WHERE DID ALL THE SOLDIERS GO? -
An analysis of the Losses experienced by the Swedish Army
during the Great Northern War.

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Abstract in English

This study investigates the losses suffered by Swedish Army during the Great Northern War. It focuses on the Infantry soldiers of two Companies of the Dala Regiment. The focus of other studies has been on the officers corps, for which more information has previously available. This study concentrates on data which has recently been made available to the History department of Uppsala University. This data combines parish records with that from the Mönsterskrivning. In addition, this study provides a quarterly breakdown of the losses, so which informs the decision making process as to what the likely causes of the losses were. Previous assumptions have been that the greater numbers of losses were due to the location of the war, in eastern Europe, otherwise down to the poor condition of the winter quartering. By examining the losses against a background of the history of the Regiment and the month in which losses occurred, it is possible to reassess the truth behind these assumptions.

Abstract in Swedish

Denna studie undersöker den svenska arméns förluster under det stora nordiska kriget. Studiens fokus ligger på meniga soldater från två kompanier tillhörande Dalregementet. Tidigare studier har undersökt officerskåren, för vilken det funnits mer information. Denna studie är koncentrerad på data som nyligen tillhandahållits Historiska institutionen vid Uppsala universitet. Denna data är en kombination av information från kyrkböcker och Mönsterskrivningen. I denna studie så har förlusterna brutits ner kvartalsvis i syfte att förklara de mest sannolika orsakerna till förlusterna. Tidigare har det antagits att större delen av förlusterna berodde antingen på att krigsskådeplatserna låg i öst Europa eller på dåliga vinterkvarter. Genom att undersöka förlusterna tillsammans med regementets historia och de månaderna då förlusterna inskrevs så har det varit möjligt att ömvärdera dessa antaganden.
Acknowledgement

This would never have come about without the help of my Swedish teacher, Lisabet Johansson, who first showed myself and my fellow Swedish B students the possibilities available to us on completing our studies, then continued in her encouragement. It also would not have been possible without the support and patience of my husband and my children. I also wish to thank the staff at the History department of Uppsala University, especially all those involved in the Early Modern Programme but especially Peter Eriksson and Patrik Winton for their help and assistance throughout the process of writing a thesis.
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INTRODUCTION

‘So shall death for the most part come creeping ‘in filth, fever and pain, with the victim lying in his own bloody excrement on the rotting straw’. This was how Lena Huldén described the experience of the common soldier within the early modern western European theatre of war.\(^1\) It provokes an evocative picture as well as highlighting one of the common fallacies. In modern warfare, the term ‘battle’ is effectively a thing of the past, as conflicts consist of a continual series of engagements with the enemy or guerilla activities resulting in a greater number of losses. Losses occurring away from violent actions, although not frequent, require explanation. This modernist view is often projected back on the earlier times, so that assumptions are made of bloody battles laying waste hundreds if not thousands of soldiers. But the evidence suggests that Huldén provides a more accurate picture. This thesis will look more closely at a small number of the fallen men from the Swedish Army, who fought in the Great Northern War at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Whilst previous research has provided figures for the numbers who died, associated in particular to the officer ranks and with specific battles or to the general conditions, very little, if any, empirical data on the ordinary soldier has been provided to support these views. Through a close examination of records pertaining to two companies of the Dala Regiment, this deficiency begins to be redressed.

The Great Northern War was selected as the subject for this study for a number of reasons. The first reason is its location. It was a war in which Sweden was opposed by the Russians, the Danish and Saxony with occasionally the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which due to its internal politics and strife also occasionally supported Sweden. The war was not fought on one battlefield, or even in one country. It took place across a large part of northern Europe and into the Ukrainian Steppes then west across to Holstein-Gottorp before heading north into Norway, even infringing into Sweden. The choice of this conflict enables an assessment of the relationship between the losses and location.

The second reason was the impact of this particular war. The Great Northern War marked Sweden’s decline as a great power and also the rise of Russia. It had resulted from an effective challenge to Sweden’s power by the invasion of its territories by Denmark and Russia, and ended with the loss of Sweden’s Baltic provinces and its German possessions. It was a war which lasted over twenty years, many of which saw little activity. This enables an assessment of the losses to be made in the context of differing campaigns. Whilst there were periods of activity and battles

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\(^1\) Huldén, Lena, 2006, 9 ‘så skulle döden för de flesta dessutom komma krypande, ”i snusk, feber och smärta, med ofret ligande i sin egen blodiga avföring på rutten balm’.
such as Narva, Dorpat and Poltava, there were also many less frenetic periods, when the Swedish Army was marching or in quarters. This provides both a time-frame over which the losses can be measured and adds a cyclical nature to the activity of warfare.

The third and final reason is a matter of practicality. The Swedish records which form the basis of this study are unique. They are unique firstly because Sweden is possibly the only country to have kept such detailed records of its population from such an early point. Secondly, they are unique because of the way Sweden sourced its military service, through indelningsverket and ständiga knektehållet, and thirdly, related to this, is the development of the army administrative system in Sweden which undertook the recording of the information, following reforms in the early 17th century. These records form a rich and valuable source. Looking closely at them provides an insight into a particular aspect of life in the Early Modern Period, that of the routine of the ordinary peasant, not just as a soldier, but also of the community which provided support for him during his military service.

It is also due to reasons of practicality that that the Dala Regiment has been selected, as it is for this Regiment that information has been drawn together from a number of sources and transcribed. Although the records incorporate the whole of the Regiment, an examination of the entire Unit would be too large a sample to be used for a study at this level. It is for this reason that a selection of two Companies from the Regiment has therefore been made.

The losses to the Swedish Army from the Great Northern War are known to have been high, as was the case of warfare in general. However, the records have not previously existed in a form which has allowed such an in-depth study of losses as that undertaken within this Thesis. The losses were known and recorded for the officer levels, and assumptions have been made for the losses and causes of those losses among the foot soldiers. This thesis inaugurates a method and system by which the losses can be quantified and analysed.

A micro approach has been adopted in this thesis so that the focus is on the detailed situation within two companies of the Dala Regiment, those of Leksands (also known as Majorens kompani) and Gagnefs. A quantitative approach will be taken to the source data, drawing out numbers on losses and where possible, identifying when they occurred. This will then be combined with a literary secondary source which provides a description of the Great Northern War from the viewpoint of the Dala Regiment. The combination of statistical analysis of the records with a description not only of the activities but also some aspects of the daily life of the soldiers, allows for assessments to be made as to the probable cause of high losses. In addition, this study adds to our body of knowledge of Early Modern Warfare, particularly regarding

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2 Lindegren, 2000, 138
Sweden. As warfare was such a large part of life in the Early Modern Period, this therefore helps to extend our understanding of Early Modern society and will also extend our understanding of this aspect of life for the peasantry in Early Modern Europe.

**THE DICHOTOMIES - *Old Versus New - Sweden***

Research concerning the Great Northern War varies from the lives of key figures such as Charles XII, various battles, particularly that of Poltava, or diaries from the Carolinian soldiers. Jan Lindegren wrote an assessment of writings on Charles XII involving a critical analysis of the authors. He describes the changing attitude which developed at the end of the nineteenth century as grounded in a more ‘sophisticated use of history’. The works of Harald Hjärne are described as having led to research into a more scientific examination of the reign of the King, ‘moving away from the previous ideological, political or straight emotional contribution to the Charles XII debate’ to provide an historical fact based insight which had not previously been achieved. This then provided the basis for the development of the military training on strategy and tactics for the Swedish Military.³

The focus has moved away in the last few decades, not just in Sweden but in general, from battles themselves towards an overview of warfare and its effects. The focus is not just on those directly involved but also on those within the surrounding environment, both those who provided the soldiers and those who lived in the areas where the wars took place. The fact of war has become not the overarching focal point, but the background to the problems faced by society. In this way writings on the Great Northern War move from being detailed accounts through to an illustration within discussions on the development of weaponry or provisioning for an army on foreign soil, over a long period of time.⁴

One area which remains dismissed or minimalised is the subject of losses. To the Traditionalists, they are almost inconsequential, on a par with ‘it is not possible to make an omelette without breaking eggs’. Under this approach, war is an accepted component of life, so that there can be no progress without it, and as it is not possible to conduct a war without consequential casualties, then the losses are acceptable. To the Marxist school of thought, it is a misuse of the forces of production, in that the fit young men sent off to die in a war could have been more usefully employed feeding the population at home. Whatever the approach, the fact remains the same, losses are a consequence of war.

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³ Lindegren, 1992, 154

The general view of warfare in the Early Modern period is that losses were predominantly due to the environment and conditions the soldiers experienced whilst serving in the army, rather than actually due to the fighting. In his book, *The Military Revolution*, following a summary of Swedish losses during the 17th Century, Geoffrey Parker states that ‘there is much indirect evidence to suggest that a high proportion of those sent to serve in the armies abroad never returned’. Whilst acknowledging that the conclusion may be an over-estimate, Parker quotes the research of demographer Jacques Dupâquier, that ‘probably one out of every four or five soldiers who enlisted in early modern Europe died each year on active service’. Dupâquier’s conclusion was based on the assumption of a total military mortality rate of roughly ten times that experienced in battle. This is backed up by Oskar Sjöström who states that ‘the odds at surviving a short time’s service at war was poor’. 

C. O. Nordensvan describes the losses to the Swedish Army as comparable to that of the other armies. He describes the time delay in receiving replacement soldiers from Sweden as a problem, as this meant the army was rarely at full strength and was generally operating at two-thirds the number it was supposed to be, and of those, a large number were temporarily inoperative due to sickness. Nordensvan further discounts the supplies as a problem, as provisions, in Poland during the first half of the war, were adequate given the circumstances. Similarly the deaths cannot be attributed to battle losses, as battles were few and infrequent, whilst the long and sometimes quick marches can also be discounted, as they had the most effect on the horse-borne troops. He concludes then, that the reason for the high number of deaths can only be attributed to the poor, damp condition of the quartering and its unfamiliarity to the Swedish troops.

A more recent, much quoted, study has been conducted by Jan Lindegren. He constructed a ‘model of Analysis’, populated with information on the ‘population, conscription and feudal rents’ for the village of Bygdeå for the period 1620-1640. The purpose was to measure the impact on the society of the disruption caused by the periodic withdrawal of labour from the farming community for the Swedish wars. In addition, Lindegren conducted a comparative study of Swedish and Danish losses, which included the Great Northern War. Within this, he provides a summary of various studies, including that of Julius Mankell published in 1865, which quotes the losses to Sweden during the Great Northern War as approximately

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5 Expressed by Parker, 1988, 53 and, Sjöström, 2008, 98, to name but two examples.
6 Parker, 1988, 53.
7 Sjöström, 2008, 98.
8 Nordensvan, 1916, 129-130.
9 Parker (1988, 53) and Frost (2000, 207) to name just two.
10 Lindegren, 1980.
10,000 men each year, or 220,000 throughout, and of Gustav Evard Axelson, writing in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, who cast doubts on the reliability of the figures given in previous studies, and paints a black picture of the drain on society as a consequence of the losses.\(^{11}\)

Lindegren describes the studies of losses in the Great Northern War as divided by the two different methods used. One is a demographic study of gender and age, whilst the other is based on the calculation or estimation of the number of new recruits. He then investigates the recruiting and losses to the Army as a whole, comparing the Finnish and Swedish Battalions, the reserves against the main army and the losses to the cavalry compared with the infantry, which produces a figure of 143,000 Swedish soldiers lost during the whole period of the war, excluding the Officer and under Officer ranks and the Finnish soldiers.\(^{12}\) This study follows neither of Lindegrens outlined methods as its focus is not on the recruits but on the losses themselves.

Losses during fighting are easily understood. A fierce battle could account for hundreds if not thousands of deaths. Robert I Frost, in his discussion of war in Northern Europe, quotes the losses to the Russian Army following the battle of Narva in 1700, as 8,000 men and that 17,000 Swedish soldiers were taken prisoner following Poltava, 1709 whilst the overall losses to the Swedish Army are described as ‘an annihilation’.\(^{13}\) Descriptions like these are not generally found for the daily life of the army on campaign in Europe.

Oskar Sjöström describes the taking part in battles and storming of sieges as the extraordinary events of a soldier’s life so that the experience of serving in the army does not sound so dangerous. When not fighting, the life of a soldier is described as monotonous, with many days of marching or making camp either in whatever accommodation was available or else erecting tents and digging out latrines or sleeping out under the stars. In fact, Sjöström describes how the long periods of routine camp life, coupled with the general war-weariness, led many soldiers to suffer from melancholy and depression, possibly also becoming suicidal.\(^{14}\)

Provisions were carried with the army, with the daily rations were prescribed. This picture of a monotony, where boredom and war-weariness are the hardest things to cope with does not seem to fit with the picture of high losses. But a part, if not all, the Army had to be re-formed on three separate occasions in the space of six years. The high loss of life cannot be disputed, but the explanations behind this can be clarified.

\(^{11}\) Lindegren, 1992u, 150-151.
\(^{12}\) Lindegren, 1992u, 179.
\(^{13}\) Frost, 2000, 230 & 294.
\(^{14}\) Sjöström, 2008, 98-100.
Sven A. Nilsson within his description of the development of the Swedish State, records that fighting on foreign soil led to a high number of deaths among Swedish forces due to epidemics.\(^\text{15}\) This was in a period less than a century earlier, under Gustav II Adolf, during wars particularly against Denmark, Poland and Russia. Jan Glete describes the war against Poland, 1621-1629, as particularly disastrous to Sweden as so many soldiers died due to disease.\(^\text{16}\) Both Sweden and Finland had been badly affected by crop failures which were followed by epidemics, in the late 1690’s, so that although Glete cites disease as the problem to soldiers in the early seventeenth century, it could as easily have been a problem to the population as a whole.\(^\text{17}\)

The evidence is clearly there that the losses were high and also the suggestion that location is possibly the reason. By pinpointing the losses, then it should be possible to confirm or reject this conclusion.

**Old versus New – in the International Arena**

Incorporated within this thesis is the use of modern statistical methods against a background of the analytical structure provided by the more modern works of Geoffrey Parker, Jeremy Black, and Jan Lindegren et al, combined with the rhetoric of a traditionalist military historian, to identify and analyse when the losses occurred and why. Whilst the traditionalists focus on the detailed description of events, the modern historians concentrate on the broader context. The difference is best illustrated by a brief comparison. Taking Gustaf Jonasson’s account of the Närke Regiment as a traditionalist account, and focusing on the early years of the Great Northern War from just after the battle of Narva, Jonasson provides a chronological description. He details the location of the King and the Regiment for the winter quartering and the replacement of those killed during the recent battle, including the communications between the headquarters in Livonia, the Regimental Commander back in Sweden and the Landshövding. This is followed by an account of the new recruits marching from Örebro, their distribution between companies and the division of the Regiment between Sweden and the Baltic. The next paragraph focuses on the King and the motivation behind the next campaign, with the third paragraph detailing the plan being put into action.\(^\text{18}\)

In contrast, Geoffrey Parker provides an account of the Army of Flanders in the mid-16\(^{\text{th}}\) to mid-17\(^{\text{th}}\) Centuries. Instead of a chronological account, Parkers account is divided into sections covering such subjects as ‘Assembling an Army: the problem of distance’ and

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\(^{15}\) Nilsson, 1990, 283

\(^{16}\) Glete, 2002, 206.

\(^{17}\) Lindegren, 2000,132

\(^{18}\) Jonasson, 1989, 200. This account has been selected because it is more recent than Anton Pihlström’s history of the Dala Regiment, although the format is almost identical.
‘Maintaining an Army: the problem of resources’. Parker deals with the problems encountered, particularly for the Spanish controlling the Army of Flanders, separated by the country of France. In dealing with these problems, the account also provides background information, for instance to the development of road systems in Europe.20

The more modern military historians are less focused on the day to day activities and more orientated to the larger problems and their solutions which, although in this instance are grounded within the military genre, provide a wider understanding of the development of society. The modern military historians are more concerned with the situations faced by society, how they were overcome and what the implications are for the development of modern society. These authors describe war in general but do not become entangled within the detail.

This Thesis uses modern technology, against the structure of the more modern authors, whilst also drawing on a traditionalist narrative description to fill out the detail of the causes of losses to the Swedish Army in the Great Northern War.

West versus East
The location of the larger part of the Great Northern War, i.e. Poland and the border lands of Russia, means that the enmeshment between western and eastern Europe is brought sharply into focus. Sweden was faced by at least three Armies, that of Denmark, Saxony and Russia, but also had to deal with that of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The east/west divide can clearly be drawn between Denmark and Saxony as western, whilst Russia is clearly eastern. The dividing line for eastern Europe was the eastern border of what was the Holy Roman Empire, leaving Poland within the realms of the east. Sweden, isolated from mainland Europe by the Baltic, whilst neither eastern nor western, had the advantage of being able to select what it considered most apt from each.

Whilst there already exists a considerable body of knowledge on warfare, much of it is based on Western and Central Europe and extrapolated to the areas for which little has yet been researched. Jeremy Black, *European warfare in a Global context, 1660-1815*, describes warfare in general, but also divides it into smaller periods. He highlights the problem of defining ‘the west’, illustrated with different versions of French predominance and the contrast between ‘the West’ in a European context against a Global context.21 Within his introduction, Black summarises the

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19 Parker, 1972.
20 The road systems were built primarily for commerce, but in Spain’s case, some routes were improved for use by the military. Parker, 1972, 70.
problem in that historians writing descriptions of western warfare adopt one or two examples based on best practice and apply them throughout.\textsuperscript{22}

In a prior publication, Black cites developments in weaponry as the reason behind changes in tactics. The replacement of the pike by the newly developed socket bayonet meant that the Armies gained more infantry fire power, and improved manoeuvrability. This then led to a decline in the importance of the cavalry in most European armies.\textsuperscript{23} Black states that the focus on European Warfare in the early modern period has always been on Germany, Italy and the Low countries, where the greater part of campaigning took place, so that less attention is given to the ‘more mobile warfare characteristic of eastern Europe and of extra-European operations’.\textsuperscript{24}

Similarly to Black, Geoffrey Parker in his book ‘The Military Revolution – Military innovation and the rise of the West, 1500-1800’, makes reference to northern Europe, and quotes Jan Lindegren’s research on Bygdeå, but then concentrates mainly on Spain, France, England, German and the Low Countries.\textsuperscript{25} He describes how in the mid-seventeenth century, there were still very few bastions in central Europe and that wars fought on the eastern half of the Great European plain were deeply resistant to military innovation. Within his contribution to The Military Revolution Debate, Parker states that ‘military geography shaped strategy’. He describes how ‘where bastions were absent’ the cavalry remained important, as siege warfare was irrelevant, and quotes Europe’s Steppes frontier in illustration of this.\textsuperscript{26}

Ronald G. Asch in his account of the Thirty Years War, describes the changes which occurred in the early seventeenth century concerning military technology.\textsuperscript{27} He cites the nature of the environment as the limiting factor, comparing Germany with its agrarian society against the more commercialized society of the Dutch Republic, which had the greater part of its wealth, and consequently the area which it most wanted to defend, enclosed within walls.\textsuperscript{28} The environment of Germany is comparable to that of eastern Europe and therefore Asch’s description of warfare is applicable to much of the area which provided the theatre for the Great Northern War.

Robert I. Frost, The Northern Wars 1558-1721, develops the argument regarding the nature of the environment, both social and physical, as a limiting factor upon the technology used against the area of northern and eastern Europe. For instance, the Cavalry were virtually

\begin{small}
\textsuperscript{22} Black, 2007, 14-15.
\textsuperscript{23} Black, 1995, 97.
\textsuperscript{24} Black, 1995, 107.
\textsuperscript{25} Parker, 1996.
\textsuperscript{26} Parker, 1995, 43.
\textsuperscript{27} Asch, 1999.
\textsuperscript{28} Asch, 1999, 55.
\end{small}
redundant in siege warfare but remained central to operations in eastern Europe.  

Whilst the Cavalry’s role on the battlefield may have diminished, it remained important in the undertaking of reconnaissance, the seeking out ‘Contributions’ and in skirmishes and harassment of the enemy.  

It also had a role in pursuing the fleeing enemy following engagement in battle.  

Frost continues his analysis, stating that western military methods were not always appropriate in the different conditions of the East. The adaption, rather than the adoption, of western methods was the key to success, with the employment of western methods by the Saxon Army cited as the reason for its failure.  

However, the Polish-Lithuanian Army had developed new ways of using the cavalry to take account of the new military technology, so that it was integrated with the new infantry firepower.  

The Polish cavalry charged in waves, charging between rounds of fire by the enemy, one wave firing then wheeling away to the rear while the next wave came in to fire. They also charged at a gallop against infantry armed with pike and shot.  

It was not that the nature of warfare in eastern Europe was totally different to that of the west.  Many of the combatants had been influenced or even trained within western Europe, and the mercenaries employed throughout Europe at one point or another would have brought their experiences with them to the battle field, leading to knowledge transfer. However, what was applicable was used and what was not was either adapted or discarded.  

Whilst the Swedish Army was often regarded as western, it did not fight as western armies were supposed to.  Jan Lindegren describes the Great Northern War as witnessing a crossover of roles for the cavalry with the traditional allocation of tasks.  

Frost describes how the cavalry was used by the Swedish to protect the flank and prevent the troop being attacked from the rear and how the Swedish Army under Charles XII remained armed with pike despite its fall from fashion in favour of the bayonet and flintlock elsewhere.  

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29 Frost, 2000, 275.  
30 The abstracting of provisions and supplies from the local community, to support the Army based in their territory.  
31 This is deduced from Pihlströms accounts on the use of cavalry, both by Sweden and Sweden’s enemies - Pihlström, 1906, 107-8, 136, 142, 214 are just some examples.  
32 Larsson, 2009, 67.  
33 Frost, 2000, 312.  
34 Frost, 2000, 311.  
35 Frost, 2000, 64.  
36 Lindegren, 1992u, 160.  
37 Frost, 2000, 274.
THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As outlined within the introduction, this Thesis will examine the losses within the contexts of time, space and location. It will answer the following questions.

- **What were the Losses?**
The records are scrutinised and information on when losses occurred are extracted to provide a simple count. Using information which is known, such as the number of ordinary soldiers which a company should contain, in conjunction with this derived material, allows for an assessment of the strength of the units to be made. Whilst this may seem straight forward, the records were not originally made for this purpose so that a number of assumptions have had to be made in the interpretation of the information.

- **Did the losses vary in different stages of the war?**
For the sake of simplicity, this Thesis breaks the Great Northern War down into three stages. These fall neatly into the war prior to Poltava, the period between the re-forming of the Army following Poltava until the defeat at Tönning and thirdly the period which covers the Norwegian campaigns. It is therefore possible to assess the losses in each of these sections to draw conclusions regarding variations within these different stages.

- **Did the losses vary in accordance with the differing theatres of war?**
This is related to the previous question. As well as assessing the losses during the different stages of the war, it is also possible to assess the impact of the differing theatres of war. For instance, the second section covers activities within Sweden as well as in northern Europe. This means that it is possible to draw conclusions regarding the location of the Army and the impact on losses. From this an assessment can be made as to whether it was more hazardous to be fighting in eastern Europe as opposed to central Europe.

- **To what extent was the Swedish recruitment system able to meet the requirements of the army?**
Having measured the losses, an assessment of the extent to which the Swedish recruitment system was able to meet the needs of the army can be made. Conclusions can also be drawn on the possible impact on society as a whole, from the demographic information for instance on the age of the recruits and their length of service.

An area which is not addressed within this study is the fate of those who were injured and dismissed during the Great Northern War. Although the records allows for a count to be made of those dismissed or discharged, the information does not allow for a comprehensive
assessment of the reasons for dismissal, nor did it allow for following up on what happened to the soldiers beyond their departure from the Army.

Whilst research has previously been conducted into losses, it is generally presented as overarching figures, for example given a percentage for the losses during the war or else it is for the whole Army. Within this thesis, the focus is on those who were drafted into the Army, i.e. the ordinary soldier or infantry man. The figures are broken down, firstly by year and then by month. Matching this back to the activities the Regiment was engaged in, enables an analysis of the possible reasons for the losses to be undertaken, thus providing a clearer understanding of the realities of eighteenth century warfare, rather than sweeping statements such as the losses being due to the damp, unhealthy conditions of winter quarters.

**DALARNA AND THE REGIMENT**

The focus of this Thesis is the losses suffered by a part of the Dala Regiment. The name, Dalarna, translates as ‘the dales’. Situated just north of central Sweden, it stretches south-easterly from the Norwegian border in the west, to 90km (measured in a straight line, from the current Dalarna border to Gavle) from the Baltic at its most southerly point. It borders the Scandinavian mountain range in the north, and stretches down to pasture land in the south. The terrain was such that, following the failure of the first Norwegian campaign in 1716, the commanding officers were sent on a tour round Dalarna as well as the more northerly county and province of Jämtland and Härjedalen so that they would be more familiar with what could be expected in Norway in future campaigns.\(^38\)

Dalarna became a county in its own right, with its own County Governor, following an Instrument of Government, in 1634. In the early eighteenth century, it was an area which provided some of Sweden’s most important exports, through the mines of Falu. The copper and iron, as well as providing an income from exports, also meant that Sweden was self-sufficient in the provision of armaments. The mines were important enough to merit their own regiment, Kopparberget, which remained to defend the mines throughout the Great Northern War.

Apart from the mines, Dalarna was generally a very poor agricultural area, with primarily subsistence farming. An agricultural community, its men were of the land.\(^39\) Martin Linde, within his book *'I Färdens spår? Bönder och överhet i Dalarna under 1700-talet'* describes Leksands as an extremely large parish, approximately 4 times as large as a well-populated parish in the Askers Härad which he compares Dalarna against. He describes the peasants as mostly *Skattebonde*, which meant that they owned their smallholding and were able to leave it to their family, as

\(^{38}\) Hansson, 2003, 22.

\(^{39}\) Linde, 2009, 9-11.
opposed to a small holding which would return to the Crown, on their death. However, the small holding had a surplus of manpower, some of which was taken up by the copper mines, otherwise a large amount of the population became involved in seasonal work, particularly travelling down to Stockholm, where they were mainly engaged in timber work. Whilst Linde’s description focuses on Leksands, the surplus of manpower is applicable to the area as a whole.\(^\text{40}\)

Although these farmers are described as landowning, they were still unlikely to have had much wealth. Ownership of the property gave the peasants a right to representation within the \textit{riksdag}, although during this period, as the \textit{riksdag} was not called, this right was redundant. Martin Linde, within his discussion of society in the Dala region, describes how, as the area did not have a local Lord, the landowning farmers had recourse to the \textit{Landshövdingen} for complaints, for example if the burden of providing recruits was considered too difficult to meet.\(^\text{41}\) The peasants’ wealth was quite probably very little more than the farm and, in an area where there was a shortage of good farm land, then the size of each property was limited.

Martin Linde attributes the warlike nature of the men of Dalarna to their history, to a time when the local societies were more inclined to rebellion. The size of the Dala parishes was such that a large number would gather after the Church Service each Sunday, providing a fertile ground for discontent to be expressed and developed, whereas in other areas, parishes were much smaller and this did not occur.\(^\text{42}\)

Although warlike in nature, the men of Dalarna were loyal to the Crown.\(^\text{43}\) Linde quotes Bjarne Beckan as stating that the people of Dalarna have an unbroken revolutionary tradition to fall back on.\(^\text{44}\) He then follows the origins of this tradition, before dismissing it as an urban myth, a creation of a matter of decades rather than centuries. However, there remained something which set Dala Regiment apart from that of Närke and from many other regions.\(^\text{45}\) The Dala Regiment was reputed to have been favoured by the Crown, throughout its history. Peter Englund, in his description of the Battle of Poltava, describes the Dala Regiment as ‘one of the army’s finest......an elite, looked on as a kind of unofficial guard’.\(^\text{46}\) Where terrain and time allowed for the forming up of the army in preparation for battle, the Dala Regiment were regularly placed on the left flank. At Kliszow, they were placed to the left of the left section of infantry, close to the left flank of cavalry, ahead of three other battalions.\(^\text{47}\) Later at Malatitze,

\(^{40}\) Linde, 2009, 26-34.
\(^{42}\) Linde, 2009, 13.
\(^{43}\) Linde, 2009, 9.
\(^{44}\) Linde, 2009, 110 (Beckman 1930, 200 ”fanns det en obruten revolutionär tradition att falla tillbaka på”).
\(^{45}\) Linde, 2009, 127.
\(^{46}\) Englund, 2003, 111.
\(^{47}\) Pihlström, 1906, 89.
the Dala Regiment is the first infantry regiment to go to the aid of Commander Roos when his battalion came under attack from the Russians.\textsuperscript{48} Prior to the battle of Poltava, men were chosen from among the Dala Regiment, as well as the Gardet, Västmanlands and Kalmar regiments, to prevent Russian soldiers from leaving the fortress.\textsuperscript{49} And at both Poltava and Gadebusch, the Dala Regiment were positioned to the left of the Infantry lines.\textsuperscript{50}

The soldiers had a reputation as woodmen, although a picture of the area shows it to be denuded of woodland.\textsuperscript{51} This was due to the timber being required to shore up the mines as they were developed and to keep them open. Although the importance of the mines would have exempted mine workers from military service, the skills were still common among the men of the area. The absence of carpentry skills was significant enough to merit being recorded within the source material.\textsuperscript{52} The Dala Regiment therefore formed a large part if not the whole of the engineering section of the Army, the section which undertook any building work required, particularly that of building pontoons and bridges.\textsuperscript{53}

The \textit{indelningsverket} system had been trialled earlier in the century, within Dalarna, as the existing conscription system was slow to provide new recruits.\textsuperscript{54} The poverty of the region and shortage of land was such that the Dala \textit{rote} were exempted from providing a house. Instead their soldiers were provided with accommodation within a household from the \textit{rote}, and supported by them. As this was still not likely to recruit a soldier, and also to avoid the possibility of the soldier running away, the Dala \textit{rote} agreed to provide one of ‘their own’.\textsuperscript{55}

Pihlström includes correspondence from Landshövding Gripenhielm to the defence commission, 1704, to support the Regions difficulties in supplying recruits for the war. It states that the larger number of the men were not suitable as soldiers due to the fact that they had been engaged in hard work in the forests since early childhood and that when a healthy fit man was found, it usually turned out he was unsuitable because he was troubled by some passion.\textsuperscript{56} It is not possible to be categorical as to whether this was truly the case or simply a reply to accusations of failing in his duty as Landshövding, without further investigation. However as the Regiment

\textsuperscript{48} Pihlström, 1906, 175.
\textsuperscript{49} Pihlström, 1906, 184.
\textsuperscript{50} Pihlström, 1906, 189, 216.
\textsuperscript{51} ‘Utsikt av Mora från Öster’ by Gustaf Wilhelm Palm, 1855, commissioned by King Oscar I.
\textsuperscript{52} From Gagnefs, Pär Larsson from Duva rote, Pär Olofsson, Klipp rote and Pär Andersson, Räf rote and from Leksands, Daniel Pehrsson, Gothe rote, Pehr Ersson Skytt rote and Daniel Mårtensson, Pihl rote are just a few of the examples of soldiers recorded as ‘\textit{kunde inget hantverk}’.
\textsuperscript{53} Although Dalarna has a number of rivers and Lake Siljan and the soldiers were heavily engaged in bridge building, as a general rule the men could not swim and were forbidden from bathing in the lakes and rivers. Larsson, 2009, 163.
\textsuperscript{54} Pihlström, 1906, 1.
\textsuperscript{55} Pihlström, 1906, 21.
\textsuperscript{56} Pihlström, 1906, 10.
were heavily employed through the war in wood craft, and the fact of a soldiers inability with
handcraft was worthy of a mention within the prime documents suggests that there is some truth
to this.

**MAINTAINING AN ARMY -**

*Recruitment and Training in General*

As the requirement for larger and larger Armies grew in the Sixteenth century, the general trend
within Europe was to engage a military contractor to find the required number of soldiers
needed. This system did not allow for the training of recruits prior to joining the army, therefore
new recruits came to the battlefield unprepared. Jeremy Black describes the main reason for drill
and discipline being required because of the situation the soldiers were in, with the enemy fairly
close, and the limited effectiveness of weaponry. The soldiers would have been frightened and
under stress, but needing to repeat the action of reloading their firearms whilst the battle
continued.57

An alternative to the military contracting system was the use of mercenaries. This meant
the hiring in of trained soldiers, ready to fight. Mercenaries had formed a large part of the
Swedish Army through the Seventeenth Century, allowing the national army to take care of
defence of the homeland. Whilst the mercenaries provided a good offensive force, there was a
reluctance to venture into eastern Europe, where the conditions were perceived as much harsher
than that of western Europe.58 Again new mercenaries had to be found if the old ones failed,
but at least they were still trained soldiers. Once more, the loyalty was to the wage payer, and did
not last beyond the payment of wages, although Sweden, in an attempt to keep the experience,
generously rewarded many mercenaries with titles, land and permanent employment.59 However,
as Lindegren points out, maintaining an army of mercenaries over a long period of time was very
expensive.60

*Recruitment and Training in Sweden*

Sweden led the way in the introduction of a compulsory military service system, in the early
Seventeenth century. The Swedish Army had become a permanent establishment in 1634, which
meant that there was no longer a need for recourse to the riksdag each time an army was

58 Glete, 2006, 206.
59 Glete, 2006, 209. in contradiction of this, Geoffrey Parker describes how the Swedish Army mutinied during the
early seventeenth century to obtain its pay arrears (Parker, 1972, 17).
60 Lindegren, 2000, 134.
required.\textsuperscript{61} At its simplest, selection of a soldier or conscript was based on the male peasant population as a whole, not just on the households. Under this system, all eligible men between the ages of 15 and 60, were to present themselves at a meeting at which the conscript would be selected, on a basis of 1 out of every 10 men. Initially the division into groups of 10, or \textit{rotar}, was conducted during the meeting, but the system evolved until the men formed themselves into \textit{rotar} and selected (or recruited) their conscript.\textsuperscript{62}

Until 1679, Sweden had been engaged in war almost permanently. It was faced with paying off its creditors and a population who were resisting further conscription of soldiers. Whilst mercenaries had been used, they added to the debt which had to be paid following each war. The conscription system for obtaining soldiers, outlined above, had been under review since as early as 1641. It was reformed under Charles XI, 1682 as the new \textit{indelningsverket} and \textit{ständiga knutehållet} system. Under this typically groups of 2-4 peasant households were formed into a \textit{rote} which had responsibility for providing a soldier, supplying him with a house and small holding which would support him and his family in peace time. The \textit{rote} was also responsible for providing the soldiers clothing, and pay, including the initial recruitment fee. Typically, 150 \textit{rotar} provided the soldiers for one company, and 8 companies formed a regiment, giving approximately 1200 men.\textsuperscript{63} If the soldier was killed or discharged, the \textit{rote} had a duty to provide a new soldier within three months of official notification coming from the \textit{Landshövdingen}.\textsuperscript{64} The new recruit would need to be found before the next \textit{mönstermöte}, the regular meetings at which the recruits were either deemed as suitable or were rejected. However, even as the Great Northern War broke out, there was a need for extra men to defend the homeland. These extra men had to be provided by the already existing system, so that the \textit{tremännings} regiments were supplied by three \textit{rotar} joining together to provide an additional soldier and then when the \textit{femmännings} regiments were formed from 4 or 5 \textit{rote} joining together.

The more well-to-do peasants were responsible in the same way for providing the cavalry, with the formation of a \textit{rusthåll}, which provided for a cavalry man and his horse.\textsuperscript{65} In addition, outside the remit of the \textit{rote} and \textit{rusthåll}, for each regiment, there were a number of officers, including the Commanding Officer at the rank of Colonel, and a priest.

Sjöström, within his account of the Battle of Fraustadt, provides a brief description of \textit{indelningsverket}, stating the benefit of the system as it provided a ‘ready to fight’ army, which

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{61} Roberts, 1979, 56.
\item\textsuperscript{62} Lindegren, 1980, 300.
\item\textsuperscript{63} Whilst 150 \textit{rotar} was the ideal, with 1200 soldiers, these numbers varied across the country, from 1000 in Viborgs inf. Reg to 1674 in Närke o Värmlands inf. Reg. Roland Persson, \textit{Rustningar i Sverige under det Stora Nordiska Kriget}.
\item\textsuperscript{64} Sjöström, 2008, 95.
\item\textsuperscript{65} Sjöström, 2008, 95.
\end{itemize}
trained regularly during peace time in the art of war and camp life regardless of the season, in as realistic an environment as was possible, so that it was prepared for whatever awaited it in a war. This was in contrast to the conscription system which provided the soldier for the duration of the war. As each new conflict occurred, the soldier had to be pulled back from his community or else a new recruit found, losing any coherence and training which had been developed during the previous conflict.

**Formation and maintenance**

The battle formation for the Swedish Army, consisted of lines of infantry, flanked on either side by cavalry. The infantry were close packed, four rows of one hundred and fifty men in each, interspersed with musketeers and grenadier, wielding bayonets and hand-grenades. The cavalry rode similarly tight in to each other. This meant that the Swedish Army was perceived by its opponents as the most aggressive in Europe. In his account of the Thirty Years War, Ronald G. Asch describes the combination of ‘infantry with artillery, and of cavalry with both musketeers and mobile artillery’ as giving the Swedish Army some advantage. Whilst an ability to demoralise the enemy through sheer terror in the face of attack because of the attacking army’s aggression may gain some advantage, there is a point at which, if the aggressive looking army is hopelessly outnumbered, the smoke screen of aggression loses its impact.

Whilst Sweden had allies, for instance the English and Dutch navies assisted early on in the war, they were engaged in conflicts of their own, elsewhere in Europe. Although there were troops garrisoned, for instance in Riga, the Swedish Army was not large enough to leave garrisons in too many places. It could either leave troops defending Swedish Territory or supply depots or it could campaign, but it was not of a sufficient size to do both effectively. Although detachments of the Army did take part in activities away from the main Army, for example the requisitioning party which accompanied Stenbock, 1701–2, 1705, or a detachment of approximately 10,000 men remained with General Rehnskiöld in Western Poland whilst the King with the main Army moved south, the greater part of the Army remained together. New recruits were marched out to join the Army, but there was an understandable time delay between the position becoming vacant and a recruit reaching the Army.

The problem with losses was therefore the reduction in effectiveness of the Army. Whilst a small number of losses did not cause a major problem, these losses could rarely be instantly replaced. This meant that the losses accumulated, could not be replaced for at least three months

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67 Larsson, 2009, 68.
68 Larsson, 2009, 69.
69 Sjöström, 2008, 74.
and would thereby have an impact on effectiveness. Nordensvan describes the Swedish Army as generally operating at two-thirds of its required strength.

Even without the losses as a consequence of battle and illness, an Army has an ongoing requirement for new recruits, to replace men who become too old or develop a condition which prevents them being able to serve their King and country. Although a fixed end period to service was not given, the fitness of the men to continue as soldiers was taken in to account.

**SOURCE MATERIAL**

The source material for this Thesis is comprised of two elements. The first provides the prime data, whilst the second provides an account of the Dala Regiment during the Great Northern War. The two elements are then drawn together to provide an analysis of the losses and the possible reasons behind them.

The prime data consists of an extract of records, originally transcribed as part of a totally independent exercise undertaken by John Långberg and Ragnar Boman, who have generously made this data available for use within research. This data is a combination of records from a variety of sources, including parish and military rolls, providing as comprehensive a collection of information as the researchers were able to find. Whilst the origin of the Parish and muster records is known, the transcribers have incorporated information also gleaned from diaries and correspondence to incorporate as much information as possible. For this reason, it has not been possible to undertake a verification exercise. It would not have been possible to undertake the transcription exercise as a part of this thesis, so the limitations of documents not designed for its purpose has to be accepted. Some errors have become apparent within the transcribed material, for instance a soldier is recorded as dying in Elbing before his recruitment date and a similar error where a soldier was in Stralsund but is then recorded as being killed Tönning several months earlier. Whilst there are some obvious, recognisable errors within the prime source, given its comprehensiveness, these errors are minor (less than 1%) and therefore do not impact on the analysis. The dataset is as complete as was possible to derive from this source data.

The muster records were made at the time that each district held its *mönster* meeting to select the recruits for the army. The parish records were made by the village pastor and recorded information primarily for the purpose of accurate tax assessment and collection, such as the head

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70 Nordensvan describes how new recruits were sent out according to orders from the King, generally to meet with the rest of the army on either the beginning of May or of June. (1916, 131).
71 Nordensvan, 1916, 129.
73 Gagnefs, Sandlopare, 1704 and Närtergal, 1712
of household and its size. Whilst this Thesis is not concerned with tax, this source provides valuable information on those who were selected as soldiers.

The transcription exercise incorporated the infantry section of the Dala Regiment, throughout a substantial part of its history and covers the whole of the period for which Indelnigsverket was operating. The source records become more detailed over time, which suggests that more information was later required in the parish records, for example, from 1790, information on the recruits height was recorded.

The whole of the Swedish Army or even of the Dala Regiment (at approximately 1200 ordinary soldiers) is too large for analysis to be undertaken at Masters level, and it is for this reason alone that a choice of two Companies has been made. In addition, as this Thesis concentrates on the Great Northern War, the data covering soldiers serving between 1700 and 1720 has been extracted to create the dataset. Two Companies is a small fraction of the army. Whilst it is possible that the two companies suffered either higher or lower losses than two other Companies, unless such a study is conducted of every infantry regiment, then it is not possible to comment categorically on the representativeness of the selected sample.

Each Company consists of 150 rotar, therefore 150 transcript records. An extract from the record for Skalk rote, Leksands Company, is included below.

"Abraham Gustafsson Skalck, born around 1672 in Fagerberg in Rättvik, was recruited 1690, was previously a soldier with rote 22 Lilltysk with the Regiment and advanced 10 september 1695 to Corporal Skalck and 17 oktober 1700 to furir with the Company Tollet. Anm: He was married in Leksands Gråda.

Matz Jöransson Skalck, born 1663 in Husby, was previously the soldier for rote nr 3 Näbb with the Company and advanced 17 oktober 1700 in Estonia to Corporal with the Company. He was taken prisoner in Saxony but deserted 19 februari 1705 but deserted and returned 6 april 1705 from Saxon prison. He was discharged 15 maj 1707 with an allowance from the ‘Soldiers hostel’. He returned again as Corporal to the same rote."

As each rote supported one person, the soldier was known by the name of that rote. So taking the above example, Abraham would have been known as Skalck and would have taken the

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"Abraham Gustafsson Skalck, född omkring 1672 i Fagerberg i Rättvik, lejd 1690, var tidigare soldat för rote 22 Lilltysk vid kompaniet och avancerade 10 september 1695 till korpral Skalck och 17 oktober 1700 till furir vid kompaniet med släktnamnet Tollet. Anm: Han var gift i Leksands Gråda.

Matz Jöransson Skalck, född 1663 i Husby, var tidigare soldat för rote nr 3 Näbb vid kompaniet och avancerade 17 oktober 1700 i Estland till korpral vid kompaniet. Han blev krigsfånge i Saxen men deserterade 19 februari 1705 men deserterade och återkom 6 april 1705 från Saxisk fängenskap. Han fick 15 maj 1707 avsked med underhåll från Krigsmanshuset. Han lejdes senare åter till korpral för samma rote (se nedan). Anm: Den kyrkliga personalieboken anger felaktigt att han blev korpral 17 oktober i Sachsen.”
name ‘Tollet’ on his promotion to furir (eng. Sergeant), when Matz would have taken on the name Skalck. The information in the transcription record refers only to those soldiers at corporal and below. In Abraham’s case, his promotion to furir, a non-commissioned officer, would take him out of the dataset, so that it is not possible to follow his career from this source data, beyond this promotion, whilst Matz was recorded as a soldier, in the rote for Näbb, until 1700, but on his promotion would have been known as Skalck, and the responsibility of that rote until 1707, when he was replaced (Matz was discharged).

The account of the activities of the Dala Regiment is taken from a literary secondary source. Written by Anton Pihlström, at the beginning of the twentieth century, it used archived documents and correspondence between Charles XII, the defence commission and others as its basis. Pihlström’s work provides a history of the Regiment from 1542 through to 1721, but for the purpose of this Thesis, only the final section which deals with the Great Northern War has been consulted. Pihlström comes into the group of disciples of Harald Hjärne, writers involved in the development of the manuals for the general military staff on tactics and strategies. His writing of military history was intended to provide learning points to those who would lead future military campaigns and is that of the traditionalist military historian, with a concentration primarily on what happened, containing details of battles and a roll call of the officers involved. A large part of the narrative has therefore been discarded as not relevant, for instance the records of exactly what happened to each officer within the Regiment, and who was appointed to which post. However, the more specific areas of activities of the Regiment have proved an informative source. His work provides a comprehensive description of the war from the ordinary soldiers’ perspective. As his focus is the Dala Regiment, his description does not include events which the Regiment were not involved in, such as the battles of Fraustadt, 1706, and Helsingborg, 1710.

The information extracted from these two sources has been combined with the contributory causes to losses of Environment, Health and Supplies, to provide a thorough analysis of the losses suffered by the Leksands and Gagnefs companies.

**METHODOLOGY**

The methodology used in this thesis has involved the extraction and manipulation of information from the source data. Whilst in the modern scenario, this would simply be a matter of sifting through returns from the Front, recording each soldier’s career including illness, injury and promotions, such information was not recorded in the same way in the eighteenth century. Detailed information exists on officers, for instance Pihlström records that following Narva,

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75 Lindegren, 1992, 154-5.
Major Gustaf Fechtenberg and Captain David Klijssendorff among others were killed, whilst Colonel Stenbock received a foot injury and Captain Von Essen died from his injuries shortly after,\(^{76}\) whilst ‘Dalregementets personhistoria’ provides a comprehensive history of every officer, including parentage and education as well as marriage and references in correspondence.

However, such detailed information does not exist in such an official format for the greater part of the army, that which is comprised of the ordinary soldiers. Finding information on these men involves sifting through records such as those included above, and drawing out the information to suit a purpose for which it was never intended. The Långberg/Boman transcription exercise was not undertaken in order to highlight information on the losses, so it becomes very much an exercise of piecing small snippets of information together to form a more complete picture. This is not always possible, so that there are incidences in the records where the soldier is recorded as ‘NN’, and whatever information is available is recorded.\(^{77}\) There are also incidences where very little of the soldiers’ career is recorded, so that an entry would read as follows:

‘Påbr Hansson Glädie was selected 1709 and died 9 November 1710 of plague’.\(^{78}\)

A quantitative approach has been adopted for the analysis, which has imposed clear limits as to what information can be used and what must be discarded. For instance, the records provide personal information such as name. Whilst this has been recorded as a means of identifying the source record, it has very limited analytical use, and is therefore discarded within the final analysis.

Normally, the data structure is designed in advance of the data collection exercise, so that only the information required is gathered. The drawing up of the data structure as a post data collection exercise involved a degree of flexibility in the design with some information being later discarded or ignored. For example, using the above extract from the transcription records, the fact that Abraham became known as Tollet on promotion or the village where he was born has not been entered. The notes added by the transcriber have only been included when they could have relevance to this Thesis, otherwise these have also been excluded, but remain available in the source documents for cross-reference, where necessary.

The selected information has been taken from the transcribed records and entered into Spreadsheets to create a dataset of a total of 1878 records.\(^{79}\)

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\(^{76}\) Pihlström, 1906, 93.
\(^{77}\) N N Goliat avled 24 juli 1702 – An anonymous recruit from Goliat rote died 24 July 1702.
\(^{78}\) ‘Påbr Hansson Glädie värvades 1709 och avled 9 november 1710 i pesten’ Glädje rote, Gagnefs company.
The information which has been used provides the following variables:

- **Year of birth**, if known. This is one of the key areas which is not always recorded within the source data.

- **Age at time of recruitment**. This was not taken from the data, but calculated from the year of birth, where included in the information, to the year when service began. Where the date of birth has not been given, then the entry is left blank. The blank entries have not been included within the computation of Average Age information.

- **Year of Recruitment – this rote**. This is the year that the soldier was recruited into the rote. In some cases this can be misleading, because if the rote’s candidate was deemed unsuitable, a new candidate would have had to be found, but the original candidate has also been recorded in the Source Data. It can therefore appear that there were two soldiers serving at the same time.

  This variable also covers the date of transfer or promotion in to the unit. A promotion or transfer into the company was sometimes but not always matched by a corresponding promotion or transfer out, so that the position remained filled. Again, taking the example of Abraham and Matz, Matz was promoted from Näbb to Skalk, coinciding with Abrahams promotion to Furir. At this point, Skalk rote would have taken over providing for Matz, from the Näbb rote. However, cross-referencing with the Näbb entry, a vacancy is recorded from Matz promotion until the middle of 1701, so in this case there was not a corresponding transfer in. If a soldier was promoted or transferred out, then his length of service is calculated for his time with this unit only.

- **Year of end of service**. This is taken from the point at which the soldier is replaced, for example following his leaving military service, but could also be the date at which he left the rote, if promoted or transferred out.

- **Number of years of service**. This is calculated from the ‘year of recruitment’ and ‘year of end of service’ information.

- **Reason code**. This applies to the reason for the end of the soldiers’ service, and provides a tool for manipulating the data. The reasons used are either a number or a letter. This allows for the soldiers to be sorted into different categories. It is then possible to identify and count those who died and when. An additional indicator also allows for these men to be counted according to the month in which the death is recorded.  
  
  79 A choice of using Spreadsheets as the tool to manipulate the data was made as it provides a far simpler method of sorting and rearranging the dataset to provide the information for analysis.  
  
  80 A number is used for those who died, indicating during which period the death took place. Otherwise a letter or series of letters are used, so that if a soldier was taken prisoner and died in prison, he is noted as a Prisoner of War.
LOSSES

Before looking at the possible causes of losses and measuring the extensiveness of them, it is first necessary to define exactly what is meant by a loss. Whilst this may seem simple enough, it needs to be clarified, particularly with regard to those losses suffered within war. In his study of the whole of the Swedish Army, Lindegren produced a flow chart to show the possible ‘life cycle’ of a soldier. Figure 1 is a simplification of that, to show the possible ‘life cycle’ of an infantryman of the Dala Regiment.

The thickness of lines in figure 1 has been used to indicate the number of instances recorded. For instance, a the line between ‘Private’ and ‘Dead’ shows that far more soldiers died than became ‘Prisoners of war’. The dotted line shows that very few ran away, and only a small number of those who were discharged later returned to the Army. Similarly, a thin line has been used to show that not many of the Prisoners who returned, went back to the Army. The thicker lines show the more frequent flow of soldiers.

![Flow chart of a Dala Regiment's Infantry Man's Life, during the Great Northern War.](image)

UF indicates those soldiers whose fate is unknown. The exchange between Trossdräng and Private depended firstly on the soldiers’ size. Trossdräng were often boys, in their late teens, but

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(POW), rather than as a death. The other letters used are P if promoted, T if transferred to another unit, Di if discharged, K if dismissed, B if exchanged with a new recruit, U indicates that the reason for the end of the soldiers service is unknown while V indicates that the position was vacant at the münster.
could also be undersized soldiers. Also, at points where there was severe pressure on the Army, the Trossdräng were drafted in as support troops. The figure shows that the largest reason for soldiers leaving service was through death.

A loss can be seen as any soldier unable to fight. However this most simplistic of definitions would mean that those soldiers taken ill or injured but who then recover would count as losses. The definition of losses has to therefore be clarified to mean those unable to fight for a long enough period to require a replacement recruit.

‘Those who lived to tell the tale’ (TWL)

The fact of soldiers leaving their service due to ill health or old age has already been touched upon. On recruitment, a soldier was not given a prospective end date. However, Peter Ullgren describes how, in the first years of the war, Charles XII pensioned off or transferred out of active service a number of soldiers, particularly from his own Lifeguards Regiment.

Because of the reforms in the early Seventeenth century, a standing army had been in existence for some time. One example from the primary data is of a soldier from Leksands Company who had been a soldier since 1673, so that it was possible for men to have already been a soldier for many years without having been involved in active service. This example, Pehr Persson of Knipe rute, was aged 27 when he joined the army, so that at the outbreak of war, he would have been aged 54. He was among those discharged in 1700. Such soldiers have been grouped together as those listed as ‘Avsked’ or discharged. They differ from the next group because these soldiers’ service to the Crown was acknowledged and a pension may have been paid. Although such a discharge of staff was unlikely to happen again during the War, it was not impossible.

A second group are those soldiers who were discharged on the grounds of age or ill health, those who were ‘kasseras’ or dismissed. Within the records, the reason for this is not always explained. Whilst it could have been due to illness, it could also be due to old age and no longer suitable to service as a soldier. Unlike the previous group, any service to the Crown is not acknowledged, and a pension is not paid. Within the Analysis section these two groups have been combined as ‘dismissed or discharged’ soldiers, and labelled ‘D or D’.

A further group of soldiers who left service without being discharged were those who ‘Bytes ut’ or exchanged places with a new recruit. The primary reason for this is that, if a rute was unable

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81 Lindegren, 1992, 204. Lindegren describes the Trossdräng as functioning in part as a reserve to the army during the Great Northern War. They were commonly drafted in as soldiers while the sick or injured who could not march took care of the wagons.
82 For the sake of brevity, from this point on these are referred to as Group X.
to supply a recruit in time for the münstermöte after which the recruits would be marched out to join the army, then the head of the rote would be taken. As he was too important a member of the community to be lost in this way, the rote would find a replacement in his absence, and an exchange would be arranged. As the first soldier could not leave until his replacement arrived, this group has been excluded from the analysis.

‘Those who did not return’

In contrast to TWL, this group contains those who, at least in the short term, did not return to the army. It incorporates those recorded as having ended their war service through death or been taken prisoner (POW) and the ‘Unknown Fates (UF)’. The UF’s are those soldiers for which there is no identifiable reason for the end of service. A number of these soldiers appear purely as a recruit entry, and are assumed to have died, as a new recruit is then found, and no further mention is made of the preceding soldier.

These three categories of soldiers have been grouped together and are collectively known as ‘The Losses’. The UF’s will be incorporated within ‘the Losses’, but also highlighted as they can be of sufficient significance to distort the findings. Those POWs who survived to return to Sweden, although normally not until after the war, resumed their place in the rote so that the soldier serving in their place was either transferred to another rote or else dismissed. 84

Within an army, ‘the Losses’ would also include those who were lost or ran away, as new recruits would also have had to be found for these. These do not occur very frequently or in large numbers, but have been separated out as ‘Other’, within the Analysis section.

CONTRIBUTORY CAUSES TO THE LOSSES

There are a number of possible contributory causes to the losses suffered by an army, in addition to the obvious battle casualties, such as the environment, health and supplies. These are discussed within this section and will be referred to within the Analysis section, to identify the most likely cause, particularly of higher number of losses, although in the absence of categorical proof this must remain conjecture.

Environment

Environment has been divided up into three sections, into ‘The Physical Environment’ providing a general description, ‘A Soldiers Life’ providing a more detailed description of Camp life and the

84 Following the first Norwegian campaign, the POW’s were returned in the autumn, following the Swedes withdrawal from Norway. Pihlström, 1905, 251.
dangers encountered and Winter quartering, a part of the seasonal life of a camp, but with particular hazards of its own.

\textit{a) The Physical Environment.}

The physical environment or the Theatre of Operations, or of War, meaning the area in which the conflict takes place, incorporates such things as the terrain and the climate. The Great Northern War took place over a number of diverse areas. With the exception of the opening excursion against Denmark, the first few years of the War took place for the most part in the north-eastern part of Europe of Courland, Estonia and Livonia gradually moving south into the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, then back north towards Saxony. These areas share a temperate climate, very similar to that of southern Sweden, which theoretically means four distinct seasons of spring, summer, autumn and winter, but in practice could mean prolonged winters or wet summers. A second area which saw action during the second third of the war was the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Ukraine, bordering into Russia. Very little of the War actually took place on Swedish territory.

Jean Meyers essay ‘States Roads, War, and the organisation of Space’ provides an historical-geographical description of Europe, varying from ‘direct routes linking large towns only, leaving to one side small towns and villages…..coexistent with .... the service routes. There were entire networks virtually accessible only to draught animals….. contrasting with these were roads accessible to carts, where, broadly speaking, northern Europe with its four-wheeled wagons……could be differentiated from southern Europe’,\textsuperscript{85} with the Danube providing water transport, being quoted as the ‘only possible supply route’ in the conquest of Turkish Hungary in the latter part of the seventeenth century ‘an indication of the inferiority of the unorganised Hungarian territory’. Whilst outlining the difficulties of communication and control, Meyer describes the ‘broad expanses of the steppes’ as part of the eastern countries, which along with the Mediterranean, differed from the major part of Europe.\textsuperscript{86} Finally, he describes eighteenth century road system across Europe as ‘little more than mere track’.\textsuperscript{87}

David Kirby describes Northern Europe as ‘trackless marshy moorland, scrub and dense forest’,\textsuperscript{88} while Jeremy Black describes ‘Poland, Russia and much of Germany’ as consisting of ‘crushed sand or of clay, which according to the season was either stone hard or devoid of any foundation’ and generally describes the area as lacking roads and having few well-developed

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Meyer, 2000, 100-101.
\item Meyer, 2000, 101.
\item Meyer, 2000, 116.
\item Kirby, 1990, 136.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
routes, with few bridges. Jan Lindegren describes how Charles XII waited for the frost, so that the water-logged muddy tracks would become firm enough for the troop to be able to march a reasonable distance, without becoming thoroughly exhausted struggling against the mud, or to push the wagons along.

Geoffrey Parker, in his description of the Spanish Army, relates how the roads across Europe were developed by traders and for commercial purposes, and that whilst adequate for the slow, irregular use of a few carts, were totally unsuited to the rigours of thousands of soldiers marching. Parker continues to explain that the ‘geography, climate and the primitive agrarian structure of Europe all hindered movement’. Whilst his book concentrates on a period almost half a century before the Great Northern War and on western Europe, it does provide the baseline from which a picture of eastern Europe can be drawn. Eastern Europe was not as commercially developed as the west, with the greater part of its trade taking place along the coastal areas and water ways, where the concentration of the major centres of population was found. The problems encountered and dealt with by the major States of western Europe remained to be problems for eastern Europe. Although there had been constant war in the Area, there had not been one major or wealthy combatant as such willing or able to follow the example of the Spanish and build a supply/communications route across eastern Europe.

The population density of eastern Europe was less than 40 inhabitants per square kilometre, with an agricultural base consisting of some small pockets of forestry with crops of rye, oats and possibly potatoes and buckwheat. Although warmer than the depths of northern Sweden or Russia, the climate would still have been of the cold, icy snow calibre for at least four months of the year, leading either to a need for fast movement or retreat to winter quarters for the harsher months.

But perhaps the most significant point about this environment particularly for the Swedes, is that it had a reputation. During the 17th Century, a large number of soldiers had been lost to epidemics, whilst fighting in Eastern Europe against Poland. It was a terrain which even mercenaries, in the seventeenth century, were reluctant to campaign in, disliking the harsher conditions and unfamiliar territory of Eastern Europe.

From these descriptions a clear picture emerges of an underdeveloped landscape. The transport networks were basic and quite probably destroyed by the march of thousands of troops.

89 Black, 2007, 36-42.
90 Lindegren, 1992,190.
91 Parker, 1972, 70.
92 Parker, 1972, 80.
94 Glete, 2006, 203.
with hundreds of heavy horse- and ox-drawn wagons. The population was thinly spread, so shelter in towns and villages was likely to have been difficult to find. Although ‘the east’ had a reputation as a disease infested region, it is unlikely that the Swedish soldiers would have known exactly where they were, serving either to neutralise or intensify their fears, depending on whether they believed themselves to be safe in western Europe or in the dreaded east.

b) A Soldiers life

Sjöström describes the physical requirements for soldiers as relatively high, as they needed to be healthy, wholesome and sound, without any hidden illnesses or frailties. The age requirements were given such that the recruit must be between the ages of 20 and 26.95

Maria Sjöberg within her account of women within the army camp, suggests that the choice of young men was an attempt to select those who were not married and therefore without dependents, who could be away for a long time. Furthermore, the later provision of smallholdings for the soldiers under indelningsverket was also an attempt to provide for wives and families so that there would be no need for them to accompany their husbands.96 Sjöberg records that Charles XII attempted to minimise the number of wives and children accompanying their husbands involved in War, stating that only those women with a role, such as market hawkers selling tobacco and brannvin, could be permitted.97 However, while the practice continued, it added to the numbers who needed to be transported, fed and accommodated.

Sjöström provides an insight into the life of a soldier, describing it as monotonous and laborious, consisting of periods of marching, often under difficult circumstances and hardship or else confined in close quarters, with routine work and continual exercises. The greater part of their lives consisted of marching, pitching camp including digging out the latrines and taking turns on watch, with involvement in battles or the storming of fortresses as unusual events.

From spring to late autumn, the soldiers spent their lives squeezed together, with five other men, in large tents, and from late autumn to winter in quarters which generally consisted of small cottages or earthen huts. Peter Englund, within his account of the battle of Poltava, describes how, following the taking of Grodno in January 1708, the officers and their entourage occupied any habitable cottages, whilst the rest of the men took shelter in the lee of walls and fences, or gathered round huge log-fires.98 They had very little in the way of free time or private lives. The clothing which was provided by the rote, was meant to last at least five years, but generally only lasted one season of campaigning. As the War went on, with long periods of nothing happening,

95 Pihlström, 1906, 8.
96 Sjöberg, 2008, 60/69
97 Sjöberg, 2008, 113
98 Englund, 1988, 44.
the soldiers were more and more prone to ‘war fatigue’ and bouts of melancholy, of becoming depressed and succumbing to suicidal tendencies, than during periods when they were active.99

The men regularly suffered from hunger and starvation. As early as the Battle of Narva, ‘the thirsty and hungry soldiers’ are described as falling on everything they could, even before the battle was won, which suggests that either the rations were insufficient or, more likely, unavailable so that the men had to make do.100

A soldier’s life was then clearly not a happy one. His prime fear was unlikely to be his demise in battle and more likely to have been whether he would have sufficient food and protection from the elements, or else that he would be left to rot in the middle of a foreign land, never to see his home land and family again.

c) Winter Quarters

An area for which there is very little descriptive material, but which has the potential for a significant impact on the losses, is the Winter Quartering. Olle Larsson within his description of Sweden during the Great Northern War, describes war as often being seasonal, with quarters being adopted from later autumn until the thaw is over, when the ground has dried out and the grass is beginning to grow.101 Geoffrey Parker describes the development of ‘barraques’, in the early-seventeenth century in the southern Netherlands, to accommodate the Army of Flanders in winter, whilst tents were used throughout the rest of the campaign, and that this was a system soon followed by other areas of western Europe.102

Maria Sjöberg also refers to winter quartering, within her account of women within the Swedish field camp, although her comment refers more to the winter of 1708-09, when quarters were adopted in the Ukraine, and states that a number of soldiers died of starvation or froze to death.103 Anton Pihlström also includes a number of comments on the winter quarters adopted by the Swedish Army, describing the quartering at Laisholm, the winter of 1700/1701 as a very cold ruin,104 or Altenburg at the end of 1701, as being in very poor condition, having been used by various armies over the past two and a half years.105

Quarters were not only adopted for the winters, although the problems not only of finding fresh fodder for the animals but also of marching on waterlogged roads or snow drifts and moving wagons through them meant that winter was the prime season for calling a halt to

100 Pihlström, 1906, 91.
101 Larsson, 2009, 66.
102 Parker, 1996, 78.
103 Sjöberg, 2008, 121.
104 Pihlström, 1906, 97.
105 Pihlström, 1906, 105.
operations for a few months. Quarters were also adopted, for instance when the troop, for whatever reason, required rest. An example of this would be following a four month exercise, gathering contributions from the surrounding area, or whilst awaiting the outcome of negotiation in Poland. There were points at which quarters were adopted for the greater part of a year, with brief periods of marching whilst the Army moved to a different camp.

Health

There are two elements to health. Firstly there is the soldiers’ health in general and secondly there are the epidemics.\textsuperscript{106}

The environment the soldiers lived in for the greater part of the time meant that they were vulnerable to a number of illnesses. The strain of marching and other camp activities along with the poor food, malnutrition and lack of vitamins coupled with inadequate clothing lowered the soldiers’ immunity, so that they were vulnerable to a host of illnesses from the common cold through to encephalitis, eye and ear infections through to scurvy, and emaciation and broken bones. Correspondence between Överste Roos and the King, quoted in ‘Närkingar i Krig och fred’, describes how, over the period of ten days during a march, January 1702, the Närke Regiment went from a situation of a few sick and one death, to a much higher level of sickness and three soldiers dead.\textsuperscript{107} Whilst the Army was accompanied by surgeons, the requirement was for an ability to deal quickly with war wounds was of greater importance than an accurate knowledge of medicine and sick care.\textsuperscript{108}

Epidemics were the most dangerous of threats to the soldiers, according to Sjöström, ‘worse than a well-armed Saxon or charging Cossack’. For instance, the most common illness in the winter months was typhus, with dysentery during the summer months, both of which were transmitted through body lice. Although the men regularly changed and washed their underwear, they were sleeping tightly packed in with others and using only their overcoat as a cover, so the lice remained and flourished, quickly spreading the diseases. Typhus and dysentery have been given here as examples but other epidemics through the army were diphtheria, jaundice, tuberculosis, malaria, anthrax and periodically bubonic plague. Every second or third soldier who fell ill died.\textsuperscript{109}

Whilst some of the causes of illnesses and epidemics, such as personal hygiene and bad air, were recognised the full implications were not understood. The regulations which recommended

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{106} For the purposes of this Thesis, the Oxford Dictionary definition meaning ‘a widespread occurrence of a disease in a community at a particular time’ is employed for epidemics.
\textsuperscript{107} Berg, Klingnèus and Norman, 1989, 205.
\textsuperscript{108} Sjöström, 2008, 103.
\textsuperscript{109} Sjöström, 2008, 102.
\end{flushleft}
that the soldier should wash his legs, feet and socks once a month remained for the Swedish Army until the 19th century. ¹¹⁰

Northern Europe had suffered a number of epidemics of plague throughout the Early Modern Period, through to the early eighteenth centuries. Little could be done for the victims. Although the problem of overcrowded urban areas was recognised as a contributory factor, the cause was actually unknown. Jan Lindegren links some of these epidemics to severe crop failures and quotes the losses as 130,000 of the Finnish population in 1696-7 and 100,000 in Estonia, with Livonia and Sweden also affected.

Lindegren also cites a high loss rate of soldiers during the Thirty Years War due to epidemics, from the soldiers either being unused to warfare or the bacteria they encountered in the battle zone, or possibly both.¹¹¹ Sven A. Nilsson similarly records that the Swedish Army suffered heavy losses due to epidemics, leading to repeated conscriptions and resort to the employment of foreign mercenaries as the Swedes were unwilling to fight abroad.¹¹²

Whilst there is no doubt that the battle of Narva in November 1700 led to losses particularly within the Russian Army, the consequence of the engagement of the Swedish Army with the Russians also led to losses on the Swedish side which were not battle related. Diseases which had been virulent within the Russian camp spread to the Swedes.¹¹³

The soldiers marching across the length of Northern Europe or even Sweden, and ships travelling round the coastal areas, transporting troops and supplies and providing communication links, were all sources of spreading disease. When plague broke out in the Baltic provinces in 1709, it spread to Finland and to Stockholm, probably through the movement of troops from the battle zone back to the mainland, and vice versa. On this occasion it is estimated that at least 22,000 Stockholmers died.¹¹⁴

Once again, the emerging picture is of cramped quarters and unhygienic conditions leading to increased vulnerability and reduced immunity to illness and disease, coupled with an inevitability that few of those who fell sick were likely to survive.

**Provisioning**

The main supplies required were food for both the soldiers and the animals, and munitions such as the weaponry and ammunition, all of which were heavy and bulky.¹¹⁵ The daily ration for the

¹¹⁰ Sjöström, 2008, 102-103.
¹¹¹ Lindegren, 2000, 132/142.
¹¹³ Black, 2007, 44.
¹¹⁵ Black, 2007, 42
soldiers, according to Sjöström, was 300 g dried bread and 2.5 ltr drink per day, with 2 kg meat, 700g butter or pork as well as 4.5 ltr peas or grain given out 10 times in a month, and therefore there was a requirement for new supplies on a regular basis.\textsuperscript{116}

The armies had two basic means of obtaining supplies. They either received them from their home base or obtained them locally. The problem with carrying the food supplies was that it was only possible to carry a few days worth. The fresh food provisions, such as meat, could only be carried for as long as it was viable as a food source. This meant it was also problematic to ship these provisions across from mainland Sweden. The problems with obtaining supplies locally meant that they had to be available in sufficient quantities, with the cash or appropriate credit (or force) to secure them.

Larsson states that a ground rule was that war should feed itself. This means that the Armies should be able to obtain food from the area where they were based. Larsson also describes how armies often built up systems of storage points and warehouses to leave stores in, as it was difficult for the army to function if it was more than six to eight days march away from these storage facilities, with a day’s march given as approximately 20km.\textsuperscript{117} However, this would have required an advance party, with stores, being sufficiently ahead of the army to prepare and supply the storage facility. Frost, within his discussion on the political situation within the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at the time of the Great Northern War, records that during the early stages of the war, circumstances were such that it was possible to obtain provisions from the nobles so that the Quartermaster could send ahead and establish magazines on the march to Warsaw.\textsuperscript{118} Within more hostile areas, this would have not been possible.

The only other option for receiving supplies from a home base was for them to be supplied by the Swedish provinces on mainland Europe, such as Finland, Livonia or Pomerania. Supplies from these areas were provided as part of the contribution system, effectively a tax on the provinces, and their contribution to the war effort. As the war progressed in pursuit of August, firstly the distance to the army would have made the obtaining of supplies from these Regions impractical. Later the threat and reality of Russian invasion and occupation of the northern Baltic States would have severed these supply routes.

Contributions were also extracted from areas either captured or occupied by Sweden during the process of war. Whilst this was feasible in rich agricultural areas, in poorer regions the army had to keep on the marching, constantly searching for fresh supplies.\textsuperscript{119} The Swedish

\textsuperscript{116} Larsson, 2009, 66.
\textsuperscript{117} Larsson, 2009, 66.
\textsuperscript{118} Frost, 2000, 264.
\textsuperscript{119} Lindegren, 2000, 154.
Army was occasionally also able to use the river Vistula to transport heavy supplies in Poland, for example in 1703, but river transport was notoriously unreliable and very much dependent on the time of year. During the winter the rivers froze, whilst they would flood with melt waters in the spring and then dry up during the summer months.\textsuperscript{120}

Unfortunately, the Baltic provinces were unable to provide adequately for the army, and although the situation was improved by the move into Courland, July 1701, it soon deteriorated as the area was small and unable to sustain them beyond 1702. In order to feed itself, the army had to move. Following the move south into the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the army fared much better. Poland was split between those who were supporting August, Elector of Saxony and those who were against him. Those opposed to August supported the Swedes, so that it was possible to gather contributions without too much opposition. Magnus Stenbock returned from a requisitioning exercise, 1703, with ‘six barrels of gold and a considerable haul of supplies in kind at a cost of 68 killed or missing and 36 horses’. Frost records that the supply situation, including the possibility of extracting further contributions remained good through to 1705.\textsuperscript{121} However, those who supported August harassed the requisitioning party, as well as the Army when the opportunity arose, which could account for the losses to Stenbock’s party.

Larsson points out that the problems of supply were not only whilst the army was on the move, but even more difficult when the army adopted winter quarters, when animals had to be provided for, whilst not working.\textsuperscript{122} This meant there had to be an adequate supply of funds to buy fodder and for a surplus to be available, whilst waiting for the crops to grow before the campaign was resumed.

The campaigns in Norway, 1716 and 1718 provided a separate set of supply problems. Although the environment of Norway was more closely related to that of Sweden, it was more sparsely populated and even less developed than much of eastern Europe. But lessons were clearly learnt from the 1716 campaign in Norway and changes implemented before the 1718 campaign. Jan Lindegren, within his essay on Karl XII, details the logistical difficulties of a normal regiment which, excluding the officers’ luggage, required 52 carts, of which 16 were for bread, while the rest carried such items as ammunition, tents and the sick.\textsuperscript{123} Roland Persson lists 22 Infantry regiments in the Swedish Army at the beginning of the war, which gives a total of more than a 1,000 wagons, for the infantry alone.\textsuperscript{124}

\textsuperscript{120} Black, 2007, 43
\textsuperscript{121} Frost, 2000, 281-2.
\textsuperscript{122} Larsson, 2009, 66.
\textsuperscript{123} Lindegren, 1992, 203.
\textsuperscript{124} Persson, 1975, 13.
Lindegren’s account details how the problems were overcome. The whole of the Swedish population were involved, each area taking responsibility for a different regiment, so that central point were nominated as responsible for supplying and supporting a quantity of men and horses, for instance a large depot in Västra Ed, Dalarna was designated to hold 6 months worth of food supplies for 20,000 men and 6,000 horses. The winter of 1717 was spent gathering the harvest from the summer and transporting it to the various storage points. A network system was also devised using the Trossdrangar, which meant that the troops marched using the supplies they carried on them, and that at about the time that these ran out, ‘fresh’ supplies should have caught up with them. The supply wagons were scheduled to leave the warehouse at several days’ intervals, so that a continuous supply chain would be achieved. When it was not possible to use wagons, because of the narrowness or condition of the roads, then pack horses were used. However, this system would have created logistical problems of its own, in that as well as carrying the supplies, the animals also had to transport food for themselves, which would reduce the quantity of supplies they could carry. Whilst this system worked for the short time of the second Norwegian campaign, following the death of the King and the return home, a large number of animals had to be destroyed as they were in such poor condition. For the first campaign, some supplies were carried with the troop, whilst a supply ship was expected to provide. When these failed, the troops had to seek contributions from the area where they were stationed.

As Lindegren’s account of the second Norwegian campaign demonstrates, the transportation of supplies was a considerable logistical problem. Given that there were very few, if any, roads in Eastern Europe and probably similar if not worse problems in Norway, the moving of the army alone provided a substantial logistical problem even before the addition of supplying it was considered.

The problems of supplying the Army were clearly recognised, borne out by the efforts which were made to supply it during the second Norwegian Campaign.

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125 Lindegren, 1992, 199
126 For information on the provisioning for the second Norwegian Campaign, see Lindegren (1992, 206). For information on the journey home to Sweden, see Pihlstrom, (1906, 262).
ANALYSIS

For the purposes of clarity in this Thesis, the Great Northern War is broken down into three distinct sections. The first section, 1700 to 1707, covers the initial successes of the Swedish Army and the greater part of the campaign against King August, the second section, 1708 to 1714, covers the Russian period through to the capitulation of Tönning, and the third section, 1715 to 1720, covers the period after the return of the Army to Sweden and the Norwegian Campaign. This is then compared against graphical representation of the data so that the points at which significant losses occurred without an identifiable event can be pinpointed and investigated. The purpose of this description is to provide an overview of the activities of the Dala Regiment during the Great Northern War. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the Regiment and the rest of the Army, so this may therefore appear as an account of the Army’s activities. Also, the fact that the focus is the Dala Regiment means that there are battles which are not mentioned, for instance when part of the Army is under Rehnsköld’s command, for example against a Saxon-Russian Army at Fraustadt, 1706.

Section 1 – 1700-1707 – Initial success and King August

Brief Description

The Swedish Army was quickly mobilised following the outbreak of war, 1700. The departure of the Dala Regiment from Sweden had been delayed so that by the time it finally arrived in northern Europe and begun marching towards Copenhagen, it was met with the news that Denmark had settled with Holstein-Gottorp and was no longer in the war. It was in general good health, on its return to Sweden.\(^{127}\)

Having had little involvement in the war so far, the Regiment was sent to Livonia, October 1700, to move against August, King of Saxony and Elector of Poland.\(^{128}\) Following the arrival in Livonia, the levels of sickness rose, so that between 200 and 300 soldiers were recorded as unfit for duty.\(^{129}\) As the Polish-Saxon army had already retired to winter quarters, the King decided to march against the Russians instead. The Swedish Army began moving from Pernau to Reval in early November, leaving the sick behind, then marched on to Wesenberg, where they were to gather in preparation of relieving Narva, Estonia.\(^{130}\)

\(^{127}\) Pihlström, 1906 83.
\(^{128}\) Pihlström, 1906, 84.
\(^{129}\) Pihlström, 1906, 86.
\(^{130}\) Pihlström, 1906, 86-87.
The Army then marched on to Pühajoggi, Estonia, arriving there in mid-November. The whole march had been along waterlogged roads, with the army up to their knees in mud at times, with poor rations and in poor wet autumnal weather. The Russians had ravaged the countryside, so that it was not possible for the Swedish Army to extract any resources from the land.\textsuperscript{131}

Despite being tired and poorly equipped, the Swedish defeated a good-sized Russian outpost.\textsuperscript{132} Following the victory, the march continued on to Narva. A snowstorm began shortly after the battle started which helped the Swedish Army. Total losses to Sweden amounted to 700 dead and 1200 injured. The Dala Regiment, which at this point did not include Gagnefs,\textsuperscript{133} had approximately 600 men, including officers, located on the left flank of the Army. The losses following the battle amounted to 200 dead or injured.\textsuperscript{134}

Following the victory at Narva, the King was persuaded that, due to the Army’s poor equipment and lack of provisions, winter quarters should be adopted rather than pursuit of the enemy. The Army marched south to Dorpat, Livonia, to adopt quarters. Late December, a detachment of 600 men, which probably contained members of the Dala Regiment,\textsuperscript{135} was sent to Gdov, Estonia, with the intention of taking it. On the journey, three soldiers froze to death during the night, whilst a number of the officers suffered frostbite to their hands and feet. Several were unable to use their muskets because of the cold. In addition, the detachment was as short of rations as the main Army, so that on one night it was not possible to feed the horses. The conditions were such that the mission was abandoned and the detachment returned to the winter quarters.\textsuperscript{136}

The Army remained in winter quarters until May of 1701, with no relief from the problem of a shortage of provisions. The quarters occupied by the Dala Regiment were in poor condition, described by Pihlström as osunda (eng. unhealthy), with insufficient food and their uniforms were in need of replacement.\textsuperscript{137} The level of sickness is recorded as high during this period, with the Leksands company recorded as losing 9 men whilst Gagnefs lost 3. Following the arrival of new recruits in May, and supplemented by the sick and injured who had now recovered, the campaign was once again taken up against the King of Saxony, with many of its newly sick members behind as the Army broke camp.\textsuperscript{138} The route was initially towards Koknese, Livonia, then on towards

\begin{footnotes}
\item[131] Pihlström, 1906, 87.
\item[132] Pihlström, 1906, 87
\item[133] Gagnefs company had remained behind at Pernau with two other companies. The reason for this is unknown. Pihlström, 86.
\item[134] Pihlström, 1906 92-93
\item[135] This is assumed as the commander of the detachment was also the Regiments commander.
\item[136] Pihlström, 1906 96.
\item[137] Pihlström, 1906 97.
\item[138] Pihlström, 1906 100.
\end{footnotes}
Riga, Estonia. Pontoons had been built in anticipation of the Army’s arrival, allowing it to cross the river Daugava, and come to the point where Saxony’s Army was stationed.139 Within days of the victory, the Swedish Army set off across Courland after the retreating Saxons. It was not possible to catch up with the Saxon Army and, as changing tack to launch and an attack against Russia would have left the Swedish Army vulnerable to a rear attack, there was no other option than to remain at camp in Courland.140 At the end of August, the Dala Regiment were quartered at Liepāja, Livonia. Its health was again poor, and merited a mention in correspondence which passed between Major Griesbach to the Dala Länshövding, Gripenhielm. Griesbach recorded that the Regiment was down in strength, to no more than 740 men (the equivalent of just under five out of eight companies). The problems were ‘benvärv, durklap och bränsiuucka’.141 Sick soldiers had been left at various points on the march from Riga, whilst some still remained in Narva.142

In September the Army relocated to Saxe-Gotha whilst awaiting the outcome of negotiations in Poland. The Dala Regiments quarters were at Altenburg, which had been in use as a camp for a prolonged period of time and was therefore in a poor condition. The level of sickness continued high, with a subsequent increase in fatalities.143 The Camp broke up at the beginning of February, 1702 to march towards Kaunas, Lithuania, but poor weather made the roads impassable so that the march had to be abandoned.144 The Dala Regiment made camp in Szadow, Lithuania. A small detachment of cavalry were sent out to requisition supplies and were all killed.145 A second, larger detachment which included the Dala Regiment was then formed to extract contributions from the whole area.146

This exercise continued to be hazardous due to the weather and state of the roads in addition to the problems posed by locals opposed to the contributions demand. A number of the detachment were killed, for instance in one incident, outside Vilnius, Lithuania, the party came under attack from hostile polish cavalry, which resulted in 67 deaths with 20 men injured.147 In May, the detachment set off to join the main army, meeting up with them at the end of June, 1702. The four month long exercise had succeeded in gathering a large amount of provisions.148

139 Pihlström, 1906 103-4.
140 Pihlström, 1906, 104.
141 Whilst benvärv can be literally translated as ‘leg pains’, it has not been possible to locate accurate translations for these words.
142 Pihlström, 1906, 105.
143 Pihlström, 1906, 105-6.
144 Pihlstrom, 1906, 107.
146 Pihlström, 1906, 108.
147 Pihlström, 1906, 112.
148 Pihlström, 1906, 114.
The campaign was renewed against the Saxon Army in July 1702, with the successful battle of Kliszów, Poland, with no loss of life recorded to the Dala Regiment, after which quarters were adopted around Pińcow, Poland.\textsuperscript{149} When the campaign was resumed, 18th July, towards Kösice, southern Poland, the sick and injured were again left behind. The Dala Regiment were required to build a crossing over the river Vistula.\textsuperscript{150} The Swedish Army marched towards Bochnia, Poland, then turned towards Krakow, Poland, arriving there at the end of July.\textsuperscript{151}

In the meantime, a detachment of soldiers who had been left behind at Riga due to sickness, came under the command of a Leksands Captain in Livonia. They were either taken prisoner or killed following a skirmish with a detachment of the Russian Army, at Hummelhof, 19\textsuperscript{th} July.\textsuperscript{152}

Once again the war stalled and the Army remained in camp for two months, during which time reinforcements arrived from both Pomerania and the eastern Baltic provinces.\textsuperscript{153} A further exercise, which lasted until February of the following year, was undertaken to extract contributions from the eastern Polish border regions. The two contribution seeking exercises had succeeded in gathering 6 barrels of gold in addition to a considerable amount of other supplies.\textsuperscript{154}

The Swedish Army returned to Warsaw where the Dala Regiment were again engaged in building a crossing over the river Vistula.\textsuperscript{155} This was followed up with the construction of a bridge at Ocunin over the river Bug, Poland, where a detachment of Saxon and Lithuanian troops were known to be camped on the opposite bank. Artillery was used to keep the enemy Armies away while the bridge was constructed. Once the Swedish Army had crossed the river, the bridge was destroyed with the materials being taken for later use.\textsuperscript{156}

The troops not involved in pursuing the enemy detachments marched to Smarzow, eastern Poland, then on to the town of Torún, which was supporting Saxony, arriving in mid-May, 1703. A detachment of the Dala Regiment was sent ahead to construct a crossing over the river Derwenz, a tributary of the Vistula. Once finished, a small number from the Dala Regiment waited until the rest of the Swedish Army had crossed, so that the bridge could be taken away again. A troop of hostile Polish cavalry attacked, but the Swedes managed to get away.\textsuperscript{157} As a great deal of the area around Torún was not supporting Saxony, it was possible for the Swedes to manoeuvre in the area around the town to lay siege to it, particularly once siege equipment

\textsuperscript{149} Pihlström, 1906, 119.  
\textsuperscript{150} Pihlström, 1906, 119.  
\textsuperscript{151} Pihlström, 1906, 120.  
\textsuperscript{152} Pihlström, 1906, 123.  
\textsuperscript{153} Pihlström, 1906, 124.  
\textsuperscript{154} Frost, 2000, 282.  
\textsuperscript{155} Pihlström, 1906, 134.  
\textsuperscript{156} Pihlström, 1906, 135.  
\textsuperscript{157} Pihlström, 1906, 136.
arrived with a new party of recruits from Sweden, at the end of August. Torún capitulated a month later, at the beginning of October.  

Winter Quarters were adopted at the beginning of November, 1703. Dala Regiment were stationed in Elblag, Poland. New recruits arrived in the spring of 1704 and the Army left winter quarters in June, to march south towards Strasbourg. From there, they were directed to march east to Nowe miasto, south-east Poland, arriving 10th July. 

On the 12th July, Stanislaus Leczinsky, the candidate supported by Charles XII, was elected King of Poland. The Dala Regiment continued their march towards Sandomierz, building crossings where necessary, then continued on first to Jaroslaw and Lemberg, in south-eastern Poland, where the Swedish Army gathered. 13th September, the Army was on the march again, moving north towards Warsaw. The Army divided into several columns, with the Dala Regiment joined by two other regiments then headed towards Praga, arriving there early in October, 1704. 

The Dala Regiments bridge building skills were put into service again outside Praga with once again, Saxony’s Army at camp on the opposite side of the river. The Saxon Army had retreated. The next day a number of regiments including Dala, accompanied the King to Gluchowo and from there to Tarczyn, central Poland, in pursuit of the Saxon Army, gathering provisions as they went. The march continued with the Dala Regiment heading towards Rawa, then towards Jezów and Stryków to Uniejów, central Poland, arriving there at the end of October. 

The campaign had been strenuous. On one day alone, 20th October, the Dala Regiment had marched 50km, and in the five months had covered a total of approximately 2,120km, along roads which were little more than tracks, most roads being made by the Army as they moved, and in poor autumn weather. Once again the winter quarters adopted were in poor condition, and the level of sickness among the men increased. The Dala Regiment remained in winter quarters until the middle of July 1705, then marched to Warsaw where they, with the Upplands Regiment, were detailed to provide security for the Polish Coronation. 

In response to the news that the Russian Army was approaching the Polish border, the Swedish Army headed east towards Blonie, outside Warsaw, only to discover that the news was
false. The troop made camp, and then began on a river crossing between Warsaw and Praga.\textsuperscript{166} A small detachment, made up of Stanislaus men and Swedish soldiers, was left guarding the bridge on both sides of the river. They were attacked by a troop of hostile Polish, Lithuanian, Saxon and Russian soldiers. The noise from the fray alerted a group of Swedish troops passing on their return to Blonie. The enemy troop had secured their side of the crossing and were beginning to demolish the bridge when more soldiers, including a small detachment of Dala Regiment came to the aid of those under attack. The Dala Regiment lost 17 men and had 53 injured during this battle which was recorded as Praga.\textsuperscript{167}

Following the coronation of the new Polish King, the Swedish Army withdrew from Poland. January 1706 the march began towards Lithuania. The Tsar had already withdrawn to Russia, but the Saxon King had withdrawn to the fortress at Grodno, northern Poland. It was decided that the fortress could not be taken by force, so the Swedish Army laid siege to it, unaware that the Saxon King and his army had secretly withdrawn leaving a detachment of Russian troops. There was a severe shortage of supplies to provide for the Swedish Army, which meant they were forced to draw further and further away from Grodno in search of food.\textsuperscript{168}

At the beginning of February, Charles XII made his headquarters in Zaludek, whilst the Dala Regiment made camp at Orla, Lithuania, and began work on a bridge over the river Nemen. The Russian detachment secretly withdrew from the fortress in March.\textsuperscript{169} The Swedish Army were unable to follow immediately as the ice on the river had made the crossing unstable, and was not thick enough to be used instead. The Army could not follow until early April, when they marched towards Pinsk in the hope of either catching the Russians or forcing them to take a longer route.\textsuperscript{170}

Once again the paths were waterlogged, with knee-deep mud. The Swedish Army was crossing the Polesye marshes, where the only paths consisted of wooden bridges. The Russians had taken a longer route, but by doing so had avoided the worst of the terrain, and were already safe when the Swedes arrived. The Swedish Army remained at camp in Pinsk for a month. The Dala Regiment had lost 18 men during the march.\textsuperscript{171}

When the Swedish Army broke camp from Pinsk, they headed south towards the Volhynia region of southern Poland. In the beginning, the paths were no better than those used on the march to Pinsk, but then improved, including containing inhabitants who were more kindly

\textsuperscript{166} Pihlström, 1906, 148.
\textsuperscript{167} Pihlström, 1906, 155.
\textsuperscript{168} Pihlström, 1906, 158.
\textsuperscript{169} Pihlström, 1906, 159
\textsuperscript{170} Pihlström, 1906, 159.
\textsuperscript{171} Pihlström, 1906, 160
disposed to the Army, with more ample supplies. The march continued through into June and ended at Lutsk, in southern Poland. The Army halted briefly to recover, then in July began the march west towards Lubin, Poland, once again in pursuit of King Augusts’ Army. The march continued through July and August until the Army came to the border of Saxony. The Army divided up into smaller units and spread out. The terrain was providing good supplies of food, so winter quarters were adopted in the middle of September, with the Dala Regiment stationed in Grimma. The daily rations at this point became generous, with 2 loaves, butter or fat, meat, vegetables and three jugs of beer per man.

With the Swedish Army occupying Saxony, August was forced to make peace and withdraw from the war. However, the Swedish Army remained in winter quarters in Saxony until September 1707, when they broke camp to begin the campaign against Russia. The Army marched back into Poland towards Posen, but then in mid-September returned to quarters whilst awaiting a new party of recruits. They broke camp again at the beginning of November, to march north-east to Brest, where new quarters were adopted. The regiments which were camped near the river were ordered to build bridges, which proved fraught with difficulties, particularly because of the ice. The bridges were finally completed in the middle of December. The problems with ice breaking the bridges continued, but the river was finally crossed on 31 December.

Analysis

During this section of the war, the Dala Regiment were involved in at least eight engagements with the enemy, including the sieges of Thorn and Grodno, as well as the contribution seeking exercises. A simplified, stylised map of the Army’s activities is included at Annex A, to provide an idea of the movement involved.

Figure 2 shows a comparison of recruits versus the total losses i.e TWL combined with the Losses. The Recruits and Losses are plotted in relation to the sum figure of Losses - Recruits for each year. The TWL are included here, as a new soldier had to be found to fill each vacancy as it arose.

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172 Pihlström, 1906, 160.
173 Pihlström, 1906, 163.
174 Pihlström, 1906, 164.
175 Pihlström, 1906, 167.
176 The figures assume a full complement of 300 infantry soldiers. Whilst the full complement for each of the Companies was 150, given that losses were ongoing, this number was unlikely to be achieved.
The actual figures given at the foot of the graph show that only in 1700, 1702 and 1705 did the number of recruits not meet the losses. Whilst the number of recruits initially echoes the losses, this pattern does not continue beyond 1703. There appears to be far more recruits than are justified by the losses with a total number of recruits for this section at 361, which is 63 over the total number of losses at 298. The peak in recruits in 1704 suggests that losses were anticipated and indicates that some planning was incorporated. The delay in the number of recruits echoing the losses (i.e. the fall in losses 1700-1701 is not mirrored by a fall in recruits until 1701-1702) can be explained by the time necessary for the request for recruits to get back to Dalarna, then the recruits to be selected before marching off to meet the rest of the Army. The excess of recruits to losses could be due to the fact that, although a full complement of 300 has been assumed, it is possible that some of the recruits arriving in 1700 were completing the Companies, or in anticipation of those later discharged due to age. It is also possible that they are in anticipation of losses due to sickness, based on experience to date of the war but this is speculation. The actual reason is not known.
Figure 3 – Total losses – 1700-1707

Source: Transcribed records of Långberg and Boman. Extract taken from parish and military records.

Figure 3 excludes the TWL group and breaks the Losses down between the deaths, the prisoners of war (POW) and the UF's. The number of soldiers taken prisoner was minimal at this early juncture of the war, occurring only in 1703, 1704 and 1707, comprising respectively 1, 2 and 1 all from Leksands Company. The only engagements during these three years were the battle at Praga and the siege of Torún, both of which were victories to Sweden. The assumption must be made that these soldiers were captured during other skirmishes, such as reconnaissance or requisitioning.

The deaths are the major group within this period, with over 50 in 1700 (17%) (79 if the UF's are presumed as deaths) and just under 50 in 1702, whilst the UF's, with the exception of 1700, are fairly insignificant. The higher numbers of UF's at the beginning can possibly be explained by the relative newness of the recording system, as this would have been the first point at which it would have been used since the reorganization of indelningsverket as the previous war ended 1679. The average losses range from just over 26% to just over 3%, giving an average for the section of 10%.
Figure 4 provides a breakdown of all the reasons for end of Service by percentage. This shows that the deaths in particular far exceeded the other reasons for the end of military service. The number of ‘D or D’ is high given that the war was still in its early stages, but the releasing of men who had been in service for some time before the start of the war is a probable explanation for this. The ‘other’ consists of 2 who were lost, 1 soldier who was sick and possibly never left Sweden and 1 who ran away.

Figure 5 provides a breakdown of the month when the deaths were recorded. It totals the losses over the whole period by month. If the UMs are excluded, then the month when the highest number of deaths occurred was July, with 15%. The actual figures are provided in Appendix B1.2, also a graph of the whole period, showing a breakdown of the month and year when death was recorded.

Excluding the UM group, the highest number of deaths occurred in July, both in 1700 and 1702. However to bring this into context, the peaks in July are of 18 and 8, in 1700 and 1702 respectively. Similar numbers occur in April and November, 1702, at 6 and 7 deaths respectively. When compared against Pihlströms account, increased losses due to death as
opposed to any other reason are expected in 1700, because of poor rations, poor weather and poor conditions, both with the quartering and inadequate uniforms. However, the Regiment did not arrive until late in the year, so that a peak would be expected at the end of 1700, which does not occur.

Figure 5 – Pie chart showing the breakdown of when Deaths are recorded as occurring, by month 1700-1707
Source: Transcribed records of Långberg and Boman. Extract taken from parish and military records.

The Regiment were gathered and marched to Ystad before setting sail to Själland. As a peak in deaths is recorded in July, 1700, they must be attributed either to conditions in Sweden or the journey over the Baltic. No further information is available, but an implication has to be that the deaths were related to camp life. Additionally, high losses could also be expected here because this is the soldiers’ first exposure to the true nature of warfare on foreign soil. The only possible explanation for the peak in deaths at this point has to be that, being newly arrived, the soldiers were still adjusting to camp life and therefore more vulnerable to illnesses and these men succumbed to those which were so virulent within the camps.

Whilst the Battle of Klissow occurred in July 1702 and could provide a possible cause of this peak, Pihlström states that there was no loss of life to the Regiment from this event. An alternative explanation of the deaths in 1702 is that a section of the Regiment had recently
returned from a four month exercise seeking contributions so that quarters were adopted, following Klissow, to allow them to rest. Pihlström states that when the campaign against Saxony was resumed, the sick and injured were left behind. Further, a number of the Regiment who had been left behind at Riga, and became involved in the Battle at Hummelhof could also contribute to the losses at this point. It is possible the deaths in April were related to the Contribution seeking exercise whilst deaths in November could be attributable to the winter conditions, which Pihlström describes as severe. But again this is speculation, as an obvious explanation is not available.

Pihlström highlights 1701 as a difficult year, with a shortage of provisions and quarters in poor conditions, and increasing sickness. These are not reflected in the figures, as the losses in 1701 were less than 10%. Also, although there are peaks identified in late 1704, it is of the order of no more than 6 deaths. The winter and the quartering are described as poor but again, they did not result in an exceptionally high death toll.

This figure reveals the similarities particularly between the last five years of this section, represented in the knot of lines along the bottom of the graph, so that it is difficult to separate one year from another. With the exception of the peaks in July, this cross section could be considered as a representative pattern for the losses, which could be expected in a ‘typical war’, if such a thing were to exist. Such a pattern could be applied against losses to other regiments to highlight the anomalies for further investigation, which could be the basis for a further study.

Taking Section 1 as a whole, figures 2 – 5 show that there were peaks in the losses in 1700, 1702 and 1704. The average number of losses for this section is 31, or 10%. The majority of losses in this Section were through death, with very few soldiers taken prisoner. The points in the year at which the greater number of deaths occurred were April, July and October through to November of 1704. Three main reasons for the deaths are possibly the unfamiliar environment in 1700, shortage of provisions and weakness following exhaustion leaving some of the soldiers more vulnerable to illness and death.

**Section 2 - 1708-1714 – Poltava to Tönning**

**Brief Description**

The Army returned to take the town of Grodno at the end of January 1708, then continued to march north-east through Lithuania, reaching Smarhoń, northern Poland, in early February. The Army rested in Smarhoń for over a month, with the Dala Regiment quartered in
The Army broke camp late in March and moved south east to the area of Radoszkowicze, Poland, where new quarters were adopted. The Dala Regiment were garrisoned in ‘Puschinow’. During this time, a party was sent to seek out supplies.\(^{178}\)

The Russians had adopted a strategy of not engaging in direct combat with the Swedes whilst on Polish territory, but instead ‘scorching and starving all regions through which the Swedes might be expected to advance’. In addition, a 200 kilometre wide buffer zone was created along the Russian borderlands, with all provisions and shelter destroyed, and villages evacuated. Finally, the Russian strategy was one of harassment and resistance at selected points.\(^{179}\)

The Army broke camp early in June, to move nearer to Holovczyn, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, where the Russians were at camp in a wooded marshy hollow beside a river. The Swedish Army were on the opposite bank, so once again bridge building skills were required. Some of the troop, including the Dala Regiment, forded the river. It was raining and the water was very deep, coming up to the soldiers’ armpits in some places. In addition, the ground on the far bank was steep and crumply making it difficult to get out. Despite all this, the Swedish defeated the Russians who withdrew to the forest. The casualties for the Dala infantry were listed as 9 dead and 48 injured.\(^{180}\)

Quarters were again adopted following Holovczyn, this time at Mogilev, Lithuania, whilst awaiting the return of a supply party. After waiting a month, as the need for supplies was so desperate, the Army broke camp and marched south to Cherikov, Poland. It was an extremely wet summer, which added to the difficulties of the march. The paths were again thick mud, and there was no shelter to adopt overnight.\(^{181}\)

The Army reached Cherikov late in August. Concerned for the supply party, the King decided to march north. Again, the march took a long time, coming to Malatitze\(^{182}\) on the Russian border, 40 km north, six days later. The order was sent out to other sections of the Army to also gather at Malatitze\(^{183}\). The first regiments to arrive began to make camp, but came under attack from Russian Troops. The alarm was raised and the Dala Regiment was among those who came to assist. Once again, the Swedish Army was victorious, and the Dala Regiment is recorded as having suffered minimal losses.\(^{184}\)

\(^{177}\) Italics, as well as denoting Swedish words, have been used for places which it has not been possible to locate. It is possible that the spelling has changed or that the place no longer exists.

\(^{178}\) Pihlström, 1906, 168.

\(^{179}\) Englund, 1988, 42.

\(^{180}\) Pihlström, 1906, 173.

\(^{181}\) Pihlström, 1906, 174.

\(^{182}\) Alternative spelling - Molyatchi

\(^{183}\) Pihlström, 1906, 175.

\(^{184}\) Pihlström, 1906, 176.
The march in pursuit of the Tsar continued in September, but was still taking a long time. As supplies had still not arrived, the King decided to march south towards Ukraine and there await reinforcements from the Cossacks. Once more, it was a strained march, with no supplies.\textsuperscript{185}

The Army came to Mglin, Russia, at the beginning of October. It became clear that the Russian Army were ahead of them, and burning everything as they passed, so that the hoped for food was not going to materialize. The march continued south, and was joined at ‘Gorki’ by the Cossacks, with reinforcements of 7000 men instead of the 30-40,000 men that were expected.

The march continued towards the Cossack leader’s main town of Baturyn, Russia. In early November, the Russian Army fell on a detachment of the Swedish Army incorporating 400 men from the Dala Regiment, who were building a crossing over the river near Mischin. There was a fierce skirmish, before the Russians retired, leaving at least 140 Swedish soldiers dead, at the end of 1708. Two crossings were built to allow the whole Army to cross, and continue on their march to Baturin, only to be met by the news that the town had been stormed by the Russians and all the supplies destroyed.\textsuperscript{186}

Winter quarters were then adopted in the area around Romny. After only a month, news was received of better quartering to be found further east. The Army began to march again in mid-December, towards Gadyach, Ukraine. The Russians had already withdrawn, when the main Swedish Army arrived. Despite the severe cold, the march continued after just a few days rest, to Veprik, which was occupied by a detachment of Russian troops. A detachment of the Swedish Army laid siege to the town (September 1708 – January 1709) while the rest continued the march towards Leschewitz, where they made camp. The accommodation was very cramped. The Dala Regiment, by now consisting of approximately 165 ordinary soldiers and corporals in addition to its officers, were housed in two small cottages, which then also had to be shared with the cavalry. It was an extremely cold winter, with a recording of 90 soldiers freezing to death on the march. The greater part of the supply wagons had been left behind at Gadyach, with only the bread and ammunition wagons being taken on to Leschewitz. At the end of December they marched to ‘Senkow’, which provided much better quartering.\textsuperscript{187}

The Russians continued to harass the Swedish Army. In February 1709, an offensive involving several cavalry and two infantry regiments including Dala, was launched against the Russian Army. The detachment marched towards ‘Achtirka’ Russia, where the greater part of the enemy Army was believed to be, arriving there in early February. The town was well fortified and defended so that the King decided to withdraw back to ‘Chuchra’, from whence he sent

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{185} Pihlström, 1906, 177.
\bibitem{186} Pihlström, 1906, 177-9.
\bibitem{187} Pihlström, 1906, 180-1.
\end{thebibliography}
detachments to raid and burn the towns and villages around the river Vorskla. The march then continued towards Krasnokutsk and ‘Gorodnaja’. Having torched these towns, the Army continued to Marfaja and Kolomak, on the Merla river.188

Again, it was a difficult march as the river was in flood, making it difficult to get wagons along the paths beside it. The wide area to the south of the river was also flooded, so those marching on that side of the river had to wade through. In the middle of February, the Dala Regiment were part of a detachment sent to Kalontajew, which meant marching back past the Merla. A crossing had to be built, which was difficult as there was still ice in the river, which was not strong enough to be used. Having finally succeeded in getting over, the Army retired to quarters for a month, to rest. The Dala Regiment made their camp at ‘Budiszeży’, where they remained for several months.189

The Army broke camp in April, 1709, and marched toward Poltava, which they were planning to lay siege to. The Dala Regiment was among the Infantry detachment placed on guard over the entrance, to prevent the Russian detachment which had retreated into the fortress from coming out again. Following a couple of attempts by the Russians to break out, the main part of the Russian Army arrived at the end of June, to relieve their colleagues. The Dala Regiment were involved in the initial battle, then those who survived withdrew to an area of forestry. Many of these gave themselves up as Prisoners of War after further fighting. A small group managed to escape through the forest, where the Russian troops did not follow. The exact number killed was not recorded.190

Before the end of the year, the Dala Regiment was in the process of being re-formed.191 The full Mönstring was held in March 1710. The defeat at Poltava had signalled to Sweden’s enemies that the war was not over. Saxony had again marched against Poland and Denmark was threatening Southern Sweden. Defence of the homeland became the priority for the Swedish Army. Whilst part of the Dala Regiment remained to defend the mines at Falu, four companies including Gagnefs and Leksands marched to Stockholm. A number of the Leksands company mutinied, resulting in 75 men being sentenced to death, although this was commuted to a much lesser punishment.192

Of the remaining Companies, some were sent on to Vaxholm and Dalarö skans to join other regiments already there, and some to provide reinforcements for Reval. The detachment sent to

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188 Pihlström, 1906, 183.
189 Pihlström, 1906, 184.
190 Pihlström, 1906, 193.
191 Stenbock had been discharged as Commander of the Dala Regiment in the middle of 1706 to take up position as director of krigskommissariatet.
192 Pihlström, 1906, 205.
Reval remained onboard ship, as the Russians had already taken the town by the time they arrived.

In the autumn, 1710, the Dala Regiment was decimated by sickness. The eastern Baltic provinces had previously been hit by a plague, which reached Stockholm in August, and took its toll among the close quartered soldiers. In October, what remained of the Dala Regiment returned to Dalarna.\(^\text{193}\)

The Regiment was re-formed for the second time, ready for mönstring in March, 1712. As the equipment ordered for the previous re-form had not been fully paid for, difficulties were encountered when attempts were made to equip the new regiment. However it was ready to march to Ystad at the beginning of June. At the end of August, the Regiment began the transfer to Rügen, Pomerania. As there was insufficient space on the transport, some of the wagons had to be left behind. The troop began the transfer from Rügen to Stralsund at the beginning of October. They took materials with them to construct a crossing over river Recknitz, near ‘Plömmendorf,’ on their way towards Wismar, where there was thought to be better quartering and defence. At the beginning of November, quarters were adopted between the river near Warnow and Wismar, whilst they awaited reinforcements.\(^\text{194}\)

The plan after this was to march against the Saxon-Russian Army. However, whilst the Swedish Army remained quartered, the Danish Army were marching towards them. The Swedish Army found itself caught between the two enemy forces. At the beginning of December, the march began towards the Saxon Army, to prevent it joining with the Danish. After five days march, the Swedish Army came to Gadebusch where, whilst the Cavalry kept Saxony’s Cavalry occupied, the rest of the Army engaged in battle with the Danes. The Dala Regiment lost 80 infantrymen with between 150 and 160 injured.\(^\text{195}\)

The Swedish Army rested for several days, then took quarters between Wismar and Lübeck, where they remained until the end of the year. A decision was then made for the Army to march towards Holstein, where it was thought there would be better supplies. The allied Armies followed, so that the Swedish Army could not rest for long. The decision was made to withdraw to Tönning\(^\text{196}\), which was reached 6th February, a journey which had taken some time as the Army had rested wherever it was possible. At each halt, soldiers were put on watch, which on occasions meant standing for a couple of days in snow and slush.\(^\text{197}\)

\(^\text{193}\) Pihlström, 1906, 206.
\(^\text{194}\) Pihlström, 1906, 213.
\(^\text{195}\) Pihlström, 1906, 220.
\(^\text{196}\) Tönning was a fortress in the Duchy of Holstein-Gottorp, who had not been involved in the war since the initial invasion and withdrawal by Denmark, but were favourable to Sweden.
\(^\text{197}\) Pihlström, 1906, 222.
Tönning was not prepared for them. The first night was spent in the open, outside the fortress, in pouring rain. The level of sickness among the Regiment was high prior to arriving at Tönning, but in the poor, unhygienic conditions it became even higher. By the end of April supplies were exhausted and sickness among the troops was out of control. The fortress was surrendered to the Danish King on the 6th May. The Dala Regiments complete strength at that point is recorded as 145 men. The number of sick left in the fortress is not recorded.

**Analysis**

This section of the war comprised of at least 5 engagements with the enemy including the sieges of Poltava and Tönning. A simplified, stylised map of this section of the war is included within Annex A.

![Recruits versus Losses - 1708-1714](image)

Figure 6 - Recruits versus Losses – 1708-1714

Source: Transcribed records of Långberg and Boman. Extract taken from parish and military records.

Figure 6 shows a steady decline in recruits, from just over 40% down to just under 30%. The losses also show a clear pattern which is contrary to the ‘Losses-Recruits’. Following the reforming of the Companies in 1711, the number of recruits is fairly low at just under 35, or 11% in 1712 and 1713, whilst the losses remain high in comparison although falling.

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198 Pihlström, 1906, 224.
199 Pihlström, 1906, 226.
Overall, the number of recruits again exceeds the number of losses, with a total of 825 recruits for this section against 768 total losses. Although the recruits are shown as arriving in 1709 in figure 6, and Pihlström records that the King decided to besiege Poltava whilst awaiting the arrival of reinforcements, very few of the 1709 recruits have a month recorded. Those which do, are recorded as being recruited in December, which confirms that the high number of recruits in figure 6 were the replacements for the lost regiment, following Poltava.

![Total Casualties - 1708-1714](image)

By far the highest category within figure 7 is the deaths, with high losses at the expected points of 1710 and 1713, prior to the Companies being re-formed. The UFs are far fewer than occurred within Section 1, with 23 over the seven year period, so are of lesser significance. The very high losses in 1708 are harder to explain as this is not a point at which high losses are expected and is prior to the disaster of Poltava in 1709. Many of these losses have little additional information, although a 231 are recorded at Mogilev, which was the quartering point. However, the Army had been in quarters almost continuously since early in the year, moving from Smarhoň until late March, then moving to newquarters in the Radoszkowicze region. They had moved out of these quarters to move towards Holovczyn then adopted quarters again at Mogilev. Whilst an assumption could be made that these deaths were due to the quartering at Mogilev, the lack of supplies is also noted along with the fact that the Army was awaiting the
return of a supply party. This was also during a period when the Russians were using harassment tactics, so that the Swedish Army had little chance to rest. Other than this, the continuous length of inactivity within quarters and proximity to others has to be considered as a serious possibility.

The high number of POW’s in 1712 coincide with the battle at Gadebusch. Pihlström records the number of deaths among the Dala Infantrymen as 80. As this battle was a victory to the Swedes, although deaths could be expected, the POW’s are harder to explain. A closer examination of the source data does not provide enlightenment, as the only additional information available was that these soldiers were taken prisoner in Denmark. The only assumption which can be made is that they were imprisoned during the course of the campaign which culminated in Tönning, whilst the army were on the march. In itself the loss of just under 100 soldiers in 1713 does not suggest the Companies required re-forming. When the losses are taken in conjunction with those of 1712, the total losses equal 235 against an input of 70 recruits, so over half the two Companies had been lost and the re-form is justified.

![Breakdown of Reasons for End of Service - 1708-1714](image)

Figure 8 – Breakdown of Reasons for End of Service – 1708-1714

Source: Transcribed records of Långberg and Boman. Extract taken from parish and military records.

Figure 8 is dominated by the deaths, which accounts for more than three quarters of the ‘end of service’. POWs present the next highest reason, but at 18% is minor compared to the deaths.
The other reasons, such as the UFs and discharged etc are insignificant, with the others, comprised of 2 sick and 1 runaway, showing at 0%.

![Breakdown of Losses by Month, 1708-1714](image)

Figure 9 – Pie chart showing the breakdown of when deaths are recorded as occurring – 1708-1714

Source: Transcribed records of Långberg and Boman. Extract taken from parish and military records.

Figure 9 provides a breakdown of the month when the deaths were recorded. The losses are totalled by month, for the period 1708-1714. The greater number of deaths were recorded in July then June, when quarters were adopted before and following the battle at Holoczwyn, both with totals higher than that of the UM, followed by the winter months of December, November and October. The majority of the June/July deaths were recorded in 1708, whilst the height in winter deaths occurred in 1710, which would attribute them to when the Army was in Sweden. Other than these, 1713 shows a peak in March and April, which would be just before the capitulation of Tönning. The ‘UM’ group represents 13.5%, so is of less significance in this period, than in the previous section. The average losses within this section ranged from 85% in 1708 to just under 5% in 1714, giving an average for the section of just under 37%.

The peak during the winter of 1710 at just over 50 for October to December can be explained by the plague epidemic which decimated the Regiment, leading to its re-formation for

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200 The ‘others’ category has been incorporated within the pie-chart for completeness and to allow comparison between the sections. In this instance, they comprise of 1 soldier who ran away and 1 dismissed due to sickness.
the second time, in 1711. However, a number of these are recorded as deaths at Reval rather than as due to ‘pesten’. As these men did not actually disembark in Reval, merely sailed there then returned, it is possible there was sickness on board ship, but this is speculation as no other information is currently available in explanation. Similarly, the peak in March/April, 1713 at 20 and 22 can be attributed to the circumstances around Tönning. The 22 deaths recorded as UM, 1713 must also be assumed to be attributable to Tönning as there was very little other activity at this point. Overall, there were 84 deaths as UM, with 16 and 17 recorded in 1711 and 1712 respectively. The 1711 deaths must be assumed as related to the plague epidemic or the march back to Dalarna as there was no other activity, whilst the deaths in 1712 are almost all related to new recruits. Some have the explanation of Wismar, Stralsund or Tönning, whilst others are blank. Whilst these deaths can be assumed to be related to the campaign in this area at the time, as opposed to being related to conditions in the camp, or provisioning, the provisioning and quartering could also have been factors, given the circumstances.

**Section 3 – 1715-1720 – The Norwegian Campaigns**

**Brief Description**

Once again, the Dala Regiment had to be re-formed. The recruitment process was set in motion as soon as news of Tönning was received.201 This being the third occasion on which the Regiment needed to be re-formed in the space of five years, it is probable that the area struggled to provide men suitable for military service. Men were initially taken in from extra ordinary Companies which had been formed under Colonel Cöjet, but when the King became aware of this, September 1714, they had to return. Even more difficult than finding recruits on this occasion was the provision of uniforms. Equipment of Bayonets and Muskets was available earlier than the clothing, so that the new soldiers began their military service in their normal farm-labourers clothes.202

The Regiment’s first orders were to march to Stockholm, where 80 men were to assist the navy whilst the rest provided defence for the Capital, which was under threat from Denmark. In March 1715 the Regiment were sent to Roslagen, where they went into quarters for the summer. During this time, the Regiment was strengthened by 200-300 older recruits.203 In the autumn,

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201 De La Gaurdie had been appointed as Colonel to the Regiment in March 1713 upon Stenbock’s appointment to General of the Infantry and Governor of Skåne but had been in Sweden at the time of Tönning.

202 Pihlström, 1906, 233.

203 Pihlström does not elaborate on these older recruits, beyond the fact that they joined the Army. There is no significant change to the average age of the recruits, implying that they had no affect the Leksands or Gagnefs Companies. Pihlström, 1906, 236.
they made camp around Uppsala but then returned home. The troops who had been to assist the Navy had returned to their regiment whilst it was stationed in Uppsala.\textsuperscript{204}

The King had by now returned from Bender, Turkey, and decided to try and make Denmark more inclined to withdraw from the war again by moving against Norway. At the end of February 1716, the order was given for several regiments, including Dalarna, to march towards Kristinaia (now Oslo),\textsuperscript{205} whilst others marched north towards Trondheim. The army had provisions for 6 weeks with them, although some of the poorer companies, such as Gagnefs, had variations on the standard rations, so that instead of the 1.5 g ration of dried bread and half a jug of grain or peas per man per day, they were provided with Crown reserves of corn. The Tent wagons had been left behind in Wismar, so the Regiment had to make use of whatever they could find as accommodation.\textsuperscript{206}

At the end of March, the order was given to make haste to Kristinaia, so the Dala Regiment broke from camp and headed across the border into Norway, arriving on the 7\textsuperscript{th} April. Reinforcements were expected, including artillery and Navy vessels. However a Danish ship with reinforcements for the Norwegians arrived and prevented the Swedish Navy from getting through, so the King decided to withdraw.\textsuperscript{207} During the night between the 18\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th} April the King broke camp to march to the river Glomma. When the troop arrived at the crossing point the next day, they found a detachment of the enemy Army on the opposite bank. A detachment of the Dala Regiment was sent over the river to chase away the enemy. Boats were found to transport the infantry regiments so that they could also cross.\textsuperscript{208}

Receiving news that the Swedish Vessel had arrived at Svinesund, the march continued towards Fredrikshall where the Army stopped, at the end of April. The Dala Regiment made camp south of Torpum, near Spånviks skans.\textsuperscript{209}

The Norwegians continued to harass the Swedes, sending small detachments over Glomma towards Sannesund and Borge. A detachment of Swedish troops, including 600 men from Dala Regiment, marched towards Sannesund. The campaign was put on hold, following the King sustaining an injury.\textsuperscript{210}

Once more, despite the arrival of the supply Ship, the Swedish provisions were running low so that the Army was forced to use requisitioning. The Dala Regiment managed better than some

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\textsuperscript{204} Pihlström, 1906, 236.
\textsuperscript{205} As this campaign is in Norway, clarification of Town localities has not been added.
\textsuperscript{206} Pihlström, 1906, 239.
\textsuperscript{207} Pihlström, 1906, 241.
\textsuperscript{208} Pihlström, 1906, 241.
\textsuperscript{209} Pihlström, 1906, 242.
\textsuperscript{210} Pihlström, 1906, 243.
\end{flushright}
of the others who were experiencing high levels of sickness. The Army arrived at a river near the fortress at Spånvikskassan. The fortress would not allow the building of a bridge over the river, and harassed the Swedish Army, at one point sending out a raiding party which stole 200 horses. The King decided to take the fortress, but to begin with a watch was set, which involved 300 of the Dala Regiment. On the 23 May, the Army successfully stormed the fortress and the detachment of Dala men remained on watch.

A month later, the King decided to make a move on Fredikshall. The Army marched through the night, through deep rivers such as Tistedalsälven, to Torpum. Despite this the Norwegian were forewarned. Some of the Swedish Army managed to pass the gate. Most of those who managed to gain entry were killed following a fierce fight. Although the Army attempted to get further in, they were unsuccessful and the order was given to withdraw. The troop stayed in the town, with the intention of making a renewed attempt later. The Commander of the fortress kept up a barrage of fire against the Swedes, even lighting fires in the town to drive them out. The Swedes, unable to put all the fires out, left the burning town and withdrew back to Torpum, leaving behind the dead, imprisoned and injured.

Shortly afterwards, the Swedish transport ship came under threat from a Danish vessel. The decision was made to withdraw back to the Swedish borderlands. The Army retreated to Böhuslän, with the Dala Regiment making camp in the area of Nordby, Sweden. At the end of August the King left Böhuslän for Skåne. The Dala Regiment remained in the area and worked on a defensive line, south of Svinesund, near Sundsborg. Work on the defences was complete by the end of September. The level of sickness among the troops began to increase, so the Dala Regiment who had remained garrisoned at Nordby, moved to Sunnervikens fögderi, near Uddevalla, where they were provided with food from the Magazine which had been built during the journey to Norway, but the levels of sickness still increased. The regiments were separated and sent to different areas, Dala being garrisoned in Älfsborgs Län. In December, they returned to Dalarna. In the period July to December, the Regiment had lost 104 Corporals and infantry.

At the beginning of January 1717, on arrival back in Dalarna, the Regiment had a strength of 823 men, including its officers. It was not recalled again until the autumn of 1718. The process to fill the vacancies was again put in place, so that by July 1717 there remained only 15 still to be filled. The uniforms and equipment, including tents, were also repaired or replaced.

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211 Pihlström, 1906, 243.
212 Pihlström, 1906, 244.
213 Pihlström, 1906, 245.
214 Pihlström, 1906, 248.
215 Pihlström, 1906, 251.
216 Pihlström, 1906, 252.
Provisions for the Army began to be gathered in the July 1718 and included salt, butter, bread, meat, and malt was put aside for drink. The marching orders were finally given at the beginning of September, for the Regiment to be ready to march to Karlstad at the beginning of October.\textsuperscript{217} Pihlström provides an itinerary for one of the Battalions.\textsuperscript{218} It shows a daily march of roughly 20km, with a rest day every third day, between the 9\textsuperscript{th} and 27\textsuperscript{th} October, which brought them to Eda skans, in eastern Sweden.\textsuperscript{219} From there, the troops then had to continue to the border then over into Norway, to Fredriksten or Blakjer, where the Norwegians were building defences.\textsuperscript{220}

The news of the Kings death spread through the troops on the 1\textsuperscript{st} December, and was shortly followed by the order to withdraw from Norway. Pihlström describes the withdrawal as made ‘with a haste and lack of planning which cost ..... more men and military equipment than would have been lost if the war had continued’.\textsuperscript{221} Fredrik, Crown Prince of Hessen took over command on the 4\textsuperscript{th} December, and ordered the Dala Regiment to break camp and march to “Barstebro (Basmo?)”. This was followed by a further order to continue back to Dalarna, taking as much of the provisions and cattle with them as possible, and that the troops should keep together, even if that meant they had to camp out overnight. They arrived in Dalarna at the end of December. Pihlström records that the Regiment had lost several men on the march home.\textsuperscript{222}

\textbf{Analysis}

The final section of the war consisted primarily of siege activity against the Norwegians at Spånvikskassan and Fredrikshall. Figure 10 shows a distinct echo between the Losses and Recruits (the second and third graph lines), but with the number of recruits slightly higher, until 1719. This suggests that the process for the provision of replacements functioned effectively and in fact, anticipated losses. Looking at the position in 1714, there was an increase in the number of recruits in 1714 and this continues into 1715 as the Regiment is re-formed. The process of re-forming the Companies clearly took time, and the lack of activity within the Theatre of Operations is reflected by the absence of any urgency to achieve the full complement of soldiers. The drop in losses in 1717 can be explained by the return to Dalarna and the inactivity before the next Norwegian Campaign is launched. The total number of recruits is 311 to 181 Losses, so again the number of recruits is higher, with only a surplus of losses to recruits occurring in 1720.

\textsuperscript{217} Pihlström, 1906, 259.
\textsuperscript{218} Pihlström, 1906, 260.
\textsuperscript{219} Pihlström, 1906, 260.
\textsuperscript{220} Pihlström, 1906, 261.
\textsuperscript{221} ‘en brådska och en planlöshet, som kostade ..... mera folk och krigsmateriel, än krigets fortsättande skulle hafta gjort’.
\textsuperscript{222} Pihlström, 1906, 262.
Figure 10 - Recruits versus Losses – 1715-1720

Source: Transcribed records of Långberg and Boman. Extract taken from parish and military records.

Figure 11 highlights the lack of POWs taken during this final section of the war which, given the short period of the 1716 Norwegian campaign and the low level of battles and skirmishes, is understandable. However, in the light of this, the loss of approximately a third of the two companies, 106 soldiers over two years, seems high. As the march to Norway did not begin before February 1716, the deaths in 1715 also present a possible anomaly. 13 of these soldiers have little information recorded apart from the month they died in. 12 died either in Uppsala or on the march home, whilst 10 died at home after having returned there due to illness. A further 16 men died whilst with the navy. The total number of the Regiment who were seconded to the navy is not known, but Pihlström records that a total of 111 ordinary soldiers died.223

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223 Pihlström, 1905, 236-7. The Swedish navy became engaged in battle with the Danish at Rügen.
Figure 11 records deaths representing approximately 33% of the combined two companies in the first two years. The losses through the rest of the section are less significant in comparison. Those within 1719 must be attributed to the march back to Dalarna after the death of the King, and in fact the record for one of the Leksands soldiers states that he suffered a great deal from hunger and fell ill on the march back, dying in January 1719.224 There is very little information given on the losses which occurred in 1720, however all of them were in service since the reforming of the Company following Tönning. The UF's appear insignificant, within this section of the war unless compared with the actual deaths. Under comparison, the UF's in 1717 almost double the number of deaths, are a third of the deaths in 1718 and a half in 1720. The average age of these men, in 1720 was just over 26. The average losses within this final section ranged from just under 18% to just under 3%, giving an average of just under 9% for the section and an overall average of 19.5%.

224 Drift Not, Päder Danielson.
Figure 12 - Breakdown of Reasons for End of Service – 1708-1714

Source: Transcribed records of Långberg and Boman. Extract taken from parish and military records.

Figure 12 provides a breakdown of the reasons for end of service, with the percentage figures provided. The Deaths section is 72% of the total, with the ‘D or D’ group providing the second largest group with 18%. A closer examination of the ‘D or D’ group revealed that most of them were dismissed due to sickness or injuries sustained. The others in this figure consist of 2 soldiers who ran away, 1 who was dismissed due to sickness and 1 who was executed.

Compared to the Breakdown of Reasons given in figures 4 and 8, the patterns are very similar, with Deaths providing the largest group in each. Whilst the ‘D or D’ group provides the second largest group in both the first and last section, the POW’s are of greater significance in the second section, when the war was more intensive and not in Sweden’s favour.

Figure 13 provides a breakdown of the month in which deaths are recorded as occurring. The overall pattern is much lower, particularly than the previous section. The peak is in June, with 22 deaths, whilst the UMs account for 21 closely followed by December which accounts for 20 deaths. Figure 13 shows a peak in deaths in January 1719. It also shows a rise in deaths occurring towards the end of 1715. As this was a period of relative inactivity, when the Dala Regiment was based primarily in eastern Sweden or else assisting the Navy, these losses are harder to explain, although at least a fifth of the deaths are attributable to service in the navy. 1716 also shows very few losses in the beginning of the year, but with sharp rises from May through to October. This matches the period when activity for the Army was at its height in
Norway through to the retreat back to Sweden. Pihlström records a shortage of provisions in April 1716, and also increases in the number of sick as the Army retreats back to Sweden, 1716. There are also a large number of losses which cannot be attributed to a month, so that they could be due to the shortage of provisions, or the increasing sickness, or a third totally unknown cause.

1718 had very few if any deaths throughout the year then suffers a sharp rise in November/December, which coincides with the death of the King and the return to Sweden. This highlights the success of the planning for the second Norwegian Campaign and underlines the lack of provisions as a likely cause of deaths during the first campaign. Both 1717 and 1720 have very low death rates, with a total of 5 and 9 respectively throughout the year, and very little additional information.

Figure 13 –Pie chart showing the breakdown of when deaths are recorded as occurring – 1715-1720  
Source: Transcribed records of Långberg and Boman. Extract taken from parish and military records.
**Demography**

An examination of the demography of the two Companies provides a control check to the information provided above, and also enables an assessment of the possible impact on the communities which provided the soldiers to the Leksands and Gagnefs companies. This can then be extrapolated to provide possible conclusions regarding society as a whole.

Figure 14 is a scatter chart which plots the average age of the recruits for each Company in each year, and then shows the trend. The regulations governing *indelningsverket* stated the age limits for recruits so that each soldier should be between the ages of 20 and 26. If the average age of the recruits increases it shows that soldiers older than 26 were being recruited, and vice versa if the average age decreases, soldiers younger than 20 were being recruited, possibly indicating a derth of men available in the required age range. Where there is a gap in the information, for instance a lack of records with year of birth recorded, then an age has been supplied on the basis of the information for the years either side. Thus, for the Gagnefs company in 1703, an average age of 33 has been assumed, which is approximately half way between the 36 of 1702 and 30 of 1704.

![Average Age of Soldiers](image)

*Figure 14: A Comparative graph of the Average Age of Recruits through the Great Northern War.***

*Source: Transcribed records of Långberg and Boman. Extract taken from Parish and military records.*

Both Companies appear to have had difficulty with providing a recruit within the age range prior to 1711, as the average age for Gagnefs company in the early period ranges from 19 to 37, and for Leksands company from 27 to 34. Both Companies have 11 occasions when the average age

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225 Figures 14 and 15 appear to begin in 1699, although data has only been recorded from 1700. 1699 is included purely for presentational reasons, so that the first entries are not plotted on the axis line.
was not within the required range. The trend lines show that Gagnefs began at approximately 31 and fell to just over 23, whilst Leksands began at 29 and fell to just under 25.

The Dala Regiment had to be re-formed following Poltava, the plague epidemic in 1710, and Tönning, in 1714. The Average Age shows a steady decrease following Poltava, from the mid-30’s/late 20’s down to low 20’s from 1713 onwards. Throughout the rest of the war, the average age remains in the mid-20’s which suggests that the rotar may not have struggled to meet their obligation on this occasion, keeping within the 20-26 year limits. The trend lines show that there was a decline in the average age of the recruits throughout the war period.

However, it is possible that the older men had already been recruited, i.e that there was a shortage of older men in the community, that those who were fit and over 26 were either in the Army or had been discharged as unfit for further service or were too valuable to the community to be conscripted. Although Pihlström states that older recruits were brought in to strengthen the Regiment, 1715, this is not reflected in the figures. Although there were 200 to 300 soldiers recruited, it is possible they were not involved in the Companies which form the subject of the Thesis. This and the Age distribution within the population of Dalarna have unfortunately fallen outside the remit of this Thesis but could be part of a further study.

The fact that the Average Age differs so widely during the early period of the War suggests that this was the point when meeting the Age requirement was most difficult. As the War has only been in progress for a short period, this suggests that although having to find these recruits put pressure on society, the war should not be singled out as a problem, particularly as it is primarily in these early years that it was a problem. A full understanding of the causes of pressure on society must be sought in the decades preceding the war, from 1674 onwards, which suggests that the Scanian wars may have had more of an impact on the male population and society as a whole, but a more detailed assessment is beyond the scope of this Thesis.

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226 Pihlström, 1905, 236.
As the *rotar* were able to remain within the limits between 1711 and 1717 suggests that whatever crisis was effecting the population in the mid-1670's was gone by the mid 1680's. A more detailed demographic investigation would be needed to fully identify the pressures on society.

Figure 15 shows the average length of service for each of the Companies, calculated according to their service during the Great Northern War. It appears to range from 1699 although no data is recorded for the period before 1700. The Average Length of Service (LOS) confirms the frequency with which soldiers had to be replaced. A short LOS is further confirmation of a high loss rate, as a longer LOS would indicate that soldiers were not replaced very frequently. Given that the majority of recruits were new at the beginning of the Great Northern War, the average LOS appears to be short in the early years of the war, the trend is for a longer length of service towards 1707, shown by the Lines falling diagonally from left to right. The average LOS continues to be low, although it is beginning to increase, in the very last section of the war.

The first part of the war appears to totally lack a pattern, until the peak at 1707. This suggests that prior to 1703, high losses occurred within Leksands company, whilst Gagnefs suffered the higher losses between 1703 and 1709, which indeed was the case. Leksands suffered 33% more losses than Gagnefs before 1703, whilst it suffered 50% less between 1703 and 1707. The average Length of Service from 1710 through to 1718 is very short, for both companies, generally with no more than 1 or 2 years.
Looking at the burden on the *Bonde*-class responsible for finding and supporting the soldier, each Company provided an average of 7 soldiers per *rote*, whilst the average number of *Bonde* within a *rote* remained at 9, throughout the war. This remains the case throughout the war, which indicates that the burden on society remained even, so that it did not increase as the war continued. However, the burden increased in other ways. The *bonde* were providing for the reserve *tre*- and *femmäning* regiments as well as all they were required to provide to support the second Norwegian Campaign. Again, this is outside the remit of this Thesis, but could form the basis of a further study.
CONCLUSION

The purpose of this Thesis was to examine the losses suffered by the Swedish Army during the Great Northern War, 1700-1720. Its focus has been on two companies of infantry men from the Dala Regiment. The aim was to measure the losses over the period of the war and assess whether they differed over time or in relation to location.

Given the definition of a loss as provided within this thesis, the measurement exercise provided a total of 1325 soldiers lost, of which just over 1000 were deaths or UFs, which amounts to an average of 63 or just over 19% per year. The losses can be broken down to 956 deaths with 128 UFs and 144 POWs.

There are a number of points where high losses could be expected but do not occur, such as late in 1700 to mid-1701, following the Battle of Narva, when Pihlström highlights that lack of provisions and poor equipment meant winter quartering had to be adopted until May of the following year or following the Battle of Poltava, 1709, when a high number of POWs could be expected. Only 35 men were recorded as taken prisoner in 1709. Far more POWs were taken in 1712.

If the losses are looked at over a basis of time, then the second section, 1708-1714 contained the largest amount of losses, with a total of 773 (or 65 %) compared with 249 (21%) in the first section and 161 (14%) in the third section. The losses were generally below 35 per annum (pa) in the first section, with the exceptions of 1700 and 1702, and in the third, with the main exceptions of 1715 and 1716. Within the second section, consisted of a seven year period, there were four incidences when the losses were over 100 pa, reaching 252 in 1708.

The first section of the war contained a high level of marching and a lack of supplies, whilst a large part of the first three years and the sixth and seventh years were spent in quarters. Whilst Pihlström’s account describes poor conditions, poor rations and poor weather, such that a march had to be abandoned during the winter of 1702, this does not account for all the losses. Although a high number are recorded in November of 1702, the highest number is actually recorded for July. Whilst the severe winter was clearly a factor, the Contribution exercise cannot be discounted, neither can the Battle at Hummelhof, with the initial exposure to foreign soil and the reality of war in 1700 also under consideration.

The second section of the war contains the first and second re-forms of the Companies, in 1709 following the battle of Poltava and in 1710 following the plague epidemic. It is clear that the re-form was required in 1708, prior to the battle of Poltava. The peak in deaths occurred in the June-July period, so once again winter quartering can be discounted, although quartering itself
could be a cause. Quarters had been adopted at Mogilev, shortly after the Battle of Holovczyn, whilst awaiting supplies. The July deaths could be attributed to the battle in conjunction with the lack of supplies. However the high number of deaths in June can only be attributed to the quartering and lack of supplies. Whilst Englund offers a possible explanation of losses due to harassment by the Russian Army, as the Swedish Army was at camp in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, this seems unlikely to have produced high losses in such a short time. Although the battle of Poltava is recorded as a disaster as far as Sweden was concerned, this Thesis concludes that the two Companies which have been used as a case study were decimated prior to the battle. If the sample of this study is then taken as representative, then the Swedish Army would have been severely undermanned when the decision was made to lay siege to Poltava.

Throughout the second section the number of casualties was high, with the exception of 1709 and 1714 when they were exceptionally low. Although there were more POWs and UFVs than in the first section, the number of deaths in 1708 outweighed them. Unfamiliarity with the environment at this point, can be dismissed as the majority of the soldiers had been in service, involved in the war and located in the northern to central Europe area for over a year. However, as mentioned within the analysis section, the Army had been almost permanently within quarters since the end of 1707. Although it was harassed by the Russians during its move from one camp to the next, compared with other periods of the war, the Army was almost continually in quarters, so that this confinement to quarters, rather than their poor condition, must be considered as a cause of high losses.

The third section contained the two Norwegian campaigns. The peak in losses in this section coincides with activities in Norway although there were also a high number of MUs for the deaths, so that it is not possible to state the causes with a degree of certainty. Pihlström records that there was a shortage of provisions. As a great deal of care was expended on the planning of provisioning for the second Norwegian campaign, with the result of fewer deaths, at least prior to the death of the King in 1718, the shortage of provisions has to be a prime contributory factor for the losses in 1716. The losses in 1715 remain open to conjecture. The one cause which can be dismissed here is the unfamiliarity to foreign bacteria, although confinement to quarters is a possibility, as at this point the Army was based in Sweden.

Breaking the losses down by the month in which they occurred has assisted the possibility of a more accurate assessment of when the deaths occurred, although there will always be an element of doubt. But what is most clearly highlighted is the difference between deaths occurring in the summer rather than winter, particularly where a high number of deaths occurred. For instance, given the high number of deaths which occurred in 1708, a presumption could have been made
that these were due to the severe winter. However, the breakdown on when the deaths were recorded shows that this was clearly not the case.

Looking at the war on the basis of location, then the first two sections of the war contained a greater range of locations than that of the third section, from the northern seaboard of Europe across to Saxony then back across to the eastern borders of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth through to Russia and back to Sweden before renewed campaigns beginning in Wismar then heading west across northern Europe. In terms of engagement with the enemy, there was very little difference between section 1 and 2 apart from the fact that Sweden was victorious during the first section.

Many kilometres of marching were a feature of all three sections of the war. During Section 1, quartering was adopted on a fairly regular basis, and although sickness among the troops is recorded, it is not reflected in the losses suffered. A peak in losses occurs when the Regiment is in transit from Sweden to Denmark, so that the factors of conditions in camp in Sweden could be the main cause of losses or else the unfamiliarity with the environment on foreign soil.

During the second section, winter quartering was adopted, but not for such long periods as section 1. Although the troops had the very severe winter of 1708-09 to contend with, the number of deaths occurring in the two Companies in this period was minimal. The highest losses are recorded as occurring in the middle of 1708, prior to the severe winter and also prior to the battle of Poltava. It is difficult to locate an exact cause for these losses. The soldiers had been quartered almost continuously since the beginning of the year and prior to that had been quartered in Saxony where provisions were plentiful. The quartering in 1708 had been at various locations and not continuous, so that quartering itself can be dismissed as the cause. However, the arrival of supplies was awaited at Mogilev. An assumption has to be made that the continuous quartering, combined with lack of supplies after a period when these had been plentiful, resulted in the troops being more vulnerable to the illnesses which were virulent in the camps. Almost twice as many losses were experienced during the middle section of the war, 1708 – 1714. During this period, the Army had only been in eastern Europe for eighteen months, up to the battle of Poltava in June, 1709. Whilst there was a peak in losses in 1708, there were more losses at the end of 1710, when the Army was in Sweden and in 1713, when it was in Swedish territory in northern Europe or trying to keep ahead of three enemy armies while it made its way across the provinces at the base of Denmark to Holstein-Gottorp.

Finally, although there was a far lower level of activity, the third section contained mainly kilometres of marching on poor roads with a number of deep rivers to be crossed. The first campaign in Norway suffered from a lack of supplies, and illness. Quartering was not adopted,
but at the same time accommodation must have been difficult, as the tent wagons had left behind in Wismar. At the beginning of this section, although some of the Dala Regiment assisted with the Navy, the greater part of the Army remained within Sweden. The losses were at a level of 15%, 1715, of which some can be attributed to the naval activities whilst a large amount of the others died on the march back from Uppsala, or of illness following their return home. Again the quartering of the soldiers and camp conditions has to be assumed as the key factor.

The demographic data shows that the role of Dalarna were able to keep the Army supplied with their quota, particularly at the crisis points when the Companies had to be re-formed, although both areas struggled to meet the age limits in the initial stages. It also shows that the burden was spread evenly across the society. The length of Service was quite clearly much shorter in the second decade of the war, although it was gradually increasing.

A brief summary was included at the beginning of this thesis, of conclusions drawn in other studies of losses. It is now possible to dismiss Nordensvans conclusion that the high losses were due to the conditions of the quarters. Also, if the figures which have been derived from the two companies are regarded as typical, when they are extrapolated, the total is 116,600 infantry men would have been lost over the period of the war, with just over 5500 lost each year, which is lower than the figures provided by Lindegren, both from his own study of losses and the quoted study undertaken by Mankell, although this figure only includes infantrymen.

What does become clearly evident from this thesis is that there is not one overall reason for the high losses. Whilst there are points when the losses are higher, it is the accumulated affect which leads to the disastrous losses. In the twenty-one year period, there are only three years when the losses exceed 100, and only eight which are over 50. This accumulated effect is the result of a combination of the causes. One of the prime factors was the lack of provisions which the Army so often suffered from because when supplies were not sparse, for instance following a successful requisitioning exercise, such as 1702, or when winter quartering were adopted in an area where provisions were plentiful, 1706, then losses suffered were significantly lower. Certainly the army proved for itself that provisions were the root cause to a high proportion of its losses, through the difference made between the 1716 and 1718 campaigns.

However, it was not the only cause. At this point, over 300 years later, it is impossible to separate out the effect of lack of provisions from poor quartering or the effect of being in quarters for extended periods, but it can be concluded that all of these contributed to the losses suffered during the Great Northern War.
Bibliography

Prime Data
Långberg, John, Bohman, Ragnar Transcription and Compilation of Records, Dalregimentet. 2010.

Literary Source

Literature


Sjöberg, Maria, Kvinnor i fält, Riga: Gidlunds Förlag, 2008.


Villstrand, Nils Erik, Adaption or Protestation:Local community facing the conscription of Infantry for the Swedish Armed forces, 1620-1679” in A Revolution from Above? The power of 16th and 17th Century Scandinavia”,(Odense:Odense University Press, 2000)

APPENDIX A -

A1 - Stylised Map

Stylised maps have been included for the first and second sections of the Great Northern War. A map has not been included for the third section as this was centred on Sweden and Norway.

*campaign against Russia was resumed, Sept 1707, but took almost a year, with adoption of quarters in between.
SECTION 2 – 1708-1714
Poltava to Tönning

A2- Abbreviations used

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<td>Per annum</td>
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APPENDIX B

B.1 Actual figures.

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B1.1 – Breakdown of Losses and recruits by year.
Source: Transcribed records of Långberg and Boman. Extract taken from Parish and military records.

B1.2 - Breakdown of deaths by month recorded.

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B1.2 – Breakdown of deaths by month recorded, for the whole period of the War.
Source: Transcribed records of Långberg and Boman. Extract taken from Parish and military records.
B1.3 - Average Age and Length of Service

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B1.3- Average Age and Length of Service, broken down by Year

Source: Transcribed records of Långberg and Boman. Extract taken from Parish and military records.
B.2 – Graphs incorporating the whole of the Great Northern War

**Recruits versus losses.** Source: Transcribed records of Långberg and Boman, extract from Parish and military records.

**Total losses.** Source: Transcribed records of Långberg and Boman, extract from Parish and military records.
Breakdown of month when deaths are recorded by year for the whole period of the Great Northern War.

Source: Transcribed records of Långberg and Boman, extract from Parish and military records.

Breakdown of month when deaths are recorded.