

THE CAROLEAN CAMPAIGN

The Carolean campaign on Trondheim, 1718–1719, has seriously affected the Swedish-Norwegian border region and still lives on in the souls of the inhabitants of Jämtland and Trøndelag. The days of Sweden as a great power were coming to an end. In August of 1718 an army of Carolean soldiers gathered in Jämtland under the command of General Armfeldt with the mission to invade Trondheim and the region of Trøndelag within a period of six weeks. Mobilised in Duved were 10 073 soldiers, 6 721 horses and 2 500 cattle. A troublesome war project began: heavy equipment was to be transported across the border into Norway on poor roads and paths. In Norway the sconces of Stene and Skåne were taken and via Stjørdal the heavy and wet march continued towards Trondheim. Along the way the army was repeatedly attacked by Norwegian troops. The siege of Trondheim took a long time and both sides suffered from lack of provisions and diseases. All the years of poor harvests and suffering prior to the campaign only served to make the situation even worse. However, the actual battles had not resulted in many deaths.

Late in December, the army received news that the Swedish King Karl XII had been shot dead at Fredrikstens fort. On Christmas Eve, Armfeldt and his withered army found themselves in Haldalen where they held vespers at a small stave church. The surrounding area was plundered for food and clothes. The situation was desperate in view of the return march to Sweden and once the troops were on their way a snowstorm broke out. 3 000 men froze to death in the border mountains between Tydal (Norway) and Handöl (Sweden). As a direct consequence of the campaign even more inhabitants of Trøndelag died of famine and diseases. In addition some 40 % of the able-bodied male inhabitants of Jämtland were wiped out.

Illustration: Alf Lannerbäck.



MONUMENTS AND MEMORIALS

A guide in the tracks of the Caroleans through Jämtland and Trøndelag

For more information on the Carolean campaign and related activities, please visit www.karoliner.com



Photo above: Opening of the first monument in Handöl. Photo: Unknown/Jamtli photo archives.

Photo cover: The memorial at Gräslidvalen. Photo: Anders Hansson.

The texts are to a large extent based on Anders Hansson's *Armfeldts karoliner* (Norstedts förlag 2003, 2018). Translation into English by Klartext Eva Henricson.

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MONUMENTS AND MEMORIALS

Travel guide



DUVED

Duved sconce was the point where Armfeldt's army gathered and from where the campaign on Trondheim was due to set off on 4 August 1718. The departure was however delayed for two weeks and the army was not under way until 18 August.

An older sconce from the mid-1600s may have been situated on a hill some 500 metres east of the location of the 18th century sconce, but the data are unreliable. On this hill stands presently the Swedish main monument commemorating Armfeldt's campaign, opened in 1892 and designed by Ferdinand Boberg, one of the most famous architects of his days.

Also on the site of the established sconce is a memorial, added in 1993 at the point of the centennial celebrations of Norrlands Artilleriregemente.



The main monument to Armfeldt's campaign in Duved. Photo: Anders Hansson.

SKALSTUGAN AND LILLMOEN

The march on Norway ran via Skilstugan, and on 25 August the entire army was gathered at the northern end of Lake Skalsvattnet in order to march into Norway and to Stene skans.

Already before reaching the border soldiers had been taken ill, due to the shortage of provisions and other hardships. One of the contributing factors may have been that this late summer of 1718 was a so-called lemming year and dead lemmings may have poisoned the drinking water available to the soldiers. At the farm Skilstugans gård a finding was made in 1940, a grave containing the remains of at least 12 Carolean soldiers. The skeletons were not in order, mixed in boxes and have probably been transported there from elsewhere. These would be the remains of soldiers perished on the way to Stene. Following the archaeological investigation made in 1941–42 the grave is marked with a chain between four blocks of cement.



Author Torsten Boberg visiting the archaeological site of the grave at Skilstugan. Photo: Unknown/Jamtli's photographic archives.

At Lillmoen (Litlmoen), about 10 km into Norway in the vicinity of Sul, is another Carolean monument, on a site where skeletons, coins, remains of cloth and shoe soles were discovered at the time of roadworks in 1860. The grave was investigated in 1955, and the remains were then dated to the early 1700s. The site has been marked with a memorial stone.

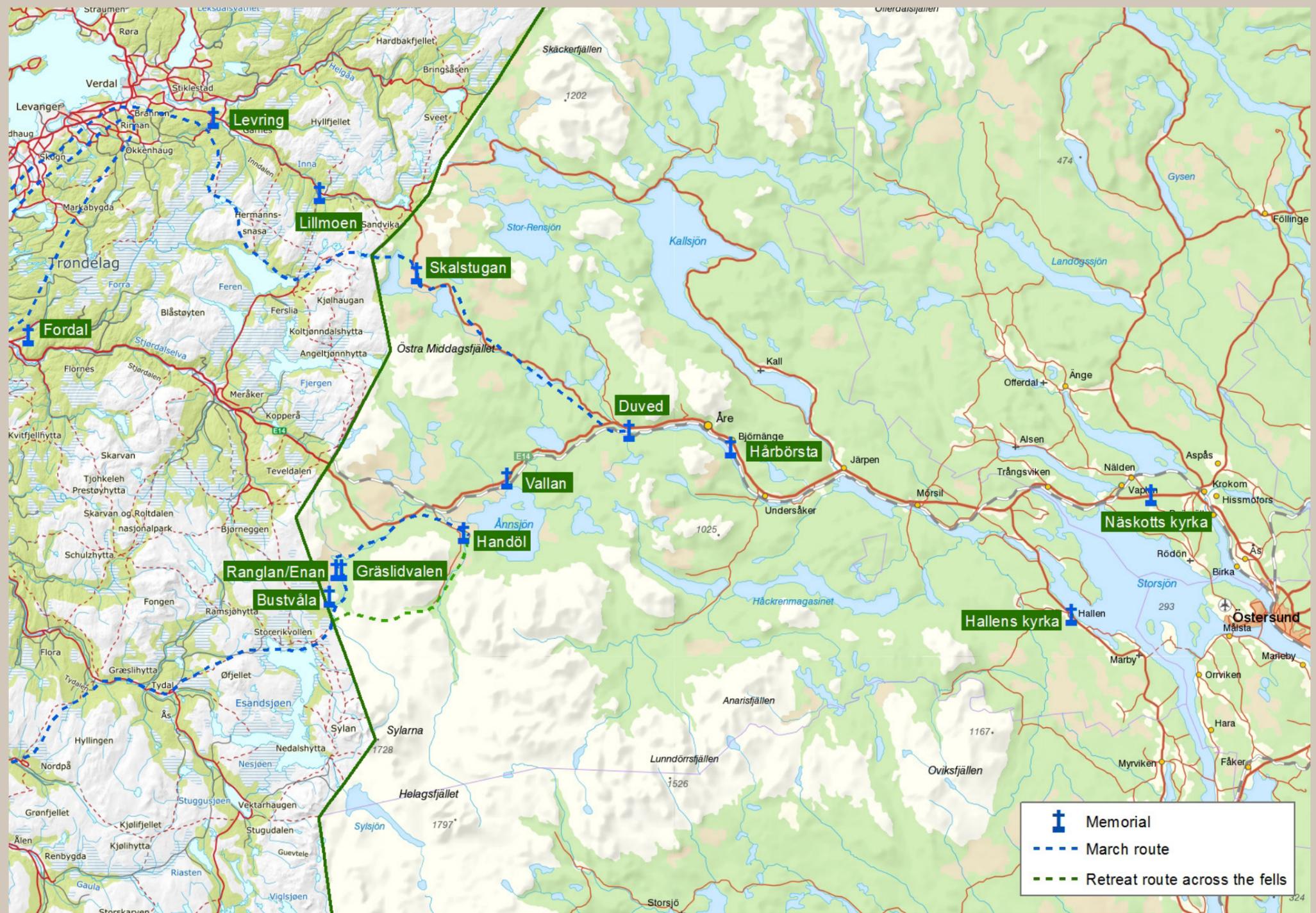
LEVRING AND STOR-INGVALD

The story of Stor-Ingvald is indeed a legend. At the time of the Swedish attack on Stene skans, Ingvald Pedersen of Frol was one of those injured. He is said to have managed to make it to the nearby farm Levring gård, where he fought his last battle. Swedish soldiers had pursued him and in order to stop him they chopped off both his feet. 'Stor-Ingvald' continued fighting however and in his last few minutes he is said to have fought on standing on his stumps on the stairs of a cabin on the farm. He managed to fell several Swedes before finally dropping to the ground and dying.

In 1901 a memorial stone was raised in his memory at Levring gård.



The memorial stone over the fallen dragoon Ingvald Pedersen at Levring gård. Photo: Anders Hansson.



 Memorial
 March route
 Retreat route across the fells

MEMORIAL STONES AT FORDAL

One of the main characters in the campaign on Norway was Captain Peter Långström, who was the commander over a Finnish so called Free Company, often used for reconnaissance jobs in hostile territory. Långström became something of a legend; his reputation claimed that in order to kill him, like King Karl XII, a silver bullet would be required.

However a silver bullet was not necessary; at the point of planning a new raid on Trondheim Långström and his men set off on 21 November 1718 towards Sweden to deliver important mail to the king. On their route to Stene they were resting at the farm Fornes in Fordal (Forradalen), while the local peasants were waiting in ambush nearby. In the morning after, Långström was shot, and brought to the farm Lerfald where he died.

In 1931 the Finnish Independence Association raised a memorial stone to the fallen hero at Fordal, near the place where he was shot. The stone has an inscription in Finnish and Norwegian. In 1993 another memorial stone was added at the site by Grønseth Velforening, four metres from the first; however instead praising the Norwegians that perished at Fordal skanse during the battle.



The memorial to Captain Långström. Photo: Anders Hansson.

THE DEAD IN THE MOUNTAINS

In the area where the rivers Ranglan and Enan merge, between the peaks Bustvalen/Bustvola and Gräslidfjället, many soldiers died as a consequence of the freezing conditions during their retreat in the snowstorm across the mountains. There are three memorials in the area:

At Gräslidvalen is a cairn-like slate foundation bearing a tablet with an inscription (see the photo on the cover of this leaflet). Previously the memorial stood at the River Enan where it was erected in 1949, but in 1962 it was moved to the present site on a hill at the border of Mount Gräslidfjället east of the River Enan. The monument was built by Kamratföreningen Norrlands Artillerister, to the memory of those perished in the area.

The Bustvåla monument is situated on the peak of Mount Bustvalen/Bustvola. It consists of a high pylon (a narrowing stone foundation) and a granite cross at the top. There is a metal tablet with an inscription. The memorial was opened in August 1933 with pomp and circumstance.

South of the point where the rivers merge there is also a plain wooden cross in memory of the dead.



The wooden cross near the rivers Ranglan and Enan. Photo: Anders Hansson.

MASS GRAVES & MEMORIALS

There are further monuments and memorials on the Swedish side, in memory of fallen soldiers and specific individuals. Mass graves have been found in several places, from Handöl where those who survived the retreat across the massif arrived, to Vallan to the north of Lake Ännsjön and in Härborsta at Undersåker. These three places have memorials.

In Handöl the first monument was raised in 1911, at the point of the recovery of a soapstone tablet in a field with the mentioning of a Carolean mass grave. Once the grave was discovered in a different place, a new monument was raised there in 1940 (see photo of the official opening in 1941 on the back of this leaflet). The soapstone tablet is presently found in the chapel, Handöls kapell. Further additions to the Handöl monument were made in 1968 and 1989. The monument in Vallan was built in 1899, and the one in Härborsta in 1937.



The memorial at Vallan. Photo: Anders Hansson.

There are more memorial stones at Hallens kyrka, from 1964 to commemorate those fallen from Hallens Kompani, and at Näskotts kyrka to the memory of the three Carolean officers and the soldiers from Näskott who perished in 1719 (the stone was erected in 1958).

The memorial at Näskotts kyrka. Photo: Bengt Nordqvist, Jamtlis photographic archives.

