#). But the complete defeat of [Bernard of Saxe-Weimar](#) in the first [Battle of Nördlingen](#) stopped his victorious advance.

After this event the [peace of Prague](#) placed the Swedish army in a very precarious position, but the victories won by the united forces of Banér and Field Marshal [Alexander Leslie](#), commander of the Army of the Weser, at the Battle of [Wittstock](#) (October 4, 1636), restored the paramount influence of [Sweden](#) in central Germany. As Banér said himself in his report to Queen Christina: "[My soldiers] would have fallen into total disorder if Field-Marshal Leslie with the five brigades of foot which he had with him during the battle had not assisted us just in time and manfully attacked and turned 4 brigades of the enemy's infantry away from us so that we could finally gain our breath."

However, the two combined armies were considerably inferior in force to those they defeated, and in 1637 Banér was completely unable to make headway against the enemy. In 1639, however, he again overran northern [Germany](#), defeated the [Saxons](#) at [Chemnitz](#) and invaded [Bohemia](#) itself. The winter of 1640–1641 Banér spent in the west. His last achievement was an audacious [coup de main](#) on the [Danube](#). Breaking camp in mid-winter (a very rare event in the 17th century) he united with the [French](#) under the [Comte de Guébriant](#) and surprised [Regensburg](#), where the [Diet](#) was sitting. Only the break-up of the ice prevented the capture of the place. Banér thereupon had to retreat to [Halberstadt](#). Here, on 10 May 1641, he died, after designating Torstenson as his successor. He was much beloved by his men, who bore his body with them on the field of [Wolfenbüttel](#). Banér was regarded as the best of Gustavus's generals, and tempting offers (which he refused) were made him by the emperor to induce him to enter his service. His son received the dignity of count.

# First Battle of Leipzig (1642)

The **Second Battle of Breitenfeld**, also known as the **First Battle of Leipzig** (23 October 1642), took place at [Breitenfeld](#) (some 7.5 km north-east of [Leipzig](#)), [Germany](#), during the [Thirty Years' War](#)— fully eleven years after the first battle at the crossroads village had unbottled the Swedish forces under [Gustavus II Adolphus](#) wherein he had handed [Field Marshal Count Tilly](#) his first major defeat in fifty years of soldiering on the same plain.

Both battles were decisive victories for [Swedish led](#) forces during the protracted [Thirty Years' War](#) in their intervention on behalf of various [Protestant "Princes"](#) of the generally small German states against the [German Catholic League](#) formed to stamp out Protestantism in Central Europe.

In this second clash between ideologies for the prized [Saxony](#) city of Leipzig, the [Protestant forces](#), led by [Field Marshal Lennart Torstenson](#), defeated an army of the [Holy Roman Empire](#), led by [Archduke Leopold Wilhelm of Austria](#) and his deputy, Prince-General [Ottavio Piccolomini](#), Duke of Amalfi.

The [Imperial army](#) suffered 15,000 casualties, where of 5,000 were taken prisoner. Forty-six guns were also seized. 4,000 Swedes were killed or wounded; among them, General [Torsten Stålhandske](#), who led the Finnish [Hakkapeliitta](#) Cavalry, received a serious wound.

The battle enabled [Sweden](#) to occupy [Saxony](#). His defeat made Emperor [Ferdinand III](#) more willing to negotiate peace, and renounce the [Preliminaries of Hamburg](#).

*Lennart Torstenson's military campaign in 1642*



# Torstenson War

The **Torstenson war**, **Hannibal controversy** or **Hannibal War** was a short period of conflict between [Sweden](#) and [Denmark–Norway](#) which occurred in 1643 to 1645 during the waning days of the [Thirty Years' War](#). The names refer to Swedish general [Lennart Torstenson](#) and Norwegian governor-general [Hannibal Sehested](#).

Denmark, who had already withdrawn from the Thirty Years' War by the [Treaty of Lübeck](#) in 1629, suffered a major defeat. In the [Second Treaty of Brömsebro \(1645\)](#), which concluded the war, Denmark had to make huge territorial concessions and exempt Sweden from the [Sound Dues](#), *de facto* acknowledging the end of the Danish *dominium maris baltici*. Danish efforts to reverse this result in the [Second Northern](#), [Scanian](#) and [Great Northern](#) wars were unsuccessful.

## *Cause*

Sweden had been highly successful in the Thirty Years' War, having defeated Danish armies in Germany and seen substantial victories under [Gustavus Adolphus](#) and, after this death, under the leadership of Count [Axel Oxenstierna](#), Lord High Chancellor of Sweden. At the same time, Sweden was continually threatened by Denmark–Norway, which almost completely encircled Sweden from the south ([Blekinge](#), [Scania](#), and [Halland](#)), the west ([Bohuslän](#)) and the northwest ([Jämtland](#)). The Danish [Sound Dues](#) were also a continuing source of irritation and a contributing factor to the war.

In the spring of 1643 the Swedish Privy Council determined that their military strength made territorial gains at the expense of Denmark likely. The Count drew up the plan for war and directed a surprise multiple-front attack on Denmark in May.

## *Beginning*

Swedish Field Marshal [Lennart Torstensson](#) was ordered to march against Denmark. Proceeding from [Moravia](#), his forces entered Danish territory at [Holstein](#) on December 12 and by the end of January 1644 the [Jutland](#) peninsula was in his possession. In February 1644 the Swedish General [Gustav Horn](#) occupied much of the then Danish provinces of [Halland](#) and [Scania](#), except for the Danish fortress town of [Malmö](#), with an army of 11,000 men.



# Battle of Jüterbog

The **Battle of Jüterbog** was fought on November 23, 1644, between [Sweden](#) and the [Holy Roman Empire](#), resulting in a Swedish victory.

## *Background*

Field Marshal [Lennart Torstenson](#) had unexpectedly marched into [Jutland](#) in September 1643 (see [Torstenson War](#)). While engaged in operations there, an Imperial army under the command of Count [Matthias Gallas](#) ventured north towards Jutland to trap the Swedish army there and destroy it. The Emperor had received requests from Denmark for help, as well as assurance that the Swedish forces were worn down and therefore a fairly easy target. However, since Torstenson thought of Gallas' approaching army of about 15,000 men as a threat to the important Swedish strongholds on the German Baltic coast, he turned his army around and headed south to engage the enemy.

Gallas had his troops build and stay behind abatises and entrenchments south of the river [Eider](#) in [Holstein](#) in an attempt to trap the Swedish forces on Jutland. This tactic failed, as Torstenson's troops outmanoeuvred the enemy by overthrowing a few Imperial positions and pose a threat both to Gallas' back, and Imperial areas further south. The Imperial army began to move south. During the summer of 1644, Torstenson's forces tried to get their hands on the retreating enemy, and in late September, they had once more caught up with the Imperial army. Gallas responded by ordering his troops to build strong defensive positions and await wished-for reinforcement. The Imperial halting-place, south of [Magdeburg](#), was soon surrounded by the Swedish, who cut off all supplies for Gallas' men. Eventually, the Imperial side ran out of bread and they started to lose people to sickness and starvation. As huge numbers of people and animals died, Gallas saw no other solution but to abandon many of the sick, most of his artillery as well as the baggage, and search protection for his troops in Magdeburg itself. The pattern repeated itself when the Swedish forces managed to enclose the city and cut off the supply. One night, the Imperial cavalry made an attempt to break out.

## *The Battle*

The Imperial cavalry were caught close to the town of [Jüterbog](#). They were almost wiped out. Out of an initial force of 4,000 soldiers, only a couple of hundred are said to have managed to get away. The Swedish also captured 3,500 horses.

## *Aftermath*

It would take a while for the Imperial forces in Magdeburg to succeed with a breakaway. Before they did, they had to turn to eating both cats and dogs as their situation grew more desperate. Many of them deserted. Most of the soldiers who aimed to switch sides and join the Swedish forces were judged to be too weak and were therefore ignored by the Swedish.

After getting some help from drift ice that ruined Swedish bridges on river [Elbe](#), Gallas commanded his troops to make a desperate effort to break out of the Swedish encirclement. They managed to escape to [Bohemia](#) in the south east. Out of 12,000 Imperial soldiers that constituted Gallas' army in the summer of 1644, about 2,000 men survived. As a result of the severe fiasco the campaign turned out to be, and the tactical mistakes he made, Gallas was relieved from his duty as Imperial commander.

# Battle of Fehmarn 1644

The **Action of 13 October 1644** took place north-west of the island of [Fehmarn](#), now part of [Germany](#), in the [Baltic Sea](#). A combined Swedish fleet, with a large element of hired Dutch ships, defeated a Danish fleet and took 1000 prisoners, including [Ulfeldt](#), Grabov and von Jasmund. The Danish admiral [Pros Mund](#) was killed in the battle.

The Swedes had 16 ships with 392 guns, and the Dutch element had 21 ships with 483 guns (making a total of 37 ships with 875 guns). The Danes had 17 ships with 448 guns. The Swedes expended two fireships and the Dutch lost one ship. The Danes lost 10 ships captured, including their largest three, and two wrecked.

*Naval battle of Fehmarn*



## The battle

On the morning of October 13 the Swedish-Dutch fleet weighed anchor and prepared for battle by dividing into two Swedish and three Dutch squadrons. One of the Swedish squadrons was led by Wrangel on *Smålands Lejon* and the other under vice admiral Peter Blum on *Draken*. The Dutch squadrons were commanded by Thijssen onboard *Jupiter*, vice admiral Henrik Gerretsen on *Groote Dolphijn* and [Schoutbynacht](#) Pieter Marcussen on *Groot Vliessingen*.

The Danish fleet was divided in two squadrons under admiral [Pros Mund](#) on *Patentia* and Joachim Grabow on *Lindormen*. Around 10 am the larger ships in both fleets were within firing range of each other and started firing. The smaller Danish ships retreated from the battle, but were pursued by the Dutch ships.

Early in the battle the Swedish flag ship *Smålands Lejon* was so damaged in her rigging and hull that she had to pull out. The Swedish ships *Regina* och *Göteborg* attacked and boarded the Danish flag ship *Patentia*. The Danish admiral Pros Mund was killed during the fighting.

The Swedish [fire ship](#) *Meerman* was sent against the Danish *Lindormen*, which quickly caught fire and exploded. Swedish *Nya Fortuna* captured the Danish man-of-war [Oldenburg](#) by boarding. The last man-of-war *Tre Løver* veered off, but was pursued by Anckarhjelm's Dutch *Jupiter*, *Patentia* and *Swarte Arent*. *Tre Løver* managed to sink *Swarte Arent* before the two other Dutch ships boarded her.

The smaller Danish vessels *Tu Løver*, *Havhesten*, and *Fides* were captured by Dutch *Jupiter* and *Groote Dolphijn*. A cluster of Danish ships were forced against the shore of Lolland, among them *Neptunus*, *Nelleblad*, *Stormarn*, and *Kronet Fisk*. These were later towed by the Dutch. Danish *Delmenhorst* went aground and exploded after being set on fire by the Swedish fire ship *Delfin*. Danish *Markatten*, *Højenhald* and a galleot also went aground, but cannon fire from land protected them from the Dutch. Only *Pelikanen* and *Lammet* managed to escape and sail to [Copenhagen](#) on October 17.

## Consequences

The Danes lost twelve ships, of which ten were captured. A hundred men perished and about 1,000 were captured. The ship *Swarte Arent* was the only loss on the Swedish side; its crew was rescued. In total, the Swedish side suffered only 59 deaths. The victory was one of the greatest in the history of the Swedish Fleet.

# Carl Gustaf Wrangel

Carl Gustaf [Wrangel](#) (also **Carl Gustav Wrangel**; 23 December 1613 – 5 July 1676) was a high-ranking [Swedish](#) noble, statesman and military commander in the [Thirty Years'](#), [Torstenson](#), [Bremen](#), [Second Northern](#) and [Scanian Wars](#).

*Carl Gustaf Wrangel in 1662*



He held the ranks of a [field marshal](#), commander-in-chief of the Swedish forces in Germany (1646–1648), and [Lord High Admiral of Sweden](#) (since 1657). He held the title of a [Count](#) of [Salmis](#).

He held several estates, primarily in the [Swedish dominions](#), where he constructed representative mansions - [Wrangelsburg](#) in [Pomerania](#) bears his name until today. Wrangel was a close friend of [Charles X Gustav of Sweden](#).

## Under Christina

At the age of twenty, Carl Gustaf Wrangel distinguished himself as a cavalry captain in the [Thirty Years' War](#). Three years later he was colonel, and in 1638 major-general, still serving in Germany. In 1644, during the [Torstenson War](#), he commanded a fleet at sea, which defeated the [Danes](#) at [Fehmarn](#) on 23 October.

In 1646 he returned to Germany as a [Field Marshal](#) and succeeded [Lennart Torstenson](#) as commander-in-chief of the [Swedish army](#) in Germany. Under Wrangel and [Turenne](#) the allied Swedish and [French](#) armies marched and fought in [Bavaria](#) and [Württemberg](#). After the [Thirty Years' War](#) had come to an end in 1648, he was made [governor-general](#) of [Swedish Pomerania](#). Queen [Christina of Sweden](#) created him count of [Salmis](#) in [Kexholms län](#) ([Salmi and Suistamo](#) pogosta, [Käkisalmi province](#)) in northern [Karelia](#), [Finland](#); and afterwards augmented his lands with [barony of Lindeberg](#) in [Halland](#).

## Under Charles X Gustav



Already before Christina's abdication, Wrangel became a close friend and trusted advisor of her successor, [Charles X Gustav of Sweden](#). Wrangel and Charles X Gustav had first met two weeks before the [Battle of Leipzig \(1642\)](#), and when Wrangel's oldest daughter was born during the siege, Charles X Gustav became her godparent. Charles X Gustav created Wrangel [freiherr](#) of Ludenhof, and [Lord High Admiral](#) on 11 December 1657 - a special favour for Charles X Gustav left most of Sweden's highest offices vacant.

*Wrangel on horseback (1652)*

When the [Second Northern War](#) broke out in 1655, Wrangel commanded a fleet, but in 1656 he was serving on land again and commanding, along with the "Great Elector" [Frederick William I of Brandenburg](#), in the three



days [Battle of Warsaw \(1656\)](#). In 1657 he invaded [Jutland](#) and in 1658 passed over the ice into the islands and took [Kronborg](#).

When Charles X Gustav died at the end of the war, Wrangel participated in organizing the obsequies and composed the melody to a [lament](#). Also in 1660, Wrangel became chancellor of the [University of Greifswald](#), after he had been made supreme judge in the [Uppland](#) province two years earlier.

## Under Charles XI

In 1664 he was appointed [Lord High Constable](#) of the [realm](#), and as such he was a member of the [Privy Council](#) during the minority of [Charles XI of Sweden](#). During the [Wars for Bremen](#), he tried to win the city of [Bremen](#) for the Swedish crown, but was not successful: On November, 15th, 1666 he was forced to make peace, and concluded the "Peace of [Habenhausen](#)". During the [Scanian War](#), Wrangel was commanding ineffectively owing to his broken health, and was recalled after his stepbrother Baron [Waldemar Wrangel](#) (1647–1676) had been [defeated at Fehrbellin](#).

## Illness and death

The hardships and injuries Wrangel suffered during his multiple campaigns, combined with unhealthy eating habits, led to Wrangel suffering from several acute and chronic illnesses for most of his life, most notably [gout](#) and [gallstone](#). He was treated at several health resorts, including [Spa](#) in August 1651, [Langenschwalbach](#) in July 1662 and [Pyrmont](#) in the summer of 1668, yet without ever completely recovering. In 1674, he broke down "like dead" from two strikes of [hypervolemia](#), and his chronic diseases made it nearly impossible for him to fulfill the tasks of commanding the Swedish forces in the [Scanian War](#).

Shortly afterwards, on 25 June ([OS](#)) or 5 July ([NS](#)) 1676, Wrangel died in his Spyker castle on [Rügen, Swedish Pomerania](#) (also spelled Spycker, now part of the [Glowe](#) municipality). His body was transferred to [Stralsund](#) and remained there throughout the [siege of 1678](#). After the battle, Stralsund fell in Danish and Brandenburgian hands, but the Danish king and the Brandenburgian elector upon requests of Wrangel's heirs permitted the body to be transferred to [Stockholm](#), which happened in July 1680. On 1 December 1680, he was buried in the [Wrangel family's](#) crypt in [Skokloster](#). His preserved written legacy is archived in the [Gamla Riksarkivet](#) (Great Imperial Archive), [Stockholm](#).

When the [Second Northern War](#) broke out in 1655, Wrangel commanded a fleet, but in 1656 he was serving on land again and commanding, along with the "Great Elector" [Frederick William I of Brandenburg](#), in the three days [Battle of Warsaw \(1656\)](#).



*Skokloster castle*

## Second Northern War

The **Second Northern War** (1655–60, also **First** or **Little Northern War**) was fought between [Sweden](#) and its adversaries the [Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth](#) (1655–60), [Russia](#) (1656–58), [Brandenburg-Prussia](#) (1657–1660), the [Habsburg Monarchy](#) (1657–60) and [Denmark–Norway](#) (1657–58 and 1658–60). The [Dutch Republic](#) often intervened against Sweden.

*March across the Belts*



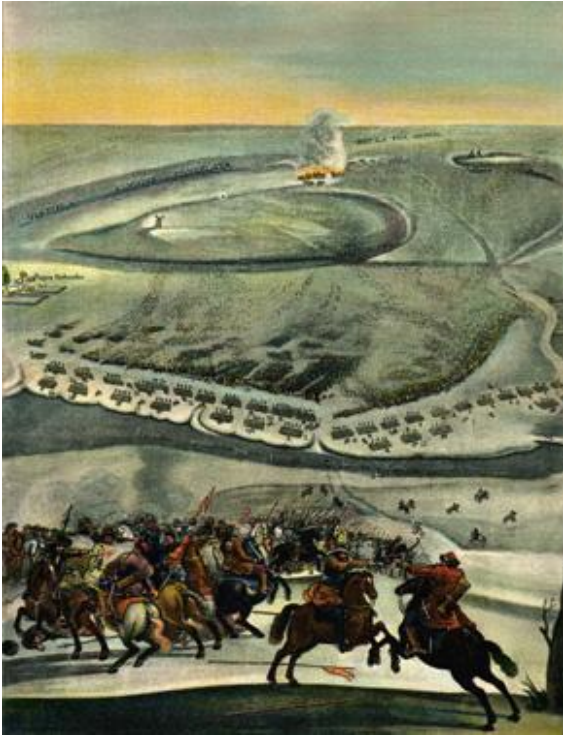
In 1655, [Charles X Gustav of Sweden](#) invaded and occupied western Poland–Lithuania, the eastern half of which was [already occupied by Russia](#). The rapid Swedish advance became known in Poland as the [Swedish Deluge](#). The [Grand Duchy of Lithuania](#) became a [Swedish fief](#), the Polish–Lithuanian regular armies surrendered and the Polish king [John II Casimir Vasa](#) fled to the [Habsburgs](#). [Frederick William I, Elector of Brandenburg](#) and [Duke of Prussia](#) initially supported the [estates](#) in [Royal Prussia](#), but [allied with Sweden](#) in return for receiving the Duchy of Prussia as a Swedish fief. Exploiting the hurt religious feelings of the [Roman Catholic](#) population under [Protestant](#) occupation and organizing Polish–Lithuanian military leaders in the

[Tyszowce Confederation](#), John II Casimir Vasa managed to regain ground in 1656. Russia took advantage of the Swedish setback, [declared war on Sweden](#) and pushed into Lithuania and [Swedish Livonia](#).

Frederick III's war on Sweden gave Charles X Gustav a reason to abandon the Polish–Lithuanian deadlock and fight Denmark instead. After marching his army to the west and making a [dangerous crossing of frozen straits](#) in the winter of 1657/58, he surprised the unprepared Frederick III on the Danish isles and forced him into surrender. In the [Treaty of Roskilde](#), Denmark had to abandon all Danish provinces in what is now Southern Sweden. The anti-Swedish allies meanwhile neutralized the Transylvanian army and Polish forces ravaged [Swedish Pomerania](#).

In 1648, the [Peace of Westphalia](#) had ended the [Thirty Years' War](#), during which the [Swedish Empire](#) emerged as the new major European power alongside [France](#). In the [Torstenson War](#), a theater of the Thirty Years' War, Sweden had defeated the former Baltic great power Denmark. Sweden had been at peace with Russia since the [Treaty of Stolbovo](#) had ended the [Ingrian War](#) in 1617. Sweden had remained in a state of war with the [Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth](#) since the [Polish–Swedish War \(1626–1629\)](#), which was concluded by the repeatedly renewed truce.

## Battle of Gołab



The **Battle of Gołab** was fought on February 8, 1656 between forces of the [Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth](#) commanded by [Stefan Czarniecki](#) on one side, and on the other [Swedish](#) forces commanded by [Charles X Gustav](#). This battle was essentially a meeting engagement with Swedish troops arriving on the battlefield at different times. It is uncertain how many actually participated. The result was a Swedish victory.

## Battle of Warka

The **Battle of Warka** on April 7, 1656 between forces of the [Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth](#) commanded by Stefan Czarniecki on one side, and on the other [Swedish](#) forces commanded by Friedrich of Baden. Battle was fought for about two hours. Polish forces won the battle.

*Battle of Warka 1656 by Franciszek Smuglewicz*





# Battle of Warsaw (1656)

The **Battle of Warsaw** ([Swedish: \*Tredagarsslaget vid Warszawa\*](#)) was a [battle](#) which took place near [Warsaw](#) on July 28–July 30 [[O.S.](#) July 18–20] 1656, between the armies of the [Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth](#) on the one hand and of [Sweden](#) and [Brandenburg](#) on the other. It was a major battle in the [Second Northern War](#) between Poland and Sweden in the period 1655–1660, also known as [The Deluge](#). According to [Hajo Holborn](#), it marked "the beginning of Prussian military history".

In the battle, a smaller Swedish-Brandenburg force gained victory over a Polish-Lithuanian force superior in numbers, though in the long term the victory achieved little. Polish-Lithuanian losses were insignificant, since the Polish noble levy promptly retreated from the battlefield.

*Swedish king Charles X Gustav in skirmish with Polish Tartars near Warsaw 1656*



The Polish-Lithuanian forces, commanded by King [John II Casimir of Poland](#), comprised about 24,000 regulars (including only 950 Winged Hussars - 8 banners), 2,000 [Tatars](#) and 10,000 of the noble levy, altogether some 36,000 men of which only about 4,000 were infantry and the remainder cavalry & dragoons, with 18 artillery pieces. The allied armies of Sweden and Brandenburg, commanded by King [Charles X of Sweden](#) and Elector [Frederick William](#) of Brandenburg, were only 19,000 strong, and after landing at [Danzig](#), marched south towards Warsaw. It fielded 12,500 cavalry & dragoons, 6,500 infantry (15 brigades) and 47 artillery pieces.

John II Casimir ferried his army across the [Vistula](#) River and met the approaching Swedish-Brandenburg force on its right bank, about five kilometers to the north of the suburb of [Praga](#). Charles X had initially hoped to destroy the Lithuanian and Tatar forces before they joined up with the remainder of the Commonwealth army, but this plan failed. Some officers of Brandenburg considered the Polish-Lithuanian forces to be overwhelming in numbers and instead advocated a retreat.

## ***First day***

On the first day, the [Swedes](#) and [Germans](#) mounted a conventional, frontal assault which was resisted and repulsed. The space between the [Białołęka](#) Forest to the east and the Vistula River on the west made the line of battle very narrow and prevented the Swedish and German infantry from forming an effective firing line with their muskets and pikes. The Polish-Lithuanian forces had also thrown up earthwork fortifications in front of their positions, creating a defensive position very difficult to assault.

## ***Second day***

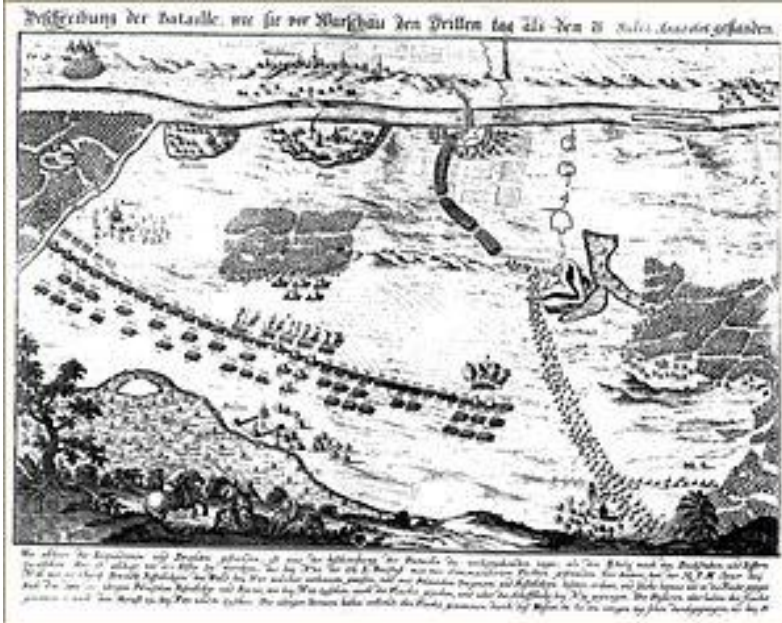
On the second day, Frederick William led a personal reconnaissance mission and noticed that a hillock against the forest, known as the "Colline", was on high enough ground to see over the Białołęka Forest and was also a prime position to put his guns. He had it assaulted and occupied by Brandenburg's infantry and dragoons and soon positioned his cannon on it, holding off against repeated Polish charges against the hillock.

With the Germans having shifted attention to the Colline hillock, the highly mobile Swedish cavalry began a daring maneuver. Wheeling around the Białoleka Forest unseen and to the Polish-Lithuanian right flank, they consolidated a new position which made the [Poles'](#) battle lines untenable. The sudden appearance of the Swedish army on their flank caused them to rush uncoordinated attacks that petered out by nightfall, although mounted Tatar forces continued to harass the allied forces.

During the night, John II Casimir realized that victory was unattainable and decided to evacuate the baggage train and his infantry across the Vistula River, while the cavalry was to prolong the fighting in order to cover the retreat and then withdraw south along the river.

### Third day

*"Battle of Warsaw on the third day", a contemporary map*



The third day was when the Commonwealth forces were finally defeated. The planned retreat was poorly executed and on most parts a failure. During the night, horses and infantry started to cause a traffic jam on the bridge across to the Warsaw-side of the river.

At sunrise, around 4 a.m., the allied forces got into battle position while the Polish forces, led by John II Casimir himself, readied themselves. Around 8 a.m. the allied forces started their attack. Field Marshal von Sparr began an hour-long bombardment and followed with a pike charge against the now demoralized and unorganized Commonwealth forces. Frederick William led a cavalry charge to the right and broke

deep into the rear of the Polish lines, causing a general disintegration of their forces.

A dispute regarding the tactics between Swedish and Brandenburg officers gave several Polish regiments the opportunity to withdraw towards the bridge. At this time, the bottleneck on the bridge's eastern side caused a panic and many Commonwealth soldiers fell into the water. Amongst those who came close to drowning was [Stanisław "Rewera" Potocki](#). The bridge collapsed but was soon repaired while dragoons held off the Swedish-Brandenburg attacks. When the artillery and infantry was across the bridge, John II Casimir ordered it to be burnt down in order to halt the pursuing Brandenburg cavalry.

Left on the eastern bank were the majority of the Polish cavalry. Numbering about ten thousand, the force started to maneuver south through a narrow corridor. The allied officers were surprised by this bold move and did not mount a flank attack that would have cut off the Polish forces and caused a catastrophe for them. Instead, the battle ended with Swedish cavalry cutting down and capturing the remaining scattered forces, amongst many were nobility from [Belz](#).

### Aftermath

The Germans and Swedes held a victory parade through the streets of Warsaw, but they were unable to hold the city and were soon forced to abandon it. The Polish king's defeat led him to concede sovereignty over the [Duchy of Prussia](#) to Brandenburg in return for an alliance in the [Treaty of Wehlau](#) the following year.



# Battle of the Sound

The naval **Battle of the Sound** took place on 8 November 1658 (29 October O.S.) during the [Second Northern War](#), near the Sound or [Oresund](#), just north of the Danish capital, [Copenhagen](#). Sweden had defeated Denmark and an army under [Charles X of Sweden](#) had Copenhagen itself under siege. The Dutch fleet was sent to prevent Sweden from gaining control of both sides of the Sound and controlling Baltic trade.



*First Phase of the Battle of the Sound*

The Dutch, under the command of Lieutenant-Admiral [Jacob van Wassenaer Obdam](#) with [Egbert Bartholomeusz Kortenaer](#) as his [flag captain](#), who had sailed to the [Baltic](#) in support of Denmark, had 41 ships with 1413 guns while the Swedes had 45 ships with 1838 guns, arranged in groups of three within each Division. The seven Danish ships with about 280 guns were unable to assist their Dutch allies because of adverse northern winds and could only watch. Obdam, who first received very complicated written instructions from [Grand Pensionary Johan de Witt](#) and asked his boss to explain them again "in three words", summed up his mission in a single sentence: "Save Copenhagen and punch anyone in the face who tries to prevent it". That "anyone" was the English fleet; the English didn't intervene however. The Swedes aggressively attacked, but failed as the approaching Dutch had the [weather gage](#). The Dutch forced the Swedish fleet to end the blockade of the Danish capital, which eventually forced Charles to abandon the siege entirely.



# Charles X Gustav of Sweden

**Charles X Gustav** also **Carl Gustav**, *Swedish*: *Karl X Gustav* (8 November 1622 – 13 February 1660) was [King of Sweden](#) from 1654 until his death. He was the son of [John Casimir](#), [Count Palatine](#) of [Zweibrücken-Kleeburg](#) and [Catherine of Sweden](#). After his father's death he also succeeded him as [Pfalzgraf](#). He was married to [Hedwig Eleonora of Holstein-Gottorp](#), who bore his son and successor, [Charles XI](#). Charles X Gustav was the second [Wittelsbach](#) king of Sweden after the childless king [Christopher of Bavaria](#) (1441–1448) and he was the first king of the Swedish *Caroline era*, which had its peak during the end of the reign of his son, [Charles XI](#).

*King of Sweden Duke of Bremen and Verden*



In his early childhood raised in the Swedish court alongside [Queen Christina](#) he received an excellent civil education. Later Charles X learned the art of war under [Lennart Torstenson](#), being present at the second [Battle of Breitenfeld \(1642\)](#) and at [Jankowitz](#) (1645).

## War in Poland-Lithuania

On 10 July 1655, Charles X left Sweden to engage in a war against the [Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth](#), in what became the [Second \(or Little\) Northern War](#) (1655–1660). By the time war was declared he had at his disposal 50,000 men and 50 warships. Hostilities had already begun with the occupation of [Dünaburg](#) in [Polish Livonia](#) by the Swedes on 1 July 1655. Then on July 21, 1655 Swedish army under [Arvid Wittenberg](#) crossed into Poland and proceeded towards the encampment of the Greater Poland Levy of the Nobility ([pospolite ruszenie](#)) encamped among the banks of the [Noteć](#) river, with some regular infantry for support. On 25 July the Polish noble levy army capitulated, and the [voivodeships](#) of [Poznań](#) and [Kalisz](#) placed themselves under the protection of the Swedish King. Thereupon the Swedes entered Warsaw without opposition and occupied the whole of [Greater Poland](#). The Polish king, [John II Casimir of Poland](#) (1648–68) of the [House of Vasa](#), eventually fled to [Silesia](#) after his armies had suffered defeats. A great number of Polish nobles and their personal armies joined the Swedes, including the majority of the famous Winged Hussars. Many Poles saw Charles X Gustav as a strong monarch who could be a more effective leader than John II Casimir.

Meanwhile Charles X Gustav pressed on towards [Kraków](#), which the Swedes captured after a two months' siege. The fall of Kraków followed a capitulation of the Polish Royal armies, but before the end of the year a reaction began in Poland herself. On 18 November 1655 the Swedes invested the fortress-monastery of [Częstochowa](#), but the Poles defended it and after a seventy days' siege the Swedish besiegers had to retire with great loss.

The difficulties of Charles X in Poland are believed to have caused him to receive the tidings of the Danish declaration of war on 1 June 1657 with extreme satisfaction. He had learnt from Torstensson that Denmark was most vulnerable if attacked from the south, and he attacked Denmark with a velocity which paralysed resistance. At the end of June 1657, at the head of 8,000 seasoned veterans, he broke up from [Bromberg](#) ([Bydgoszcz](#)) south of [Pomerania](#) and reached the borders of [Holstein](#) on 18 July. The Danish army dispersed and the Swedes recovered the [duchy of Bremen](#). In the early autumn Charles's troops swarmed over [Jutland](#) and firmly established themselves in the duchies. But the fortress of [Fredriksodde](#) ([Fredericia](#)) held Charles's smaller army at bay from mid-August to mid-October, while the fleet of Denmark, after two days' battle, compelled the Swedish fleet to abandon its projected attack on the Danish islands.

The position of the Swedish king had now become critical. In July Denmark and Poland-Lithuania concluded an offensive and defensive alliance. Still more ominously for the Swedes, the elector of Brandenburg, perceiving Sweden's difficulties, joined the league against Sweden and compelled Charles to accept the proffered mediation of [Oliver Cromwell](#), [Coenraad van Beuningen](#) and [Cardinal Mazarin](#). The negotiations foundered, however, upon the refusal of Sweden to refer the points in dispute to a general peace-congress, and Charles received encouragement from the capture of Fredriksodde, 23 October-24, whereupon he began to make preparations for conveying his troops over to [Funen](#) in transport vessels. But soon another and cheaper expedient presented itself. In the middle of December 1657 began the great frost, which would prove so fatal to Denmark. In a few weeks the cold had grown so intense that the freezing of an arm of the sea with so rapid a current as the [Small Belt](#) became a conceivable possibility; and henceforth meteorological observations formed an essential part of the strategy of the Swedes.

## March across the Belts

*The crossing of the Great Belt*



On 28 January 1658, Charles X arrived at [Haderslev](#) in South Jutland. His meteorologists estimated that in a couple of days the ice of the Little Belt would become firm enough to bear even the passage of a mail-clad host. The cold during the night of 29 January became most severe; and early in the morning of the 30th the Swedish king gave the order to start, the horsemen dismounting on the weaker spots of ice and cautiously leading their horses as far apart as

possible, until they swung into their saddles again, closed their ranks and made a dash for the shore. Swedish arms quickly overpowered the Danish troops lining the opposite coast and won the whole of Funen with the loss of only two companies of cavalry, which disappeared under the ice while fighting with the Danish left wing. Pursuing his march, Charles X, with his eyes fixed steadily on [Copenhagen](#), resolved to cross the frozen [Great Belt](#) also. However, he accepted the advice of his chief engineer officer [Erik Dahlberg](#), who acted as pioneer throughout and chose the more circuitous route from Svendborg, by the islands of [Langeland](#), [Lolland](#) and [Falster](#), in preference to the direct route from Nyborg to Korsør, which would have had to cross a broad, almost uninterrupted expanse of ice. A council of war, which met at two o'clock in the morning to consider the practicability of Dahlberg's proposal, dismissed it as hazardous. Even the king wavered; but when Dahlberg persisted in his opinion, Charles overruled the objections of the commanders. On the night of 5 February the transit began, the cavalry leading the way through the snow-covered ice, which quickly thawed beneath the horses' hoofs so that the infantry which followed after had to wade through half an ell of sludge, facing the risk that the ice would break beneath their feet. At three o'clock in the afternoon, with Dahlberg leading the way, the army reached Grimsted in Lolland without losing a man; on 8 February, Charles reached Falster. On 11 February he stood safely on the soil of [Zealand](#). A Swedish medal struck to commemorate the transit of the Baltic Sea bear the inscription: *Natura hoc debuit uni*. Sweden had achieved a rare war exploit, in Sweden considered to be matched only by the crusade of the [Livonian Order](#) led by [William of Modena](#) to conquer [Saaremaa](#) (Osel) in January 1227 and afterwards when two Russian armies crossed the frozen [Gulf of Bothnia](#) from Finland to mainland Sweden in March during the [Finnish War](#).

On 17 July he again landed on Zealand and besieged Copenhagen with its king [Frederick III of Denmark](#), but [Copenhagen repelled a major assault](#) and managed to hold out long enough for the Dutch fleet under Lieutenant-Admiral [Jacob van Wassenaer Obdam](#) to relieve the city, defeating the Swedish fleet in the [Battle of the Sound](#) on 29 October 1658. The Dutch liberated the Danish Isles in 1659. As Baltic trade was vital to the Dutch economy they made clear to Charles they wouldn't allow Sweden to control the Sound.

# Magnus Gabriel De la Gardie

Count **Magnus Gabriel De la Gardie** (15 October 1622 – 26 April 1686) was a [Swedish](#) statesman and military man. He became a member of the [Swedish Privy Council](#) in 1647 and came to be the holder of three of the five offices counted as the [Great Officers of the Realm](#), namely [Lord High Treasurer](#), [Lord High Chancellor](#) and [Lord High Steward](#). He also served as [Governor-General](#) in the Swedish dominion of [Livonia](#).



Magnus Gabriel [De la Gardie](#) was born on 15 October, 1622. The place of his birth was Reval (present-day [Tallinn](#)), [Estonia](#), which at the time was a Swedish dominion where Magnus Gabriel's father [Jacob De la Gardie](#) served as [governor](#). Jacob De la Gardie, Count of [Läckö](#), was a prominent military commander who served as [Lord High Constable of Sweden](#) from 1620 until his death in 1652. Father of Jacob, and grandfather of Magnus Gabriel, was Baron [Pontus De la Gardie](#), a French mercenary who had been in Danish service but made a career in Sweden after having been captured by Swedish troops in 1565. Pontus married [Sofia Gyllenhielm](#), the daughter of King [John III of Sweden](#), in 1580.

## 1654-1660: Under Charles X Gustav

When Charles Gustav, De la Gardie's brother-in-law, ascended to the throne, it meant a return to the public for De la Gardie. In August 1654, he became governor of Västergötland, Dalsland and [Halland](#) and in December that year he was made chancellor of [Uppsala University](#). In 1655, he was for the second time chosen for the office of General-Governor of Livonia. He also became Lieutenant General of the Swedish troops in [Ingria](#), Estonia and Livonia, which meant that he commanded troops in the [wars against Poland and Russia](#). It appears that De la Gardie was anything but a splendid military commander, as he received much more complaints than praise from the king for his actions in that area.

## 1672-1686: Under Charles XI

In December 1672, King [Charles XI](#) came to age. Despite what people might have anticipated, De la Gardie now became mightier than ever before. The young and inexperienced king seems to have been glad to take the advice of his Lord High Chancellor De la Gardie, who tried to increase the king's power in order to increase his own. However, from 1675, his influence decreased. That year, bound by the treaty with France, Sweden entered the [Franco-Dutch War](#) by invading [Brandenburg](#). Although being numerically superior, the Swedish forces lost at [Fehrbellin](#), which led to Denmark being encouraged to attack Sweden. Thus, the [Scanian War](#) was initiated.



# Scanian War

The **Scanian War** was a part of the [Northern Wars](#) involving the union of [Denmark-Norway](#), [Brandenburg](#) and [Sweden](#). It was fought mainly on [Scanian](#) soil, in the former Danish provinces along the border with Sweden and in Northern Germany. While the latter battles are regarded a theater of the Scanian war in English, Danish and Swedish historiography, they are seen as a separate war in German historiography, called the **Swedish-Brandenburgian War**.

*Siege of Szczecin*



The war was prompted by the Swedish involvement in the [Franco-Dutch War](#). Sweden had allied with [France](#) against several European countries. The [United Provinces](#), under attack by France, sought support from [Denmark-Norway](#). After some hesitation, King [Christian V](#) started the invasion of the [Scania \(Skåneland\)](#) in 1675, while the Swedes were occupied with a war against [Brandenburg](#). The invasion of Scania was combined with a simultaneous Norwegian front called the **Gyldenløve War**, forcing the defending Swedes to fight a two-front war in addition to their entanglements in the [Holy Roman Empire](#).

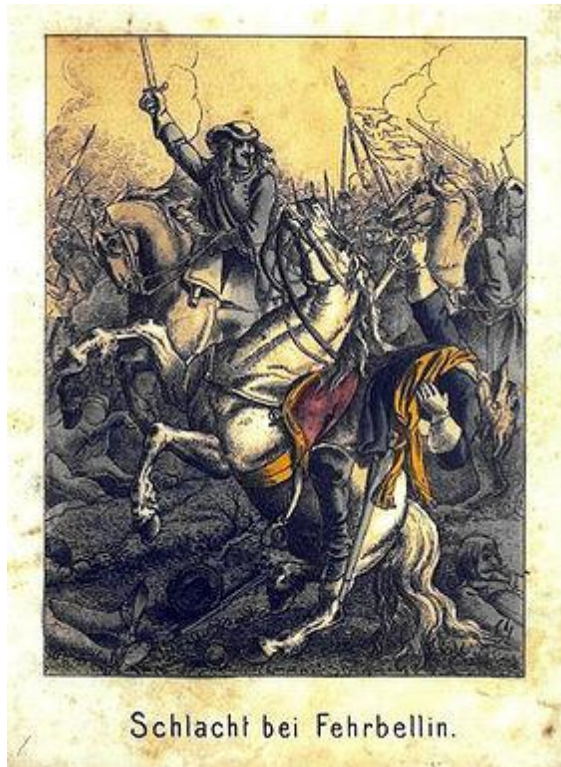
The Danish objective was to retrieve the [Scanian lands](#) that had been ceded to Sweden in the [Treaty of Roskilde](#), after the [Northern Wars](#). Although the Danish offensive was initially a great success, Swedish counter-offensives led by the 19-year-old [Charles XI of Sweden](#) nullified much of the gain.



It was a war with no definite victor; the Swedish navy lost at sea, the Danish army was defeated in Scania by the Swedes, who in turn were defeated in Northern Germany by the Brandenburgers. The war and the hostilities ended when Denmark's ally the [United Provinces](#) settled with Sweden's stronger ally [France](#) and the Swedish king [Charles XI](#) married Danish princess [Ulrike Eleonora](#), sister of [Christian V](#).

# Battle of Fehrbellin

The **Battle of Fehrbellin** was fought on June 18, 1675 between [Swedish](#) and [Brandenburg-Prussian](#) troops. The Swedes, under Count [Waldemar von Wrangel](#) (stepbrother of [Riksamiral Carl Gustaf Wrangel](#)), had invaded and occupied parts of [Brandenburg](#) from their possessions in [Pomerania](#), but were repelled by the forces of [Frederick William](#), the Great Elector, under his [Feldmarschall Georg von Derfflinger](#) near the town of [Fehrbellin](#). The battle went down in history as [Prussia](#)'s baptism of fire.



Prior to the battle the Swedes and Brandenburg had been allies in various wars against the [Kingdom of Poland](#). However, when Elector Frederick William during the [Franco-Dutch War](#) had joined an allied expedition with Emperor [Leopold I](#) to [Alsace](#) against the forces of King [Louis XIV of France](#), the French persuaded Sweden, which had been increasingly isolated on the continent, to attack Brandenburg while her army was away.

When Frederick William, encamping at [Erstein](#), heard of the attack and occupation of a large part of his principality in December 1674, he immediately drew his army out of the coalition but had to take winter quarters at [Marktbreit](#) in [Franconia](#). Leaving on 26 May 1675, he marched 250 kilometres (160 mi) to [Magdeburg](#) in only two weeks. This feat was considered one of the great marches in military history. He did it by abandoning his supply wagons and leaving large parts of the [infantry](#) behind, having his army buy supplies from the locals, but forbidding pillaging. The Swedes did not expect him to arrive that early.

Once he returned to Brandenburg, Frederick William realized that the Swedish forces, occupying the swampy [Havelland](#) region between [Havelberg](#) and the town of [Brandenburg](#), were dispersed and ordered Derfflinger to take the central town of [Rathenow](#) in order to split them roughly down the middle. The elector bribed a local official loyal to him to hold a large and elaborate banquet for the Swedish officers of the fortress in order to get them drunk before the assault began in the night of June 14. Derfflinger then personally impersonated a Swedish officer and convinced the guards to open the gates of the town by claiming that a Brandenburg patrol was after him. Once the gates were opened for him, he led the charge of 1,000 [dragoons](#) against the city and the rest of the army soon followed. He was 69 years old at the time.

Once Derfflinger had expelled the Swedish garrison from Rathenow, this made the Swedish lines vulnerable. On June 17, the Brandenburgian troops reached [Nauen](#). The Swedes, who had planned to cross the [Elbe](#) river in order to join forces with [Brunswick](#) troops, were forced back to their last position at Fehrbellin.

## Battle

The Swedish commander, Wrangel, harassed by Brandenburg raiding parties under the command of Colonel Joachim Hennings, found himself hemmed in by a destroyed bridge over the [Rhine](#) River at the town of Fehrbellin. Impassable [marshes](#) on both [flanks](#) left Wrangel little choice but to give battle south of the nearby village of Hakenberg while his [engineers](#) repaired the span.



A total of 15,000 Brandenburgers, including 5,600 cavalry and 13 cannons, faced 7,000 infantry, 4,000 cavalry and 38 guns on the Swedish side. One authority gives the Swedes a total of 12,000 troops. Wrangel omitted to secure the surrounding heights, and Frederick William and Derfflinger, by placing their guns on a series of low hills to his left while the Swedes had only swamps to their flanks and a river behind them, gained a decisive tactical advantage.

These guns opened fire around noon on the 18th and caused heavy casualties on the Swedish right flank. Wrangel, now aware of the threat, attempted several times to wrest control of the hills but was stopped each time. Frederick William had his main attack press the right flank of the Swedes, eventually causing their cavalry to flee, and exposing

their infantry to a flank attack led by Prince [Frederick II of Hesse-Homburg](#). In several hours of close combat involving heavy losses, the Brandenburgian cavalry turned and routed a [regiment](#) of Swedish infantry. The Swedish right however held up long enough though for the Fehrbellin bridge to be repaired and Wrangel was able to get a large portion of his army across before darkness fell. Frederick William rejected all his officers' suggestions to shell the town.

The Brandenburg troops lost about 500 men. Wrangel's forces, although routed, lost only about the same amount on the day of the battle, but lost much more in the coming days' retreat pursued by the Brandenburgers up to [Wittstock](#). Raiding parties, desertion, starvation, and other factors reduced the retreating Swedish army to a fraction of what it once was.

Upon the Brandenburgian victory, the [Holy Roman Empire](#) and [Denmark](#) finally met their obligations and declared war on Sweden. While Frederick William forces invaded [Swedish Pomerania](#), the Swedes did not enter the margraviate again until the 1679 [Peace of Saint-Germain-en-Laye](#), which—to the elector's great disappointment—largely restored the [status quo ante bellum](#).

[http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wolmar\\_Wrangel](http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wolmar_Wrangel)

## Wolmar Wrangel

**Wolmar Wrangel af Lindeberg**, född 1641, död 1675, friherre [Wrangel af Lindeberg](#), [militär](#). Halvbror till [Carl Gustaf Wrangel](#). Gift med grevinnan Kristina af Vasaborg (1644-1689), dotter till [Gustav II Adolfs](#) utomäktenskaplige son [Gustaf Gustafsson af Vasaborg](#) och grevinnan Anna Sofia Wied-Runkel.

Han blev för faderns förtjänster [friherre](#) 1654, och gick tidigt i ut i krigstjänst. Under [Karl X Gustavs](#) danska krig var han [ryttmästare](#), och blev under [Karl XI:s](#) förmyndarregering anställd hos den omyndige kungen, hos vilken han kom i stor gunst. År 1665 blev han överste för ett regemente till häst, med vilket han sedan deltog i det [bremiska kriget](#). År 1667 blev han generalmajor och överste för [Upplands ryttere](#).

År 1674 blev han generallöjtnant, och kom under fälttåget mot [Brandenburg](#) till [Tyskland](#) tillsammans med sin halvbror, som sedan 1664 var [riksmarsk](#). Under detta fälttåg skulle han vara den tredje personen i befälsordningen, efter riksmarsken och [fältmarskalk](#) [Conrad Mardefelt](#), men genom att såväl riksmarsken som Mardefelt på grund av sjukdom inte kunde föra befälet, kom Wolmar Wrangel att bli den egentlige överbefälhavaren. Han ledde den svenska armén under nederlaget i [slaget vid Fehrbellin 1675](#). Riksmarsken var mycket kritisk mot sin halvbrors insatser under detta olyckliga fälttåg, men vem som bar skulden tvistas det om



See video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYI1sm6Gvew&feature=related>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Lund](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Lund)

# Battle of Lund

The **Battle of Lund** was fought on December 4, 1676 in an area north of the city of [Lund](#) in [Scania](#) in southern [Sweden](#), between the invading [Danish](#) army and the army of [Charles XI of Sweden](#). It was part of the [Scanian War](#). The Danish army of about 12,300 was under the personal command of 31-year-old King [Christian V of Denmark](#) and aided by General [Carl von Arensdorff](#), and the Swedish army, which numbered about 8,000, was commanded by Field Marshal [Simon Grundel-Helmfelt](#) and the 21-year-old Swedish king [Charles XI](#).

*Charles XI at the battle of Lund, by Johan Philip Lemke*



In early November, the Danish king and his army had taken post at Lund, south of the [Kävlinge River](#). The Danes controlled all the river crossings, and the Swedish army was forced to camp on the North side. For one month this situation endured, but in late November snow arrived and the river surface began to freeze. On the morning of December 3 the Swedish General of Fortifications [Erik Dahlberg](#) reported to the king that the ice would carry. The Danes assumed that the Swedes had gone into winter camp and that they would not attack until spring.

## Battle

Before daybreak the Swedish army broke camp and made preparations to cross the river under the cover of a moonless night. Between 4:00 and 5:30 in the morning, the entire Swedish force had successfully crossed the river and reached the south bank. The Danes had not been alarmed.

According to the initial plan the Swedes should attack the sleeping Danish camp with cavalry in the south-east, but reconnaissance patrols reported that the ground between the two armies was unsuitable for mounted troops. Charles and his generals gathered to discuss the new situation. Most advisors pointed out that the Danish army possessed much more infantry, and it would be foolish to attack by foot. The long march towards the Danish camps would certainly alarm them and the Swedes would lose the surprise element. The Swedish main strength lay in its cavalry.

The king was eager to attack at once, but was swayed by his advisors. He ordered the troops to advance towards the hills just outside the north wall of Lund, to seize a tactical advantage. It would mean better terrain for the cavalry, and the town itself would cover the Swedish south flank. However, the Danes had woken, and soon recognised the Swedish intentions. The Danes quickly broke camp and started to race the Swedes for control of the hills.

The first skirmish for the hills was between the Swedish right wing and the Danish left wing, and ended in a tie. However, it secured the hills under Swedish control, and pushed the Danes to the east.

It was nine o'clock in the morning and the sun had just risen when the real battle began. The front now stretched one kilometer from North to South, with the Danes to the east and the Swedes to the west. The Danish army was supported by 56 guns of various calibers, while the Swedes only brought eight six-pounders and four three-pounders.

Once the fighting commenced, Charles XI personally led a flanking maneuver to overwhelm the Danish left flank. During the fighting, the Danish commander [Carl von Arensdorff](#) was badly wounded, and the entire left wing was forced to retreat the battle at 10:00, severely crippling the Danish army. The Swedish king and the Field Marshal [Helmfelt](#) used their cavalry to pursue fleeing Danish troops, and cut down any who lagged behind. The terrible chase continued eight kilometers, right up to the river. Some officers at the Danish camp attempted to ward off the Swedes, but many Danes were forced onto the ice for safety. However, the ice did not hold, and a great number of the remaining Danish left wing drowned.

However, while the Danish left wing fled, the right wing pushed the Swedes back, and further back, until the Swedish left was also scattered. With the absence of Danish King Christian V and with General Arenstorff wounded, [Friedrich von Arensdorff](#), the general's brother, had assumed command of the Danish army. The Danish front was now facing south and the Swedish forces found themselves under constant attack and with their back against the town wall. As the battle commenced, the situation for the Swedes was getting more and more desperate, and there was no sign of the king, the Household cavalry or the Field Marshal for hours. The Swedes were also greatly outnumbered, as the Danes approximately counted 4,500 infantry and 2,100 cavalry, and the Swedes 1,400 infantry and 2,500 cavalry. Instead of forcing another attack, Friedrich von Arensdorff ordered the army to regroup at noon, halting the battle shortly.

At the river, the Swedish king was contemplating his next move. Available intelligence from the town was scarce, and suggested that the whole Danish army was on the run. Although he was tempted to rout the fleeing Danish cavalry all the way to [Landskrona](#), he instead opted to return to Lund to his army.

The battle at Lund renewed, and the Swedes were forced back once more. However, at sunset (about 15:00) the Swedish king returned from the north with his cavalry, combined with some cavalry units from the scattered Swedish left wing. He decided to try to circle the Danish army to the west to join the remains of the Swedish center. Danish commander Arensdorff made the decision to halt the offensive on the Swedish center and instead tend to the enemy cavalry in the northwest. As chance would have it, the two forces lined up in a similar manner as at the outset of the battle six hours earlier.

Charles XI, two of his generals and three of his guards managed to break through the Danish lines and join the diminished Swedish center. While Arensdorff was still attacking the cavalry in the north, the return of the Swedish king inspired the exhausted troops to attack the Danish forces in the back. Though the Danes still outnumbered the Swedes, by approximately 4,500 to 4,000, Arensdorff had lost the initiative and after just half an hour his army had disintegrated.

Charles XI wanted to clear the field of Danish soldiers. The remaining Danish cavalry quickly disappeared into the night. Although Danish General [Bibow](#) bravely protected the infantry retreat, many of the Danish were massacred until Field Marshal Helmfelt ordered that the killing should stop and that Danish and Dutch soldiers that surrendered should be spared. At 17.00 in the evening cease fire was sounded.

The victory at Lund served as an immense morale boost to the Swedish army. Charles XI was criticized for getting carried away by his success on the right flank, but the battle had nonetheless made him popular with his own troops. The remaining Danish forces were forced to retreat to the fortress of [Landskrona](#). Reinforced by their Austrian and German allies, they would once again meet the Swedish army at the [Battle of Landskrona](#).

# Battle of Landskrona

The **Battle of Landskrona** was fought on the *Ylleshed* moore, outside the town of [Landskrona](#), in southern [Sweden](#) on July 14, 1677 ([Julian calendar](#)) between Sweden and Denmark.

*Battle of Landskrona: Painting by Johan Philip Lemke*



On July 12 the Swedish army of 10,000 men had just been reinforced with 4,000 peasants from [Småland](#) and left its camp near [Klippan](#) to march south. The plan was to find the Danish army that had been weakened by losses at [Malmö](#) and attack it before reinforcements could arrive from Germany and Austria via Landskrona. The Danes however, had already returned to Landskrona and camped on the hills west of the town.

## *The battle*

Early in the morning of July 14, [Charles XI](#) formed his army into four columns and started advancing towards the Danes. But as soon as the Swedes got the enemy camp in sight they noticed that it was empty. This caused some confusion among the Swedish generals. Most of them assumed that [Christian V](#) had retreated to Landskrona and that the Swedes should abort the operation. However Charles was determined to deliver battle and kept his army marching towards the Danish camp.

During the night Christian had moved his army down from the hills and lined it up behind an earth wall with the intention of ambushing the Swedes on the moor.

The Swedish General [Ascheberg](#) spotted the Danish troops behind the wall. The Swedish army paused for about one hour and at nine o'clock formed itself into two lines at the north-east end of the moor.

Although his generals advised against it, Christian decided to leave his favorable position behind the wall and attack the Swedes. The two armies started advancing towards each other and were soon separated only by a small valley. The artillery exchanged fire but none of the sides were willing to attack across the dale.

Finally Charles XI and his guard on the right wing charged down the slope and up the other side. They were immediately surrounded and almost taken prisoner, but saved by the Household cavalry. The rest of the Swedish right wing followed and the battle began. After less than one hour the Danish left wing was routed and the Danish artillery was in Swedish hands.

On the Danish right Christian V out-flanked the Swedes and when Field marshal [Simon Grundel-Helmfelt](#) was killed the Swedish left wing was scattered. However, backed up by the 4,000 peasants, the Swedes managed to escape and reorganize their left wing.

In the center the Danes took the initiative when General [Russenstein](#) attacked soon after both flanks were engaged. But as his left flank was unprotected it took a lot of punishment and the Danish center slowly started dissolving. At the same time Christian could not make the left flank of the Swedish center bulge. When the Swedish cavalry that had pursued the Danish left wing returned to the battle at the same time, the Swedish left wing was ready for action, Christian V left the field at four o'clock.

At 6 o'clock all Danish troops had quit the field and the Swedes retired to the former Danish camp.



# Charles XI of Sweden

**Charles XI** also **Carl**, [Swedish](#): *Karl XI* (24 November 1655 – 5 April 1697) was [King of Sweden](#) from 1660 until his death, in a period in [Swedish history](#) known as the [Swedish empire](#) (1611–1718).

*Charles XI in his coronation outfit. Painting by David Klöcker Ehrenstrahl, circa 1690*



Charles was the only son of King [Charles X of Sweden](#) and [Hedwig Eleonora of Holstein-Gottorp](#). His father died when he was five years old, so Charles was educated by his governors until his coronation at the age of seventeen. Soon after, he was forced out on military expeditions to secure the recently acquired [dominions](#) from [Danish](#) troops in the [Scanian War](#).

*Charles XI at the Battle of Lund in 1676.*

The situation in Europe was shaky during this time and Sweden was going through financial problems. The guardians of Charles XI decided to negotiate an alliance with [France](#) in 1671. This would ensure that Sweden would not be isolated in case of a war, and that the national finances would improve thanks to French [subsidies](#). France directed its aggression against the [Dutch](#) in 1672, and by the spring of 1674, Sweden was forced to take part by directing forces towards [Brandenburg](#), under the lead of [Carl Gustav Wrangel](#).



[Denmark](#) was an ally of the [Habsburg Holy Roman Empire](#), and it was evident that Sweden was on the verge to yet another war against Denmark. An attempted remedy was made by chancellor [Nils Brahe](#), who traveled to Copenhagen, in the spring of 1675, to try to get the Danish princess [Ulrika Eleonora](#) engaged to the Swedish king. In mid-June 1675, the engagement was officially proclaimed. However, when news arrived about the Swedish defeat in the [Battle of Fehrbellin](#), Danish king [Christian V](#) declared war on Sweden in September.

*Carl's coffin at Riddarholmen Church*



Charles XI had complained about stomach pains since 1694. In the summer of 1696, he asked his doctors for an opinion on the pain that had gotten continuously worse, but they had no cure for it. He continued his schedule as normal but, in February 1697, the pain became too strong and he had to return to Stockholm, where the doctors discovered he had a big hard lump in his stomach. There was little they could do. He died on 5 April 1697, in his forty-first year. An autopsy showed cancer had spread through the entire [abdominal cavity](#).

# Siege of Stralsund (1678)

The **Siege of Stralsund** was a [battle](#) between the [Electorate of Brandenburg](#) and the [Swedish Empire](#) on 10 and 11 October, [1678](#), during the [Scanian War](#). After two days of bombardment, the severely devastated Swedish fortress of [Stralsund](#) surrendered to the Brandenburgers. The remainder of [Swedish Pomerania](#) was taken by the end of the year, yet most of the province including Stralsund was returned to Sweden by the terms of the [Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye](#) and the [Peace of Lund](#), both concluded in 1679.

*Invasion of the of Swedish Rügen by Brandenburg, 1678*



The Scanian War reached [Swedish Pomerania](#) when after the [Battle of Fehrbellin](#) (1675) the retreating Swedish forces were pursued by a Brandenburgian army under "[Great Elector](#)" [Frederick William I](#)'s command. Stralsund was one of only two major fortresses Sweden [maintained in Pomerania](#), the other one being [Stettin](#). After the Brandenburgian army had captured Stettin and [Wolgast](#), [Stralsund](#) was seriously threatened. In addition, [Danish](#) forces had landed on [Rügen](#) in 1677, aided by a [loyal Rugian noble](#)

Thus, all buildings outside the fortifications were levelled in 1677 to strip an imminent Brandenburgian attack of cover. Stralsund then held a population of 8,500, including armed burghers, and close to 5,000 Swedish, German and Finnish foot and horse.

## Siege

Frederick William I positioned his artillery south of the town and started bombardment on 10 October 1678. His aim was to force Swedish commander [Otto Wilhelm von Königsmarck](#) into surrender by abundantly firing incendiary bombs on the burghers' mansions. The small, newly created Brandenburgian navy also took part in the siege.

Most of the southern half of the town was destroyed when the defendants surrendered the town on 11 October, namely 285 houses, 476 huts, and 194 servant dwellings.

Despite great efforts of Frederick William I to win the loyalty of the Swedish Pomeranian population, including generous aid programs to rebuilt Stralsund and Stettin, most remained loyal to Sweden. After the fall of Stralsund, there were only few Swedish-held areas left in Swedish Pomerania, all of which Frederick William I had cleared by the end of 1678.

Stralsund was returned to Sweden in the [Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye \(1679\)](#). Due to the devastating bombardment and another fire on 12 June 1680, the population was reduced to about 6,000, with an additional 2,000 garrisoned Swedes. After the 1680 fire destroyed an additional 48 houses, 89 huts, and 82 servant dwellings, only 205 houses, 408 huts, and 158 servant dwellings were still standing.



# Otto Wilhelm Königsmarck

Otto Wilhelm Königsmarck



Count **Otto Wilhelm Königsmarck** (5 January 1639 – 5 September 1688) was a [Swedish](#) military officer from [Minden](#). He attained the rank of [field marshal](#) in 1676, commanded the [Battle of Stralsund \(1678\)](#), and became [Governor General](#) for [Swedish Pomerania](#) from 1679 to 1687. He was the son of [Hans Christoff Königsmarck](#) and the brother of [Conrad Christoff Königsmarck](#). He was also the uncle of [Aurora Königsmarck](#), [Amalia Wilhelmina Königsmarck](#), [Philip Christoph Königsmarck](#) and [Carl Johan Königsmarck](#). He married [Catharina Charlotta De la Gardie](#).

**LG NOTE:** The Swedish text credits him with being in charge of the bombardement of the Parthenon.

*Under det [Skånska kriget](#) ledde Königsmarck det svenska försvaret av de tyska besittningarna. Senare gick han i [venetiansk](#) tjänst och har gjort sig ryktbar då han under belägringen av Aten riktade kanoneld mot [Parthenon](#), där stadens [osmanska](#) försvarare hade ett krutförråd som sprang i luften och förstörde stora delar av Parthenon.*

*1687 drabbades Parthenon mycket hårt då Aten attackerades av venetier. Osmanerna befäste Akropolis och använde Parthenon som krutmagasin. Den [26 september](#) samma år bombarderade artilleri, under den [svensk-tyske](#) fältmarskalken [Otto Wilhelm Königsmarcks](#) befäl, byggnaden och den exploderade delvis. Den inre strukturen förstördes, vad som var kvar av taket föll samman och några av pelarna, huvudsakligen på sydsidan, höggs av. Skulpturer föll till marken, och delar av dem såldes senare som souvenirer. Efter detta lämnades byggnaden oanvänd.*

<http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parthenon>



In 1687, the Parthenon suffered its greatest blow when the [Venetians](#) under [Francesco Morosini](#) attacked Athens, and the Ottoman Turks fortified the Acropolis and used the building as a [gunpowder magazine](#). On 26 September a Venetian mortar, fired from the Hill of Philopappus, blew the magazine up and the building was partly destroyed. Morosini then proceeded to attempt to loot sculptures from the ruin. The internal structures were demolished, whatever was left of the roof collapsed, and some of the pillars, particularly on the southern side, were decapitated.



# Great Northern War

The **Great Northern War** (1700–21) was a conflict in which a coalition led by the [Tsardom of Russia](#) successfully contested the supremacy of the [Swedish Empire](#) in northern [Central Europe](#) and [Eastern Europe](#). The initial leaders of the anti-Swedish alliance were [Peter I the Great](#) of Russia, [Frederick IV](#) of [Denmark–Norway](#) and [August II the Strong](#) of [Saxe-Poland-Lithuania](#).

*Great Northern War. Clockwise from top: [Battle of Poltava](#), [Battle of Gangut](#), [Battle of Narva](#), [Battle of Gadebusch](#), [Battle of Storkyro](#)*



[Charles XII](#) led the Swedish army. On the Swedish side were [Holstein-Gottorp](#), several Polish and Lithuanian magnates under [Stanisław Leszczyński](#) (1704–10) and [cossacks](#) under the Ukrainian Hetman [Ivan Mazepa](#) (1708–10). The [Ottoman Empire](#) temporarily hosted Charles XII of Sweden and intervened against Peter I.

The war started when an alliance of [Denmark–Norway](#), [Saxony](#), [Poland-Lithuania](#) and [Russia](#) declared war on the [Swedish Empire](#), launching a threefold attack at [Swedish Holstein-Gottorp](#), [Swedish Livonia](#), and [Swedish Ingria](#), sensing an opportunity as [Sweden](#) was ruled by the young [Karl XII](#) (also called Charles XII), who was 18 years old and inexperienced at the time. Sweden parried the Danish and Russian attacks at [Travendal](#) and [Narva](#).

Sweden proper was invaded by Denmark–Norway from the West and by Russia from the East, occupying all of Finland by 1714. Though the Danish attacks were [repulsed](#), Russia managed to [occupy Finland](#). Charles XII [opened up a Norwegian front](#), but was killed in [Fredriksten](#) in 1718.

The war ended with a defeat for Sweden, leaving Russia as the new major power in the [Baltic Sea](#)

and a new important player in European politics — it began of a pattern of Russian expansion that would only be stopped [two centuries later](#).

## Swedish camp

[Charles XII of Sweden](#) succeeded [Charles XI of Sweden](#) in 1697, aged 14. From his predecessor, he took over the Swedish Empire as an absolute monarch. Charles XI had tried to keep the empire out of wars, and concentrated on inner reforms such as [reduction](#) and [allotment](#), which had strengthened the monarch's status and the empire's military abilities. Charles XII refrained from all kinds of luxury and alcohol and usage of the French language. He preferred the life of an ordinary soldier on horseback, not that of contemporary baroque courts. He determinedly pursued his goal of dethroning his adversaries, whom he considered unworthy of their thrones due to broken promises, thereby refusing to take several chances to make peace.

During the war, the most important Swedish commanders besides Charles XII were his close friend [Carl Gustav Rehnskiöld](#), also [Magnus Stenbock](#) and [Adam Ludwig Lewenhaupt](#).

In 1700, [Charles XII](#) had a standing army of 77,000 men (based on annual training). By 1707 this number had swollen to at least 120,000 despite casualties.

Russia was able to mobilize a larger army, but could not put all of them into action simultaneously. The Russian mobilization system was ineffective and the expanding nation needed to be defended in many locations. A grand mobilization covering Russia's vast territories would have been unrealistic. Peter I tried to raise his army's morale to Swedish levels.

Denmark contributed 20,000 men in their invasion of Holstein-Gottorp and more on other fronts.

Poland and Saxony together could mobilize at least 100,000 men.

[Charles XII of Sweden](#) first focused on attacking Denmark. The Swedish navy was able to outmaneuver the Danish [Sound](#) blockade and deploy an army near the Danish capital, [Copenhagen](#). This surprise move and pressure by the Maritime Powers ([Great Britain](#) and the [Dutch Republic](#)) forced Denmark–Norway to withdraw from the war in August 1700 according to the terms of the [Peace of Travendal](#).

Charles XII was now able to speedily deploy his army to the eastern coast of the [Baltic Sea](#) and face his remaining enemies: besides the army of Augustus II in Livonia, an army of Russian czar [Peter I](#) was already on its way to invade Swedish [Ingria](#), where it laid siege to [Narva](#) in October. In November, the Russian and Swedish armies met at the [First Battle of Narva](#) where the Russians suffered a crushing defeat.

After Poltava, the initial anti-Swedish coalition was re-established and subsequently joined by Hanover and Prussia. The remaining Swedish forces south and east of the Baltic Sea were evicted, with the last city, Riga, falling in 1710. Most of the [Swedish dominions](#) were partitioned among the coalition members, destroying the Swedish *[dominium maris baltici](#)*. Sweden proper was invaded by Denmark–Norway from the West and by Russia from the East, occupying all of Finland by 1714. Though the Danish attacks were [repulsed](#), Russia managed to [occupy Finland](#). Charles XII [opened up a Norwegian front](#), but was killed in [Fredriksten](#) in 1718.

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# Arvid Horn

**Count Arvid Bernhard Horn of Ekebyholm** (6 April 1664 – 17 April 1742) was a [Swedish soldier](#), [diplomat](#) and [politician](#). He was one of the leading figures of the Swedish [Age of Liberty](#).

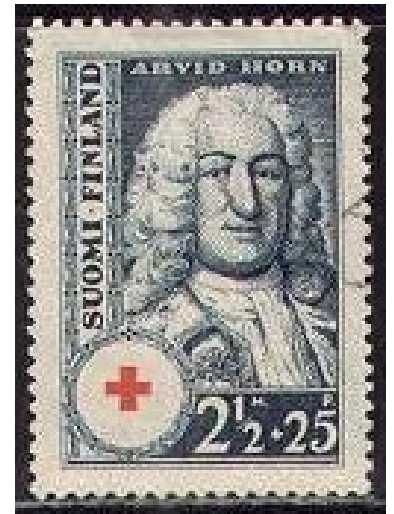
*President of [Privy Council Chancellery of Sweden](#)*

He was born Arvid Bernhard [Horn](#) in [Vuorentaka](#) (now part of [Salo](#), [Finland Proper](#)), [Sweden](#), the son of [Gustaf Horn af Kanckas](#) and his wife Anna Helena von Gertten. After completing his studies at [Turku](#), he entered the [Swedish Army](#) and served for several years in the [Netherlands](#), in [Hungary](#) under Prince Eugene, and in [Flanders](#) under [Waldeck](#) (1690–1695). He stood high in the favour of the young [Charles XII of Sweden](#) and was one of his foremost generals in the earlier part of the [Great Northern War](#). In 1704 he was entrusted with his first diplomatic mission, the deposition of [Augustus II of Poland](#) and the election of [Stanislaus I of Poland](#), a mission which he accomplished with distinguished ability but absolute unscrupulousness. Shortly afterwards he was besieged by Augustus in [Warsaw](#) and compelled to surrender.



In 1705 he was made a Privy Councillor, in 1706 a count and in 1707 governor of Charles XII's nephew, the young duke Charles Frederick of [Holstein-Gottorp](#). In

1710 he succeeded [Nils Gyldenstolpe](#) as President of the [Privy Council Chancellery](#). Transferred to the central point of the administration, he had ample opportunity of regarding with other eyes the situation of the kingdom, and in consequence of his remonstrances he fell rapidly in the favour of Charles XII. Both in 1710 and 1713 Horn was in favour of summoning the [Estates](#), but when in 1714 the diet adopted an anti-monarchical attitude, he gravely warned and ultimately dissolved it. In Charles XII's later years Horn had little to do with the administration. After the death of Charles XII, in 1718 it was Horn who persuaded the princess [Ulrika Eleonora of Sweden](#) to relinquish her hereditary claims and submit to be elected queen of Sweden. He protested against the queen's autocratic behaviour, and resigned from the Privy Council.



He was elected [lantmarskalk](#), for the [Caps](#) at the [Riksdag](#) of 1720, and contributed, on the resignation of Ulrika Eleonora, to the election of [Frederick of Hesse](#) as king of Sweden, whose first act was to restore to him to the Privy Council and as President of its Chancellery, in effect as [Prime Minister](#). For the next eighteen years he so absolutely controlled both the foreign and the domestic affairs of Sweden that the period between 1720 and 1738 has well been called the Horn period. Not till 1731 was there any appearance of opposition in the diet to Horn's "system"; but Horn, piqued by the growing coolness of the king, the same year offered his resignation, which was not accepted.



## Battle of Narva (1700)

The **Battle of [Narva](#)** on 19 November 1700 (30 November, [N.S.](#)) was an early [battle](#) in the [Great Northern War](#). A [Swedish](#) relief army under [Charles XII of Sweden](#) defeated a [Russian](#) siege force three times its size. Before, Charles XII had forced [Denmark-Norway](#) to sign the [Treaty of Travendal](#). Narva was not followed by further advances of the Swedish army into [Russia](#), instead, Charles XII turned southward to expel [August the Strong](#) from [Livonia](#) and [Poland-Lithuania](#). Peter the Great took Narva in a second battle in 1704.

*The Swedish Victory at Narva by Gustaf Cederström, painted 1910*



Charles XII, assisted by the [Royal Navy](#) and the [Dutch Navy](#), first landed in Humlebaek north of [Copenhagen](#) and [forced Denmark-Norway to leave the alliance](#) in August 1700 (until 1709). He then moved part of the Swedish army across the Baltic Sea to Estonia where it was joined by Estonian and Finnish regiments of the Swedish army,

On 19 ([OS](#)) or 30 ([NS](#)) November 1700 (20 November in the [Swedish transitional calendar](#)), Charles XII positioned his 8,000 men (another 2,500 men were garrisoned in the city and would also take part in the battle at a later stage) opposite the besieging Russian army of about 33,000 to

35,000 troops.

The Swedish army was commanded personally by Charles XII, assisted by General [Carl Gustav Rehnskiöld](#). The Russian forces were commanded by Tsar Peter and [Charles Eugène de Croy](#). Claiming important domestic events in Russia to which he was required to attend, Peter had left Narva just days before and was therefore not present during the actual fighting. He trusted that his commanders would draw success from the battle and presumed that Charles would not immediately attack his well fortified forces of superior number. Some interpretations view his flight from Narva days before the battle an act of cowardice; most of Europe mocked the Tsar after the battle for his departure. However, some scholars believe this accusation has little merit, as reportedly the Tsar had placed himself in physical danger too many times previously for his flight to be out of cowardice.

For much of the day, a blizzard engulfed both armies, making attacks impossible. However, at midday, the winds changed and the snowstorm blew directly into the eyes of the Russians. Charles saw his opportunity and advanced on the Russian army under cover of the weather. The Swedes attacked in two columns, quickly broke through the Russian lines cutting them in three, and rounded them up. At one crucial point, a bridge over the [Narova](#) river collapsed under retreating Russian troops: The stampede led to the overall losses of 6,000 men and the loss of 145 guns. The Russians remaining in Narva surrendered.

The Russian surrender brought to Charles XII's army all of Peter's cannons, muskets and military supplies. This left Russia's remaining armed forces with essentially no equipment. If Sweden, or any other aggressor, had invaded Russia immediately after Narva, Peter would have been almost powerless to stop them. However, the tactical Swedish victory also contained the seed of the future strategical defeat. After Narva, Charles XII became convinced that he knocked the Russians out of the war for a long time and heavily underestimated them until the [battle of Poltava](#). Peter, at the same time, learned the lesson of Narva and initiated a series of efficient military reforms.

# Charles XII of Sweden

**Charles XII** also **Carl of Sweden**, [Swedish](#): *Karl XII* also known as *Charles the Habitué* (17 June 1682 – 30 November 1718) was the [King](#) of the [Swedish Empire](#) from 1697 to 1718. Charles was the only surviving son of King [Charles XI of Sweden](#) and [Ulrika Eleonora the Elder](#), he assumed power after a seven-month caretaker government at the age of fifteen.

*Charles XII in military uniform, David von Krafft (1706)*



In 1700, a triple alliance of [Denmark–Norway](#), [Saxony–Poland–Lithuania](#) and [Russia](#) launched a threefold attack on the Swedish protectorate of [Swedish Holstein-Gottorp](#) and provinces of [Livonia](#) and [Ingria](#), aiming to draw advantage as [Sweden](#) was unaligned and ruled by a young and inexperienced king, thus initiating the [Great Northern War](#). Leading the formidable [Swedish army](#) against the alliance, Charles had by 1706 forced to submission all parties but Russia.

Charles' subsequent [march on Moscow](#) ended with the dismemberment of the Swedish army at [Poltava](#) and [Perevolochna](#), and he spent the following years in exile in the [Ottoman Empire](#) before returning to lead an assault on Norway, trying to evict the Danish king from the war once more in order to aim all his forces at the Russians. Two failed campaigns concluded with his death at the [Siege of Fredriksten](#) in 1718.

Charles's first campaign was against Denmark–Norway, ruled by his cousin [Frederick IV of Denmark](#). For this campaign Charles secured the support of England and the Netherlands, both maritime powers concerned about Denmark's threats to close [the Sound](#). Leading a force of 8,000 and 43 ships in an invasion of [Zealand](#), Charles rapidly compelled the Danes to submit to the [Peace of Travendal](#) in August 1700, which indemnified Holstein.

Having forced Denmark–Norway to peace within months, King Charles turned his attention upon the two other powerful neighbors, King August II (cousin to both Charles XII and Frederick IV of Denmark–Norway) and [Peter the Great](#) of Russia, who also had entered the war against him, ironically on the same day that Denmark came to terms.



*Charles XII and Mazepa at the Dnieper River after Poltava by Gustaf Cederström*

Russia had opened their part of the war by invading the Swedish-held territories of [Livonia](#) and [Estonia](#). Charles countered this by attacking the Russian besiegers at the [Battle of Narva](#). The Swedish army of ten thousand men was outnumbered almost four to one by the Russians. Charles attacked under cover of a blizzard, effectively split the Russian army in two and won the battle. Many of Peter's troops that fled the battlefield drowned in the [Narva River](#), and the total number of Russian fatalities reached about 10,000 at the end of the battle, while the Swedish troop lost 667 men.

While Charles won several decisive battles in the Commonwealth and ultimately secured the coronation of his ally [Stanisław Leszczyński](#) and the surrender of Saxony, the Russian Tsar [Peter the Great](#) embarked on a military reform plan that improved the Russian army, using the effectively organized Swedes and other



European standards for role model. Russian forces managed to penetrate [Ingria](#) and established a new city, [Saint Petersburg](#), there. Charles planned an [invasion of the Russian heartland](#), allying himself with [Ivan Mazepa](#), [Hetman](#) of the [Ukrainian Cossacks](#). The size of the invading Swedish army was peeled of as Charles left Leszczyński with some 24,000 German and Polish troops, departing eastwards from Saxony in late 1707 with some 35,000 men, adding a further 12,500 under [Adam Ludwig Lewenhaupt](#) marching from Livonia. Charles left the homeland with a defense of approximately 28,800 men, with a further 14,000 in Swedish Finland as well as further garrisons in the Baltic and German provinces.

After securing his "favorite" victory in the [Battle of Holowczyn](#), despite being outnumbered over one to three against the new Russian army, Charles opted to march eastwards on Moscow rather than try to seize [Saint Petersburg](#), founded from the Swedish town of [Nyenskans](#) five years earlier

By the time of the decisive [Battle of Poltava](#), Charles had been wounded, one-third of his infantry was dead, and his supply train was destroyed. The king was incapacitated by a coma resulting from his injuries and was unable to lead the Swedish forces. With the numbers of Charles' army reduced to some 23,000, with several wounded and handling the siege of Poltava, his general [Carl Gustav Rehnskiöld](#) had a clearly inferior force to face the fortified and modernized army of Tsar Peter, some 45,000. The Swedish assault ended in disaster, and the king fled with a small entourage south to the [Ottoman Empire](#), where he set up camp at [Bender](#) with some 1,000 of his [Caroleans](#) ("Karoliner" in Swedish). The Swedish defeat at Poltava is considered by some historians to be the point where the downfall of the [Swedish Empire](#) was consummated and the [Russian Empire](#) was founded. The remainder of the army surrendered days later at [Perevolochna](#) under Lewenhaupt's command, most of them (including Lewenhaupt himself) spending the rest of their days in Russian captivity.

*The funeral transport of Charles XII. A romanticized painting by Gustaf Cederström, 1884*



In 1718 Charles once more invaded Norway. The main force consisting of 40,000 men [laid siege to the strong fortress](#) of [Fredriksten](#), overlooking the border town of [Fredrikshald](#). While inspecting trenches close to the perimeter of the fortress on 11 December (30 November [Old Style](#)), 1718, Charles was killed by a [projectile](#). The shot penetrated the left side of his skull and exited out of the right, destroying most of his brain in

the process. The invasion was abandoned, and Charles' body was brought across the border. Another army corps under [Carl Gustaf Armfeldt](#) marched against [Trondheim](#) with 10,000 men, but had to make a retreat, during which many of the 5,800 remaining men [perished in a severe winter storm](#).



# Battle of Klissow

The **Battle of Klissow** took place on July 8 ([Julian calendar](#)) / July 9 ([Swedish calendar](#)) / July 19, 1702 ([Gregorian calendar](#)) near [Kliszów](#), [Poland-Lithuania](#), during the [Great Northern War](#). The numerically superior [Polish-Saxon](#) army of [August II the Strong](#), operating from an advantageous defensive position, was defeated by a Swedish army half its size under the command of king [Charles XII](#).



[August the Strong](#), [Elector of Saxony](#), [King of Poland](#) and [Grand Duke of Lithuania](#), had in 1699 planned a three-fold attack on the [Swedish Empire](#) together with [Peter the Great](#), [Tsar of Russia](#) and [Frederik IV](#) of [Denmark-Norway](#). The plan failed when Frederik was [forced out of the war](#) in 1700. [Charles XII of Sweden](#) in the same year, defeated the Russian army in the [Battle of Narva](#). After Narva, Charles XII evicted August the Strong's forces from [Swedish Livonia](#) and pursued him into the [Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth](#).

At [Kliszów](#), south of [Kielce](#), the Swedish and Saxon-Polish-Lithuanian armies encamped some

5 miles (8.0 km) apart. The camps were separated by a large wood and a swamp, with the Swedes north of the woods, Augustus the Strong's camp was naturally secured by a narrow stretch of swamp to the north and the swampy valley of the [Nida](#) river to the east. At 9:00 am, Charles XII moved his army through the woods on the morning of 19 July and at 11:00 am arrived north of the swampy stretch securing August's camp. The army consisted of 8,000 infantry, 4,000 cavalry and four guns - the bulk of the artillery was stuck in the forest. August's army consisted of 7,500 Saxon infantry, 9,000 Saxon cavalry, 6,000 Polish cavalry, and 46 guns.

Charles XII's strategy was to rout the Saxe-Polish forces in an 'envelope' manoeuvre and re-position his forces to strengthen his flanks. A Swedish assault on Lubomirski's flank was beaten back, as were two subsequent counter-attacks of the Polish cavalry and a Saxon assault over the marsh.

After the Swedish forces had withstood the Polish charges, Lubomirski withdrew and thus left the Saxon right flank unprotected. Charles XII concentrated his main army at this flank and advanced into the Saxon camp within half an hour, evicting Augustus the Strong's remaining forces into the surrounding swamps.

During the battle, Charles XII's brother-in-law [Frederick IV, Duke of Holstein-Gottorp](#) was killed by artillery fire. Another 300 Swedes fell, as did 2,000 Saxons. 1,000 Saxons were taken prisoner.

The Swedes now attempted to [encircle](#) the Saxons by taking the crossing of the Nida. General Schulenburg, whose infantry in the center had scarcely been attacked, now committed himself to a fierce defense of the crossing, allowing the majority of Saxon units to withdraw.

## Consequences

Charles had won the battle, but Schulenburg's actions had saved the Saxon army from destruction. The Swedes captured the Saxon artillery, war chest and King August's entire baggage. On July 31 Charles and his army marched into [Kraków](#). August withdrew with his army to [Sandomierz](#).

# Axel Sparre



*Karl XII i Bender. Målning av Axel Sparre (1715)*

Axel **Sparre**, född [9 januari 1652](#) i [Visby](#) och död [31 maj 1728](#) på [Brokind](#) i [Östergötland](#), var en [svensk greve](#), militär och konstnär. Sparre var son till [Axel Carlsson Sparre](#) och Margareta Oxenstierna af Korsholm och Wasa och bror till [Erik Sparre af Sundby](#). Han blev [överste](#) och chef för [Västmanlands regemente](#) 1699, [generalmajor](#) 1705, [generallöjtnant](#) 1710, [general](#) i [infanteriet](#) 1713 och slutligen [fältmarskalk](#) 1721.

Han deltog i [Karl XII:s](#) fälttåg 1700-09 i det [Stora nordiska kriget](#), till exempel i [slaget vid Düna](#), [slaget vid Kliszów](#), [slaget vid Fraustadt](#) och [slaget vid Poltava](#). Därefter följde han [Karl XII](#) till [Bender](#) med också Cornelius Loos och förde där befälet över den svenska armén sedan Karl XII återvänt till [Sverige](#).

## Siege of Nöteborg (1702)

The **Siege of Nöteborg** was one of the first sieges of the [Great Northern War](#), when Russian forces captured the Swedish fortress of [Nöteborg](#), later renamed [Shlisselburg](#), in October 1702. With the aim of capturing the Swedish fortress of Nöteborg, [Peter the Great](#) assembled a force of 35,000 and marched for ten days to his destination. About 12,000 of these men were positioned on the banks of the [Neva](#) river, where they camped until 25 September. On that day, after giving command of the main force to [Boris Sheremetev](#), he moved toward Nöteborg. After an initial refusal by the Swedish commander, Wilhelm von Schlippenbach, to give up the fort immediately, the Russians began bombarding it. A final Russian assault on the fort was tactically unsuccessful, resulting in heavy casualties, but forced the fort's defenders to surrender on 11 October 1702. After taking control, Peter immediately began reconstructing the fort for his own purposes, renaming it [Shlisselburg](#).

### Swedish defences

Nöteborg was defended by a small garrison of four hundred men, with one hundred and forty-two cannons of small caliber. Under the command of the old colonel Wilhelm von Schlippenbach, the brother of the Swedish general commanding in Livonia, [Wolmar Anton von Schlippenbach](#). And another fifty grenadiers arriving just days before the assault, as a reinforcement party under the command of Major Leyon, which were to play a big role in the defending aspects of the fortress. When he arrived with his grenadiers there were only "two hundred and twenty-five" remaining soldiers left who were in good shape of defending the fortress, the rest was either sick, dead or wounded from the artillery fire.

The defences in the fortress at that time consisted of a stone wall 28 feet high and 14 feet thick, with seven towers. Near the northeastern part of the fortress was a castle, which itself consisted of a stone wall and three towers. The main defence of the fortress was the [Neva river](#) itself, along with [Lake Ladoga](#), which

together encircled the entire fort. On the right bank of the Neva, about 3,000 yards (1.5 miles) from the main fort, there was a separate fortification, consisting of a [sconce](#)-type [outwork](#). In the outwork, a regiment was garrisoned in order to assist with communication and transportation with the main fort, across the river.

With a force then of about twelve thousand men, [Peter the Great](#) and his army advanced to lay siege to the fortress of Nöteborg. Nöteborg had originally been built by the people of [Novgorod](#) four centuries earlier, under the name of Orekhovo or Oreshek, on a small island of the river Neva, just where it flows out from [Lake Ladoga](#). The island was in shape like a hazel-nut, whence both the Russian and Swedish names. It served for a long time as a barrier against the incursions of the Swedes and Danes, and protected the commerce of Novgorod as well as of Ladoga.

The remainder of the Russians took up positions on both sides of the [River Neva](#) by 26 September, and during the next several days were busy constructing [artillery batteries](#), which were completed by 1 October, bombarding of the fortress started at 2 October. The difficult job of securing the [outwork](#) on the Neva's bank was handed over to the [Preobrazhensky Regiment](#), which, at four o'clock in the morning of 1 October, embarked towards the far coast of the river. Under the leadership of the Czar himself, the Russians were successful in capturing the [sconce](#), encountering little resistance. Upon its capture, further construction work began, and eventually the town was besieged from all sides. Using a fleet of small boats, which they brought down from the [river Svir](#) through Lake Ladoga, they succeeded in completely blockading the fort. Once the blockade was in place, a letter was sent to the Swedish commandant, Wilhelm von Schlippenbach, requesting he give up the fort. Schlippenbach replied with a request for a four-day wait, during which he was to consult with General [Arvid Horn](#), his superior, who was in [Narva](#). On 11 October, in response to Schlippenbach's refusal to immediately surrender, Russian forces opened fire.

On 3 October, the wife of the commandant had sent a letter to the Russian field-marshal, in the name of the wives of the officers, asking that they be permitted to depart. Peter, wishing to lose no time, had himself replied to the letter that he could not consent to put Swedish ladies to the discomfort of a separation from their husbands, and if they desired to leave the fort, they could do so if they took their husbands with them.

On 4 October, 300 Russian soldiers occupied some small islands which were closer to the enemy fort, with the help of [earthworks](#).

## ***Assault on the fort***

*The assault of Swedish fortress of Nöteborg by Russian troops. Czar Peter I is shown in the center.*



Preparations to perform a final assault on the fort began on 9 October; [siege ladders](#) were distributed, and officers were told where they would strike the fort. Finally, on the eleventh, Peter decided to perform the assault. At one o'clock in the morning, a fire broke out in the fort. Local hunters and men from the Preobrazhensky Regiment, among others, waited at the ready in [landing boats](#), two miles away from the fort. At half-past two, mortar shots were fired, which was the signal to commence the attack.

While having ninety-five men in the "Church, ruins part" under the command of Major Leyon, seventy-five men in the "basement, ruins part" in



command of Major Charpentier and the rest of the defenders spread out all over the walls, the Russians launched their first assault, crossing the river in their landing boats prepared with siege ladders and tons of men, constantly under fire from both muskets as well as cannons they made an attempt to climb over the "breached-wall entrenches" which there were three of. However, it was bravely repulsed by the Swedes mostly in help of the grenadiers who caused huge damages to the Russian infantry and forced them to retreat.

In the second and third assault, men from the Preobrazhensky and Semenovsky Regiments landed on the fort island and proceeded to erect [escalades](#) to scale the walls. The ladders turned out to be too short, but the attack continued. Fissures in the fortress wall formed [choke points](#), and Russian troops took heavy casualties in their attempts to scale the fortress walls. Major Andrei Karpov was severely injured during the attack, and Peter, upon receiving news of this and the other casualties, decided to call off the assault on the fort. However, the orders never arrived to the front lines. There are stories that [Mikhail Golitsyn](#) did, in fact, receive the orders, but refused to carry them out, telling the messenger to "tell the Czar that now I am not his, but God's," implying that it was too late to pull out.

### ***Swedish surrender***

Following the unrelenting but relatively fruitless assault on the fort by Russian forces, which lasted for 13 hours, the Swedish commandant accepted to capitulate on honorable conditions, realizing he could not defend the fortress for much longer. His whole garrison, with all their property, were allowed to depart to the next Swedish fort. According to Swedish sources, eighty-three soldiers went out of the Nöteborg fortress in "good condition to fight" with another one hundred and fifty-six wounded, four light artillery guns were also brought with them and the other one hundred and thirty-eight was left behind. The Russians, however, lost more than the whole Swedish garrison, in all six hundred and sixty-one men dead, as well as one thousand three hundred and thirty men wounded. The later Swedish death casualties of the critical wounded, leaving the fort are still unknown.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Pu%C5%82tusk\\_\(1703\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Pu%C5%82tusk_(1703))

## **Battle of Pułtusk (1703)**

The **Battle of Pułtusk** took place on April 21, 1703 in [Pułtusk](#) during the [Great Northern War](#). The [Swedish](#) army under the command of [Charles XII](#) defeated the [Saxon](#) army under [Adam Heinrich von Steinau](#).

The town was also a battleground in the [Polish-Soviet War](#) of 1920, at the eve of the [Battle of Warsaw](#). In



1931 the town had some 16,800 inhabitants. As a result of the [Invasion of Poland](#) in 1939 it was incorporated into [Nazi Germany](#); from 1941-1945 it was known in [German](#) as **Ostenburg**. During the German occupation approximately 50% of the city's inhabitants were killed. In the battle for Pułtusk during [World War II](#) over 16,000 soldiers of the [Soviet Red Army](#) fell. As a result of the battle approximately 85% of the city was destroyed.

*Saxon retreat during the battle.*

# Battle of Holowczyn (1708)

The **Battle of Holowczyn** or **Golovchin** was fought between the [Russian army](#), led by [Field Marshal Boris Sheremetyev](#), and the [Swedish](#) army, led by [Charles XII of Sweden](#), only 26 years of age at the time. Despite difficult natural obstacles and superior enemy artillery, the Swedes were able to achieve surprise and defeat the numerically superior Russian forces. Reportedly it was Charles' favorite victory.

After dealing with [Saxony-Poland](#), Charles was ready to take on his remaining enemy in the [Great Northern War](#): Russia. The best route into the Russian heartland was along the [continental divide](#) from [Grodno](#) to [Minsk](#) and [Smolensk](#). From there, [Moscow](#) could be reached without having to cross any major [rivers](#). Charles chose instead a straighter – but more difficult – route, over the [Berezina](#) and [Drut](#) rivers. The army was moved from its winter camp near [Radoszkowice](#) in June 1708; the movement was plagued by poor [road conditions](#) and [weather](#).

The unexpected choice of route made the Russians unsure of the Swedish intentions. In addition, with [Peter I of Russia](#) away the Field Marshal Boris Sheremetyev had to contend with the rivalry of [Aleksander Menshikov](#). After a [council of war](#), it was decided to draw the Russian defence line by the [Dnieper River](#). In June and July the army was moved piecemeal towards [Vabich](#), a [marshy](#) tributary of the Drut river.

The main force of the Russian army was [deployed](#) around the village of [Vasilki](#), east and across the Vabich from [Holowczyn](#). The bridges across Vabich were [fortified](#) and defended with [artillery](#). To the south, General [Anikita Repnin](#) deployed his force and fortified his position three kilometers to the southeast. Between the two fortified camps lay marshy territory that could not be fortified.

The Swedes had observed the Russian deployment along the Vabich. Starting on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June, Swedish [regiments](#) started [bivouacking](#) on the heights west of Holowczyn. Charles and his followers noticed the gap in the fortifications, and decided on a plan of attack. Crossing the marshy area between the two Russian [camps](#) would not only be an unsuspected move, but would also serve to divide the enemy force in two. To ensure success, the attack was to be carried out in the darkness of night.

## *The battle*

At midnight on the 4th of July the Swedes started moving quietly towards the river. Infantry carried [fascines](#) to help them traverse the waterlogged ground before crossing the Vabich on leather [pontoon bridges](#). However, heavy rainfall made the pontoons too heavy to carry; they were left behind. At 2:30 the Russian [alarm](#) was raised as Swedish artillery started bombarding the opposite river bank. Swedish success would depend on how many troops could cross the river without the aid of pontoons before the enemy forces could arrive. Charles as so often led the charge personally, by wading across the water in front of his men. After forming with difficulty on the boggy far bank, the Swedes began to advance through the marsh. Meanwhile, fascines were laid on the river banks to assist the cavalry's crossing. Both the engineers and the Swedish vanguard began to be targeted by Repnin's artillery.

General Repnin soon saw the danger of a Swedish [wedge](#) forming between the two Russian positions, and ordered his men to decamp and head north toward Sheremetyev. Five Swedish [battalions](#) fought hard to prevent the Russian regiments from merging. Sheremetyev, hearing the sound of battle, dispatched reinforcements towards Repnin's position, but by now enough Swedish forces had arrived to prevent these reinforcements from joining Repnin. The latter was forced to retire his forces eastwards and southwards. Swedish [cavalry](#) by now had followed the infantry across the river, and scattered their Russian counterparts towards the south.

# Battle of Lesnaya

The **Battle of Lesnaya**, was one of the major battles of the [Great Northern War](#). It took place on September 28, 1708 between a [Russian](#) army of 18,000 men and a [Swedish](#) force of about 13,000 men, under the command of General [Adam Ludwig Lewenhaupt](#), at the village of Lesnaya.



*Battle of Lesnaya by Jean-Marc Nattier, painted 1717*

Early Swedish victories at Copenhagen and at the [Battle of Narva](#) in 1700 temporarily took both [Denmark](#) and [Russia](#) out of the war. However, King [Charles XII of Sweden](#) proved unable to speedily end the war as it took eight years to deal with the remaining combatant Charles Augustus of [Saxony-Poland](#). Meanwhile, [Peter the Great](#) rebuilt his army into modern form, concentrating on infantry trained to use linear tactics and modern firearms properly. He then achieved a stunning victory in [Livonia](#), where he established the city of [Saint Petersburg](#). As a reaction, Charles ordered an attack on the Russian heartland with an assault on [Moscow](#) from his campaign base in Poland.

Lewenhaupt, one of Sweden's foremost generals, was the commander of one of Sweden's best armies, based at the [Baltic Sea](#) port of Riga. In the summer of 1708, King Charles ordered him to march southward with most of his force and link up with the main army of 25,000 men, based in Poland. Lewenhaupt was to bring a fresh supply of ammunition and food to support the Swedish army in a proposed march on the Russian capital of [Moscow](#).

However, Lewenhaupt found that gathering the needed supplies and preparing the army for an overland march took longer than expected, and on September 26, after waiting for Lewenhaupt for weeks, Charles XII abandoned his camps and decided to invade [Ukraine](#), hoping to reach that rich granary before winter. At the time, Lewenhaupt was only about 80 miles from Charles' position.

Having observed these movements, Peter decided to attack Lewenhaupt's smaller force before Charles could support it. Menshikov moved quickly to intercept Lewenhaupt's force and prevented it from crossing the [Sozh River](#) to safety.

The battle itself was closely contested and both forces suffered heavy casualties. Late in the day a snow storm, rare for September even in Russia, set in. This disorganized the Swedish troops and Lewenhaupt ordered a tactical retreat to follow his main orders not to risk the supplies. He was forced though to leave many much-needed supply wagons behind due to the muddy terrain. The Swedes used the abandoned supply wagons to make a wagon fort in order to cover the retreat across the bridge over Lesnjanka.

During the rest of the day the remaining Swedish supply wagons were moved across the bridge and most of them were over by the evening together with the main bulk of the army. Several thousand Swedish soldiers had been scattered during the battle or the retreat and many of them were either killed or captured by Russian cossack cavalry.



The Swedes lost 1,000 men dead and wounded and 4,000 missing in the battle. Russian casualties totaled 1,111 killed and 2,856 wounded, about one third of those engaged (Lewenhaupt, probably basing himself on the account of a Russian prisoner-of-war, in his diary claimed 16,000 rather than 12,000 Russian combatants)

In his hurry to rejoin Charles' main army, Lewenhaupt decided to abandon the cannon, the cattle and most of the food, driving part of his soldiers to [mutiny](#). After stealing the alcohol, some of the Swedish soldiers got drunk, and Lewenhaupt was forced to leave about 1,000 of them in the woods. By the time they finally reached Charles and the main force on October 19 (October 8 [OS](#)), virtually no supplies and only 6,000 men remained, only increasing Charles' victuals problem.

Another effect of the battle of Lesnaya was that it convinced the Russian army that they could stand a match against Sweden's soldiers. This new-found confidence would aid them morally during the 1709 campaign in which they destroyed Charles' main Swedish army. Peter referred to Lesnaya as "the mother of the [Battle of Poltava](#)."

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adam\\_Ludwig\\_Lewenhaupt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adam_Ludwig_Lewenhaupt)

## Adam Ludwig Lewenhaupt

**Adam Ludwig Lewenhaupt** (15 April 1659 – 12 February 1719) was a [Swedish general](#).

Educated at [Lund University](#), [Rostock](#), [Wittenberg](#) and [Uppsala](#), he originally pursued a career in the diplomatic arena, but found this occupation quite undesirable. He then became a soldier, served in the [Austrian army](#) against the [Turks](#), and under [William III](#) in Holland. He returned to [Sweden](#) in 1697. When the [Great Northern War](#) broke out, he was placed in command of a newly created regiment of infantry. He was one of the few successful commanders against the Russians in the Baltic region while King Charles XII was on campaign in Poland and Saxony.



In 1705 Lewenhaupt won the [Battle of Gemauerthof](#) and was appointed [Governor of Riga](#). In 1708, he was ordered to march east with a supply column, to support Charles's primary invasion force in Russia. This led to the [Battle of Lesnaya](#) (1708), in which he was defeated and forced to abandon his supplies. In 1709, after having connected with the King's army, Lewenhaupt was given command of the infantry at the disastrous [Battle of Poltava](#) (1709) and the [Surrender at Perevolochna](#). He was kept a prisoner in [Russia](#), and he lived in [Moscow](#) until his death, in 1719. His memoirs, edited by his son-in-law, were published at [Stockholm](#) in 1757.

For Video of this battle <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v0F3mRfSy7s&feature=related>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Poltava](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Poltava)

## Battle of Poltava

The **Battle of Poltava** ([Swedish](#): *Slaget vid Poltava*, on 27 June 1709 (8 July, [N.S.](#)) was the decisive victory of [Peter I of Russia](#) over the [Swedish](#) forces under [Field Marshal Carl Gustav Rehnskiöld](#) in one of the battles of the [Great Northern War](#). It is widely believed to have been the beginning of [Sweden's](#) decline as a [Great Power](#); the [Russians](#) took their place as the leading nation of northern Europe.

*The Battle of Poltava by Denis Martens the Younger, painted 1726*



[Charles XII](#) led early Swedish victories at Copenhagen and at the [Battle of Narva](#) in 1700 when he knocked both [Denmark-Norway](#) and [Russia](#) temporarily out of the war. However, he was unable to bring the war to a conclusion, and it would take six years before he had dealt with the remaining combatant [Augustus II](#) of [Saxony-Poland](#).

In an attempt to finally end the war, Charles ordered [a final attack](#) on the Russian heartland with a possible assault on [Moscow](#) from his campaign base in Poland. The Swedish army of almost 44,000 men left [Saxony](#) on 22 August 1707

and marched slowly eastwards. In the spring Charles resumed his advance, but his army had been reduced by about one-third due to starvation, frostbite and other effects of the weather. The wet weather had also seriously depleted the army's supplies of gunpowder; the cannon were also essentially out of action, due to a lack of usable ammunition. Charles's first action was to lay siege to the fort of [Poltava](#).

When the battle opened, Charles had about 14,000 men, while Peter commanded about 45,000. However, although Charles had faced great odds before, his expertise could not be brought forth during the actual battle, as he had been wounded during the siege on 17 June, when he was hit in the foot while taking part in a small engagement during an inspection of the Swedish outposts on the banks of the [Vorskla](#). He had to turn over command to Field Marshal [Carl Gustav Rehnskiöld](#) and General [Adam Ludwig Lewenhaupt](#).

The battle began before dawn at 3:45 a.m. on 28 June (Swedish calendar), with the Swedes advancing boldly against the Russian fortified lines just north of Poltava. At first, the battle started off in a traditional fashion, with the better trained Swedes pressing in on the Russians' redoubts, overrunning a few Russian defensive redoubts within the first 15 minutes. The Swedish seemed to possess an advantage, but this was quickly nullified. By dawn (at around 4:30 a.m.), the weather was unusually very hot and humid with the rising sun obscured by smoke from cannon and musket fire. The Swedish infantry, commanded by General Lewenhaupt, attempted to attack the Russians in their fortified camp just north of Poltava. But the Swedish advance soon faltered, partly because the infantry had been ordered to withdraw and reorganise.

Several Swede regiments were surrounded in a classic [Cannae](#)-style battle as Bauer's Russian cavalry swarmed around the Swedish army and attacked the Swedish rear guard. Cruetz and the cavalry tried to buy the infantry time to get away; several units attacked the Russians head on despite them forming into squares. By this stage, the Swedes had no organised bodies of troops to oppose the Russian infantry or cavalry. Small groups of foot soldiers managed to break through and escape to the south while most of the rest were overwhelmed and ridden down. Seeing the defeat of his army from a stretcher in the rear, Charles ordered the army to retreat at 11:00 a.m. By noon, the battle was over as Russian cavalry had mopped up the stragglers on the battlefield and returned to their own lines. Charles then gathered the remainder of his troops and baggage train, and retreated to the south later that same day, abandoning the siege of Poltava. Rehnskiöld was captured.

# Cornelius von Loos

**Cornelius Loos**, född 1686 i [Stockholm](#), död i Hamburg 15 april 1738, var en [svensk ingenjörsofficer](#) under [Karl XII](#). 1710 sändes [fortifikationsmajor](#) Cornelius Loos, tillsammans med [kapten Konrad Sparre](#) och [löjtnant Hans Gyllenskepp](#) (med flera) från [Bender](#) på en halvtannat år lång resa till [Orienten](#). Första anhalt var Istanbul för att sedan fortsätta vidare till Egypten med flera länder. Uppdraget under resan var att teckna av bland annat byggnadsverk att senare förströ kungen med. Omkring trehundra teckningar utfördes. Endast ett fyrtiotal av dessa räddades undan brand vid kalabaliken i Bender 1713. Huvuddelen av de teckningar som klarat sig består av illustrationer av [Istanbul](#). Dessa teckningar anses vara det bästa nedtecknade vittnesmålet om hur Istanbul såg ut i början av 1700-talet. Originalhandlingarna finns nu på [Nationalmuseum](#). Efter hemkomsten till Sverige 1718 avancerade Loos inom [armén](#) för att till slut uppnå [generalmajors](#) värdighet. Loos avslutade sin karriär som kommandant i Hamburg.

<http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/198701/the.swedish.connection.htm>

When the warrior king Charles XII came to the Swedish throne in 1697, he found himself facing the powerful Russia of Peter the Great, intent on obtaining control of the Baltic. The two nations went to war in 1700 and in 1709 Russia's victory at the battle of Poltava in the Ukraine forced the Swedish king to flee to Bender on the Dnestr river not far from Odessa - now in the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic, but then an important Turkish town.

The Ottoman Sultan, Ahmet III, welcomed his vanquished ally and treated him hospitably. So for four years - from 1709 to 1713 - Sweden was ruled from a small town in Ottoman Bessarabia, a thousand miles from Stockholm. Even in the 18th century, communications were not so bad as to make government by courier impossible.

Charles XII, however, was a very active monarch and found that time hung heavy on his hands. He later referred to "our lazy dog-days in Turkey." His thoughts, perhaps because of his interest in Biblical history - he had commissioned a new Swedish translation of the Bible - turned to the historical monuments of the Middle East. So he chose three officers and charged them to go "to Jerusalem and Egypt to examine the rarities and monuments there and make drawings of them," as the Chancellery log-book puts it.

The three men he selected were Captain Cornelius Loos, Captain Conrad Sparre and Lieutenant Hans Gyllenskiep. Loos, although only 24, commanded the expedition. He was a trained military engineer and therefore knew how to make accurate plans, and had already been working with the king on a book illustrating infantry and cavalry drills.

The three men left Bender in January 1710. Three weeks later they reached Istanbul, where they spent six weeks, then sailed for Alexandria on a Turkish man-of-war. They landed at Alexandria on May 21, 1710, and set off to visit the Pyramids and other sites in Egypt. They then took a ship to Acre and traveled overland to Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Jericho, the Dead Sea, Gaza, Galilee, Nazareth, Damascus, Baalbek, Tripoli and Aleppo. They were among the first Europeans to visit the magnificent ruins of Palmyra, and finally returned to Bender on June 28, 1711.

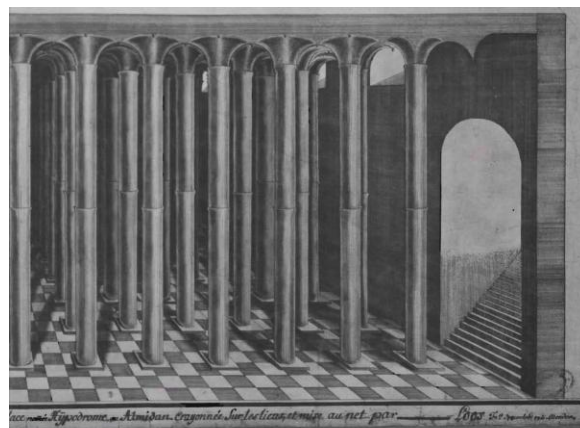
Captain Loos made sketches throughout the trip and back at Bender made finished drawings for the king. A list made in 1736 shows that he handed over more than 300 drawings, plans and views of towns and ruins throughout Egypt, Palestine and Syria. In addition, he copied a great number of inscriptions and collected over 500 antique medals, engraved gems, "heathen figures" and other curiosities. The expedition also collected



botanical specimens, made paintings of male and female Turkish costume and constructed a model of the Temple of Saint Helena in Jerusalem. The king was so pleased and interested that he kept the drawings in a chest in his bedroom to study at leisure.

But two years later disaster struck. The King of Sweden and the Ottoman sultan fell out over the best strategy to use against the Russians. This disagreement led to an attack by the local Turkish garrison on the king's residence in January 1713. Charles XII was taken captive, and during the siege fire spread to his personal apartments. Three chests containing the drawings of Captain Loos were burned. The king's plan to publish them in a luxury edition had to be abandoned, and so the world lost what would have undoubtedly been one of the most elaborate and important books on the subject ever produced. Today, only 40 of the original 300 drawings survive.

Only rarely did Loos take liberties with the truth. By questioning Loos' two companions, the king was able to discover that the expedition had never gone to the site of Troy, although Loos had produced some drawings of it, which he had based on the sketches of other travelers. When Loos apologized to the king, Charles said, "Oh, this is nothing! You travelers take many such privileges."



CORNELIUS LOOS

Teckningar från en expedition  
till Främre Orienten 1710–1711

[http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Konrad\\_Sparre](http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Konrad_Sparre)

## Konrad Sparre



**Konrad Sparre**, född 4 december 1680 i [Stockholm](#), död 15 april 1744 på sin gård Malma i [Västergötland](#), var en [svensk friherre](#) och [militär](#). Han var son till [Carl Sparre](#) och Beata Falkenberg af Trystorp, bror till [landshövdingen Fredrik Henrik Sparre](#) och från 1718 gift med Anna Eleonora [Wachtmeister af Björkö](#) (1695-1778). Begravd i [Hyringa kyrka](#).

Sparre deltog från 1698 på fransk sida i [Spanska tronföljdskriget](#) och tjänstgjorde där under sin farbror [greve Erik Sparre af Sundby](#). I Polen anslöt han sig 1708 till den svenska armén och deltog i [Karl XII:s ryska fälttåg](#). Den lysande segern i [slaget vid Holowczyn](#) samma år följdes av det avgörande nederlaget i [slaget vid Poltava](#) året därpå. Han blev sårad i en skärmytsling kort före Poltava och fick bäras på bår till [Bender](#) i det dåvarande [Osmanska riket](#). På uppdrag av [Karl XII](#) deltog han i [major Cornelius Loos](#) expedition till [Orienten](#) 1710-11. Första anhalt var [Istanbul](#) och sedan besöktes [Syrien](#) och [Egypten](#). Uppdraget för expeditionen var att teckna av bland annat byggnadsverk att senare förströ

kungen med. Omkring trehundra teckningar utfördes. Endast ett fyrtiotal av dessa räddades undan en brand i samband med [kalabaliken i Bender 1713](#) och förvaras idag på [Nationalmuseum](#).

Sparre var [kapten](#) i [livgardet](#) 1711 och tillfångatogs i kalabaliken i Bender men blev utlöst efter nio dygn. Han följde 1714 den polske kungen [Stanisław I Leszczyński](#) från [Turkiet](#) till [Zweibrücken](#) och återförenades med Karl XII samma år när denne återkommit till [Stralsund](#). Han sårades i striden vid [Stresow](#) i samband med att [Fredrik Vilhelm I av Preussen](#) landsatte trupper på [Rügen](#) 1715. Efter Stralsunds kapitulation fördes han som fånge till [Spandau](#) men rymde och återkom till [Sverige](#) 1717. Vid hemkomsten utsågs han till [överstelöjtnant](#) vid [Halländska regementet](#) och deltog i [Karl XII:s norska fälttåg](#) 1718.

## Siege of Vyborg (1710)

The **Siege of Vyborg** took place in the spring of 1710 during the [Great Northern War](#) (1700–1721), as a second attempt by the Russians to capture the fortress town of [Vyborg](#) after a failed attempt in 1706. After the outbreak of the war, Swedish forces had fortified themselves in the port of Vyborg. In order to assure safety for the newly founded city of [Saint Petersburg](#), [Peter the Great](#) ordered the Swedish fort to be secured. These plans were put on hold because of other ongoing conflicts but, after the Russian success at the [Battle of Poltava](#) in June 1709, the men and resources were available to capture the town.

*A 1709 engraving, showing the Castle on the left*



Thirteen thousand troops under General-Admiral [Fyodor Apraksin](#) marched to Vyborg and laid siege on 22 March 1710. [Magnus Stiernstråle](#), the Swedish commander at the fort, waited in vain for Finnish assistance, while a stalemate ensued because the Russians lacked sufficient artillery. In April, Peter the Great managed to bring through a fleet of 250 ships to deliver guns and supplies, and to help perform a final assault on Swedish positions. After these Russian attacks, the Swedish garrison surrendered on 12 June 1710.

After the victory at the [Battle of Poltava](#), the Russian army was able to proceed with further offensive actions in the northwestern theater of operations. In 1710, the Russian army undertook an offensive in two directions: on the Baltic coast (where, in the fall in 1710, Riga was besieged) and in Finland, with attacks on [Vyborg](#) and [Kexholm](#). The selection of the command staff destined for the siege of Vyborg led to the main authority being given to General-Admiral [Fyodor Apraksin](#), while his subordinates were Major-Generals [Robert Bruce](#) ([ru](#)) and [Wilhelm Bergholtz](#). Bruce and Bergholtz had operated mainly in defensive roles before the siege, chiefly in the defense of [Saint Petersburg](#). They would later lead the offensive into Finland.

*Vyborg in the late 1700s, after being refortified by the Russians*



In his letters announcing the capture of Vyborg, Peter the Great wrote that from now on the "final security of Saint Petersburg has been achieved." The czar said that Vyborg should become a "firm cushion" to the new capital. By capturing Vyborg, several important strategic goals were achieved. The Russian Empire now had vastly improved access to the [Baltic Sea](#), from which they could launch further attacks against [Finland](#), and a powerful fort that would defend the new capital of [Saint Petersburg](#). The czar ordered the fort to be renovated with the help of a special army division and local peasants.

During peace talks with Sweden, the "Vyborg question" was debated, and Peter the Great told his representative, [Andrey Osterman](#), to pressure Sweden to cede Vyborg and [Riga](#) regardless of the situation. Thus, after the [Treaty of Nystad](#), Vyborg officially became incorporated into the Russian Empire. This began a new period in the city's multinational history, where Russian influences would mix with the city's [Swedish](#), [Finnish](#), and [German culture](#).

# Battle of Helsingborg (1710)

The **Battle of Helsingborg** (February 28, 1710) was Denmark's failed and final attempt to regain the [Scanian lands](#), lost to [Sweden](#) in 1658.

On the Ringstorp heights northwest of [Helsingborg](#), 14,000 [Danish](#) invaders under [Jørgen Rantzau](#) were decisively defeated by an equally large [Swedish](#) army under [Magnus Stenbock](#).

In late fall 1709, an enormous Danish fleet gathered in Øresund, and on November 2 the a landing was made off [Råå](#). The Danish invasion army was led by general [Christian Ditlev Reventlow](#) and consisted of 15,000 men divided into six [cavalry](#) regiments, four [dragoon](#) regiments, eight [infantry](#) regiments and six [artillery companies](#). It was met with virtually no resistance from the Swedes. The Swedish army was in terrible shape after [Poltava](#), when several regiments had been completely annihilated. The work on reconstructing and recruiting the regiments had begun immediately after Poltava, but by late summer 1709, [Magnus Stenbock](#) only had one Scanian regiment in battle-fit condition. The Swedish counterattack would have to wait and the army retreated into [Småland](#). In the beginning of December, the Danes controlled almost all of central Scania except for [Landskrona](#) and [Malmö](#). Their objective was to take the naval base at [Karlskrona](#) in [Blekinge](#), and the Danish army worked its way quickly into Sweden. In January 1710, it defeated a smaller Swedish force outside [Kristianstad](#).

Stenbock had frantically tried to gather a new Swedish army and several new regiments had begun to assemble in [Växjö](#), from where Stenbock had planned to march. The raw recruits were exercised daily on the ice of a frozen lake close to the city. By February 5 Stenbock had moved to [Osby](#) where additional units joined in. By now, about 16,000 men were part of his host. [Helsingborg](#) was the key to Scania and Stenbock intended on marching over [Rönneå](#) to [Kävlingeån](#), in doing so cutting off the Danish supply lines.

On the morning of February 28 Stenbock marched south towards Helsingborg. When he approached the Danish positions he ordered his army to take battle positions. A thick morning fog lay over the area and hid the two parties from each other. When the fog lifted the two commanders could review over their respective armies. Rantzau saw that the Swedish army outflanked his own left flank in the west and was forced to reinforce it quickly. Rantzau had deployed his [artillery](#) on the heights of Ringstorp, from where he started firing at the Swedish troops at noon.

Instead of profiting from the weak Danish west flank Stenbock instead turned his army eastward to the Danish right flank. This was perceived by the Danes as an attempt to encircle the Danish eastern flank, and to prevent this it marched further east which opened up gaps in the Danish line that couldn't be filled. In the east, by Brohuset, the first skirmishes took place. The Swedes were repelled and Swedish commander Burenskiöld was captured. However, the rest of the Swedish east flank was able to improve the situation and soon the Danes were at a disadvantage. Rantzau participated in the fighting personally, not thinking of the direction of the battle, and was eventually wounded by a bullet through the lung. At the same time a rumor developed in the Danish east flank that the Swedes had encircled them and were attacking from behind, which caused the entire formation to collapse with the troops fleeing towards Helsingborg.

Rantzau's disappearance from the field became noticeable in the middle of the Danish line where the Swedish forces had begun to attack. The Danes had great difficulties withstanding the assault, and when the troops saw how the eastern flank was faring, the middle started to collapse. The Danish elite forces Gardet and the corps of [grenadiers](#) which were deployed on the edges could prevent the Swedish advance long enough to allow the other forces to pull back, but many of the fleeing troops were cut down by the Swedish cavalry.



# Magnus Stenbock

Count **Magnus Gustafsson Stenbock** ([Stockholm](#), August 12, 1664 - [Copenhagen](#), February 23, 1717) was a [Swedish](#) military officer at the time of the [Great Northern War](#).



He was the son of [Gustaf Otto Stenbock](#) and [Christina Catharine de la Gardie](#). He was educated at [Uppsala](#) and at [Paris](#), chose the military profession, and spent some years in the service of the [United Provinces](#).

Returning to Sweden he entered the [Army](#), and, in 1688, became major. He served with the Swedes in the [Low Countries](#) and on the Rhine, distinguishing himself for skill and courage at [Fleurus](#). During the [Nine Years' War](#) he was employed not only in the field but also as a confidential agent in diplomatic missions.

Soon afterwards, as colonel of the [Dalecarlian](#) regiment, he led it in the [astonishing victory of Narva](#). He distinguished himself still more at [Dünamünde](#), [Klissow](#) and [Cracow](#). In 1703 he fought the successful [battle at Pułtusk](#), and three years later, having reached the rank of general of infantry, was made [Governor-General](#) of [Scania](#). He led the Swedish troops to victory in the [Battle of Helsingborg \(1710\)](#), the last battle between [Denmark](#) and [Sweden](#) in Scania.

He was a great favorite with [Charles XII](#) in the earlier campaigns, but later the two drifted somewhat apart. It is recorded that the king, before whom [General Lagercrona](#) accused Stenbock of drunkenness, replied that Stenbock drunk was more capable of giving orders than Lagercrona sober.

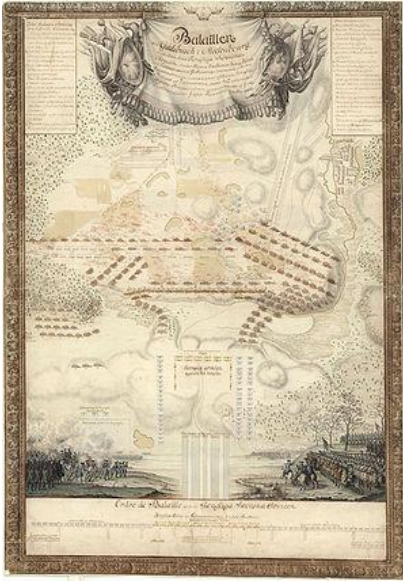


*Equestrian Magnus Stenbock in Helsingborg*

His activities were not confined to war and diplomacy; the [University of Lund](#) was under his care as Chancellor for some years, and he had no mean skill as a painter and a poet. He became [Privy Councillor](#) in 1710, and Charles gave him his [field marshal's](#) baton in 1712. In the same year he invaded [Mecklenburg](#) (with but 9000 men) in order to [cover besieged Stralsund](#) in [Swedish Pomerania](#). He won the [Battle of Gadebusch](#), but numbers prevailed against him in the end. [Cut off in Tönning](#) he was forced to surrender after a gallant resistance, and passed into captivity. During his captivity he produced extraordinary fine ivory miniatures, which often included referrals to the number 51 - a reference to [Psalm 51](#) "Have mercy on me, O God" Five years of harsh treatment in [Copenhagen](#) brought his life to a close.

He married Eva Magdalena Oxenstierna on 26 December 1690 in Stockholm. She was the daughter of [Bengt Gabrielsson Oxenstierna](#) and Magdalena Eriksdotter Stenbock.

# Battle of Gadebusch



The **Battle of Gadebusch** was [Sweden's](#) final great victory in the [Great Northern War](#). It was fought by the Swedes to prevent the loss of the city of [Stralsund](#) to [Danish](#) and [Saxon](#) forces.

During 1712, all of Sweden's [dominions](#) south of the [Baltic Sea](#), apart from [forts](#), had been conquered by the allies Denmark, Saxony, and [Russia](#). In the Baltic the Danish [admiral Gyldenløve](#) patrolled with a squadron to disrupt Swedish [supply lines](#) to the Continent. It was vital for Sweden not to lose Stralsund, as it was the gateway to campaigns in [Poland](#).

While a Danish army moved in the region of [Hamburg](#), a large Russian-Saxon force stood south of Stralsund. Stenbock could hardly attack this force with a [frontal assault](#), but hoped that by moving west towards [Mecklenburg](#) it could be [encircled](#) or scattered. Such a movement would also prevent the joining of the two allied forces. The Danish army under [Frederick IV of Denmark](#) was led by general [Jobst von Scholten](#) closer to the Russian-Saxon army, and on December 3 the Danish forces reached the little town of [Gadebusch](#), southwest of [Wismar](#). Fortunately for Stenbock the allied movements were slowed due to disagreements among the allied commanders. On December 8 he marched the Swedish army to [Gross Brütz](#) less than ten kilometers east of [Gadebusch](#). Now the Russian [infantry](#) was too far away to assist the Danes, but the Saxon [cavalry](#) under [Jacob Heinrich von Flemming](#) was approaching quickly.

That night the Danish forces broke camp and moved to a better position around the village of Wakenstädt, three kilometers south of and today incorporated by [Gadebusch](#). Scholten expected the Swedish attack to come from the south to avoid the marshy [Radegast](#) river. At four in the morning of December 9 the Danish army was arrayed in defensive formation, with cavalry wings flanking the infantry in the center. As hours passed, snowfall turned to rain. Finally, the Saxon cavalry under Flemming arrived at Wakenstädt at mid-morning.

The Swedish onslaught from the east began around 11 a.m.. Swedish artillery opened fire on the tightly grouped Danish [battalions](#) and provided cover for the deploying cavalry and infantry. At 1 p.m. the order to attack was given. While the artillery kept firing, the infantry marched towards the Danes, not firing until reaching a distance of twelve paces. During this time, the Danish opponent remained relatively passive. A Danish cavalry counterattack was broken by the infantry, supported by the constant artillery fire.

To the north, the Swedish cavalry made a flanking movement and surprised the Danish cavalry on the left wing. The subsequent retreat into Wakenstädt caused confusion in the Danish ranks, which was exploited by the infantry on the Swedish right wing. Meanwhile, heavy fighting was taking place on the Swedish left wing where the elite of the Danish army, the royal guard, was positioned supported by the main bulk of the Saxon cavalry. But despite the numerical superiority of the allies, attacks by the Saxon cavalry were repelled. The two Danish guard regiments fought a hard pressed meelee battle with the Swedish [Dalecarlia regiment](#) and [Helsing regiment](#), the fight was eventually won by the Swedes when the Danes realized that cavalry support would not come (the cavalry was engaged with the Swedish cavalry during the whole fight) while they were slowly pushed back by the Swedish infantry onslaught.

The battle wound down by dusk: Danish and Saxon forces withdrew more or less orderly to a position several kilometers west of Gadebusch to regroup. All of the Danish artillery had been abandoned.



# Skirmish at Bender

The **Skirmish at Bender** ([Swedish](#): *Kalabaliken i Bender*) was devised to remove [Charles XII of Sweden](#) from the [Ottoman Empire](#) after his military defeats in Russia. It took place on February 1, 1713 on [Ottoman](#) territory, in what is now the town of [Bender, Moldova](#).

*The skirmish as depicted in 1894*



## History

After the Swedish defeat at the [battle of Poltava](#) on 27 June 1709 and the [surrender](#) of most of the Swedish army at [Perevolochna](#) three days later, [Charles XII of Sweden](#) fled together with a few hundred Swedish soldiers and a large number of [cossacks](#) to the [Ottoman Empire](#), where they spent a total of five years.

The events of the Skirmish at Bender officially began on 31 January 1713 with the firing of Turkish artillery on the Swedish camp. On February 1, the Ottoman forces attacked the camp.

Together with some 40 soldiers, Charles XII held a stand against many hundreds of Turks. The [life guard Axel Erik Roos](#) in particular distinguished himself during the skirmish and accounts tell that he saved the king's life three times during the day. The king himself killed at least one Ottoman soldier with his sword in hand to hand combat when he and Roos came under attack by 3 Ottomans. During parts of the fighting Charles was also actively sniping with a carbine against the assaulting enemy from a window in his sleeping quarters, positioned in the building where the Swedes had taken up their

defense. The fighting lasted for over 7 hours and the Ottomans eventually used both artillery and fire arrows when the initial assaults were beaten back and the later method proved to be effective. The fire arrows caught the building's roof on fire and forced the defenders to abandon it, the fighting then came to an abrupt end when the king tripped on his own [spurs](#) while exiting the burning house. He was assaulted by scores of Ottoman soldiers who managed to capture him and the remaining fighters.

After some time as a prisoner, Charles XII and his soldiers were released when news about the Swedish victory in the [battle of Gadebusch](#) reached the Ottomans. Charles then started to plan his trip back to Sweden.



# Axel Erik Roos

**Axel Erik Roos**, born in 1684 in [Årnäs](#) in [Västergötland](#), died December 14, 1765 in [Lövåsen](#), [Gestad](#), [Dalsland](#) (Sweden) was a [baron](#), [lieutenant general](#) in the [Swedish](#) army of [Charles XII of Sweden](#), and [governor](#) of [Dalsland](#).

## *Career*

Roos started as a 16-year-old [page](#) at the court of Charles XII in 1700, then accompanied the king during the [Great Northern War](#) and participated in a number of battles. He was wounded at [Kliszów](#) and [Fraustadt](#), was appointed second lieutenant in the Södermanland regiment and, in 1707, lieutenant in the Värmland regiment. He was appointed to the "[corps of Drabants](#)" in 1708 and accompanied the king to [Bendery](#). There he excelled himself being cited for brilliant bravery in the [skirmish at Bender](#) and saved the king's life three times in one day, including protecting the king with his own body. Roos gave a detailed account of the skirmish at Bender in a letter which he personally delivered to the Swedish [Queen Ulrika Eleonora](#). The account was printed in 1757 and has since been reprinted on several occasions. The letter is considered to have great historical value and the original is kept in the [National Archives of Sweden](#).

Roos was appointed Adjutant General in 1713 and on the very same day as [colonel](#) in the Scanian cavalry. Over the following years, Roos was employed by the king in several demanding and secret missions. During one such trip in 1716, he was captured by the [Danish](#) enemy, but managed to escape to [Scania](#). He participated, too, in the 1718 siege of the [Fredriksten](#) fortress in [Norway](#), during which the king was killed. Roos was wounded 16 times in the Great Northern War campaign. The king had great confidence in him and called him "Roosen", and he was almost always in the king's immediate proximity during the war.

In 1725 he was promoted to major general and colonel of the [Nyland](#) cavalry brigade and the [Tavastehus dragoons](#). In 1728, he was given command of the Bohus dragoons. In 1740, after a stint as military commander, he was appointed governor of [Älvsborg County](#), finally retiring as a Lieutenant General. He lived at Lövås [manor](#) and died there, 81 years old, in 1766. His funeral assembled a large number of the most prominent nobles in the country. There, his life was described in a long speech by the member of parliament for [Värmland](#), [Lennart Magnus Ugglå](#). The speech was distributed in printed form with the title: "Åminnelsetal öfver General, landshöfdingen mm Baron Axel Erik Roos."

It is considered that the man "Axel" in [Esaías Tegnér's](#) [eponymous](#) poem is Erik Axel Roos. The [noble house](#) of Roos came to an end with his death. Roos' sword and spurs were stored for nearly two hundred years in the church of Gestad until they were stolen in the 1980s during a burglary. They have not been recovered since.

## *Personal life*

Axel Roos was the son of General [Carl Gustaf Roos](#) and is known among other things, for his command of an infantry unit during the battle of Poltava. Two of his sons were killed serving as officers during campaigns in Poland and Germany. It is said that Erik Axel Roos was not tall and that he kept his youthful looks to the end of his life. There are several paintings of him, including one in [Karlberg Palace](#), [Stockholm](#).

# Battle of Storkyro

The **Battle of Storkyro** was fought on February 19, 1714 ([O.S.](#)) / March 2, 1714 ([N.S.](#)) near the village of Napo ([Finnish](#): *Napue*) in Storkyro parish ([Finnish](#): *Isokyrö*), [Ostrobothnia](#), [Swedish Empire](#) (present day [Finland](#)) between a [Swedish](#) and a [Russian](#) army, as part of the [Great Northern War](#).



The Swedish force, consisting almost entirely of Finnish troops, was destroyed by the numerically superior Russian force. As a result, all of Finland came under Russian [military occupation](#) for the rest of the war, a period of hardship known in Finland as the [Greater Wrath](#).

General [Carl Gustaf Armfeldt](#) was given command over the troops in Finland in August 1713. He faced a hopeless task; Lybecker had left him with a neglected, starving, destitute army. Reconnaissance wasn't possible because the cavalry was too worn out to carry out its duties. When the Russian general, [Mikhail Golitsyn](#), marched into [Ostrobothnia](#) in the beginning of February 1714, Armfeldt placed his forces in a defensive position by the village of Napo, east of [Vasa](#). A council of war was held on 16 February, where Armfeldt was determined to commit to stay and give battle. A fatalist air hung over the Swedish army - weakened from the ravages of winter, a superior

army was approaching, and all hopes of reinforcements were gone.

The Russian movements were observed by Armfeldt and his officers. [Cossacks](#) and [dragoons](#) arrived in the morning, while the main force deployed in the afternoon. As the battle would break out in any moment, Armfeldt rode along the Swedish line and exhorted his soldiers to fight for king and country. How this was received by the doomed troops is unknown, but Armfeldt's own account states that they soldiers "showed incredible bravery, and loyalty unto death, and on their knees and with streaming eyes asked God for help."

Armfeldt realized something was amiss when only a small cavalry force continued approaching along the frozen river, while the rest of the enemy force disappeared to the north. Realizing too late the implications of this, he commanded the Swedish line to redeploy northwards to better respond to the threat. He then ordered a pre-emptive attack. The Swedish right wing had initially great successes, mauling the Russian left with [grapeshot](#), while the infantry fired their single volley and then threw themselves at the enemy in a [bayonet charge](#). The Russian left flank hadn't fully arrayed itself and was disordered at the time of the Swedish attack. However, despite the initial Swedish success, the Russian position was stabilized thanks in great part to its numerical superiority.

The Russian right flank was better organized and repelled the Swedish attack. The Swedish cavalry was immobilized, circumvented, and cut down by Russian dragoons and cossacks, and the left flank collapsed slowly in desperate fighting. Armfeldt tried to relieve his encircled left flank but Golitsyn now committed his forces against the Swedish center and right flank, and while the left flank was ground down, the Swedish infantry dissolved in panic.

The battle ended with the destruction of the Swedish army in Finland, with almost 2,500 casualties. Many of them bled or froze to death in the night following the battle; bodies were left lying in the battlefield for weeks. The Russian casualties were also severe: as many as 2,000 wounded or killed. The majority of the Russian dead were buried in the Storkyro church graveyard. Strategically, the victory at Storkyro allowed the Russians to control all of Finland the following years; Sweden was too weak to prevent this.

# Siege of Fredriksten

The **Siege of Fredriksten** was a siege of the Norwegian fortress of [Fredriksten](#) in the city of [Halden](#) by [Charles XII of Sweden](#). While inspecting his troops' lines, Charles XII was killed by a projectile that shot into the left side of his head and out of the right. The Swedes broke the siege off, and the Norwegians kept the fortress.

*Fredriksten fortress as seen from the harbor.*



King [Charles XII of Sweden](#) made several campaigns into the city during the [Great Northern War](#) during his campaign to capture [Denmark–Norway](#). At the close of the [Great Northern War](#), the Norwegian Army had been weakened in early 1716 by withdrawal of 5000 of the best troops to Denmark. When rumors reached Christiania that [Charles XII](#) was preparing to invade, all remaining troops in [Østerdal](#) and [Gudbrandsdal](#) were ordered to the border at Halden and Fredrikstad. The Norwegians expected the Swedes to invade at [Kongsvinger](#), [Basmo](#) and/or Halden. It was at Basmo where Charles XII struck, crossing the border March 8, 1716. The Norwegian [scorched earth](#) policy and [guerrilla](#) raid interdiction of supply chains by the residents of Bohuslen deprived Charles of supplies, while the fortresses still held by the Norwegians behind his lines threatened his supply chain and his retreat if seriously weakened in combat. Charles took Christiania (now Oslo), but without heavy siege artillery, was unable to take [Akershus](#).

After a brief occupation, Charles retraced his steps to the [Norwegian fortresses](#) in southeastern Norway with the objective of capturing Frederiksten. This would remove the threat at his back, and the fortifications could serve as the base for a renewed offensive later that year. Capturing the harbours at the mouth of the [Glomma](#) river would also allow him to land the necessary provisions for a successful siege of Akershus.

Charles' troops attempted to take Frederiksten by storm on July 4. His troops took the town after fierce fighting, but the citizens set fire to their own houses, forcing Charles, unable to take the fortress, to retreat and await the arrival of heavy siege guns. Unfortunately for the invading army the entire Swedish transport fleet was captured or destroyed by the Norwegian naval hero [Tordenskjold](#) at the [Battle of Dynekilen](#) in Bohuslen. Running low on supplies, Charles retreated hastily across the [Svinesund](#) and burned the bridges behind him. By July 12, 1716 all Swedish troops had been withdrawn from the area around Fredriksten.

## *Siege of 1718*

Charles came again to besiege the fortress in autumn of 1718 with 40,000 men. He did this intending to first capture Halden to be able to sustain a siege of Akershus. By first taking the border areas, Charles wished to avoid a repeat of the fiasco he had suffered two years before. The 1,400 strong garrison of Frederiksten fought ferociously to hold back the invasion, but suffered a severe setback when, on December 8 the forward fortification Fort Gyldenløve fell. Encouraged by their very hard-fought success the Swedish army intensified their efforts against the main fort. The Swedish trenches had almost reached the main fortification walls when on the evening of December 11 (Swedish calendar: November 30), 1718, a projectile struck and killed Charles XII while he inspected the work. The death of the king effectively ended the attack on Fredriksten and the invasion was called off, leading to the conclusion of the war. A memorial is located in the park named in his memory where the Swedish king fell, just in front of the fortress.



## *Expedition by Carl Gustaf Armfeldt*



*Charles XII of Sweden's coat after he died.*

[Carl Gustaf Armfeldt](#) tried to take the city of [Trondheim](#) via [Fredriksten](#) while the siege was still going on. Poorly equipped, Armfelt pulled out after the king fell at [Fredriksten](#). The ensuing disaster that struck his army is known as the [Carolean Death March](#). On [New Year's Eve](#) 1718 he arrived at Norwegian [Tydal](#), with 80 kilometers to the closest Swedish village in [Jämtland](#). When the troops had marched 10 kilometers from Tydalen, a severe [blizzard](#) struck from the northwest. The bitter cold killed the [guide](#) on the very first day, and the army scatted blindly in the mountains ([Sylan](#) mountain range). On the following nights hundreds more perished. Of the over 5,000 men who left Tydalen, only 870 were found alive on arrival at [Duved](#), mostly hardened Finnish [veterans](#).

The siege in 1718 was the last invasion of Norway in the [Great Northern War](#). The war ended on the end of the siege of Fredricksten and the death of Charles XII.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Dyneken](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Dyneken)

## Battle of Dynekilen

The naval **Battle of Dynekilen** took place on 8 July 1716 during the [Great Northern War](#).

On 28 October 1709 [Frederik IV of Denmark](#), the Danish-Norwegian king declared the war against Sweden. The war declaration came after the Swedish defeat at the [Battle of Poltava](#) which resulted in a decisive victory for [Peter I of Russia](#) over [Charles XII of Sweden](#).

In the naval enactment, a light [Danish-Norwegian](#) force under [Peter Tordenskjold](#) trapped and defeated a similar Swedish force in Dynekilen fjord (just north of [Strömstad](#)), on the west coast of Sweden. 80 percent of the sailors and 90 percent of the soldiers in Tordenskjold's force were Norwegian. The Swedes had been escorting troops from Göteborg (Gothenburg) to Fredrikstad.

The [Danish-Norwegian flotilla](#) defeated the Swedes, who had arranged their ships and boats defensively, and destroyed a small island fort equipped with six 12-pounder guns. The largest Swedish ship, *Stenbock*, was surrendered, after which the lighter vessels were run aground and abandoned. A Swedish land force then arrived, forcing Tordenskjold to quickly leave, taking with him some of the captured Swedish ships. The rest were destroyed. The Dano-Norwegian force suffered 76 casualties.



*Reenactment of the Battle of Dynekilen*

# Carolean Death March

The **Carolean Death March** ([Swedish](#): *karolinernas dödsmarsch*) or the **Catastrophe of Øyfjellet** refers to the disastrous retreat by a [Swedish Carolean](#) army under the command of [Carl Gustaf Armfeldt](#) across the [Tydal](#) mountain range in [Trøndelag](#) around the new year 1718-1719.

In 1718, after several defeats in the [Great Northern War](#), Sweden had lost its eastern territories to [Russia](#). Too weakened to retake these, [Charles XII of Sweden](#) planned an attack on Norway to force the [Dano-Norwegian](#) king [Frederick IV](#) into great concessions in subsequent peace treaty negotiations.

After the defeat at [Storkyro](#), Lieutenant-general [Carl Gustaf Armfeldt](#) had retreated to the area of [Gävle](#) with the mauled army of [Finland](#). He was now ordered to make a diversionary attack from [Jämtland](#) towards [Trondheim](#) in Trøndelag with his poorly equipped soldiers. After assembling a host of 10,000 soldiers in [Duved](#), he set off towards Norway on August 29, 1718. Four months later, the campaign in Trøndelag had failed: the defenders of Trondheim had successfully held off Armfeldt. The army of 10,000 had dwindled to around 6,000, and the surviving soldiers were exhausted and starved, their clothing tattered and threadbare. Bad weather made resupplies from Sweden impossible, so the army had to live off the land, causing untold suffering to the Norwegian civilian population.

After Charles' death on December 11, 1718 during the siege of [Fredriksten](#), all Swedish forces in Norway were ordered to retreat back to Sweden. Armfeldt received notice of Charles' death on January 7, 1719, when his force was in [Haltdalen](#), [Gauldal](#) with about 6,000 men. He decided to take the shortest route to Sweden: first over the mountains to [Tydal](#) and from there over the Tydal mountain range back to the fort of [Hjerpe](#). So far the winter had been mild with scant to no snow cover. [Skis](#) were therefore not needed, but the army was poorly equipped and exhausted from the campaigning in Trøndelag.

On January 8, 1719 the army left Haltdalen and marched to Tydal, a distance of almost 30 kilometers. Due to the cold weather, about 200 men died on the mountains from [exposure](#). On January 11, Armfeldt's army was gathered on the Ås and Østby farms in Tydal, almost 5,800 men in total. A vanguard of 14 skiers was sent across to Jämtland to prepare for the main army's arrival in Sweden.

The army left Østby on the morning of January 12, 1719 (New Year's Day according to the Swedish calendar), accompanied by Norwegian [guide](#) Lars Bersvendsen Østby, who had been coerced into aiding the enemy by having two kinswomen held hostage. The weather was very cold, but there was no snowfall. The distance to the village [Handöl](#) in present-day [Åre Municipality](#) is about 55 kilometers. In clement weather the army could have reached Jämtland after a two day march.

That afternoon a violent northwesterly [blizzard](#) struck, with its strong wind swirling up the light snow. The resulting poor visibility and biting cold forced Armfeldt to encamp on the northern mountainside of [Øyfjellet](#) by the lake Essand. In desperate efforts to keep warm, the soldiers set fire to [dwarf birch](#), [heather](#), their own [rifle butts](#) and [sleds](#), but to little effect. An estimated 200 men froze to death this first night.

The storm continued the next day, and the retreat now became chaotic as the soldiers were scattered in the hills. The main part of the force reached the Swedish border and encamped at [Enaälven](#). A hole was hacked in the ice on the Ena to see in which direction the water flowed: in that direction lay rescue. However, the severe weather continued to take its toll; many of the [draught horses](#) died and all equipment had to be abandoned on the mountain. The storm was still raging on January 14 as the first troops led by Armfeldt made their way to Handöl. The majority of the survivors arrived at Handöl on the January 15 and 16. About 3,000 men remained on the mountain, frozen to death. During the continued voyage down to [Duved](#), where lodging had been arranged for the soldiers, another 700 men died. About 600 of the surviving 2,100 soldiers were crippled for life.

# Greater Wrath

The **Greater Wrath** ([Finnish](#): *Isoviha* [Swedish](#): *Stora ofreden*) is a term used in [Finnish history](#) for the Russian [invasion](#) and subsequent [military occupation](#) of Eastern Sweden, now Finland, from [1714](#) until the [treaty of Nystad 1721](#), which ended the [Great Northern War](#), although sometimes the term is used to denote all of the Great Northern War.

In the war there were Finnish troops fighting in Poland and Russia but they were also deployed in large numbers in the defense of the [Baltic](#) territories, where they slowly succumbed to [Peter the Great](#)'s attacks. After the disaster of [Poltava](#) in [1709](#), the shattered continental army provided very little help. Russia captured [Viborg](#) in [1710](#) and invaded the rest of Finland in [1713](#), defeating the Finnish army in the battles of [Pälkäne](#) in 1713 and [Storkyro \(Isokyrö\)](#) in February, [1714](#).

After the victory at Isokyrö, [Mikhail Golitsyn](#) became governor of Finland. Finns began waging [partisan warfare](#) against the Russians. As retaliation, the Finnish peasants were forced to pay large contributions to the occupying Russians (as was the custom in that time). Plundering was widespread, especially in [Ostrobothnia](#) and in communities near the major roads. Churches were looted, [Isokyrö](#) was burned to the ground. A scorched earth zone several hundred kilometers wide was burned to hinder Swedish counteroffensives. About 5,000 Finns were killed and some 10,000 taken away as [slaves](#), of whom only a few thousand would ever return. However according to newer research the amount of those killed is much larger. Thousands, especially officials, also fled to the (relative) safety of Sweden. The poorer peasants hid in the woods to avoid the ravages of the occupiers and their [press-gangs](#). Atrocities were at their worst between 1714–17 when the infamous Swedish Count [Gustaf Otto Douglas](#), who had defected to the Russian side during the war, was in charge of the occupation.

In addition to the predations of the Russian occupants, Finland was struck – as were most other Baltic countries at the time – by the [plague](#). In [Helsinki](#), 1,185 people died: nearly two thirds of the population.

Even the Swedish western side of the [Gulf of Bothnia](#) was ravaged by the Russians. The city of [Umeå](#) was burned to the ground by the Russians on September 18, 1714, and after struggling to rebuild was razed again in [1719](#), [1720](#), and [1721](#).

It took several decades for the Finnish population and economy to recover after the peace in 1721, at which point Finland was scourged again during the [Lesser Wrath](#), although less devastating.



# Russo-Swedish War (1741–1743)

The **Russo–Swedish War of 1741–1743**, known as the **Hats' Russian War** in [Sweden](#) and the **Hats' War** in [Finland](#), which resulted in the **Lesser Wrath** ([Finnish](#): *Pikkuviha*, [Swedish](#): *Lilla ofreden*), or the occupation of Finland, was instigated by the [Hats](#), a Swedish political party that aspired to regain the territories lost to [Russia](#) during the [Great Northern War](#), and by [French](#) diplomacy, which sought to divert Russia's attention from supporting its long-standing ally, the [Habsburg monarchy](#), in the [War of the Austrian Succession](#).

While 8,000 Swedish and Finnish troops were being deployed at the Russian border, near [Lappeenranta](#) ([Swedish](#): *Villmanstrand*) and [Hamina](#) ([Swedish](#): *Frederikshamn*), Sweden declared war on August 8. The objective of these maneuvers was to threaten [Saint Petersburg](#) and to set the stage for a *coup d'état*, engineered by French and Swedish diplomats and aimed at toppling the pro-Austrian regime of [Anna Leopoldovna](#). The coup did take place in December, but the new Tsarina, [Elizaveta Petrovna](#), reneged on her promises to return the [Baltic provinces](#) to Sweden and continued the vigorous prosecution of the war, under the guidance of her pro-Austrian chancellor, [Aleksey Bestuzhev](#).

The threat to the Russian capital had been relieved as early as September 3, when 20,000 Russians under Field-Marshal [Peter Lacy](#) advanced from [Vyborg](#) ([Swedish](#): *Viborg*, [Finnish](#): *Viipuri*) towards Lappeenranta ([Swedish](#): *Villmanstrand*) and inflicted a major defeat on the Swedish commander [Charles Emil Lewenhaupt](#). By June 1742, the 35,000-strong Russian army ousted 17,000 Swedes from Hamina ([Swedish](#): *Frederikshamn*). As the war unfolded, Lewenhaupt's position deteriorated and he was forced to retreat towards [Helsinki](#) ([Swedish](#): *Helsingfors*). In August, Lacy captured [Porvoo](#) ([Swedish](#): *Borgå*) and [Savonlinna](#) ([Swedish](#): *Nyslott*) and encircled the entire Swedish army near Helsinki, where he received Lewenhaupt's capitulation on September 4.

As soon as hostilities ceased and the Russian army entered [Turku](#) ([Swedish](#): *Åbo*), the statesmen [Alexander Rumyantsev](#) and [Ernst Nolken](#) arrived at the city in order to discuss a peace settlement. The Tsarina promised to evacuate her army from Finland on the condition that [Adolf Frederick of Holstein-Gottorp](#) — that is, the uncle of [her own heir apparent](#) — was named as the heir to the throne of Sweden. (The latter had been [offered the crown of Finland](#) by the local *lantdag*). The Hats acquiesced in her proposal in the hope that Adolf Frederick would be able to obtain better terms from her. Elizabeth also wanted Russian forces to occupy Sweden in order to ensure Adolf Frederick's peaceful election, but this plan aroused the vehement opposition of the Swedish representatives and was abandoned.

While peace negotiations lumbered on, the [Baltic Fleet](#) of Russia destroyed a Swedish flotilla near [Korpo Island](#) ([Finnish](#): *Korppoo*). The following month, Lacy — who had distinguished himself in similar operations during the Great Northern War — embarked from [Kronstadt](#) in order to effect a landing in [Sweden proper](#). When the [Baltic Fleet](#) was approaching [Umeå](#), news came that the [Treaty of Åbo](#) ([Finnish](#): *Turku*) had been finalized, with Sweden ceding to Russia the towns of Lappeenranta and Hamina and a strip of Finland to the northwest of Saint Petersburg. The [Kymi River](#) was to form part of the border between the two powers. The treaty marked the further decline of [Sweden as a great power](#) in Northern Europe.

The territory ceded to Russia was added to the Russian gains in the [Treaty of Nystad](#) ([Finnish](#): *Uusikaupunki*) in 1721, under the [Governorate of Vyborg](#). This was later incorporated into the Russian [Grand Duchy of Finland](#) in 1812.

# Adolf Frederick, King of Sweden

**Adolf Frederick** or **Adolph Frederick** ([Swedish](#): *Adolf Fredrik*, [German](#): *Adolph Friedrich* ; [Gottorp](#), 14 May 1710 – [Stockholm](#), 12 February 1771) was [King of Sweden](#) from 1751 until his death.

Following his death, his son [Gustav III](#) seized power through violent means in a 1772 [coup d'etat](#), reinstating absolute rule. The rule of the Riksdag was not to prevail again until after [World War I](#), when universal and equal suffrage was also instated (although under Adolf Frederick a minor number of women have had the vote).

*Adolf Frederick of Sweden, painted by Lorens Pasch the Younger*



His father was [Christian Augustus](#) (1673—1726) duke and a younger prince of Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorp, prince-bishop of Lubeck, and administrator, during the [Great Northern War](#), of the duchies of [Holstein-Gottorp](#) for his relative [Charles Frederick](#). His mother was [Albertina Frederica of Baden-Durlach](#).

The first King from the House of Holstein-Gottorp, Adolph Frederick was a weak monarch, instated as first in line of the throne following the parliamentary government's [failure to reconquer the Baltic provinces](#) in 1741-43.

From 1727 to 1750 prince Adolf Frederick was prince-bishop of [Lübeck](#) (which meant the rulership of a fief around and including [Eutin](#)), and administrator of Holstein-[Kiel](#) during the minority of his nephew, Duke Charles Peter Ulrich, afterwards [Peter III of Russia](#). In 1743 he was elected heir to the throne of Sweden by the [Hat faction](#) in order that they might obtain better conditions at the [Peace of Turku](#) from Empress [Elizabeth of Russia](#), who had adopted his nephew as her [heir](#).

## Death

The king died on 12 February 1771 after having consumed a meal consisting of [lobster](#), [caviar](#), [sauerkraut](#), [kippers](#) and [champagne](#), which was topped off with 14 servings of his favourite dessert: [semla](#) served in a bowl of hot milk. He is thus remembered by Swedish school children as "the king who ate himself to death."

# Russo-Swedish War (1788–1790)

The **Russo-Swedish War of 1788–90**, known as *Gustav III's Russian war* in [Sweden](#), *Gustav III's War* in [Finland](#) and *Catherine II's Swedish War* in [Russia](#), was fought between [Sweden](#) and [Russia](#) from June 1788 to August 1790.

*The battle of Svensksund as depicted by Swedish painter Johan Tietrich Schoultz*



The conflict was initiated by King [Gustav III of Sweden](#) for domestic political reasons, as he believed that a short war would leave the opposition with no recourse but to support him. Despite establishing himself an autocrat in a bloodless *coup d'état* that ended parliamentary rule in 1772, his political powers did not give him the right to start a war.

The Western powers — such as the [United Kingdom](#), the [Dutch Republic](#) and [Kingdom of Prussia](#) — were alarmed by a string of Russian victories in the [Russo-Turkish War](#)

(1787–1792) and lobbied for the war in the north, which would have diverted the attention of [Catherine II of Russia](#) from the Southern theatre. It was at their instigation that Gustav concluded an alliance with the [Ottoman Empire](#) in summer of 1788.

In 1788, a head tailor of the [Royal Swedish Opera](#) received an order to sew a number of Russian military uniforms that later were used in an exchange of gunfire at [Puumala](#), a Swedish outpost on the Russo-Swedish border, on June 27, 1788. The [staged](#) attack, which caused an outrage in [Stockholm](#), was to convince the [Riksdag of the Estates](#) and to provide Gustav with an excuse to declare a "defensive" war on Russia.

Before the grand opening of the Riksdag in 1789, King Gustav III had the [Riksdag Music](#) commissioned. The Parliament then decided on the creation of a [National Debt Office](#) to raise funds and finance the war, a move that gave rise to a wave of inflation of the Swedish [Riksdaler](#).

## The war

The Swedes initially planned a naval assault on [Saint Petersburg](#). One Swedish army was to advance through Finland; a second army, accompanied by the Swedish coastal flotilla, was to advance along the Finnish coast into the [Gulf of Finland](#); while a third army sailed with the Swedish battlefleet in order to land at [Oranienbaum](#) to advance on Saint Petersburg.

The [Russian battlefleet](#), under [Samuel Greig](#), met the Swedish fleet off Hogland Island in the Gulf of Finland on July 17, 1788, at the [Battle of Hogland](#). The battle was tactically indecisive, but prevented the Swedish landing. As the war was deeply unpopular in Sweden and the Finnish officers were mutinous, news of the failure at Hogland triggered a revolt among some of the noble army officers, known as the [League of Anjala](#).



The Swedish attack on Russia caused [Denmark-Norway](#) to [declare war on Sweden](#) in August in accordance with its treaty obligations to Russia. A Norwegian army briefly invaded Sweden and won the [Battle of Kvistrum Bridge](#), before peace was signed on July 9, 1789 following the diplomatic intervention of [Great Britain](#) and [Prussia](#). Under their pressure, Denmark-Norway declared itself neutral to the conflict, bringing this [Lingonberry War](#) to an end.

At sea, the two evenly matched battlefleets met again at the [Battle of Öland](#) on 25 July 1789, which was indecisive. A month later, on August 24, the Russian Vice-Admiral Nassau-Siegen decisively defeated the Swedish coastal flotilla at the [First Battle of Svensksund](#). The Russian Victory was short-lived, as [Gustav Wachtmeister](#) led his Swedes to victory at the [Battle of Valkeala](#).

*A naval scene from the Battle of Krasnaya Gorka, near Kronstadt.*



In 1790, King Gustav revived the plan for a landing close to Saint Petersburg, this time near [Vyborg](#). But the plan foundered in a disastrous attack on the Russian fleet at the [Battle of Reval](#) on May 13. A further attack on the Russian fleet off Kronstadt at the beginning of June also failed, and the Swedish battlefleet and galley flotilla both retired to Vyborg Bay, where the combined Swedish fleets of some 400 vessels were blockaded by [Vasily Chichagov's Baltic Fleet](#) for a month. On July 3, the Swedes forced their way out in the costly [Battle of](#)

[Vyborg Bay](#), losing 7 ships of the line and 3 frigates.

The Swedish battlefleet retired to [Sveaborg](#) for repairs while the Swedish galley flotilla made for a strong defensive position at Svensksund. An impetuous Russian attack on the Swedish galley flotilla on July 9 at the [Second Battle of Svensksund](#) resulted in disaster for the Russians, who lost some 7,000 out of 18,500 men in dead or captured and about one-third of their flotilla. It was the greatest naval victory ever gained by Sweden and helped to pave the way for peace.

The Russian Vice-Chancellor [Bezborodko](#) immediately agreed to negotiations, and the war was ended by the [Treaty of Värälä](#) on August 14.

# Gustaf Mauritz Armfelt

*Gustaf Mauritz Armfelt standing next to the bust of Alexander I, by Johan Erik Lindh*



Count **Gustaf Mauritz Armfelt** (31 March 1757, [Tarvasjoki, Finland Proper](#) – 19 August 1814, [Tsarskoye Selo, Russia](#)) was a [Finnish](#) and [Swedish](#) [courtier](#) and diplomat. In [Finland](#), he is considered one of the great Finnish statesmen. Born in [Tarvasjoki, Finland](#), he was the great grandson of [Charles XII of Sweden](#)'s general, [Carl Gustaf Armfeldt](#). His advice to [Russia](#)'s [Tsar Alexander I](#) was of utmost importance for the establishment of the [Grand Duchy of Finland](#) prepared to become increasingly [autonomous](#).

## Career

In 1774, Armfelt became an [ensign](#) in the guards, but his frivolous behavior involving a duel provoked the displeasure of [Gustav III of Sweden](#). As a result, he thought it prudent to go abroad 1778. Subsequently, however, in 1780, Armfelt met the king again at [Spa](#) in Belgium and completely won over the previously disgruntled monarch with his natural amiability, intelligence and social gifts. Henceforth, his fortune was made. At first, he was given the

position of *maitre des plaisirs* in the Swedish court, but it wasn't long before more serious affairs were entrusted to him. He took part in negotiations with [Catherine II of Russia](#) in 1783, and, during the [Russo-Swedish War \(1788–1790\)](#), he was one of the king's most trusted and active counsellors.

He displayed great valour in the field during this time. In 1788, when [the Danes](#) unexpectedly invaded Sweden and threatened [Gothenburg](#), Armfelt organized the [Dalecarlian](#) levies under the king's direction and led them to victory. He remained absolutely faithful to King Gustav when nearly the whole of the Swedish nobility fell away from him. Armfelt distinguished himself in the later phases of the [Russo-Swedish War](#), eventually becoming the Swedish [plenipotentiary](#) who negotiated the war's demise with the [Treaty of Värälä](#) in August 1790. Armfelt had been seriously wounded in the battle of Savitaipale in June 1790. During the reign of Gustav III, his influence was paramount in Sweden, though Armfelt protested against his master's headstrong championship of his subjects.

## Diplomacy

On his deathbed in 1792, King Gustav III committed the care of his infant son to Armfelt and appointed him to the [Privy Council](#), which was to advise the new regent, the king's younger brother, [Charles](#). Armfelt was also appointed as the [Over-Governor of Stockholm](#), but the new regent was staunchly anti-Gustavian and sent Armfelt to serve as the Swedish ambassador to [Naples](#) in order to get rid of him. From Naples, Armfelt began secret communications with Catherine II, arguing that she should bring about by means of a military intervention a change in the Swedish government in favour of the Gustavians. The plot, though, was discovered by spies for the regent, who immediately sent a Swedish man-of-war to Naples to seize him. With the assistance of the exiled British [Queen Caroline](#), he was just barely able to escape. He fled to Russia, where he was interned at [Kaluga](#) 1794–1797. At home, he was condemned to death as a traitor and his property confiscated. His mistress, [Magdalena Rudenschöld](#), was judged for complicity and [pilloried](#) on the Riddarhus Square before being imprisoned for two years in [Stockholm](#).

## ***Military service***

When [Gustav IV of Sweden](#) attained his majority, Armfelt was completely rehabilitated and sent as Swedish ambassador to [Vienna](#) in 1802, but was obliged to quit the post two years later for sharply attacking the [Austrian](#) government's attitude towards [Napoleon Bonaparte](#). From 1805 to 1807, he was the commander-in-chief of the Swedish forces in [Pomerania](#), where he displayed great ability and stopped the conquest of the duchy for as long as possible. On his return home, he was appointed commander-in-chief of the [Norwegian](#) frontier, where he was stifled in his duties by the constant flow of *ordres, contre-ordres et désordres* from his master.

Armfelt was firmly opposed to the revolutionaries who in 1809 overthrew Gustav IV and exiled his family. He was the most courageous of the deposed king's supporters and resolved afterwards to retire to Finland, which had been ceded to Russia. Appointed to high offices in the Swedish government, his departure was delayed on purpose until his enemies could gather and declare a decree expelling Armfelt as a conspirator in 1811. On 31 March, he visited Russia's ambassador in Stockholm and gave him an oath of allegiance. The following day, he was deported from Sweden.

Armfelt's position greatly improved in Russia. After deposing [Speransky](#) he exercised almost as much influence over Emperor [Alexander I](#) as [Czartoryski](#). He contributed more than anyone else to Finnish independence with his plan to turn the [Grand Duchy of Finland](#) into an autonomous [state](#) within the [Russian Empire](#). He also won over Alexander to the idea of uniting Norway with Sweden.

Armfelt, who had been Chancellor of the [Royal Academy of Turku](#) from 1791 to 1792, was made Chancellor of the new [Imperial Academy of Turku](#) in 1812. He held the position for two years. In 1812, the grateful Emperor raised him to the rank of [count](#). He served as the Minister State Secretary of Finland, the Grand Duchy's highest representative, in St Petersburg 1812–14. He was also briefly [Governor-General of Finland](#) in 1813.

He died at [Tsarskoe Selo](#) near [Saint Petersburg](#) on 19 August 1814.

Together with [Göran Magnus Sprengtporten](#), Armfelt is regarded as one of the fathers of [Finnish independence](#).



# Battle of Hogland

The naval **Battle of Hogland** took place on 17 July (6 July [OS](#)) 1788 during the [Russo-Swedish War \(1788-1790\)](#).



## *Origins*

On the outbreak of war with Russia in 1788, Sweden planned to attack the Russian capital [St. Petersburg](#). One Swedish army was to advance through Finland; a second army, accompanied by the Swedish coastal flotilla, was to advance along the Finnish coast into the [Gulf of Finland](#); while a third army sailed with the Swedish battlefleet in order to land at [Oranienbaum](#) to advance on St. Petersburg. To succeed, the Russian [Baltic Fleet](#) had to be eliminated or blockaded in its ports at Reval (now [Tallinn](#)) and [Kronstadt](#).

In early July, the Swedish battlefleet of 15 ships of the line sailed into the Gulf of Finland. A hastily assembled Russian fleet of 17 ships of the line under Admiral [Samuel Greig](#) met the Swedish fleet off [Hogland](#) Island on 17 July 1788.

## *Battle*

The two fleets were fairly evenly matched, but while Greig was an experienced commander, Duke Karl seems to have spent much of the battle in his cabin. Duke Karl's flagship was forced out of the line, shrouded in smoke. Greig's flagship, the 100-gun *Rostislav* then attacked the 70-gun *Prins Gustav*, commanded by Vice-Admiral Gustav Wachtmeister, which was forced to surrender. Elsewhere, the Swedes disabled the 74-gun *Vladislav*, which lost its steering and was then surrounded by Swedish vessels before surrendering to the 62-gun *Kronprins Gustav Adolf*. The fighting continued for six hours, and the fleets only separated after dark with the Swedish ships beginning to run out of ammunition.

## *Aftermath*

Unusually for a [naval battle](#), both sides captured one ship. The Russians suffered the worst casualties, losing 319-580 men killed compared with between 200 and 300 Swedes, but the battle was a strategic victory for the Russians because Greig had done enough to prevent the Swedish landing.

## Battle of Öland (1789)

The naval **Battle of Öland** took place on 26 July 1789 during the [Russo-Swedish War \(1788-1790\)](#).

Having assembled 21 ships of the line and eight large frigates under his flag, [Prince Karl, Duke of Södermanland](#) decided to intercept the Russian fleet near the island of [Öland](#).

*The battle of Öland*



The Swedish fleet came in contact with the Russians on 26 July 1789 just south of Öland. The Russians took the defensive position, with the Swedes making some indecisive attacks and firing at long range. Duke Karl would have won a signal victory but for the unaccountable remissness of his second-in-command, Admiral [Per Liljehorn](#) whose second division of the Swedish fleet did not reach the fighting in

time, failing to follow orders to attack. Having met with strong resistance, the Swedes disengaged.

For three days the fleets manoeuvred within sight of each other, but finally the Swedes retreated to the naval base at [Karlskrona](#). The battle ended in a draw, but the Russians returned east.

Admiral Liljehorn was put to trial, convicted and barely escaped death as his life was spared by the government.

# First Battle of Svensksund

The **First Battle of Svensksund**, also known as the **First Battle of Rochensalm** from the [Russian](#) version of the [Finnish](#): *Ruotsinsalmi*, was a [naval battle](#) fought in the [Gulf of Finland](#) in the [Baltic Sea](#), outside the present day city of [Kotka](#), on August 24, 1789 during the [Russo-Swedish War \(1788-1790\)](#). The victory has been named the biggest Swedish naval victory of all time.



Gustav's main aim was to recapture some of the territory in Finland that had been lost to the Russians in the disastrous [war of 1741-43](#). In 1788, he launched a surprise attack against the Russian fleet, intending to catch it by surprise. The plan was to attack [Kronstadt](#) and land a force to assault the capital of [St Petersburg](#).

In 1790 an attempt to assault [Viborg](#) failed, and the Swedish navy along with King Gustav himself was caught in the [Bay of Viborg](#). It manage to escape during the dramatic "[Viborg gauntlet](#)" on 3 July, though with heavy losses to the deep-sea navy. After retreating [Svensksund](#), King Gustav along with his flag captain Lieutenant-Colonel [Carl Olof Cronstedt](#) waited and prepared the fleet for the expected Russian attack. On 6 July, the final decisions were made for the defences, and early in the morning on 9 July 1790 the [order of battle](#) was determined and the battle started.

Russian coastal fleet was eager to attack, especially on 9 July, the anniversary of [Catherine the Great](#)'s proclamation as Empress of Russia. Recognizing the failure to decisively defeat Swedish archipelago fleet [year earlier at same location](#) Nassau-Siegen chose to commit his whole force from the south. This was done to prevent Swedes from escaping to the shelter of [Svartholm fortress](#) since Nassau-Siegen was expecting a clear victory having clear superiority in ships, artillery as well as in men.

The battle started very well for the Swedes. Although the Russians were superior in both men and guns, the Swedish forces were anchored in a strong horseshoe-shaped formation. The Russians attacked from the south, but soon became disordered. They took a battering from the Swedish coastal forces, including [shore batteries](#), anchored frigates, [galleys](#) and [gunboats](#).

The Swedes then counter-attacked with gunboats down the left flank, forcing the Russian gunboats to retreat. This in turn led to the Russian galleys being overcome by waves and sea, and either sunk or run aground. Several sailing ships, anchored in position, were boarded and either captured or burnt.

At dawn of July 10, the Swedes consolidated their position with an attack and succeeded in driving the Russian fleet off.



# Battle of Valkeala

**Battle of Valkeala** took place in [Gustav III's Russian War](#) April 29, 1790 at [Valkeala](#) in [Kymi](#) in [Southern Finland](#) and ended with a Swedish victory.

General [Gustav Wachtmeister](#), wounded in the battle.



[Kronobergs regemente](#).

A Swedish army corps of 4000 men under the command of [Gustav III](#) and several of his closest officers crossed in April 28, 1790 [Kymi River](#) in [Pörrille](#) village at a hastily struck a bridge over a ford. The next day continued their march to Valkeala, where a Russian force of 3000 men stood ready to face them. The Swedish force available for battle consisted of roughly 3000 men since 3 battalions had been diverted to guard the ford crossing and rear positions.

The Swedes were victorious in the following battle, pressing home the victory with several successful head on bayonet charges however during the fighting the Swedish Commanding General [Gustav Wachtmeister](#) was wounded by a musket ball to the arm. After Colonel [Swedenhjelm](#)'s adversity through [Anjala](#) on May 5, the Army Corps of [Keltis](#) returned the Kymi river. Swedish units involved included the [Västmanlands regemente](#), [Östgöta infanteriregemente](#), [Livgrenadjärregementet](#), [Första livgrenadjärregementet](#) and

## Aftermath

Wachtmeister was the hero of the hour for a king who wished for good publicity. Wachtmeister was made a [Major-General](#) for his heroic intervention. The war ended with a string of Swedish victories, but in the end Gustav III was assassinated at a masked ball. Wachtmeister, however, continued to serve Sweden a long time away.

# Battle of Reval

The naval **Battle of Reval** took place on 13 May 1790 (2 May OS) during the [Russo-Swedish War \(1788-1790\)](#), off the port of Reval (now [Tallinn](#), [Estonia](#)).

*The Battle of Reval by Aivazovsky*



Undaunted by the Swedish defeats and failures during 1789, the Swedish king, [Gustav III](#) sent the battlefleet under his brother [Prince Karl](#), Duke of Södermanland, to eliminate [Admiral Chichagov](#)'s Russian squadron, which had wintered in the harbour at Reval.

General-Admiral Duke Karl approached Reval with 26 [ships of the line](#) and large [frigates](#) mounting a combined 1,680 cannon. Chichagov, preparing to meet the enemy in the harbour, formed a battle line made up of 9 [ships of the line](#) and the [frigate Venus](#).

The Russian fleet (9 ships of the line, 5 frigates) was anchored in a line going from Reval [harbour](#) towards the [Viimsi](#) (Wims) peninsula. The first line consisted of nine ships of the line and frigates (the 100-gun battleships *Rostislav* and *Saratov*, 74-gun *Kir Ioann*, *Mstislav*, *Sv. Yelena* and *Yaroslav*, 66-gun *Pobedonosets*, *Boleslav* and *Iziaslav* and the 40-gun frigate *Venus*). In the second line, four frigates - *Podrazhislav* (32 guns), *Slava* (32), *Nadezhda Blagopoluchiya* (32) and *Pryamislav* (36). Two bomb-vessels were deployed on the flanks. The third line was composed of seven launches.

The Swedish fleet under the command of [General-Admiral](#) Duke Karl of [Södermanland](#) consisted of 22 [ships of the line](#), four [frigates](#) and four smaller vessels. It entered the harbour and started passing by the anchored Russian ships.

Due to the strong winds and inaccurate aiming most of the Swedish [projectiles](#) ricocheted past their targets. The Russian ships that were anchored within the protected area of the harbour were able to use their guns much more effectively. The ship of the Swedish General-Admiral, which could not be brought into the wind due to a rigging problem, was forced to drift towards *Rostislav* and received major damage from [grapeshot](#). The 64-gun battleship *Prins Karl*, fifteenth the Swedish line, lost her [rudder](#) to Russian fire and had to [strike her colours](#).

The Duke of Södermanland directed the battle from the frigate [Ulla Fersen](#), beyond the range of Russian fire. After a two hour [artillery](#) duel he ordered his ships to break off the engagement; hence the last ten ships of Swedish line veered off without firing a shot. The Swedish ship *Riksens Ständer* hit the [reef](#) north of [Aegna](#) (Wolf) island. Swedish attempts to dislodge her failed, and the Swedes were forced to burn her so that the Russians would be unable to take her.

# Charles XIII of Sweden

**Charles XIII & II** also **Carl**, [Swedish](#): *Karl XIII* ([Stockholm](#), 7 October 1748 – [Stockholm](#), 5 February 1818), was [King of Sweden](#) (as *Charles XIII*) from 1809 and [King of Norway](#) (as *Charles II*) from 1814 until his death. He was the second son of King [Adolf Frederick of Sweden](#) and [Louisa Ulrika of Prussia](#), sister of [Frederick II of Prussia](#).

*Charles XIII of Sweden wearing the Order of Charles XIII*



Though known as King Charles XIII in Sweden, he was actually the seventh Swedish king by that name, as his predecessor [Charles IX](#) (reigned 1604–1611) had adopted his numeral after studying a fictitious history of Sweden.

Prince Charles was appointed [grand admiral](#) when he was but few days old.

Charles was given several official tasks during his period as duke. In 1777, he served as regent during Gustav III's stay in Russia, in 1780 he served as formal chief commander during the King's stay in [Spa](#). On the outbreak of the [Russo-Swedish War](#) of 1788 he served with distinction as admiral of the [fleet](#), especially at the battles of [Hogland](#) (7 June 1788) and [Öland](#) (26 July 1789). On the latter occasion he would have won a signal victory but for the unaccountable remissness of his second-

in-command, Admiral Liljehorn.

Charles was in close connection to the opposition against Gustav III, and it is debated whether he knew of and supported the plans to assassinate the King.

On the assassination of Gustav III in 1792, Charles acted as [regent](#) of Sweden till 1796 on behalf of his nephew, King Gustav IV, who was a minor when his father was shot in the Stockholm opera. The de facto regent, however, was in fact [Gustaf Adolf Reuterholm](#), whose influence over him was supreme. These four years have been considered perhaps the most miserable and degrading period in Swedish history; an Age of Lead succeeding an [Age of Gold](#), as it has well been called, and may be briefly described as alternations of the fantastic [jacobinism](#) and the ruthless [despotism](#).

On the coming of age of [Gustav IV Adolf of Sweden](#) in November 1796, the duke's regency ended. In 1803, the Boheman affair caused a severe conflict between Gustav IV Adolf and the ducal couple. The mystic Karl Adolf Boheman (1764–1831) had been introduced to the couple by Count Magnus Stenbock in 1793 and gained great influence by promising to reveal scientific secrets about the occult. Boheman inducted them into a secret society and founded what he described as a branch of the Freemasons in 1801, where both sexes were accepted as members, and to which the Counts and Countesses Ruuth and Brahe as well as the [mother of the queen](#) were introduced. Boheman was arrested upon an attempt to recruit the monarch, who accused him of revolutionary agendas and expelled him. The ducal couple were exposed in an informal investigation by the monarch, and the duchess was questioned in the presence of the royal council. In 1808, he was again chief commander during Gustav IV Adolf's stay in Finland.

On 13 March 1809, those who had dethroned Gustav IV Adolf appointed him regent, and he was finally elected king by the [Riksdag of the Estates](#). But by this time he was prematurely decrepit, and [Crown Prince Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte](#) took over the government as soon as he landed in Sweden in 1810



# Battle of Fredrikshamn

The **battle of Fredrikshamn** was an attack by the Swedish archipelago fleet on their Russian counterparts near the town of Fredrikshamn, Finland during the [Russo-Swedish War \(1788–1790\)](#).



Swedish coastal fleet was commanded by [Gustav III](#). It consisted of 1 [turuma](#), 1 [pojama](#) and 2 [udema](#) type archipelago frigates, 1 xebec, 18 galleys, 40 [gun sloops \(kanonslup\)](#), 30 [gun yawls \(kanonjolle\)](#), 9 cannon longboats (kanonbarkass) and 4 mortar longboats (mörsarbarkass).

Russian coastal naval unit was led by Pjotr Slisoff. It consisted of 1 archipelago frigate ([turuma Sällan Värre](#)), 1 galley, 10 half-galleys, 59 [gun sloops](#) and 2 gun prams *Tiger* and *Leopard*. In addition to the naval units the Russians had an artillery battery on the shore supporting them.

The battle started in the early morning of May 15, 1790 when the Swedish fleet approached Fredrikshamn. The Russian fleet at Fredrikshamn hastily scrambled and sailed to face them and a several hour long firefight commenced with devastating result for the Russians. The battle cost the Russians 30 ships sunk or captured including the [turuma](#) type archipelago frigate *Sällan Värre* that for the second time entered Swedish service after it originally had been captured by the Russians in the [First battle of Svensksund](#). The defenders' heaviest vessels were unable to navigate to the shallow waters in the bay and were easily captured by the attacker.

After the battle the Swedish ships entered Fredrikshamn harbor and demanded the commander of the town fortifications to surrender along with the remainder of the Russian fleet. Any surprise initiative the Swedes had after the battle was lost when Gustav III allowed the Russian commander request of an hour of respite to value the demands of surrender. When the attack on the town resumed later that day the garrison was reinforced and ready. Any further Swedish attacks proved fruitless and in the evening of May 15 the Swedish fleet withdrew back to Svensksund.

## Battle of Vyborg Bay (1790)

The **Battle of Viborg Bay** (in Swedish literature known as *Viborgska gatloppet*, "the Viborg gauntlet") was a [naval battle](#) fought between [Russia](#) and [Sweden](#) on July 4, 1790, during the [Russo-Swedish War \(1788-1790\)](#). The Swedish Navy suffered heavy losses, losing six ships of the line and four frigates, but [Gustav III of Sweden](#) eventually ensured a Swedish naval escape through a Russian naval [blockade](#) composed of units of the [Baltic Fleet](#), commanded by Admiral [Vasili Chichagov](#). The battle ranks among the world's largest historical naval battles and also among the most influential, as it introduced for the first time the naval battle concept of "[firepower](#) over mobility".



*Battle of Vyborg Bay, by Ivan Aivazovsky*

The stage for the battle was set in the first week of June 1790. Northern [white nights](#) were nearly as light as the day and, to King Gustav's consternation, unfavourable southwesterly winds prevented the combined Swedish fleets of some 400 vessels from sailing southeast to Swedish-controlled [Finnish](#) waters. This allowed the Russian sailing battlefleet and coastal galley fleet to join forces.

King Gustav ordered a two-part Swedish naval force of 400 ships (with 3,000 guns and 30,000 sailor and soldiers) to anchor temporarily between the [islands](#) of [Krysserort](#) (Ristiniemi in Finnish), and [Biskopsö](#) (Piisaari in Finnish) just inside the mouth of [Bay of Viborg](#), Russia, in the [Gulf of Finland](#). This strategic position placed the Swedish navy within striking distance of the Russian imperial capital, [Saint Petersburg](#).

Meanwhile, on June 18, 1790, an assault on the Russian galley fleet at Trångsund (Uuuras in Finnish), ordered by Gustav III of Sweden and started two days earlier, failed due to lack of support of its center force and returned. Shortages of food and water prompted Gustav III of Sweden to act. On June 19, 1790, he instructed admiral Nordenskiöld to formulate a plan for the breakout for when the winds changed, one which would include a [distraction](#) with gun [sloops](#) at [Kanonslupar](#) with an actual breakout at Krysserort, and one which the king would lead personally.

Then on July 2, 1790, the wind shifted to the north, favorably for the Swedish supreme command at Vyborg Bay, which met in session, and a Swedish reconnaissance force apprehended a Russian unit at [Björkö Sound](#) in the [Battle of Björkö sound](#).

On June 21, 1790, Prince Nassau-Siegen attacked the Swedes at Björkö Sound with 89 ships. Then, at nightfall on July 3 (June 22 [OS](#)), 1790 Gustav III of Sweden ordered the breakout to commence from Krysserort at 10:00 on the following day.

At 02:00 on July 4, 1790, Swedish units [bombarded](#) Russian shore [batteries](#). At the same time, Swedish [sloops](#), led by Lieutenant Colonel Jacob Törning, attacked a Russian naval unit just west of [Vasikansaari Island](#), west of Björkö sound.

Just prior to 07:00 that morning, Gustav III of Sweden spoke with then captain Johan Puke of the 64-gun ship of the line, the *Dristigheten* ("The Audacity"), which would lead the breakout. Moments later, Puke, aboard the *Dristigheten*, led a line of ships and the Swedish naval fleet away from the bay, through the western channel, around the Salvors shallows into the middle of the channel between the shallows and Krysserort, and towards the first Russian ships of the line, the *Seslav* and *Saint Peter*.

This line of ships consisted of the flagship the *Konung Gustaf III* (with Prince Grand Admiral Duke Carl aboard), the *Seraphimerorden* (with Gustav III of Sweden aboard) - in the line's center, the *Manligheten* ("The Manliness", sister ship of the *Dristigheten*), the other ships of line, the navy frigates, the frigate *Zemire*, the 70-gun ship of the line *Enigheten* ("The Unity"), and three fire barges, used to set fire to enemy ships. Meanwhile, the flotilla protected the naval fleet, on a parallel [course](#) further west, nearer the shoreline.

Immediately prior to the engagement, Gustav III transferred onto a smaller sloop. Puke ordered all non-essential personnel below decks and, moments later, the Swedish navy engaged the Russian blockade, splitting between the *Selsav* and the *Saint Peter*. Gustav III of Sweden was rowed through the fire, but the flagship *Konung Gustaf III* was hit and the Grand Admiral Duke Carl injured. One Russian ship was destroyed by multiple broadside hits.

Once through the first group of ships, Gustav III of Sweden reboarded the *Seraphimerorden*. The king's personal ship, the [Amphion](#) survived with no damage. Further west, the galley fleet line of ships consisting sequentially of the frigates *Styrbjörn* and *Norden* ("North"), six [Turuma](#) squadron ships, *Sällan Värre* ("Rarely Worse"), the remaining archipelago frigates, the *Malmberg* ships, the *Hjelmstierna* ships, and Colonel Jacob Tönningen's assigned gun sloops and gun tenders, passed the first Russian set of ships, then engaged the second. The *Styrbjörn* though subjected to heavy fire, managed to pass through and score several hits on Russian commander Povalishin's ship and on the bomb ship *Pobeditel* ("Victor").

As the brunt of both Swedish fleets passed through the blockade, Ensign Sandel, commanding the [fireship](#) *Postiljonen* ("Postman") towed by the 74-gun ship of the line *Enigheten*, set his ship on fire too early. He then, under alcohol intoxication, committed series of errors which caused the fireship to drift towards the *Enigheten*, set it on fire, and then collide with the Swedish 40-gun frigate *Zemire*, with all three ships exploding in an enormous channel-covering cascade of debris and smoke. The explosion severely damaged or destroyed ships within or trying to get through the blockade. The Russian ship groups blocking the Swedish fleets were disrupted by passing Swedish ships.

The Swedish navy lost a total of eight ships (seven grounded due to heavy smoke from the explosion): four grounded ships of the line - the 64-gun *Hedvig Elisabeth Charlotta* (though her captain, Jindric Johan Nauckhoff, continued firing at the Russian frigates until the end), the *Finland* at the Salvors shallows, the 74-gun *Lovisa Ulrika* at the [Passaloda shallows](#) just south of [Reipie](#), and the 64-gun *Ömheten* (*the Tenderness*) at the Pensar islets - and one shipwrecked ship of the line (*the Auroras*), although the king's British naval adviser [Sidney Smith](#) was saved; three frigates including the *Uppland* and the *Jarrislawitz* ("Yaroslavets," captured in 1788 from Russia), both at the Passaloda shallows.

The Swedish warships that survived the breakout headed into open seas, assembled at [Vidskär skerry](#) just south of Pitkäpaasi, and then sailed to [Sveaborg](#) fortress near [Helsinki](#), [Finland](#) for repairs. Chichagov was late in pursuing the Swedish navy, but pursued them to Sveaborg. The next day, Captain Crown captured the 62-gun *Retvisan* ("Justice" in old Swedish spelling) with the help of the 66-gun *Iziaslav* (The Imperial Russian Navy would subsequently name other ships "Retvisan").

The Swedish battlefleet retired to Sveaborg for repairs while the Swedish archipelago fleet made for a strong defensive position at Svensksund, near [Kotka](#). An impetuous Russian attack on the Swedish archipelago fleet on July 9 at the [Second Battle of Svensksund](#) resulted in a disaster for the Russians that more than offset the Swedish defeat at Viborg Bay, and both parties would sue for peace.



# Battle of Svensksund

The **Battle of Svensksund** (Finnish: *Ruotsinsalmi*) was a naval battle fought in the [Gulf of Finland](#) outside the present day city of [Kotka](#) on 9 July 1790. The [Swedish](#) naval forces dealt the [Russian](#) fleet a devastating defeat that resulted in an end to the [Russo-Swedish War of 1788–90](#). The victory has been named the biggest Swedish naval victory of all time.

*The battle as depicted by Swedish painter Johan Tietrich Schoultz*



Circumstances in the 1780s, including the war between Russia and the [Ottoman Empire](#), and the moving of a portion of the Russian [Baltic Fleet](#) to the [Black Sea](#), prompted the Swedish King, [Gustav III](#) to attack the Russian Empire in 1788. It was also initiated to distract domestic attention from domestic political problems and for the king to be able to fulfill his role as a successful and powerful monarch.

Gustav's main aim was to recapture some of the territory in Finland that had been lost to the Russians in the disastrous [war of 1741-43](#). In 1788, he

launched a surprise attack against the Russian fleet, intending to catch it by surprise. The plan was to attack [Kronstadt](#) and land a force to assault the capital of [St Petersburg](#).

The war was intended to be short and to be won by the assault aton St Petersburg, conducted by the navy and [skärgårdsflottan](#) (the "archipelago navy"). The latter, officially designated as *Arméns flotta* ("navy of the army") was a separate branch of the armed forces designed for coastal operations and [amphibious warfare](#) in the Baltic. Since its formation in 1756, it had been something of an elite within the Swedish armed forces. However, after the [Battle of Hogland](#) (1788) (a tactical tie but a strategic failure for the Swedes) Gustav lost the initiative and tensions in Sweden rose. The [first battle of Svensksund](#) on 24 August 1789 ended in a Swedish defeat.

## Battle

In 1790 an attempt to assault [Viborg](#) failed, and the Swedish navy along with King Gustav himself was caught in the [Bay of Viborg](#). It manage to escape during the dramatic "[Viborg gauntlet](#)" on 3 July, though with heavy losses to the deep-sea navy. After retreating [Svensksund](#), King Gustav along with his flag captain Lieutenant-Colonel [Carl Olof Cronstedt](#) waited and prepared the fleet for the expected Russian attack. On 6 July, the final decisions were made for the defences, and early in the morning on 9 July 1790 the [order of battle](#) was determined and the battle started.

Russian coastal fleet was eager to attack, especially on 9 July, the anniversary of [Catherine the Great's](#) proclamation as Empress of Russia. Recognizing the failure to decisively defeat Swedish archipelago fleet [year earlier at same location](#) Nassau-Siegen chose to commit his whole force from the south. This was done to prevent Swedes from escaping to the shelter of [Svartholm fortress](#) since Nassau-Siegen was expecting a clear victory having clear superiority in ships, artillery as well as in men.

The battle started very well for the Swedes. Although the Russians were superior in both men and guns, the Swedish forces were anchored in a strong horseshoe-shaped formation. The Russians attacked from the south, but soon became disordered. They took a battering from the Swedish coastal forces, including [shore batteries](#), anchored frigates, [galleys](#) and [gunboats](#).

The Swedes then counter-attacked with gunboats down the left flank, forcing the Russian gunboats to retreat. This in turn led to the Russian galleys being overcome by waves and sea, and either sunk or run aground. Several sailing ships, anchored in position, were boarded and either captured or burnt.

At dawn of July 10, the Swedes consolidated their position with an attack and succeeded in driving the Russian fleet off.

The Russians lost around 7,400 of at least 14,000 men dead, wounded and captured, compared with Swedish losses of one [udemä](#), four minor vessels and 300 men. Among the Russian ships that were lost were 10 "archipelago frigates" (sail/oar hybrids) and [xebecks](#), 9 "half-xebecks" (schooners), 16 galleys, 4 gun prams and floating batteries, 7 bomb vessels, 5 gun sloops and several other small vessels. Along with 21 other ships the Swedes captured the *Catarina*, flagship of Nassau-Siegen.

The battle of Svensksund is the biggest naval battle ever fought in the Baltic sea: 500 ships (including supply ships and other ships not involved in combat), over 26,000 men and several thousand cannons. At Svensksund, the Swedes boasted to have destroyed 40 percent of the Russian coastal fleet. It qualifies among the [largest naval battles in history](#) in terms of the number of vessels involved.



### ***Aftermath***

This defeat encouraged Russia to negotiate with Sweden eventually signing the [Treaty of Värälä](#) on 14 August 1790. Neither side gained any territory, however all provisions in the peace treaty of Nystad from 1721 that formally infringed upon Swedish sovereignty were cancelled.

After the war the Russians started a massive fortification programme on the eastern, Russian, side of the [Kymi river](#), building the sea fortress [Fort Slava](#) and the land fortress [Kymmlinna](#). The forts later grew into the port city of [Kotka](#).

### ***Sankt Nikolai***

The Russian frigate [Sankt Nikolai](#) was sunk in the battle. She was found in 1948 almost intact off [Kotka](#). Over 2,300 objects have been recovered from her hull by divers.

*The recovered stem of Sankt Nokolai*

# Gustav III of Sweden

**Gustav III** ([Stockholm](#), 24 January [O.S. 13 January] 1746 – [Stockholm](#), 29 March 1792) was [King of Sweden](#) from 1771 until his death. He was the eldest son of King [Adolph Frederick](#) and [Louisa Ulrika of Prussia](#), she a sister of [Frederick the Great](#) of Prussia.

*Trophies from the Battle of Svensksund brought into the Stockholm Cathedral.*

*Painting by Pehr Hilleström.*



Throughout 1789 and 1790 Gustav conducted the [war with Russia](#), at first leaning towards disaster before successfully breaking a blockade by the Russian fleet in the [Battle of Svensksund](#) on 9 July, regarded as the greatest naval victory ever gained by the [Swedish Navy](#). The Russians lost one-third of their fleet and 7,000 men. A month later, on 14 August 1790, peace was signed between Russia and Sweden [at Värälä](#).

He was, however, hampered by poverty and the lack of support from the other European Powers, and, after the brief [Gävle](#) diet 22 January–24 February 1792, he fell victim to a widespread [conspiracy](#) among his aristocratic enemies.

A masked ball took place at the [Royal Opera House](#) in Stockholm at midnight on 16 March 1792. Gustav had arrived earlier that evening to enjoy a dinner in the company of friends. During dinner, he received an anonymous letter that contained a threat to his life, but, as the king had received numerous threatening letters in the past, he chose to ignore it, and, after dining, left his rooms to take part in the masquerade.

*Gustav's masquerade dress. Displayed at Livrustkammaren*



Soon upon entering, he was surrounded by [Anckarström](#) and his co-conspirators Count Claes Fredrik Horn and Count [Adolf Ludvig Ribbing](#). The king was easily spotted, mainly due to the breast star of the [Royal Order of the Seraphim](#) which glowed in silver upon his cape. The conspirators were all wearing black masks and accosted him in French with the words:

*Bonjour, beau masque* ("Good-day, fine mask")

Anckarström moved in behind the King and fired a pistol-shot into the left side of his back. The King jumped aside, crying in French:

*Ah! Je suis blessé, tirez-moi d'ici et arrêtez-le* ("Ah! I am wounded, take me away from here and arrest him!")

The King was immediately carried back to his quarters, and the exits of the Opera were sealed. Anckarström was arrested the following morning, and immediately confessed to the murder, although he denied a conspiracy until informed that Horn and Ribbing had also been arrested and had confessed in full.

The king had not been shot dead, but was alive, and continued to function as head of state. The coup was a failure in the short run. However, the wound became infected and on 29 March he finally died, his last words being:

*Jag känner mig sömnig, några ögonblicks vila skulle göra mig gott* ("I feel sleepy, a few moments rest would do me good")



## Siege of Sveaborg

The **Siege of Sveaborg** was a short siege by [Russia](#) that took place at [Sveaborg](#) ([Finnish](#): *Suomenlinna*) in early 1808, during the [Finnish War](#).



Russian forces under [Friedrich Wilhelm von Buxhoeveden](#) laid siege to [Sveaborg](#) after the fall of [Helsinki](#) on March 2, 1808. [Carl Olof Cronstedt](#), the commander of Sveaborg, bombarded the besiegers so heavily he started running low on [gunpowder](#). The bombardment of the mobile Russian troops proved ineffective. On March 23 he [parleyed](#) with Russian representatives on the island [Lonnán](#). On April 6 Cronstedt agreed with [Jan Pieter van Suchtelen](#), the Russian commander in Helsinki, on an honorable [capitulation](#) on May 3 in case Swedish reinforcement didn't reach Sveaborg by then. The Swedish couriers bearing the requests for reinforcements were delayed by the Russians and didn't reach [Stockholm](#) until May 3, the same day Cronstedt capitulated and surrendered the fortress to the Russians, along with 7,500 soldiers and a fleet of 94 ships. Even if the couriers had arrived earlier, Sveaborg probably could not have been relieved by the fleet, as that winter was unusually cold and the [Baltic sea](#) was frozen.

The capture of Sveaborg helped the Russian conquest of Finland greatly, as it removed the threat of a counterattack from the south and west. To Sweden it was a devastating blow as it made the resupply of the battered Finnish army much more difficult. It was considered by many as one of the major reasons (if not *the* major reason) Finland was lost. Cronstedt was subsequently considered a [traitor](#) by many Swedes and Finns, notably [Johan Ludvig Runeberg](#) in his epic [The Tales of Ensign Stål](#).

# Carl Olof Cronstedt

*Carl Olof Cronstedt*



**Carl-Olof Cronstedt** the elder (3 October 1756 – 7 April 1820) was a Swedish naval commander responsible for the overwhelming Swedish victory at the [Second Battle of Svensksund](#), one of the [largest naval battles in history](#). He is often better remembered as the commander of the fortress of [Sveaborg](#) ([Finnish: Suomenlinna](#)) during the [Finnish war](#) 1808, which was fought between [Sweden](#) and [Imperial Russia](#).

## *The life of Cronstedt*

Cronstedt was born on Botby mansion (now a part of [Helsinki](#)) in Finland 3 October 1756. His parents were Johan Gabriel Cronstedt and Hedvig Juliana [Jägerhorn af Spurila](#). He joined the army 1765 and advanced to the rank of [lieutenant](#) in 1773. Only five years later he was promoted to the rank of [lieutenant colonel](#). When Sweden in 1788 [declared war](#) on Russia he fought in the [royal navy](#). In 1790 he won a great naval victory against the Russian fleet at the naval [battle of Svensksund](#) (in the [Gulf of Finland](#)). The [naval battle](#) is the [greatest](#)

[naval battle](#) in the [Baltic sea](#) history.

After the naval battle he was promoted to the rank of [colonel](#) and was appointed to naval state secretary. After further advances he was soon to become [vice admiral](#). However, shortly after he was to be in disfavor of the new king and was appointed to be commander of Sveaborg. Cronstedt had desires to be commander of the whole royal fleet, not commander of some distant fortress in Finland.

In 1801, he was elected a member of the [Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences](#), but was expelled in 1809.

## *Siege of Sveaborg*

Cronstedt surrendered the fortress to the [Russian army](#) after a [siege](#) of two months. The fortress had internationally received the reputation of being "the [Gibraltar](#) of the North", and was by some assumed to be impregnable. In the [peace treaty](#) next year (1809), Sweden was forced to give up the territory of [Finland](#) (about half of the kingdom). In order to find scapegoats for the loss of Finland the surrendering of Sveaborg became a convenient vehicle, and as Cronstedt was the responsible officer, he was charged with the whole catastrophe.

Today however, many historians are re-evaluating the action of Cronstedt. His decision to surrender the fortress was a great humanitarian act, in order to prevent the children and women within being killed by the Russians (many of the civilians from Helsinki had fled to the fortress and would likely have been killed if Cronstedt had not reached agreements with the Russians). Furthermore, the war was doomed to a Swedish defeat already from the beginning. Sweden was not in the shape for war with no money or resources whatsoever. Cronstedt was the man to be blamed in order to save the dignity of King [Gustav IV Adolf](#).

## ***Sveaborg in the Finnish war***

War broke out 21 February 1808 on the initiative of the [Russian empire](#). The timing was unusual, as wars were usually fought in summertime, and the temperature at that time was -30 degrees Celsius (-22 F). Because of the cold winter, the poor condition of the [Swedish army](#) and the plan to retreat to the north, the Russian army faced poor resistance in Finland. So, the Finnish territory was overrun and half of the [kingdom](#) (Finland) was conquered in a few months. The Swedish main force retreated towards Sweden, leaving Sveaborg and Svartholm to defend themselves. The idea was that the fortresses would hold out and that reinforcements would arrive in the next summer. The fortress Svartholm surrendered already on March 18. The siege of Sveaborg begun in early March. After only three weeks of siege, negotiations between Carl-Olof Cronstedt and the commander of the Russian unit Jan-Peter van [Suchtelen](#) were held. The negotiations resulted in a deal, that if no reinforcements had arrived by May 3, the fortress would unconditionally surrender. Unfortunately for the Swedes, the sea was still frozen in May 1808 and royal fleet could not arrive, therefore Sveaborg surrendered on the May 3.

### **Suspected causes**

Although much of the happenings are clear, some details are still held in darkness. One reason is that the sea was frozen and the royal navy could not arrive. Furthermore, the messengers sent to Stockholm were delayed by the Russians and arrived too late. It is also disputed if any troops would have arrived anyway, as Sweden had their troops tied with their southern enemy Denmark and their mighty ally France. Interesting though why Cronstedt did not succeed to buy more time and why any negotiations about surrendering were held in the first place, Sveaborg that was supposed to be the uninvadable "Gibraltar of the north". These questions are more complicated to answer.

### ***The legacy of Cronstedt***

The surrender of Sveaborg in undoubtedly one of the most important events in the [history of Finland](#). Therefore Carl-Olof Cronstedt is naturally a central character of it. In Sweden he was recognized as a [traitor](#) after the war, [condemned to death](#) in the court of Stockholm (later abolished on the initiative of the Russian emperor). He alone was made responsible for the loss of Finland, and therefore ending one era in [Swedish history](#). During the earlier, [era of greatness](#) Sweden was in the 17th century recognized as a [major power](#) in Europe, and now Sweden had become a shadow of its former self.

Cronstedt was also by many condemned as a traitor in Finland. He was made a symbol of an embarrassing war and a failure to stop the Russian army. This war was for long an embarrassment for Finland until [Johan Ludvig Runeberg](#) wrote the national romantic poem collection [The Tales of Ensign Stål](#). In this writing Runeberg paints the picture that the Finns fought bravely in the Finnish war and that everything was the fault of a few officers and the king. This was an encouragement for the Finnish national identity, in part built up on the hatred of Cronstedt.



# Anjala conspiracy

The **Anjala conspiracy** of 1788 was a scheme by disgruntled [Swedish](#) officers to end [Gustav III's Russian War](#) of 1788–90. Declaring [Finland](#) an independent [state](#) was part of the plot, although it is disputed what importance the conspirators connected to that aspect.

*Colonel Johan Henrik Hästesko (1741–1790) was a Finnish soldier and an officer of the Swedish Army. He took part in the Anjala conspiracy and was beheaded for that (only one to actually suffer such fate).*



## *Rising anger against the king and his war*

As the war was badly prepared and without the expected initial success, anger rose against the king within the military ranks deployed to Finland, where the memory of the harsh Russian occupations of 1713–21 (the "[Greater Wrath](#)") (Isoviha in Finnish) and 1741–43 (the "[Lesser Wrath](#)") (Pikkuviha in Finnish) remained vivid. The war was clearly initiated by Sweden, and in the view of a strong opinion, particularly among noble officers, a clear violation of the [authoritarian Instrument of Government](#) that the king, with support of the common estates of the parliament had imposed in 1772.

It was no secret that the war was conceived to increase the king's popularity and influence, and diminish that of his, mostly noble, opponents. The anger was fueled also by [Cabinet members](#) who felt duped to support the war plans by the king's selective quoting of diplomatic reports from [Saint Petersburg](#). The failed attempts to besiege and recapture [Hamina](#) and [Savonlinna](#), both of which had been in Russian hands since 1743, ultimately ignited a vehement opposition among the officers, and it was said that even the king wished for peace.

## *A peace feeler bypasses the king*

The leaders of the *Anjala conspiracy* met in Liikkala to secretly open communications with [Tsarina Catherine the Great](#). Major [Johan Anders Jägerhorn](#) delivered the *Liikkala note* dated August 8, 1788 to the empress. The letter note was signed by several officers, including [Armfelt](#), [Commander-in-Chief](#) of the Savo forces and the king's closest confidant. The officers declared the war to be illegal, asked for the restoration of the Finnish borders according to the [Treaty of Nystad](#) of 1721, and for peace negotiations with representatives of *the Finnish nation*, which they understood as representatives for the eastern and northern half of Sweden, which during the 18th century had twice had been harshly occupied, and whose population overwhelmingly were [ethnic Finns](#).

The response from the Empress was underwhelming. However, when Jägerhorn returned, the conspirators decided to lie to their fellow officers, and spread rumors about Catherine's inclination to accept the note.

When Gustav III learned of the note, he demanded from his officers a pledge to fight to the last man. Instead, 113 of them signed their support in [Anjala](#), accepting responsibility for the note and criticizing the attack on Russia. They declared that they would continue their defense of the fatherland in case Catherine refused the peace offer. An important demand was that the [diet](#) must be summoned in the critical situation. The declaration won increasing respect within the army and navy.

The support, however, diminished when it became obvious that the Russian government aimed to use the declaration to divide [Sweden proper](#). From the Swedish government's point of view, this was an act of [high treason](#) that put the integrity of state in dire danger.

Gustav III perceived his most bitter opponents to have become leaders of the Anjala conspiracy, and feared for his life should he remain in Finland. Commencing a new theatre of war against [Denmark](#) in the South, the king had a good excuse to leave for less dangerous surroundings. Soon, however, he found the public opinion on his side, and the leading conspirators were arrested during the winter. Two of the conspirators ended up as refugees in Russia, nine were sentenced to death, although only one, Johan Henrik Hästesko, was executed, while the rest were either deported or put in prison.

The idea of a separate *Finnish nation* was subsequently echoed by [Alexander I](#) at the [Diet of Porvoo](#), when he formed the autonomous [Grand Duchy of Finland](#) from the eastern part of Sweden as a part of the Imperial Russia.

[HTTP://SWORDANDSEA.BLOGSPOT.COM/2009/09/EXECUTION-OF-COLONEL-HASTESKO.HTML](http://swordandsea.blogspot.com/2009/09/execution-of-colonel-hastesko.html)

## Execution of Colonel Hästesko



On September 8, 1790 Johan Henrik Hästesko, Colonel of the Turku Regiment, was beheaded for his role in the Anjala mutiny against King Gustav III. He was the only conspirator to suffer such a fate. All the others (including Carl Erik Mannerheim, great-grandfather of Finland's national hero and a subordinate of Hästesko's) received clemency.

Hästesko was born in 1741 into an old Finnish-Swedish aristocratic family. (Their name means "horse-shoe," after the heraldic image on their coat of arms). Johan's father, a military officer, died in Russian captivity in 1742. Raised by his mother near Mikkeli (later the site of Marshal Mannerheim's World War II headquarters), Johan likewise chose a military career. As a young man, he fought in the Pomeranian War (1757-1762). Handsome and ambitious, he rose fairly rapidly and his career was further advanced by marrying a wealthy and beautiful young heiress, Beata Helena von Morian, in 1770. According to the couple's

great-grandson, Anders Ramsay, it proved a happy marriage and, by all accounts, Beata was utterly devoted to her husband.

There have been widely varying descriptions of Hästesko's character. Local tradition in Mälkilä (the estate he acquired by marrying Beata) painted him as a harsh and cruel figure, while Johann Albrecht Ehrenström, a statesman and fellow nobleman, vouched he was an upright man and a staunch royalist. Most controversial, however, would be Hästesko's leading role in the Anjala League.

This tragic episode, during the Russo-Swedish War of 1788-1790, pitted Finnish and Swedish noble officers against their monarch. The King was actually at fault. Contrary to the Swedish constitution, he had, without consulting the Diet, begun war with Russia. Relations between the Crown and the nobles were always

fragile, especially as Gustav III was progressively moving towards absolutism, undermining the aristocracy which had been a powerful ruling elite prior to his reign during the "Age of Liberty", when the Diet reigned supreme. In this environment, the King's unlawful initiation of war was a spark to the fuse. Furthermore, many Finnish nobles, in particular, were weary of the constant feuding between Sweden and Russia. Time and time again, Finland became a battleground, devastated by endless warfare.

Swedish and Finnish officers soon began to plot against the King. At the military headquarters in Anjala, Finland, they launched a mutiny and appealed to the Russian Empress, Catherine the Great, for peace. Some remained within legitimate limits of resistance, but others overstepped the bounds, as one act of defiance led to another. A sideshow in the drama was the conspiracy of a few Finnish officers (although, apparently, not Hästesko) to detach Finland from Sweden altogether.

Catherine, however, rebuffed all the rebellious officers' overtures, and the rank and file of Sweden's army remained loyal to the King. For his part, Gustav escaped to Sweden, leaving his brother in command of the war, and (after many vicissitudes) managed to turn the crisis to his advantage. Rallying support among the lower Estates, he convinced the Diet to increase his constitutional powers further. Meanwhile, the Anjala conspirators were arrested, tried, and condemned to death. In a grand gesture of mercy, Gustav then pardoned the majority...but not Hästesko.

Why did the King, normally remarkably lenient, insist on executing Hästesko? True, he was a leading mutineer, but certainly not the only one. He had, however, in a heated interchange during the early stages of the revolt, behaved rudely towards the King, and some, including his descendant, Anders Ramsay, have cited this *lèse-majesté* as the reason for Gustav's implacability. Who knows?

In any case (and whatever view one takes of his role in the rebellion), Hästesko behaved with honor and dignity during his darkest moments. In contrast to other conspirators, he refused to flee Swedish justice and take refuge in Russia. In his trial, lasting for many long months, he attempted to justify his actions, arguing that he had been motivated by patriotism. When his defense failed, and the King rejected his appeal for clemency, he appears, based on his last letters, to have resigned himself to his doom, taking comfort in his (Lutheran) religion. On the scaffold, he left his gold watch to his weeping old servant, who had attended him during his imprisonment, gave him his wedding band to return to his wife, with his "last loving greetings," and died bravely.

Poor Beata, who had idolized her husband, was broken by grief. As Anders Ramsay describes in his memoirs, she never recovered from her loss and wore deep mourning for the rest of her life (51 years).



# Johan Anders Jägerhorn

**Johan (Jan) Anders Jägerhorn af Spurila** was a Finnish [nobleman](#) born in 8 April 1757 in Helsinki county. He was the eldest son of lieutenant colonel Fredrik Anders Jägerhorn and Ulrika Sofia Brunow. Colonel Fredrik Adolf Jägerhorn, vice commander of the [Sveaborg](#) fortress in 1808 was Johan Anders' brother.

The [Jägerhorn af Spurila](#) noble family tree can be documented to 15th century Finland with legends - inspired by the [Song of Roland](#) - going back to the 12th century when Swedish crusader king [Eric the Saint](#) of Sweden came to Finland and made an early ancestor of the family [squire](#) of the king.

Johan Anders Jägerhorn was a military officer with the rank of major in the Swedish army and lieutenant colonel in the Russian army 1789.

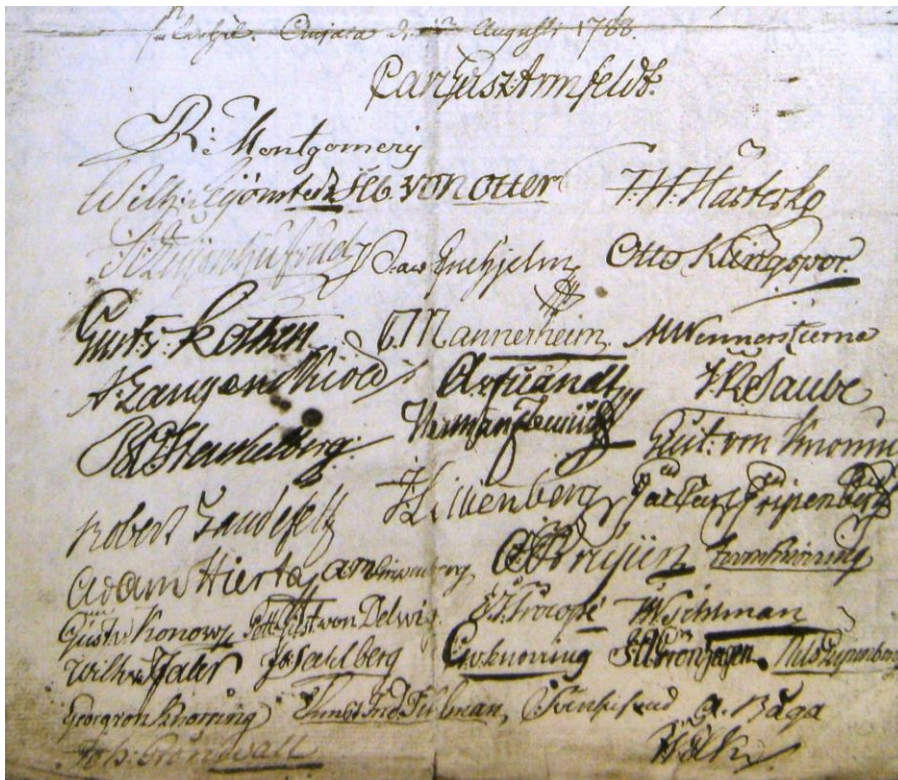
As a participant in the Anjala officers' plot against the Swedish king in Finland 1788, Jägerhorn advocated sovereignty for Finland. Condemned to death by the Swedes, he was exiled to Germany. In Hamburg he befriended [Lord Edward FitzGerald](#) and acted as an intermediary between the Irish and the French before the rebellion of 1798. After two years' imprisonment (1799–1801) in the [Tower of London](#), he returned to Finland and was instrumental in shaping the constitution of newly autonomous Finland. After having been part of the Swedish kingdom for more than 600 years, Finland became an autonomous Russian [Grand Duchy](#) in 1809. Jägerhorn was thus one of the historical originators of [Finnish independence](#). Finland

declared independence on 6 December 1917.

Johan Anders Jägerhorn was the founder and leader of a secret order called [Walhalla-orden](#) with its seat in the Suomenlinna fortress.

He was married to Ulrika Sofia Blomcreutz of Swedish nobility in 1783. Jägerhorn died in Porvoo, Finland on 6 March 1825. His only two daughters had died at early age in tragic accidents.

In 1981, Minister [Desmond O'Malley](#) of Ireland unveiled a commemorative plaque adorning Jägerhorn's house in [Porvoo](#), Finland and stated: "If this man has spent 2 years of prison for the independence of Ireland, he is indeed worthy of this plaque."



Signatories to the Anjala agreement

## Carl Erik Mannerheim (1759-1837)



Marshal Mannerheim's great-grandfather, Count Carl Erik Mannerheim (1759-1837), was also a famous Finnish soldier and statesman. He was one of the founders of the autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland (1809-1917). His career brought him sometimes to the brink of death; at other times, to the heights of honor.

Born in Dalarna, Sweden, Carl Erik was the youngest son of Baron Johan Augustin Mannerheim, an artillery colonel, and his wife, Helena Maria Söderhjelm. Carl Erik's eldest brother, Lars Augustin, was a famed jurist and a major opposition leader during the reign of King Gustaf III of Sweden. Carl Erik, too, would clash with the King, with fateful consequences.

At 16, Carl Erik enrolled at Uppsala University, and studied natural sciences under Linnaeus. All his life, he was keenly interested in botany. Nonetheless, he

chose a military career and rose rapidly in the army. His duties brought him to Finland, then under Swedish rule. In 1787, he became first major of the Turku infantry regiment. As Turku was the Swedish capital of Finland, the appointment placed Carl Erik near the centre of Finnish political affairs.

During the Russo-Swedish War of 1788-1790, Carl Erik joined the Anjala League, an officers' revolt against King Gustaf III. According to the Swedish constitution, the monarch was obliged to obtain the consent of the Diet of Four Estates (ie. the nobles, clergy, burghers and peasants) before declaring an offensive war. In 1788, however, Gustaf, whose absolutist tendencies repeatedly brought him into conflict with the Swedish nobility, made war on Russia without consulting the Diet. Roughly 100 aristocratic officers mutinied, attempting to negotiate peace with the Russian sovereign, Catherine II. She rejected their overtures, however, and the rank and file of the Swedish army remained loyal to the King, dooming the officers' efforts. The "Anjala-men," as they came to be known, after Anjala Manor, the Swedish military headquarters, where they had drafted their manifesto, were court-martialed and condemned to death. Colonel J. H. Hästesko, Mannerheim's commanding officer, was executed. The others, however, received clemency.

Carl Erik was allowed to remain in the army, but, not surprisingly, had lost all opportunities for career advancement, and resigned in 1795. The next year, he married Vendla Sofia von Willebrand, a wealthy young Finnish noblewoman. He purchased the magnificent manor of Louhisaari, near Turku, and, for the

next twenty years, lived a private life, concentrating on agriculture. In 1805, he was appointed head of the Finnish Economic Society.

The Russian conquest of Finland in 1808-1809 brought Carl Erik once more onto the public scene. The reigning Tsar, Alexander I, had initially planned to annex Finland as a Russian province, alarming the Finns, who were anxious to preserve their traditional legal and political institutions. Carl Erik Mannerheim led a delegation, consisting of members of the four Finnish Estates, to St. Petersburg to discuss the Finns' concerns with the Tsar. He emphasized the need to call the Finnish Diet to resolve the situation. The liberal-minded Tsar was amenable to the Finns' wishes, appointing a Swedish-Finnish nobleman, G. M. Sprengtporten, as the country's governor-general, and promising to convene a Diet as soon as possible. On March 25, 1809, Alexander opened the famous Diet of Porvoo, swearing to uphold Finland's traditional laws, customs, and religion. The autonomous realm of Finland was thus established.

In the years to come, Carl Erik Mannerheim would continue to play a major political role. A long-term



member of the State Council, he served as provincial governor of Turku and Pori from 1816-1826 and as deputy chairman of the Economics Department of the Senate (a kind of prime minister) from 1822-1826. A shrewd statesman, a tactful diplomat, and a sincere patriot, he was an outstanding leader. In 1825, to honor his achievements, the Tsar awarded him the title of Count. In 1826, however, the aging Mannerheim retired from public life. He devoted his last years to agriculture and horticulture.

It was very fortunate, not only for him, but also for Finland, that he was pardoned for his role in the Anjala mutiny. If he had been executed as a young man, he would never have founded the Finnish branch of the Mannerheim family, and his great-grandson, who saved Finland from Soviet conquest (and, surely, destruction) would never have existed. Strange twists and turns of history!



For a special Video of this war, see this link

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIUK\\_7INPzY&feature=youtube\\_gdata\\_player](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIUK_7INPzY&feature=youtube_gdata_player)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finnish\\_War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finnish_War)

# Finnish War

The **Finnish War** was fought between [Sweden](#) and the [Russian Empire](#) from February 1808 to September 1809. As a result of the war, the eastern third of Sweden was established as the autonomous [Grand Duchy of Finland](#) within the Russian Empire. Other notable effects were the [Swedish parliament](#)'s adoption of a [new constitution](#) and the establishment of the [House of Bernadotte](#), the new [Swedish royal house](#), in 1818.

*Situation at outbreak of hostilities*



After the Russian Emperor [Alexander I](#) concluded the 1807 [Treaty of Tilsit](#) with [Napoleon](#), he suggested that the Swedish King [Gustav IV Adolf](#) should join the [Continental System](#). The king, who viewed [Napoleon](#) as the [Antichrist](#), [Britain](#) as his ally against Napoleon's France and was apprehensive of the system's ruinous consequences for Sweden's maritime commerce, instead entered into negotiations with Britain in order to prepare a joint attack against [Denmark](#), whose Norwegian possessions he coveted.

Although most Swedish officers were skeptical about their chances in fighting the larger and more experienced Russian army, Gustav Adolf had an unrealistic view of Sweden's ability to defend itself against Russia. In [Saint Petersburg](#), his stubbornness was viewed as a convenient pretext to occupy [Finland](#), thus pushing the Russo-Swedish frontier considerably to the west of the Russian capital and

safeguarding it in case of any future hostilities between the two powers.

## February – May 1808

On February 21, 1808, 24,000 Russian troops under [Friedrich Wilhelm von Buxhoevden](#) crossed the border and captured [Hämeenlinna](#). The king was quite unprepared for the attack, especially as war was not declared until April. About 21,000 Swedish troops were stationed in various fortresses of Finland, while the rest of his army was unable to leave southern Sweden for fear of Danish attack.

The plan of the Swedish commander, [Johan Adam Cronstedt](#), was to retreat into [Ostrobothnia](#) leaving only the isolated fortresses of [Svartholm](#) and [Sveaborg](#) behind. In March, the Russians with only modest troops overran, basically without resistance: [Kuopio](#); [Tampere](#); [Jakobstad](#); Svartholm, which surrendered after a short siege; [Helsinki](#); [Hanko](#); and landed in [Gotland](#) and the [Åland Islands](#). Buxhoevden laid siege to Sveaborg, which surrendered on May 3 with 6,000 soldiers, 100 vessels, and more than 700 cannons, as the commanding officer [Carl Olof Cronstedt](#) and his council thought that resistance was futile.

Under a new commander, [Carl Johan Adlercreutz](#), the Swedish army counter-attacked and the Russian offensive was halted. [Nikolay Tuchkov](#), a Russian general who was dispatched to the north of Finland, left garrisons in every fort on his way, thus reducing his unit to 4,000 troops, which proved insufficient to pacify the hostile country. The Finns rose up in guerrilla fighting as far as [Hamina](#) (in Russian "[Old Finland](#)"), where the unit of Colonel [Sandels](#) was active. [Kulnev](#)'s detachment was defeated [at Siikajoki](#) (April 18) as was Bulatov's contingent [at Revolax](#) (April 27).

## ***August – September 1808***

After the Russians were driven from Central Finland, their forces stretched along the line of [Pori](#) — [Tampere](#) — [Mikkeli](#). Having received considerable reinforcements, their numbers increased to 55,000, as opposed to the 36,000 their opponents had. On August 14, Count [Nikolay Kamensky](#) decided to use this numerical superiority to launch a new offensive.

Although [Georg Carl von Döbeln](#) won the [Battle of Jutas](#) for Sweden on September 13, Kamensky's 11,000-strong corps achieved more important victories at [Kuortane](#) on September 1, at [Salmi](#) on September 2, and at [Oravais](#) on September 14.

## ***Winter 1808***

By that time, Russian forces had overrun all of Finland. On November 19, the [Convention of Olkijoki](#) was signed and the Swedish army was forced to leave the country. The emperor was, however, now eager to bring hostilities to the territory of Sweden proper, which was certain to bring the war to a victorious end.

With these reasons in mind, Kamensky suggested a daring plan, whereby the Russian army was to cross the frozen [Gulf of Bothnia](#) in two directions: one unit was to march from [Vaasa](#) towards [Umeå](#) and another from Turku to the [Åland Islands](#) and thence towards the vicinity of [Stockholm](#). A third unit was to advance on [Tornio](#) and arrive in Sweden by land.

Although Knorring was urged to execute the plan as quickly as possible, he regarded the idea as unrealistic and procrastinated until March, when the emperor dispatched the War Minister [Arakcheyev](#) to Finland in order to pressure Knorring into action before arriving at the army himself.

## ***Spring 1809***

As Russian forces embarked upon their unprecedented march across the frozen Baltic on March 13, King Gustav IV — accused of fatal mistakes leading to the loss of Finland — was dethroned in Stockholm and his uncle was proclaimed [Charles XIII of Sweden](#). Four days later, Bagration's corps of 17,000 men occupied the strategic [Åland Islands](#), while Kulnev led the vanguard further across the frozen sea and on March 19 reached the Swedish shore within 70 km from Stockholm.

When news of Kulnev's incursion spread to the Swedish capital, the new king sent an embassy to Knorring, proposing a truce. The Russian commander agreed and speedily recalled Kulnev back to Åland. In the meantime, another Russian contingent — 5,000 men under [Barclay de Tolly](#) — endured great hardships in crossing the frozen gulf further north: they entered Umeå on March 24.

A third force, commanded by Count [Shuvalov](#), struck against Tornio and, braving fierce frost, encircled a Swedish army, which capitulated on March 25.

## ***Summer 1809***

In August, Charles XIII, anxious to reach a better peace settlement, ordered Sandels to land in the north of Sweden and to attack Kamensky's rear. The last engagements of the war, [at Sävar](#) and [Ratan](#), proved inconclusive and Kamensky succeeded in neutralizing this belated counter-offensive.

Sandels's action was only a prelude to the peace negotiations that opened in August and resulted in the [Treaty of Fredrikshamn](#) (September 17), in which Sweden ceded the whole of Finland and part of Lapland east of the [Torne River](#) (part of [Norrlands län](#)) to Russia. Sweden closed its harbours to British ships and joined the [Continental System](#), leading to the formal declaration of [war on Great Britain](#).

# Otto von Fieandt

**Henrik Otto von Fieandt** (1762–1823) was a [Swedish Colonel](#) who fought in the [1788–90 war](#) with [Russia](#). Otto von Fieandt was born in 1762 into a military family as his father was a lieutenant at the Savolax regiment.

Otto began his military studies early as the customs of the time demanded and after completing these he was made a staff aide under Lieutenant General von Platen. As such he took part in the [Russo-Swedish War of 1788](#) and advanced to Captain at the Tavastehus (Fin. Hämeenlinna) regiment, during that campaign although he had been involved in the Anjala conspiracy as well (the plan by Swedish officers to declare Finland an independent state). For his involvement in the conspiracy he was sentenced to execution, but the king showed mercy. He was later transferred to the famous Björneborg regiment and in 1796 he attained the rank of Major at the Rautalampi battalion.

At the outbreak of the 1808-09 [Finnish War](#), he was Lieutenant Colonel at the army. During the campaign he was the commander of an own independent unit, with which he time and time again caused the enemy notable losses. He got a wide reputation for his resolute ways of command as well as his own ego. He won many brilliant successes defending the roads between Lintulax, Perho and Karstula and the west coast. But after a 17-hour battle at Karstula on August 21 1808, he was forced to retreat.

After the war he stayed on in Finland, although most of the officers moved over to Sweden. Otto von Fieandt attained the rank of Colonel as he went into retirement in 1810. He died at Kananoja estates in the area of Viborg in 1823.

Von Fieandt is the titular character of the tenth poem comprising *The Tales of Ensign Stål*. Runeberg paints him as an eccentric figure, stating that he spoke Finnish to his men, that he used a whip instead of a sword, and that he went into battle smoking a pipe.

A monument known as the "Stones of Otto von Fieandt" stands in [Karstula](#) in commemoration of the Battle of Karstula, in which his Swedish forces were forced to retreat.



*The Stones of Otto von Fieandt are a monument to the battle between the Swedish and the Russians. In spite of the loss suffered by the Swedish troops this battle was one of the crucial moments of the Finnish War, and it was fought on 21.8.1808 at Enonjoki. The Swedish troops were led by Otto von Fieandt and the monument has been named after him.*





## Battle of Pyhäjoki

The **Battle of Pyhäjoki** was fought on 16 April 1808, at [Pyhäjoki](#) in [Northern Ostrobothnia](#) during the [Russian–Swedish war of 1808–09](#).

The winter made the operations more difficult and the battle of Pyhäjoki became one of the first skirmishes to be fought after the Swedish retreat stopped. The Russian army had been following the Swedish army to the north. At the same time, they had left large portions of Finland to be occupied by the Russians. The battle of Pyhäjoki was quite intense, but [von Döbeln](#) ordered a retreat in order to follow the original strategic plan, which had been drawn up by [Wilhelm Mauritz Klingspor](#).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Siikajoki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Siikajoki)

## Battle of Siikajoki

*The battle of Siikajoki*



The **Battle of Siikajoki** ([Finnish](#): *Siikajoen taistelu*) was fought between [Swedish](#) and [Russian](#) troops on April 18, 1808 at [Siikajoki](#), near [Oulu](#), [Finland](#). During the first stage of the [Finnish War](#) the Swedish commander [Wilhelm Mauritz Klingspor](#) had decided to retreat from southern Finland, so that the Swedes would gain time, and more troops could be moved to Finland via [Tornio](#). The move was also made in case the Danes would take the opportunity attack Sweden.

The [Battle of Pyhäjoki](#), which had been fought two days earlier, was one of the first skirmishes of the war, but Siikajoki was the first major attempt to stop the advancing Russians. [Carl Johan Adlercreutz](#) had been appointed commander after count [Löwenhjelm](#) had been captured by the Russian at Pyhäjoki. The force commanded by [Georg Carl von Döbeln](#) was trying to cross the river of Siikajoki when the Russians caught up with his force. Von Döbeln decided to take a stance on the south bank of

the river. He first ordered a counterattack, but were forced to pull back. At that moment, the Russian enter is opening up and the newly appointed General Adjutant Adlercreutz orders another attack, which throws the Russians back and halted the Russian advance.

The Battle of Siikajoki is describet in the poem [Adlercreutz](#) in [Runeberg's](#) epic [Tales of Ensign Stål](#).

# Battle of Revolax

*The Battle of Revolax*



The **Battle of Revolax** ([Finnish](#): *Revonlahden taistelu*) took place on April 27, 1808 at [Revonlahti](#), (now part of [Siikajoki](#)) in [Northern Ostrobothnia, Finland](#), when the [Swedish](#) supreme commander [Wilhelm Mauritz Klingspor](#) and the Savolax brigade under colonel [Johan Adam Cronstedt](#), a total of about 2,250 Swedes surprised an isolated [Russian](#) column of about 1,800 men under Major General Michail Leontjevich Bulatov. The Russians were surrounded and tried to cut their way through but failed and the Russian general Bulatov was taken prisoner by the Swedes.

This, and the preceding [battle of Siikajoki](#) nine days earlier, are considered very important events since they are the first Swedish victories after about 2 months of planned retreat. The next battle took place at [Pulkkila](#) on May 1.

## *The summer offensive begins*

The Swedish commander Klingspor continued his retreat towards [Oulu](#) after the Swedish victory at the [Battle of Siikajoki](#). They were closely followed by the Russians. A Russian fore, commanded by Bulatov, had set camp at the village of [Revonlahti](#). Cronstedt prepared an assault to drive them away. He led a force of some 1,800 men through the night of 26 and 27 April. The Swedes could hear the sound of musket fire to the north, where Adlercreutz were fighting against the forward Russian unit which had been advancing on him. However Adlercreutz managed to stop the advance.

Cronstedt and his 4th Brigade prepared themselves for the battles that were to be fought the next day. Bulatov and his Russian troops were entrenched inside the village. The Russian units consisted also of the [Mohiley](#) Regiment and the [Perm](#) Regiment. The Russians had three guns. In the morning of April 27 the Swedish attacked with two equally strong columns: the right column was led by Gustav Aminoff. It consisted of two battalions from the [Savolax Infantry Regiment](#), the third battalion from the Savolax Jaeger Regiment, the second battalion of the Carelian Jaeger Corps and two 3-pound guns; the left column was led by Lieutenant Colonel Adolf Ludwig Christiern and consisted of two battalions from the Savolax Infantry Regiment, the first battalion from the Savolax Jaegar Regiment, the first battalion from the Carelian Jaeger Corps, and two 3-pounder guns.

The right column managed to sweep away all the Russian resistance and were advancing along the river, towards the village. At the same time, the left column prepared its troops to assault the vicarage, where Bulatov had set up his headquarters and gathered most of his troops. The attack on the vicarage became a difficult operation, as the Russians defended themselves viciously. The Swedes finally stormed the building at 10 a.m. and a bloody close-combat battle ensued.

More than 94 Swedes and 600 Russians had died, were wounded or captured when the violence finally ended. The Swedish victory at Revolax meant the end of the first Swedish retreat. Klingspor, who was known to be a cautious and sceptical man, acted against his temperament, and ordered a counter-offensive towards the south. The Savolax Brigade, which was led by av Sandels, and of whome Cronstedt's men were a part of, were to fight a bloody war in the southern parts of Finland. Sandel's newly formed 5th Brigade would soon take commence resistance fighting in the eastern parts of Finland. The Swedish counter offensive had begun and it would continue all the summer of 1808.

# Battle of Pulkkila

The **Battle of Pulkkila** was fought between [Swedish](#) and [Russian](#) forces near [Pulkkila](#) in [Northern Ostrobothnia](#) on May 2, 1808 during the [Finnish War](#).

At the battle of Pulkkila on 2 May 1808, [Johan August Sandels](#) marched eastwards to liberate those parts of Finland that were under Russian control. During the march they encountered some Russian troops at [Pulkkila](#). These Russian troops were led by Obuhov. The Russians were soon surrounded and tried desperately to break out, but they were forced back to a nearby village where the Russians were defeated after some vicious fighting. The Russian commander was forced to surrender to the attacking Swedes. The Swedes then went on and retook the town of [Kuopio](#) in the middle of [Finland](#).

Sandels' offensive was one of the most remarkable operations of the entire war. During his operations against [Barclay de Tolly](#)'s troops, he captured Russian depots, constantly harassed their rear areas, and committed actions that won him respect among both friends and foes.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joachim\\_Zachris\\_Duncker](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joachim_Zachris_Duncker)

# Joachim Zachris Duncker

**Joachim Zachris Duncker** (November 12, 1774 – July 6, 1809) was a [Swedish](#) soldier born in [Kristina](#) in [Savonia \(Savolax\)](#).

In 1789 Duncker obtained the rank of 2:nd [Lieutenant](#) in the Savolax ranger regiment. He fought in the 1790 [war](#) against [Russia](#) and proved his valor at the [Battle of Perttimäki](#) May 19. In 1804 Duncker was promoted to [Captain](#).

During the [Finnish War](#) of 1808-1809 he distinguished himself as a brave and prominent officer. When [Cronstedt's](#) army retreated from [Mikkeli](#) to [Iisalmi](#) and [Oulu](#) through Leppävirta (March 1808), Duncker commanded the army's rearguard. During the [Battle of Pulkkila](#) (May 2, 1808) he distinguished himself so



well that [Johan August Sandels](#) gave him the honorary assignment to bring the news of the victory to the Swedish king. Shortly after, he was promoted to Major. In June 1808 he captured a large transport of supplies to the Russians. During the [Battle of Virta bro](#) (October 27, 1808), Duncker together with [Colonel Fahlander](#) and [Major Malm](#) and only 600 men helped [Sandels](#) to utterly defeated a superior Russian force. In 1809 Duncker fought the Russians in the Swedish province of [Västerbotten](#), and was promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel. During the [Battle of Hörnefors](#) (July 5, 1809) Duncker commanded the Swedish rearguard and received fatal wounds and died in the Russian encampment the day after.

Duncker was buried next to [Umeå](#) church by the Russians that gave him a full honour guard. He lies buried together with a Russian cossack chief. In 1897 a memorial was erected on the spot where the grave was assumed to be.

Lieutenant-Colonel JZ Duncker's Memorial Monument



# Battle of Lemo

The **Battle of Lemo** was fought during the [Finnish War](#), between [Sweden](#) and [Russia](#) on 19–20 June 1808 (Julian calendar 7–8 June) .

*Battle field from Russian gun positions*



On June 19, some 2,500 Swedes landed at Lemu in [Kaarina](#) and at the nearby strategic island, [Finland Proper](#), aided by the [Swedish Navy](#). There, the Swedes intended to liberate the [Turku](#) from the Russians. The Swedish landing forces commanded by Major General [Eberhard von Vegesack](#). The Russian had troops about 3 600 men under the military commander Lieutenant General [Karl Gustav von Baggovut](#) in Turku area.

## Overview

Major General von Vegesack started immediately to entrench the landing site. The main defense line was set along the terrain facing the open field. The guns deployed to the front of Ala-Lemu Manor house. The gunboats, who escorted the landing fleet, were in the positions at the strait. They close the straits and they had the visibility to the battle field.

The Russian troops were deployed in small units along the [Turku](#) - [Vyborg](#) main road.

## Phase 1 (Sunday, June 19th (J 7th))

The initial phases of the operation were quite successful for the Swedes, who managed to advance several kilometers, eventually having Turku in sight. The units of the Libau Infantry Regiment with one gun launched the first Russian counter attack and they pulled the advanced Swedish troops back to the main defense line. [von Vegesack](#) attacked immediately to Russian center. The Russian commander [Baggovut](#) received reinforcements and he attacked with divided forces; 2 companies attacked on the right and 2 companies on the left and 2 companies with the gun in the center. Lieutenant von Vegesack (the son the general) found the Russian left flank open and attacked immediately. The Russians had to withdraw a few kilometers to the defense. The Swedish troops followed.

## Phase 2 (Monday, June 20th (J 8th))

Major General [Nikolay Borozdin](#) had collected more reinforcements, 300 men from the Brest Infantry Regiment, 2 more guns and one squadron of the Finland Dragoon Regiment. In the small hours in the morning the Libau Infantry Regiment make the Swedish troops a retreat again back to the main defense line. Von Vegesack ordered all the men from the nearby islands to the Lemo battlefield and strengthened the defense line.

[Baggovut](#) received Pernov (Pärnu) Musketeer Regiment as the additional reinforces. The Russian launched the whole front attack with bayonets; Pernov Regiment on the right, Libau Regiment in the center and Brest Regiment on the left. The Russian artillery set fire the Ala-Lemu Manor house. The Swedes were forced to pull back and eventually evacuate to their ships. The fortifications at the shore and later the gunboats

defended the fleeing Swedes. The Russian artillery moved to the shore and fired the landing fleet. Von Vegesack pulled his land and sea forces back to the [Åland Islands](#).

After the battle the Russian reserve forces at the Yli-Lemo were 2 companies from the Nevski Regiment and ½ squadron Finland Dragoon Regiment.

*The dying soldier*



Summer 2008 near the Yli-Lemo Manor house was erected the monument "Kuoleva Soturi" (A dying soldier) by the sculptor [Heidi Linnell](#) in the memory of the all the killed soldiers in the battle of Lemo. The monument was inspired by [The Tales of Ensign Stål](#) (Part: Den döende krigaren).

## Battle of Nykarleby

The **Battle of Nykarleby** was fought between [Sweden](#) and [Russia](#) during the [Finnish War](#) 1808–1809.

When [Carl Johan Adlercreutz](#) continued his summer offensive, he saw an excellent opportunity to encircle the Russian main army at the town of [Nykarleby](#). The Swedish offensive began on [Midsummer's Eve](#), but the Russian forces had already evacuated the city and pulled back to [Vaasa](#), where another Swedish force, commanded by [Johan Bergenstråhle](#) were landing.

Adlercreutz engaged several smaller Russian units who were guarding the Russian retreat. The Russians were led by Jankovitch. He pulled back over the bridge in the town centre, and then burned the bridge. On the way to Vaasa they encountered a smaller Swedish unit led by von Otter and a small battle ensued. The Swedes decided to stop in Nykarleby to celebrate Midsummer while the Russian troops were retreating. The inhabitants generously offered food and drinks to the Swedish army.

Legend says that [Georg Carl von Döbeln](#), who was marching in front of the [Pori Regiment](#), became so angry when he saw the Russians retreat after having burned the bridge, and that the surprise attack had failed, that he ran out in the river, loyally followed by his regiment. He had then been close to drowning and his men had to rescue him. The battle of Nykarleby was to become a relatively bloodless battle.

The Swedes won a small victory at Nykarleby, but the ensuing festivities delayed the march to the south in such a manner that they couldn't support the Swedish landing force in Vaasa.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Vaasa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Vaasa)

## Battle of Vasa

The **Battle of Vasa** was fought between [Sweden](#) and [Russia](#) during the [Finnish War](#) 1808-09.

While the Swedish army was celebrating its victory at [Nykarleby](#), another Swedish force, led by [Johan Bergenstråhle](#), landed in [Vaasa](#). Adlercreutz had forgot about this landing and didn't send any troops to help Bergenstråhle. The Swedes, numbering about 1,200, landed just outside Vaasa, but the Russians, strengthened by the arrival of the retreating Russian main army turned out to be too strong. About 1,000 men managed to retreat northwards after some harsh street battles. The Swedes then joined up with the Swedish main force in Nykarleby. The Swedish commander Bergenstråhle was captured by the Russians.



# Battle of Rimito Kramp

The **Battle of Rimito Kramp** was fought between [Sweden](#) and [Russia](#) during the [Finnish War](#) 1808-09.

## ***Battle***

Swedish naval unit under Hjelmstjerna was tasked with destroying the Russian coastal fleet unit that had successfully bypassed the Swedish blockade of Hanko. After learning that a small Russian gun sloop unit had moved to relatively vulnerable position at the southern end of Airisto region Hjelmstjerna made the decision to attack.

Russian position at the small bay at Rimito Kramp was however strong with all the boats positioned so that they would create crossfire at the mouth of the bay. In addition to the Swedish problems the wind was blowing against them, though not as critical as with sailing ships it prevented Swedish ships from accurately aiming their guns.

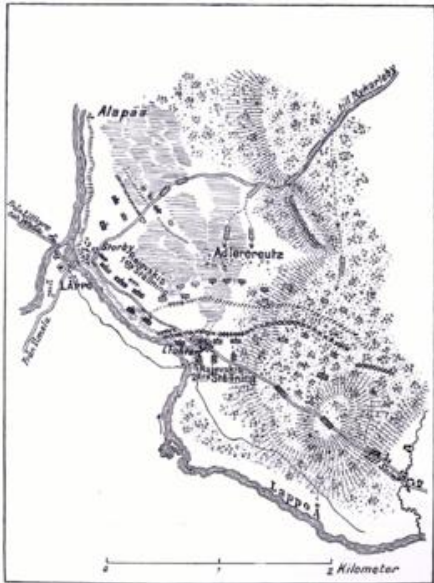
Russians were reinforced during the night and Swedes expecting Russians to attack chose to wait as well. Later during the second day Swedish reinforcements arrived and Hjelmstjerna planned to launch his renewed attack during the night using galleys and their greater crew complements to overpower the smaller Russian vessels.

While preparing for the attack Hjelmstjerna neglected to guard the narrow passage that led from Rimito Kramp towards Turku. During the night little before planned Swedish attack the Russians fled to Turku where they were further reinforced in addition to being supported by three 24-pounder artillery batteries. Though Swedes had forced the Russians with retreat they had failed to inflict defeat to the Russian coastal forces.

Being disappointed to the failures at naval front [Gustav IV Adolf](#) chose to personally oversee the actions taken against Russians. He arrived on 4 July to the Hjelmstjerna's naval unit near Turku with Vice Admiral Rajalin with intent to attack against Russians as soon as possible to prevent Russian naval forces from linking up.

Swedish forces mounted an attack (also known as *Battle of Pukkisaari*) against Russians towards Turku while Russians under command of Lieutenant General P.K. Konovnitsin formed line from their gun sloops and gun yawls between islands of [Ruissalo](#) and [Hirvensalo](#) under cover of the artillery batteries. Battle which started at 18:00 lasted until the midnight. Though Russian line had bent Swedes were unable to breach it. Battle ended without a clear winner with 11 Russian ships damaged and most of the Swedish ships damaged.

## Battle of Lapua



The **Battle of Lapua** was fought between [Swedish](#) and [Russian](#) troops on July 14, 1808 at [Lapua, Finland](#). The Russians had set up defences around Lapua. The Swedes tried to outflank and surround the defending Russians. The [Björneborg Regiment](#) under [Georg Carl von Döbeln](#) distinguished itself during the battle. In the end the Russians managed to retreat, but the victory was an important one for the Swedish as it allowed them to continue their offensive.

Positions at the battle

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Sand%C3%B6str%C3%B6m](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Sand%C3%B6str%C3%B6m)

## Battle of Sandöström

The **Battle of Sandöström** was fought between [Sweden](#) and [Russia](#) during the [Finnish War](#) 1808-09.

After failing to destroy the Russian coastal units near Turku Swedes chose to attempt to destroy the Russian reinforcements. As Swedish fleet controlled the open sea were the Russian coastal units forced to use narrow coastal waterways and so Swedes deployed detachment of [gunboats](#) under Captain Sölfverarm to block the passage north of island of Kemiö.

Hjelmstjerna was forced to split his forces to prevent Russian coastal forces from Turku from getting into his rear and therefore he initially gave Sölfverarm only 8 gunboats but later reinforced them with further four. He retained 14 gunboats and 7 galleys for himself and posted 4 additional gunboats to block other coastal waterways. Sölfverarm was aware of the weaknesses of his position and started blockading the waterways.

First attempt to breach Sölfverarm position happened on 18 July when 6 gunboats tried to get past the Swedes without success. Under command of Captain 1st class Hayden did Russian detachment of 30 gun yaws make the next attempt with the support of Russian artillery batteries and ground forces on the shore on 21 July slightly after midnight. Though greatly outnumbered the Swedes managed to make an orderly withdrawal. Neither side managed to sink any ships however Swedes suffered casualties of 46 dead and wounded against Russians 19, though Russian commander Hayden was amongst the badly wounded.

### *Battle*

Sölfverarm continued to strengthen his defenses and constructed artillery battery to an island in middle of the narrow passage. Swedes were also reinforced with Lieutenant Colonel Önnert Jönsson - who took command - and with 10 gunboats. Also Russians gained reinforcements and now were able to field 50 gun

armed vessels. In addition to naval assets Russians had one six gun and 1 four gun batteries, 2 field guns and six companies of infantry in support.

Russian attack started on 2 August at 0300. Swedish battery in the middle of the passage proved to be very effective though it also was subjected to heavy fire. Though several Swedish gunboats were forced to withdraw from the battle line Swedes managed to beat back the initial Russian attack. More attacks followed during the day but Swedes were able to hold their line. However later a stronger Russian attack managed to breach Swedish line and forced Swedish naval forces to withdraw leaving the artillery battery surrounded by Russians.

Swedish withdrawal was orderly and Russians failed to take advantage of it before Hjelmstjerna's reserves arrived. However instead of counter attacking with fresh forces against Russians who had expended most of their ammo he chose to withdraw. Though battle itself was not a clear victory either way Russians managed to gain access through the coastal waterways and link up with their coastal units.

## ***Aftermath***

While the naval battle was being fought at Sändöström another Swedish unit was performing landing operations on the island of Kemiö. As the landing operation suffered from multiple delays the initial goal of the operation, to provide support for preventing Russian ships from getting past Kemiö, failed but after learning that Russian commander of operations in Finland [Friedrich Wilhelm von Buxhoeveden](#) was dining at nearby manor house of Vestankärr decided Colonel Axel af Pålén, commander of the landing force, to attempt capturing him.

Af Pålén managed to reach the vicinity of the manor house with his 150 men without being seen but while Swedes were moving in to surround the house the Russian pickets saw him and alerted their commander who managed to escape. Arriving Russian reinforcements forced the landing force to retire.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Kauhajoki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Kauhajoki)

# **Battle of Kauhajoki**

The **Battle of Kauhajoki** was fought between [Swedish](#) and [Russian](#) troops on August 10, 1808. After the important Swedish victory at the [Battle of Lapua](#) the force under the command of [Georg Carl von Döbeln](#) defeated a Russian force near [Kauhajoki](#), [Southern Ostrobothnia](#), [Finland](#).

Samtidigt mötte von Döbeln en rysk styrka vid Kauhajoki. Det följande slaget kom att bli en av von Döbelns viktigaste segrar.

Vid Kauhajoki anföll han en överlägsen rysk styrka och tvingade dem till reträtt. Än en gång berättar legenden om hans heta temperament och kalla mod. Efter att han bevittnat den ryska råheten mot civilbefolkningen och bönderna i Kauhajoki utförde von Döbeln och hans mannar ett stordåd i slaget som följde. Ett ögonvittne sa: "Det genomfördes som på en övningsexercis". När ryssarna kom genom den första linjen hoppade von Döbeln upp på en milsten som fanns bredvid honom. Han ropade till ryssarna: "Spring till helvetet, ni fördömde, och erhall er belöning! Här står jag och här skall jag falla! Här ser ni mitt monument!".



# Battle of Alavus

The **Battle of Alavus** took place on August 17, 1808 in the vicinity of the town of [Alavus](#) ([Swedish](#): *Alavo*), as part of the [Finnish War](#). The Finnish army, under the command of [general Carl Johan Adlercreutz](#) defeated a smaller Russian force and drove it southwards. It was the last in a string of Swedish successes during the summer of 1808, and marked the turning point in the war.

Positions at the battle



With his [supply lines](#) harassed by Swedish forces and retreating southward, the newly appointed general major [Nikolay Kamenskiy](#) decided to retake the initiative. The logistical situation precluded this however, and he was forced to march to [Jämsä](#). Not until August 7 was he able to regain control of the situation, as Swedish raiding activities ebbed and reinforcements and fresh supplies started arriving. Kamenskiy then decided to renew his offensive. He sent a detachment under colonel [Erikson](#) toward Alavus and marched towards [Jyväskylä](#).

Probably encouraged by the victory at [Kauhajoki](#), marshal [Wilhelm Mauritz Klingspor](#) ordered general Adlercreutz to attack the Russian position at Alavus. The army, much worn by the ordeals of the summer, was moved south on August 16 in pouring rain. The following day the weather cleared.

## The battle

In bright sunshine, Adlercreutz attacked the Russian positions south of the Alavus [church](#), near the small village of [Härkölä](#), protected by lake [Alajärvi](#) on his left and marshy ground on

his right. The Russian counterattacked on their right wing and forced a [battalion](#) of Karelians on the Swedish left flank to retreat northwards. At this point Adlercreutz ordered the 3:rd battalion of Savolax infantry regiment, supported by the 2:nd battalion, to counterattack. After a barrage of gunfire, the battalion made a [bayonet charge](#) and threw back the Russians. The Russian left flank was also under pressure and started yielding; by 19.00 the entire Russian force had retired with casualties tallying 370 men, compared to 200 on the Swedish side.

## Aftermath

Despite the success, Klingspor never capitalized on it or the outcome of [Lapua](#) and the difficult Russian supply situation in the summer of 1808. After the defeat at Alavus, Russian fortune turned and Kamenskiy was successful in his counteroffensive, which drove the Swedes ever further north.

# Battle of Ratan and Sävar

The **Battle of Sävar and Ratan** is actually two separate battles fought a day apart. They are mentioned together as it was the same armies that fought both battles and the later battle was essentially an extension of the first one. The battle of Sävar and Ratan was the last battle on Swedish soil.

*The village of Sävar and the village of Ratan, slightly north of Umeå, Sweden*



The Russians had successfully captured the city of [Umeå](#) and driven the Swedish army commanded by [Sandels](#) south, to [Härnösand](#). [Tsar Alexander I of Russia](#) demanded that Sweden cede all of [Finland](#). To achieve a better negotiating position, the Swedish army command planned to land troops north of the Russian positions in Umeå to attack the Russian army from the rear, while the mainland army of 3,400 men under [Fabian Wrede](#) attacked them from the front.

Chosen to lead the sea-borne task force was Lieutenant-General [Gustav Wachtmeister](#). Battle proven in the [Prussian](#) army, in the [Russo-Swedish War 1789-1790](#), and in the [Pomeranian War](#) just two years earlier. There was talk on giving the command to [von Döbeln](#), but Wachtmeister was chosen.

There was no threat from the Russians possible on the waters, as the combined force of the [Swedish Örloggsflottan](#) and the [British Navy](#) had the Russian fleet at bay. The task force left [Stockholm](#) on August 8 and sailed north towards Ratan 45 km north from Umeå. To avoid detection by the Russian army in Umeå, the task force sailed east of Holmön. It arrived at Ratan August 16. The attack was planned for August 19.

The Swedish task force sent was composed of:

- 2 [ships of the line](#) (*Adolf Fredrik* and *Försiktigheten*)
- 1 [frigate](#) (*Jarramas*)
- 44 gun [sloops](#)
- 6 [galleys](#)
- 20-40 troop transport ships
- 6,800 soldiers

On August 17, the Swedish army disembarked from their ships in Ratan. Later the same day, they destroyed a small Russian detachment in Djäkneboda.

The Russian commander, Lieutenant-General [Nikolay Mikhailovich Kamensky](#), was marching south when he learned of the Swedish task force. He quickly wheeled around and marched north to face Wachtmeister's army before Wrede's arrived.

The Swedish force under Wachtmeister was delayed at [Sävar](#) 20 km north of [Umeå](#). The Russians attacked Wachtmeister's force in [Sävar](#) at 07:30 August 19. The Russian force took possession of high ground immediately and the Swedes counterattacked the Russians uphill. A fierce battle broke out and despite the Swedes success in the fighting Wachtmeister ordered his forces to retreat back to Ratan. The Battle of Sävar

was over at 15:00. Although the Battle of Sävar turned out as a Russian victory, the Russian army was too damaged to dare face Wrede advancing from the south.

In Sävar, Sweden suffered casualties of 396 men dead and around 450 wounded, the Russians suffered around 600 men dead and around 1000 wounded.

After the Battle of Sävar, the Swedish force fell back to the village of Ratan, in which they immediately prepared for another battle. On August 20 Kamensky ordered his army to attack the Swedes in a delaying battle to secure the Russian supply wagons retreat north. This time Sweden had support from their [artillery](#), not only the ground based, but also the cannons loaded on the Swedish fleet. Altogether, around 100 cannons were available for the [Swedish army](#). The artillery barrage destroyed large parts of the village and its surroundings.

During the Battle of Ratan, Wachtmeister managed to hold off Kamensky, who afterwards retreated north towards [Piteå](#). Shortly after, Swedish troops entered Umeå.

Casualties at [Ratan](#) numbered 150 Swedes (26 dead, 2 prisoners) and 150 Russians (dead and wounded).

## ***Aftermath***

Although the battle was a Russian victory, it was a [pyrrhic](#) one. The Russian army could not stay with the enemy advancing from the south having just suffered so many casualties. Instead it retreated north after the battle, easing up the situation for the Swedish army. The battles' outcome have also been argued to have helped Sweden achieve a better position in the peace negotiations with Russia. The Russian Tsar Alexander had demanded all of Österland, [Åland](#), the parts of Norrland in present day [Finland](#) and parts of Norrland in present day Sweden. The Czar's demand was that the border was to be drawn at the [Kalix River](#). The engagements in Sävar and Ratan have been argued to have helped move the border north to the [Tornio](#) and [Muonio](#) rivers in the peace talks.

Having the border further north than demanded by the Russians in the initial talks turned out to be fortunate for Sweden in the long run as major findings of iron ore were discovered in these areas later.



# Gustav Wachtmeister

**Gustav Wachtmeister** (1757–1826) was a [Swedish Army officer](#) made famous at the [Battle of Valkeala](#) in [Finland](#) in [1789](#) against [Russia](#) where he was wounded by a [musket](#) shot to his arm, which had to be amputated. He was made the hero of the hour by [King Gustav III of Sweden](#) who was in desperate need of publicity as he tried to silence domestic opposition with a crushing victory over [Russia](#).

Portrait of Gustav Wachtmeister



He was born into an [aristocratic Swedish](#) family in [1757](#) and as was common for sons of [Swedish noble families](#), embarked on [military](#) life at a young age, receiving a [commission](#) as an [ensign](#) in [1772](#). In [1778](#) he went abroad to gain experience on campaign, joining the [Prussian Army](#) fighting [Austria](#) in the [War of Bavarian Succession](#) from 1778-79.

Returning to [Sweden](#), Wachtmeister's career flourished and by [1780](#) he had a posting as a [lieutenant-colonel](#) commanding a battalion in the provincial [Dalecarlia](#) regiment. He went on to fight against [Russia](#) at the [Battle of Valkeala](#) and in numerous others until the war ended in [1790](#) without any real gain for either country.

His later conquests were mainly fought against [Napoleon](#) at [Pomerania](#) and against [Russia](#) who in [1809](#) invaded [Sweden](#) after a [military coup](#) overthrew the current [King Gustav IV](#). The new [King Karl XIII](#) ordered Wachtmeister to attack the [Russians](#) behind enemy lines which he did at the [Battle of Ratan and Sävar](#).

**Battle of Valkeala** took place in [Gustav III's Russian War](#) April 29, 1790 at [Valkeala](#) in [Kymi](#) in [Southern Finland](#) and ended with a Swedish victory.

A Swedish army corps of 4000 men under the command of [Gustav III](#) and several of his closest officers crossed in April 28, 1790 [Kymi River](#) in [Pörille](#) village at a hastily struck a bridge over a ford. The next day continued their march to Valkeala, where a Russian force of 3000 men stood ready to face them. The Swedish force available for battle consisted of roughly 3000 men since 3 battalions had been diverted to guard the ford crossing and rear positions.

The Swedes were victorious in the following battle, pressing home the victory with several successful head on bayonet charges however during the fighting the Swedish Commanding General [Gustav Wachtmeister](#) was wounded by a musket ball to the arm.

## *Personal life*

After the [Battle of Ratan and Sävar](#) during which he retreated his men back to the coast, where they were sheltered by [Naval guns](#), he was considered to have not acted with sufficient boldness by his superiors, and was given the option to retire voluntarily to his estates. He died in 1826, at age of 79 years.

## Battle of Grönvikssund

The **Battle of Grönvikssund** was fought between [Sweden](#) and [Russia](#) during the [Finnish War](#) 1808-09.

Johan Ludvig Brant was tasked with defeating Russian coastal forces operating near [Nystad](#) (fi. Uusikaupunki). When he learned that roughly twenty Russian gunboats had sailed from Nystad towards Turku he started chasing them. Swedish naval unit caught up with the Russians who upon noticing the approaching Swedes formed for battle. Swedish numerical superiority allowed them to attempt flanking maneuver around the island dominating the battle area, however Russians noticed it and managed to block the flankers.

As flanking had failed approached Swedish to close range however though outnumbered Russian force made fierce resistance and withdrew only slowly while maintaining unit cohesion. When he was running out of ammo Selivanoff had to order retreat at 19:00 when most of his ships had already been shot full of holes. Swedes gave chase to the retreating Russians but failed to catch them before nightfall and turned back.

Numerical superiority and favorable wind were important factors contributing to the Swedish victory. However Swedes' decision to avoid boarding actions probably saved Russians from even greater losses. Swedish victory forced Russians to postpone their plans for attacking Åland and instead of forming a landing force Russian coastal forces were used to protect supply convoys.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Jutas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Jutas)

## Battle of Jutas

The **Battle of Jutas** (**Fi**: *Juuttaan taistelu*, **Sv**: *Slaget vid Jutas*) was fought on September 13, 1808 between [Swedish](#) and [Russian](#) troops south of [Nykarleby](#) in [Ostrobothnia](#), [Finland](#). Before the battle the Swedish army was in retreat after the campaign of the previous summer. The main Swedish force was retreating from [Vaasa](#) to Nykarleby. The Russians sent a force to cut off the Swedish retreat. In response the Swedes sent a force under [Georg Carl von Döbeln](#) to intercept them. The battle ended in a Swedish victory, but the main Swedish army was beaten in the [Battle of Oravais](#) the very next day.



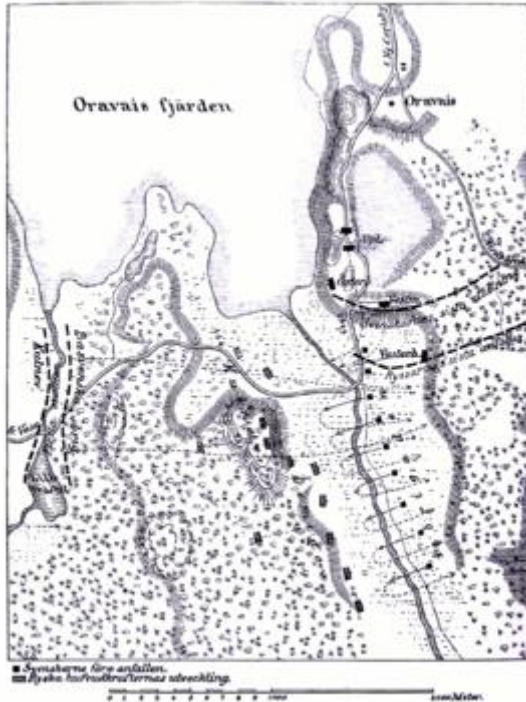
*Döbeln at Jutas by Albert Edelfelt*

The battle has become legendary due to [Johan Ludvig Runeberg](#)'s epic poem *Döbeln at Jutas*.

# Battle of Oravais

The **Battle of Oravais** ([Finnish](#): *Oravaisten taistelu*, [Swedish](#): *Slaget vid Oravais*) is sometimes regarded as the turning point of the [Finnish War](#): the last chance for [Sweden](#) to turn the war to her advantage. It was the bloodiest battle of the conflict, which some historians attribute to the [exhaustion](#), [resignation](#) and [desperation](#) of the [Swedish army](#): it was losing the war.

Positions at the battle



## Prelude

At the beginning of the war, Swedish forces had retreated to [Oulu](#). They had then managed to repel the Russians and reach [Savonia](#) despite the capitulation of the fortress of [Sveaborg](#) by the end of summer [1808](#). Russia recuperated quickly, and by the end of August the Swedish army was again retreating northwards along the coastal road. To avoid being [encircled](#), [colonel Georg Carl von Döbeln](#) was sent in advance to [Nykarleby](#) with a brigade. The threat of encirclement was exaggerated, but the Swedish army was at this point showing signs of panic and collapse. On September 13 the army left for [Oravais](#) and it halted to await news from von Döbeln, who was fighting the Russians at [Jutas](#). The sound of a cannon was heard in Oravais, and a brigade was sent to reinforce von Döbeln.

The Russian main army had marched from Vasa in furious pursuit of the Swedish forces. The night before September 14 was spent in [bivouacs](#) along the road between [Vörå](#) and

Oravais. The impulsive General-major [Yakov Kulnev](#)'s troops had taken the lead and were the first to make contact with the Swedes.

## Battle

At dawn the first shots were exchanged between Kulnev's troops and a Swedish [outpost](#) by a bridge in the [forest](#). Firing intensified, the Swedish position was reinforced continuously while the remainder of the Russian forces behind Kulnev arrived. Fighting continued with heavy losses on both sides until the situation became untenable for the Swedes, who retreated to their defensive positions at 10 a.m. The retreat was covered by a single [artillery](#) piece commanded by the fifteen-year-old sublieutenant [Wilhelm von Schwerin](#).

The Swedish main position was deployed along a ridge which was protected to the north (on the Swedish right wing) by an inlet from the Baltic, and the [Fjärdså stream](#) with its south to north flow provided added defensive potential. The forest in front of the ridge had been cleared to afford the artillery a better view of the arriving Russians, who were regrouping at the edge of the forest.

Artillery [bombardment](#) then began between the two forces, and continued for an hour until the Russians mounted a [frontal assault](#) against the Swedish positions. Kulnev, on the Russian left wing, struck the Swedish right, but was repelled when his force became bogged down in the Fjärdså stream. The Russians now reinforced their right wing, under [Nikolay Demidov](#), and another assault was made. It was also repelled, but this time the Swedish unexplainably left their positions and counterattacked; Adlercreutz had



issued no order to that effect. The Swedish counterattack met overpowering fire and was forced to withdraw with heavy losses.

At 2 p.m. the battle was far from decided. The Russians made a second attempt at turning the Swedish left [flank](#). This thinned the Russian center, and Adlercreutz ordered a forceful attack to exploit the weakness. Despite the intensive Russian fire, the attack proceeded swiftly, and the whole Swedish line was carried

along by the movement. The entire Russian line was forced to retire back into the forest where the battle had begun earlier in the morning.



However, Russian numerical superiority and dwindling of ammunition frustrated Adlercreutz' attempted decisive stroke. As Russian reinforcements arrived, the spent Swedish army retired to their defensive positions again. At this point the battle was still undecided, but General Kamensky ordered Demidov's right wing to make yet another attempt on the weak Swedish left wing. When this maneuver started night had fallen and the battle had raged for fourteen hours; it became too much for the Swedish army, which hastily retreated to the north.

*Oravais battle field as seen from Adlercreutz' command post*

## ***Aftermath***

The Swedish [lieutenant](#) Carl Johan Ljunggren retold the retreat from Oravais like this:

"The darkness was such that despite continuous shovings one could not recognize the shover... Hundreds of noises came out of the night; everywhere the wounded wailed, each in his own language; artillerymen and coachmen yelled at their exhausted horses and bellowed scores of curses each time they became stuck, which happened all the time; wheels and weapons rattled, soldiers bellowed; all staggered from tiredness and hunger. Thus came the army finally to Nykarleby. The Russians hadn't followed, for their forces were also completely spent.

The battle of Oravais had shown that the Swedish army was not tactically inferior to the Russian counterpart. It was the Russian numerical superiority that shifted the balance in the end. However, the Swedish strategic situation was hopeless: allied only with [Great Britain](#), it faced the overmight of [Napoleon's Europe](#) and its Russian ally. Oravais was merely one battle on the road to final Swedish defeat.

# Helsinki village landing

The **Helsinki village landing** was fought during the [Finnish War](#), between [Sweden](#) and [Russia](#) 26–28 September 1808, part of the battles of Turku archipelago. [Gustav IV Adolf of Sweden](#) planned a large landing operation, over 8000 strong. Due to the difficult sea weather conditions, the task force under colonel [Anders Fredrik Skjöldebrand](#) was forced to return as broken and damaged back to Sweden. The other task force of 3400 men under lieutenant colonel [Gustav Olof Lagerbring](#) landed to the Helsinki village (Taivassalo) successfully and the troops advanced to the inland areas. The king of Sweden himself was late too, he arrived (28 September 1808) to the battle area with his own yacht.

*Swedish troops landing area*



## Monday 26 September

The landing started in at 09.00 o'clock in the morning. The Cossacks who patrolled at the beach were pushed back to the village of Järvenperä. The Swedish troops advanced slowly and the Russians reacted quickly and they send 3 companies from [Pernov \(Pärnu\) Musketeer Regiment](#) supported by 2 cannons to oppose advancing Swedes at Järvenperä. [Kronobergs regemente](#) offensive caused the Russians retreat.

## Tuesday 27 September

In the morning the Swedes proceeded advance to direction of the village of Viikari. Lieutenant General [Karl Gustav von Bagge](#) had built there a defense line with a battalion of the [Nevski Musketeer Regiment](#). According to the orders of Bagge, he had to delay the progress of the Swedes. Bagge's forces were of the environment of the Manor House. The Swedes pushed back the Russians from their positions. Colonel, Freiherr [Gustaf Reinhold Boije af Gennäs](#) was ordered as the commander of the Swedish battle forces.

## Wednesday 28 September

During the night prince [Pyotr Bagration](#) brought big reinforcements to Bagge. Boije planned a double offensive. One force would attack from north of Viikari to Puusta and at the same time the Lagerbring force should strike to the flank of Russian forces at the Puusta through Haaroinen and Ranta. Because of the reinforcements Bagge had the initiative and he strikes strongly direct to the main line of position of Boije. Simultaneous also Bagge had started a flank offensive via Ranta. The attack stronger of Lagerbring stopped to the force of the Russian troops and he had retreat. Boije found the situation hopeless and ordered the general retreat to the Helsinki village. At the beach the situation was chaotic. The King had ordered all the gunboats to the Kahiluoto. There were only the defenseless troopships left. The loading of the ships happened under the Russian fire in disarray and with the big losses.

For a Video of this battle see this link

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIUK\\_7INPzY&feature=youtube\\_gdata\\_player](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIUK_7INPzY&feature=youtube_gdata_player)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Koljonvirta](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Koljonvirta)

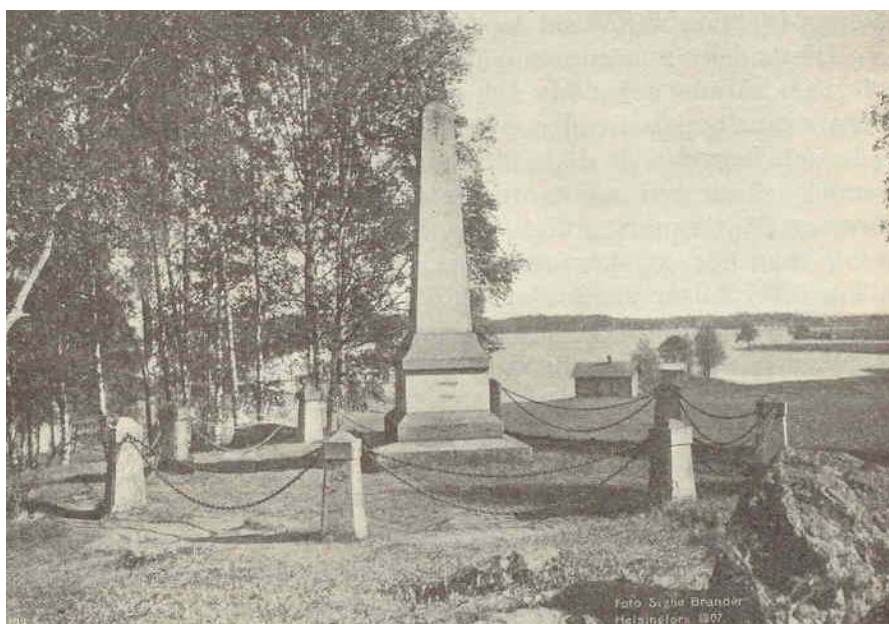
## Battle of Koljonvirta (Virta Bridge)

The **Battle of Koljonvirta** ([Finnish](#): *Koljonvirran taistelu*) ([Swedish](#): *Virta Bro*) i.e the Battle of the Virta Bridge was fought between [Swedish](#) and [Russian](#) troops on October 27, 1808. The Swedish force consisted of troops from Savolax and Östergötland. After the main Swedish army had been defeated at the [Battle of Oravais](#) the army under [Johan August Sandels](#) in [Savonia](#) had to retreat in order not to be outflanked by the Russians. Sandels found a good defensive position north of [Iisalmi](#) and decided to resist the Russian advance there.

*Positions at the battle*



Between September 29 and October 27 a [cease-fire](#) was in effect. Sandels was heavily outnumbered but had a good defensive position between two lakes connected by the Koljonvirta river and he had prepared his position well during the cease-fire. On October 27 the cease-fire was to end at 1 PM, but Russians started their attack a little earlier, perhaps because of the time difference between Sweden and Russia. Sandels pulled back the forces on the south side of the river and the Russians attacked over the partially demolished bridge. The Swedish counter-attacked and literally pushed the Russian troops into the river. The Russians pulled up fresh troops on the south side of the river, but they didn't try to attack again. The battle was the last Swedish victory on Finnish soil.



*Monument at the Virta Bridge*



# Jakob Henrik Zidén

**Jakob Henrik Zidén** ([31 oktober 1785](#) — [27 oktober 1808](#)), finsk [fänrik](#), omnämnd i *[Fänrik Ståls sägner](#)*.

Han föddes i [S:t Mårtens socken](#) i [Åbo och Björneborgs län](#) som son till [prosten](#) Jakob Zidén och Kristina Elisabet Fahlberg (av svensk släkt).

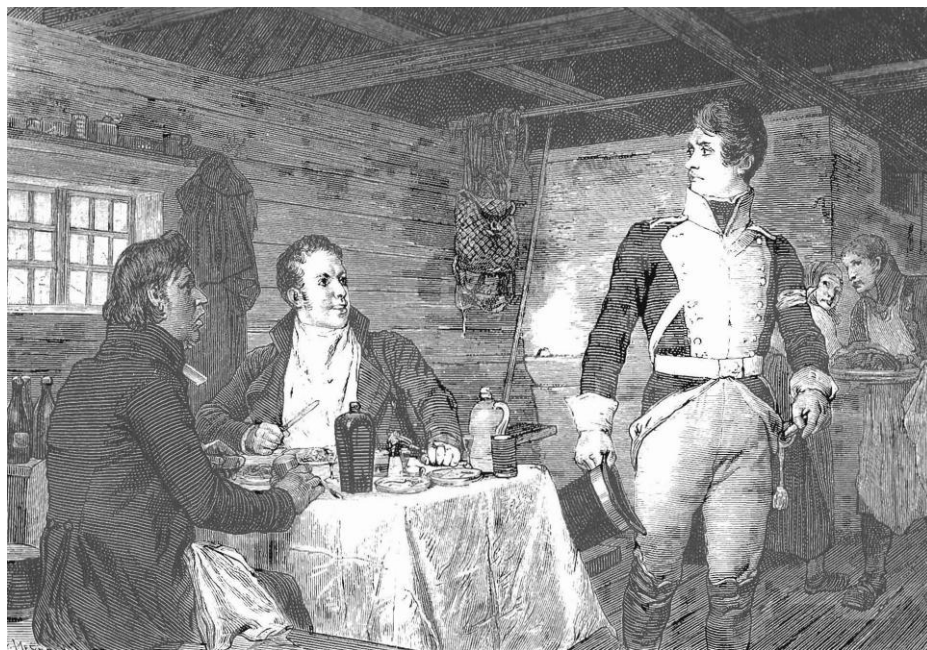
Jakob Henrik Zidén visade tidigt intresse för krigaryrket och skrevs in 1797, bara elva år gammal, som [förare](#) vid [Åbo läns regemente](#). Efter att året efter ha blivit student i [Åbo](#) tog han avsked från regementet 1801 men redan 1804 blev han åter förare vid sitt gamla regemente och befordrades till [fältväbel](#) samma år. Under [Finska kriget](#) utmärkte han sig, speciellt vid [slaget vid Haistila](#) den 17 mars 1808, och blev befordrad till [fänrik](#) vid de nyuppsatta [Vasa regemente](#). Han utmärkte sig åter för *synnerlig tapperhet* i anfallen mot staden [Kuopio](#) i juni. Brigadchefen [Sandels](#) berömde honom i en rapport för mod i striden vid [Kelloniemi](#) nära [Toivola](#) den 30 juni.

I [slaget vid Virta bro](#) den 27 oktober 1808 leder fänriken Zidén som vanligt några meter framför sin pluton från Pedersörekompaniet i anslaget mot de ryska styrkorna under general Tutschkov och får flera sår. Med det mod han så ofta tidigare visat fortsätter han framryckningen tills han slutligen träffas av ett [druvhagel](#) i pannan och dör.

För sina insatser belönades han med både silver- och guldmedalj för tapperhet och hyllas i dikten [Löjtnant Zidén](#) i [Runebergs](#) diktsamling *[Fänrik Ståls sägner](#)*. Hans namn finns dessutom på [Virtamonumentet](#) från 1885.

## “Tales of Ensign Stål”

Runeberg described in his “Tales of Ensign Stål” in the poem “Sandels” how, while having breakfast, his aid, Lieutenant Ziden, is frustrated by the delay. Ziden was killed in that battle. Below is a sample from the poem:



*Sandels he sat in a Pardala inn,  
A-breakfasting free and fine.  
“Today another fight will begin,  
At Virta Bridge, I opine.  
Pastor, so glad you’re here with me,  
A bit of trout, maybe?”*

*“Tutschkoff has kindly sent me word,  
That the truce is over at last,  
Take a good helping. By the Lord!  
We can eat and then ride fast.  
We must prize our our blessings. Isn’t  
that so? Perhaps you prefer Margaux?”*

*Resentment burned in the young man’s  
breast, As with eyes all aflame he  
spoke: “General, excuse me, but the  
truth is best:  
The army won’t stand a joke.  
Here’s what I heard all the soldiers say,  
That you’re our worst coward today.”*

# Gustav IV Adolf of Sweden

**Gustav IV Adolf of Sweden** also *Gustav Adolph* (1 November 1778 – 7 February 1837) was [King of Sweden](#) from 1792 until his abdication in 1809. He was the son of [Gustav III of Sweden](#) and his queen consort [Sophia Magdalena](#), eldest daughter of [Frederick V of Denmark](#) and his first wife [Louise of Great Britain](#). He was the last Swedish ruler of [Finland](#). [Gustavia](#) in [Swedish Pomerania](#) was named after him, but was lost in the [Napoleonic Wars](#).



## *Loss of Finland*

His reign was ill-fated and was to end abruptly. In 1805, he joined the Third Coalition against Napoleon. His campaign went poorly and the French occupied [Swedish Pomerania](#). When his ally, Russia, made peace and concluded an alliance with France at Tilsit in 1807, Sweden and Portugal were left as Great Britain's European allies. On 21 February 1808, [Russia invaded Finland](#), which consisted of provinces of Sweden, on the pretext of compelling Sweden to join Napoleon's Continental System. Denmark likewise declared war on Sweden. In just few months after, almost all of Finland was lost to Russia. As a result of the war, on 17 September 1809, in the [Treaty of Hamina](#), Sweden surrendered the eastern third of Sweden to Russia. The autonomous [Grand Principality of Finland](#) within [Imperial Russia](#) was established.

## *Coup d'état and abdication*

*Gustav arrested.*



Gustav Adolf's inept and erratic leadership in diplomacy and war precipitated his deposition through a conspiracy of army officers.

On 7 March 1809, [lieutenant-colonel Georg Adlersparre](#), commander of a part of the so-called western army stationed in [Värmland](#), triggered the revolution by raising the flag of rebellion in [Karlstad](#) and starting to march upon Stockholm. To prevent the King from joining loyal troops in Scania, on 13 March 1809 seven of the conspirators led by [Carl Johan Adlercreutz](#) broke into the royal apartments in the palace, seized the king, and imprisoned him and his family in [Gripsholm](#) castle; the king's uncle, Duke Charles (Karl), was thereupon persuaded to accept the leadership of a provisional government, which was proclaimed the same day; and a diet, hastily summoned, solemnly approved of the [revolution](#).

On 29 March Gustav IV Adolf, to save the crown for his son, voluntarily abdicated; but on 10 May the [Riksdag of the Estates](#), dominated by the [army](#), declared that not merely Gustav but his whole family had forfeited the throne. On 5 June, Duke Charles (Gustav's uncle) was proclaimed king under the name of [Charles XIII](#), after accepting a new liberal [constitution](#), which was ratified by the diet the next day. In December, Gustav and his family were transported to [Germany](#). In 1812, he divorced his wife.

In exile Gustav used several titles, Count [Gottorp](#), Duke of [Holstein-Eutin](#), and finally settled at [St. Gallen](#) in [Switzerland](#) where he lived in a small hotel in great loneliness and indigence, under the name of Colonel Gustafsson.



# Crimean War

## Baltic theatre

The [Baltic](#) was a forgotten theatre of the Crimean War. The popularisation of events elsewhere had overshadowed the significance of this theatre, which was close to [Saint Petersburg](#), the Russian capital. In April 1854 an Anglo-French fleet was sent into the Baltic to attack the Russian sea port of [Kronstadt](#) and the Russian fleet stationed there. In August 1854 the combined English and French fleet returned to Kronstadt for another attempt. However, from the beginning, the Baltic campaign remained a stalemate. The outnumbered [Russian Baltic Fleet](#) confined its movements to the areas around its fortifications. At the same time, British and French commanders [Sir Charles Napier](#) and [Alexandre Ferdinand Parseval-Deschenes](#)—although they led the largest fleet assembled since the [Napoleonic Wars](#)—considered the [Sveaborg](#) fortress too well-defended to engage. Thus, shelling of the Russian batteries was limited to two attempts in the summers of 1854 and 1855, and initially, the attacking fleets limited their actions to blockading the Russian trade in the [Gulf of Finland](#). Naval attacks on other ports, such as the ones at [Hogland](#) were more successful. Additionally, they conducted raids on less fortified sections of the [Finnish](#) coast.

*Bombardment of Bomarsund during the Crimean War, after William Simpson*



Russia was dependent on imports for both the domestic economy and the supply of her military forces and the blockade seriously undermined the Russian economy. Raiding by allied British and French fleets destroyed forts on the Finnish coast including the newly constructed [Bomarsund](#) on the [Åland Islands](#) which was raided on July 3 through July 16, 1854, and Fort Slava. Other such attacks were not so successful, and the poorly planned attempts to take [Hanko](#), [Ekenäs](#), [Kokkola](#), and [Turku](#) were repulsed.

The burning of [tar](#) warehouses and ships in [Oulu](#) and [Raahe](#) led to

international criticism and, in Britain, MP [Thomas Gibson](#) demanded in the [House of Commons](#) that the First Lord of the Admiralty explain "a system which carried on a great war by plundering and destroying the property of defenceless villagers".

In 1855, the Western Allied Baltic Fleet tried to destroy heavily defended Russian dockyards at [Sveaborg](#) outside [Helsinki](#). More than 1,000 enemy guns tested the strength of the fortress for two days. Despite the shelling, the sailors of the 120-gun ship *Rossiya*, led by Captain Viktor Poplonsky, defended the entrance to the harbour. The Allies fired over twenty thousand shells but were unable to defeat the Russian batteries. A massive new fleet of more than 350 gunboats and mortar vessels was prepared, but before the attack was launched, the war ended.



## The Skirmish of Halkokari

An interesting historical affair, known as the [Skirmish of Halkokari](#), occurred at the town of Gamlakarleby (Kokkola) in June 1854 during the [Crimean War](#). [Royal Marines](#) from [HMS Vulture](#) and [HMS Odin](#) tried to come ashore to ransack the town, but were repelled by local defenders, of which many were civilians armed with hunting rifles. One of the 9 smaller British craft (a [gunboat](#)) fell into the hands of the defenders. As such, this boat was the only Royal Navy vessel still in foreign possession in 1914. The boat is still today a museum-object and can be seen in Kokkola's English Park. The town council has refused to return the boat despite several requests by the United Kingdom, most recently by [John Stuttard](#), the Lord Mayor of London. The British Treasury annually pays a small sum for the maintenance of nine graves of nine Royal Marines killed in action during the skirmish to the local church congregation.



## Matts Kankkonen

While doing some genealogy research, I ran across an interesting story about the family of my second cousin three times removed, Maria Eriksdotter Kankkonen, b. 10 Aug 1792. She was married to Gustaf Adolf Isaksson Hilli-Kankkonen, b. 6 Oct 1792. Gustaf was a sea captain on the Baltic sea in 1845 when rough seas drove his ship onto a sandbank. One of the crewmen jumped off ship to land and survived, but when Gustaf jumped a large wave came along and swept him out to sea where he drowned. He and his wife Maria had four sons who fought in the battle of Halkokari in 1854 during the Crimean War. Two of the sons were awarded medals by the Czar of Russia for their heroism.

*Portrait of Matts Kankkonen , painting in the President's Palace*



### Matts Gustafsson

The oldest son Matts Gustafsson Kankkonen was trained as a marksman and volunteered to fight at Halkokari, outside of Gamlakarleby. When he arrived at Halkokari, he stood behind a warehouse and saw an English officer stand up in the longboat, light a cigarette and Matts heard him say: "Within an hour the city shall be in flames." At that moment Matts fired a shot and the officer fell. Matts fired again and a second Englishman drowned or fell overboard and the longboat was riddled with bullets. (The longboat is on display in a park in Gamlakarleby.)

When Matts went to Petersburg (Russia) he was awarded a silver medal with the superscription 'for bravery' to wear with the ribbon of the Order of St. George. The Czar also commanded artist V. Svetschkov to paint a portrait of Matts which presently hangs in the Presidential palace in Helsingfors. The portrait of Matts is in full figure and he had on the clothing he wore in the battle at

Halkokari. He held a rifle in his right hand and had another gun from the sword belt on his left side. The artist determined that Kankkonen used several rifles in battle. Russian soldiers loaded and he shot as fast as they loaded. The artist painted two pictures representing the moment when the first shot was fired and the pictures were reproduced with Swedish and Russian text below. In his older years the village boys often gathered at his cottage to hear him tell of the battle at Halkokari, his visit with the Czar, his wolf hunting, etc.

His brother Adolf also participated in the battle at Halkokari and exchanged shots. Brothers Karl and Vilhelm were assigned guard duty in the harbor but did not fire a single shot while on duty. They helped take 19 prisoners, together with the English longboat, to the city. Vilhelm was only 19 years old during the battle. He became a master shipbuilder of many fast sailing ships which he designed and built at Bergbom's shipyard.



*Halkokari battle memorial*



## A Finnish Brutus?



Here, we see **Eugen Schauman** (1875-1904), a young Finnish civil servant who became famous for assassinating the hated Russian governor of Finland, Nikolai Bobrikov. On June 16, 1904, Schauman ran up to Bobrikov on the staircase of the Senate building and fired three times at him; the governor died some hours later in the hospital. After fatally wounding Bobrikov, Schauman shot himself twice, and died instantly.



The background for the murder was Finnish frustration at the increasingly oppressive Russian regime. Since 1809, when it was wrested from Sweden, Finland had been an autonomous duchy of the Russian Empire. The Tsars had ruled the country in their capacity as Grand Dukes of Finland, in accord with the country's traditional laws and customs, dating from the era of Swedish rule. Finland had enjoyed a wide measure of independence, with its own Diet of Four Estates (nobles, clergy, burghers, and peasants), its own Council of State, or Senate, and its own army, whose sole task was to defend Finland (rather than the Russian Empire as a whole). Since Alexander I, who had granted Finland this privileged status, each Tsar had sworn, upon his ascent to the throne, to maintain Finland's autonomy. As long as Russia respected this arrangement, the Finns were loyal and devoted subjects of the Tsars. This friendly relationship, however, collapsed, when Nicholas II, swayed by aggressively nationalistic Russian advisers, imposed a harsh program of Russification upon the Finns. The objective of the new policy was to abolish Finland's autonomy, reducing the Grand Duchy to a Russian province like any other. Similar policies were imposed upon other minorities within the Empire, such as the Poles, the Estonians, the Latvians, and the Lithuanians. Proponents of Russification feared the growth of Romantic Nationalism among these peoples, perceiving it as a threat to the unity of the Russian Empire. By attacking local cultures and institutions, they sought to destroy these minorities' sense of national identity. The effect, however, was merely to create hostility to the Russian regime.

In 1898, the Tsar appointed General Nikolai Bobrikov, an aggressive proponent of Russification, to the post of Governor-General of Finland. In 1899, the Tsar issued a decree, the so-called "February Manifesto," asserting, in violation of previous custom and usage, his right to rule Finland, through the Russian Council of State, without the consent of the Finnish Diet or Senate. The Finns, alarmed by the attack on their autonomy, addressed a nation-wide petition to the Tsar, asking him to rescind the February Manifesto. Unfortunately, he would not even receive the delegation, sent to St. Petersburg to present the petition. Another decree made Russian (rather than, as before, Swedish and Finnish) the main administrative language of Finland. In 1901, the previously independent Finnish army was assimilated into the Russian army, and made eligible for military service anywhere in the Empire. The Finns addressed another nation-wide protest to the Tsar. Again, he disregarded their petition. A well-organized passive resistance to Russification arose, led by distinguished Finnish jurists, who opposed the oppressive measures on constitutional grounds. In response, in 1903, the Tsar granted Bobrikov dictatorial powers. The press was strictly censored, and a number of Bobrikov's opponents were exiled to Siberia. A crude and brutal man,

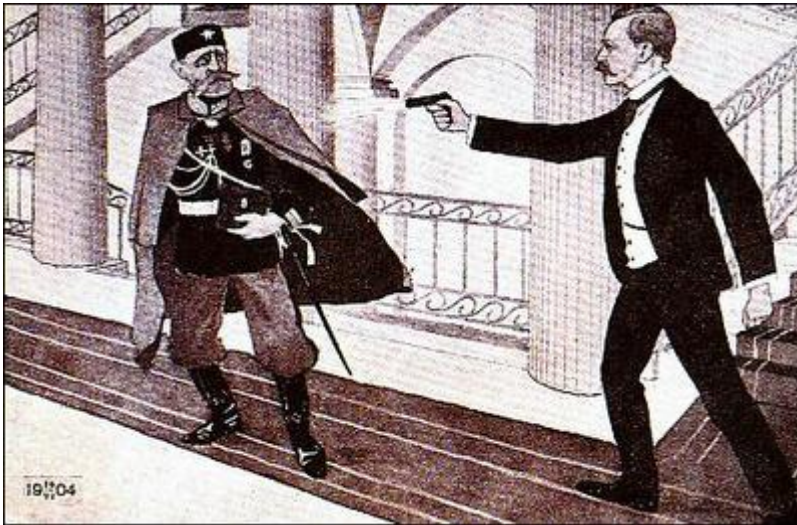


Bobrikov threatened: "I have the guts not only to send these blackguards into exile, but to string them up as well." Understandably, the governor was bitterly hated by the Finns.

During this period, an active resistance to Russification arose. Young Finnish patriots, inspired by the tyrannicides of classical antiquity, began to plot Bobrikov's assassination. Among these activists was the fiery young idealist, Eugen Schauman. The Schaumans, a distinguished, Swedish-speaking, noble family, had long been loyal to the Tsar; Eugen's father had been an officer in the Russian army, and Eugen himself had been born in the Ukraine, where his father was stationed. Eugen retained a sense of loyalty to the Tsar, even in planning the assassination of Bobrikov. He realized the gravity of his action, in killing the Tsar's representative, and, while viewing it as necessary, resolved to "expiate" his crime by taking his own life.

Schauman left a letter to the Tsar in which he apologized for his action, presenting it as a desperate last resort in the face of ever-increasing tyranny. To protect his family and friends from charges of conspiracy, Eugen stressed that he had acted alone. He implored that the Tsar take seriously the grievances of the Finns and other oppressed nationalities. Throughout, he maintained a respectful tone. (This attitude was typical of Finnish activists, who tended to view the monarch himself as good, but merely misled by evil advisers).

Eugen Schauman became a national hero. In large measure, this is due to the fact that he did not try to escape after murdering Bobrikov. Many Finns viewed his insistence on dying for his crime as a sign of a moral rigor which elevated him above common criminals. He was considered a noble tyrannicide, a sort of Finnish Brutus. Indeed, a plaque was erected in the Senate, at the site of the assassination, with the Latin inscription: *Se pro patria dedit*.



While some Russians, in the aftermath of the murder, advocated ruthless reprisals against the Finns, the Tsar wisely decided upon a milder course. He appointed a new governor who was much less aggressive,

and the Russians reconsidered the policy of conscripting Finns into the Imperial army. The 1905 revolution in Russia also served to relieve pressure on Finland. The harsh policy would later be re-introduced, but, for some time, the Tsar treated the Finns with greater moderation.

Bobrikov's assassination is the most important political murder in modern Finnish history. We cannot endorse Schauman's action; tyrannicide, as it entails the use of force without legal authority, is always problematic, and Schauman's suicide raises a number of moral issues. Nonetheless, it is interesting to see how the Finns viewed the event. It is a remarkable, tragic, and very dramatic episode.



