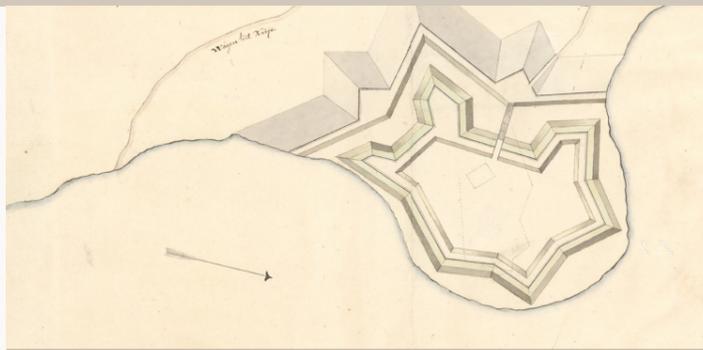


THE CAROLEAN CAMPAIGN

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.



SCONCES AND FORTIFICATIONS

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



Image above: Duveds skans in a drawing from 1710. From Riksarkivet.

Image front: Duveds skans. Photo: Jan Norrman / Riksantikvarieämbetet [CC BY 2.5 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.5>)], via Wikimedia Commons.

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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SCONCES AND FORTIFICATIONS

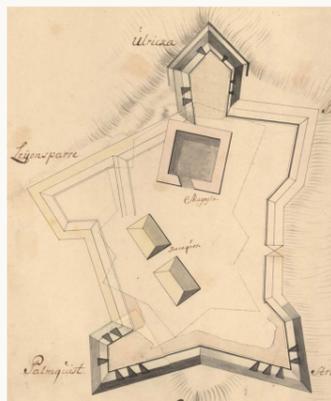
Travel guide



JERPE SKANS

The sconce Jerpe skans was one of the last outposts before the Norwegian border. All the soldiers, cattle, horses and transports passed through Järpen on the way to Duveds skans. In Järpen some preparations were made to avoid processing everything in Duved: some of the fat stock was slaughtered and parts of the provisions were left there. Jerpe skans was also the first collection point for all the horses needed. The initial order detailed that 3 000 horses were to be on site on 1 August, before the planned march on 4 August. This was easier said than done and the departure was delayed. The problem of procuring enough horses meant that the entire campaign was postponed, and that the army left Duved with insufficient provisions while horses and draught animals were already in poor condition.

The sconce consisted of two sections, one fortification at the bridge abutment and another one, 100 metres above on a hill. There was a covered footbridge between them. The sconce was built in 1670, and then added to at various stages. It was mounted with ten 3-pound and ten 6-pound cannons (1 pound = 0.425 kilo, the weight of the cannon ball). A little further downstream there was an older sconce, possibly built already in 1612.



Jerpe skans, drawing from 1713. From Krigsarkivet.

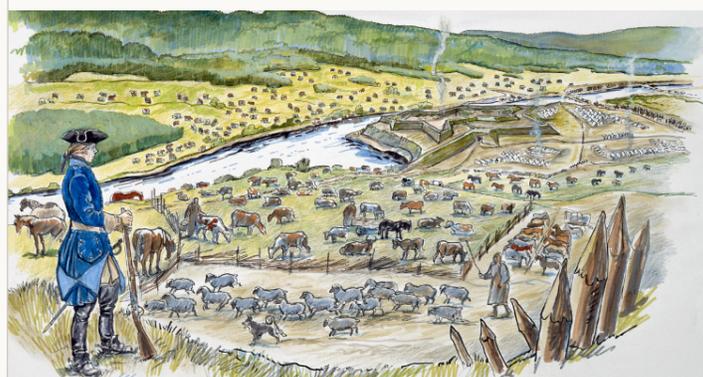
In 1912 a granite monument was erected on this site, on the initiative of Station Inspector Algot Rehn in Järpen. In 1993 Norrlands Artilleriregemente added a commemorative tablet to the monument.

DUVEDS SKANS

Duved was intended to see the gathering of Armfeldt's army and the departure of the campaign on Trondheim on 4 August 1718. This was also where the large amounts of equipment, provisions, horses and feed were to be brought since the main store was situated at Duveds skans. It is difficult to imagine what it would have looked like in Duved – at the time only consisting of three farms – and its surroundings that was accommodating more than 10 000 soldiers, 6 800 horses and 2 500 fat stock. The men were to carry enough food to last them for six weeks; the time estimated that it would take to advance to Trondheim and occupy the city. The departure was delayed for two weeks and only started on 18 August, which meant that upon departure about one third of the six weeks' provisions had already been consumed.

Duveds skans was strategically situated by the River Indalsälven and the road to Norway (see image on the cover). The sconce was built in 1700, refurbished in 1710 (see drawing on the back), and repaired and reinforced in 1717. At that time it was mounted with four 18-pound cannons and eight 3-pounders, as well as two 30-pound mortars. Unconfirmed data indicate that an older sconce from the mid-1600s may have been situated on a hill 500 metres to the east of the 18th century sconce.

On the hill where the 17th century sconce may have been situated is nowadays the Swedish main monument commemorating Armfeldt's campaign, since 1892. There is a monument also on the site of the 18th century sconce, erected in 1993.



The camp area at Duveds skans. Illustration by Alf Lannerbäck.

LÅNGÅ SKANS



Långå skans. Photo: Jan Norrman, Riksantikvarieämbetet, CC BY 2.5, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=62862718>.

In preparation for the campaign, additional stores were created at several other sconces, among them at Långå skans by the River Ljusnan in Härjedalen. The sconce was situated some 70 km from the Norwegian border, on one of the possible attack routes. Built in 1700 the sconce replaced an older one from 1658 which was situated a few hundred metres to the south-west of the new one. Långå skans was not particularly large but well mounted with two 6-pound and six 3-pound cannons.

The attack route to Trondheim was finally determined to run via Skaltugan to Verdal and Levanger, and Långå skans was not involved in the initial stage of the war. During the retreat, when Armfeldt led his army southbound via Haldalen, Långå was prepared to accommodate soldiers. At the point when Armfeldt gave the order to destroy the sconce in Røros he specified that gunpowder, weapons and copper should be confiscated and sent on to Långå skans.

It was also from Långå that General Aide-de-camp Marks sent the letter to Lieutenant General de la Barre in Røros and also to Armfeldt, informing of the death of King Karl XII. At that time Armfeldt had already arrived in Haldalen, and the main body had started walking across the mountains. In Sweden it was still not clear which route the army had chosen, so orders were given to move the provisions and the feed remaining in Långå to Funäsdalen, nearer the border.



STENE SKANS

Stene skans was mainly in use between 1611 and 1720. The sconce was situated across the valley by the River Inna in Verdal, and constituted a strong fort. In the vicinity of the sconce were abatis (barriers of logs and similar), and in principle this meant that the Norwegians had closed all the routes past Stene. As Armfeldt was approaching there were 200 men at the sconce, and another 700 reserves. There was also a small field artillery of 3-pound cannons. Norwegian troops were also posted at abatis and at other strategic points. Despite this the Swedes managed to slip up and surround the sconce. The sconce was taken on 1 September 1718 without any serious losses for the Caroleans (one dead and two injured) – but around 20 Norwegians died during the attack. Armfeldt now had the opportunity to send for provisions from Sweden and had established a useful base on Norwegian soil from which he could plan the continued march on Trondheim.

At the end of the war, at the time of the Caroleans' retreat, the sconce was burned on 30 December 1718 (it is now reconstructed in part); large quantities of provisions went up in smoke: more than 53 tonnes of bread, 150 barrels of grain and 1½ tonnes of meat. This was to avoid the provisions falling into the enemy's hands, but it must have been a disastrous sight for the starving local population that had seen their stored food being confiscated.

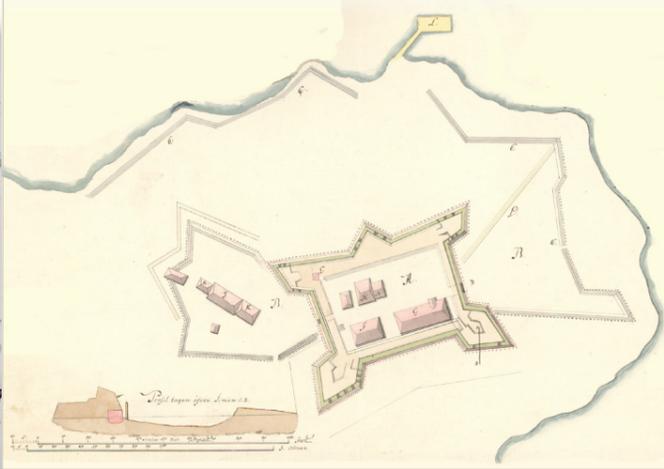


Stene skans from the east. Illustration by Alf Lannerbäck.

SKÅNES SKANS

After resting for a day at Stene skans Armfeldt's army marched on towards Skånes skans on 3 September. Skånes is situated about 20 km from Stene on a peninsula in the Trondheim fiord, half way between Stiklestad and Levanger. In its oldest version, it was built during the war between Denmark and Sweden, 1643–1645. The sconce played a part in Trondheim's peripheral defence and also served as storage for the troops defending the border during the Great Northern War in the 18th century. The sconce was well designed and mounted with four minor cannons of 4.5 pounds. Lieutenant Colonel Cronstedt who in 1718 produced the drawing below, stated that it was manned by "130 farmer dragoons and other farmers". Jöran Nordberg who in the 1730s started his narrative of the history of King Karl XII describes that the sconce was manned by 150 farmers, one artillery lieutenant, five constables and a farmer captain.

Armfeldt's army reached Skånes skans in the evening, and since it was far mightier than the defending force the Norwegians capitulated instantly. The Swedes found a rich bounty here: in addition to the cannons and gun carriages, ammunition and tools there were also good stocks of provisions. The men rested here overnight and resumed the march on Trondheim the following day 4 September in good mood.



Skånes skans, drawing from 1718 (revised). From Krigsarkivet.

KRISTIANSTEN FÄSTNING

Kristiansten Fortress was built in 1682–1684 at the time of reconstructing Trondheim following a major city fire. It was designed as a star-shaped fort, surrounded by a main tower 'the Donjon' and other features. The fortress was expanded to its present shape in the 1740s.

Trondheim was the planned final destination for Armfeldt's Carolean Army. The city is laid out on the southern shores of the Trondheim fiord, and to the north the inlet was protected by the fortification on Munkholmen Island. The River Nidälven also served as a defensive element for the city while the two other approach routes were supervised by Västerskans sconce at the western gate and by Kristiansten fortress at the city bridge to the east. Once the Norwegians became aware that the Swedes were approaching it was decided that 300 men would be posted at Munkholmen with another 800 men at Kristiansten. At the same time it was determined to destroy all the buildings in the Bakklandet section of the city outside the city wall next to Kristiansten; a drastic measure that devastated the poor civil population already hit hard by the shortage of food and other provision caused by the war. The high water level in the River Stjørdalsälven put an end to the march on Trondheim, and the start to the catastrophic defeat of the Carolean army.



The Donjon at Kristiansten fortress. Photo: Lennart Adsten.