**Battle of Ratan and Sävar**

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Battle of Sävar and Ratan** | |
| Part of [Finnish War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finnish_War) | |
| [Ratan battle.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Ratan_battle.jpg) | |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Date** | 19–20 August 1809 | | **Location** | The village of [Sävar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/S%C3%A4var) and the village of [Ratan](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Ratan_(village)&action=edit&redlink=1), slightly north of [Umeå](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ume%C3%A5), [Sweden](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sweden) | | **Result** | Sävar: Russian victory Ratan: Swedish victory | | |
| **Belligerents** | |
| https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/thumb/4/4c/Flag_of_Sweden.svg/23px-Flag_of_Sweden.svg.png [Sweden](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sweden" \o "Sweden) | https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/thumb/f/f3/Flag_of_Russia.svg/23px-Flag_of_Russia.svg.png [Russia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russia" \o "Russia) |
| **Commanders and leaders** | |
| [Gustav Wachtmeister](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustav_Wachtmeister) | [Nikolay Mikhailovich Kamensky](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nikolay_Mikhailovich_Kamensky) |
| **Strength** | |
| 6,800 troops | 6,000 troops [[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Ratan_and_S%C3%A4var#cite_note-Multi.fi-1) |
| **Casualties and losses** | |
| Total: 1 000. Sävar: 850 (396 dead, 450 wounded). Ratan: 150 (26 dead, 2 prisoners) [[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Ratan_and_S%C3%A4var#cite_note-svbattles-2) | Total: 1 750. Sävar: 1 600 (600 dead, 1000 wounded). Ratan: 150 (dead and wounded)[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Ratan_and_S%C3%A4var#cite_note-svbattles-2) |

|  |
| --- |
|  |
|  |
|  |

The **Battle of Sävar and Ratan** is two battles fought a day apart. They are mentioned together as the same armies fought both battles and the later battle was essentially an extension of the first. The battle of Sävar and Ratan was the last battle on Swedish soil[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Ratan_and_S%C3%A4var#cite_note-3) and the last between Swedish and Russian forces.

**Prelude to the battle**

The Russians had successfully captured the city of [Umeå](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ume%C3%A5) and driven the Swedish army commanded by [Sandels](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johan_August_Sandels) south, to [Härnösand](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/H%C3%A4rn%C3%B6sand). [Tsar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tsar) [Alexander I of Russia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_I_of_Russia) demanded that Sweden cede all of [Finland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finland). To achieve a better negotiating position, the Swedish army command planned to land troops north of the Russian positions in Umeå to attack the Russian army from the rear, while the mainland army of 3,400 men under [Fabian Wrede](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fabian_Wrede) attacked them from the front.

Chosen to lead the sea-borne task force was Lieutenant-General [Gustav Wachtmeister](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustav_Wachtmeister). Battle proven in the [Prussian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prussia) army, in the [Russo-Swedish War 1789-1790](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustav_III%27s_Russian_War), and in the [Pomeranian War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pomeranian_War) just two years earlier. There was talk on giving the command to [von Döbeln](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georg_Carl_von_D%C3%B6beln), but Wachtmeister was chosen.

There was no threat from the Russians possible on the waters, as the combined force of the [Swedish Örloggsflottan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Swedish_Navy) and the [British Navy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Navy) had the Russian fleet at bay. The task force left [Stockholm](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stockholm) on August 8 and sailed north towards Ratan 45 km north from Umeå. To avoid detection by the Russian army in Umeå, the task force sailed east of Holmön. It arrived at Ratan August 16. The attack was planned for August 19.

The Swedish task force sent was composed of:

* 2 [ships of the line](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ship_of_the_line) (*Adolf Fredrik* and *Försiktigheten*)
* 1 [frigate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frigate) (*Jarramas*)
* 44 gun [sloops](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sloop)
* 6 [galleys](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galley)
* 20-40 troop transport ships
* 6,800 soldiers

**Description of the battle**

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:View_and_Map_of_the_Affair_at_Ratan,_of_August_20,_1809_-_WDL.png)

"View and Map of the Affair at Ratan, of August 20, 1809" by Carl Gustaf Gillberg, 1809

On August 17, the Swedish army disembarked from their ships in Ratan. Later the same day, they destroyed a small Russian detachment in Djäkneboda.

The Russian commander, Lieutenant-General [Nikolay Mikhailovich Kamensky](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nikolay_Mikhailovich_Kamensky), was marching south when he learned of the Swedish task force. He quickly wheeled around and marched north to face Wachtmeister's army before Wrede's arrived.

The Swedish force under Wachtmeister was delayed at [Sävar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/S%C3%A4var) 20 km north of [Umeå](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ume%C3%A5). The Russians attacked Wachtmeister's force in [Sävar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/S%C3%A4var) at 07:30 August 19. The Russian force took possession of high ground immediately and the Swedes counterattacked the Russians uphill. A fierce battle broke out and despite the Swedes success in the fighting Wachtmeister ordered his forces to retreat back to Ratan. The Battle of Sävar was over at 15:00. Although the Battle of Sävar turned out as a Russian victory, the Russian army was too damaged to dare face Wrede advancing from the south.

In Sävar, Sweden suffered casualties of 396 men dead and around 450 wounded, the Russians suffered around 600 men dead and around 1000 wounded.

After the Battle of Sävar, the Swedish force fell back to the village of Ratan, in which they immediately prepared for another battle. On August 20 Kamensky ordered his army to attack the Swedes in a delaying battle to secure the Russian supply wagons retreat north. This time Sweden had support from their [artillery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artillery), not only the ground based, but also the cannons loaded on the Swedish fleet. Altogether, around 100 cannons were available for the [Swedish army](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swedish_army). The artillery barrage destroyed large parts of the village and its surroundings.

During the Battle of Ratan, Wachtmeister managed to hold off Kamensky, who afterwards retreated north towards [Piteå](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pite%C3%A5). Shortly after, Swedish troops entered Umeå.

Casualties at [Ratan](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Ratan_(village)&action=edit&redlink=1) numbered 150 Swedes (26 dead, 2 prisoners) and 150 Russians (dead and wounded).[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Ratan_and_S%C3%A4var#cite_note-svbattles-2)

**Aftermath**

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:S%C3%A4var_monument-2007-06-15.jpg)

War memorial of Battle of Sävar.

Although the battle was a Russian victory, it was a [pyrrhic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyrrhic_victory) one. The Russian army could not stay with the enemy advancing from the south having just suffered so many casualties. Instead it retreated north after the battle, easing up the situation for the Swedish army. It has also been argued that the outcomes of the battles helped Sweden to achieve a better position in the peace negotiations with Russia. Czar Alexander of Russia had demanded all of Österland, [Åland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%85land), the parts of Norrland in present-day [Finland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finland) and parts of Norrland in present-day Sweden. The Czar's demand was for the border to be drawn at the [Kalix River](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kalix_River). The engagements in Sävar and Ratan have been argued to have helped move the border north to the [Tornio](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tornio) and [Muonio](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muonio) rivers in the peace talks.

Having the border further north than demanded by the Russians in the initial talks turned out to be fortunate for Sweden in the long run as major findings of iron ore were discovered in these areas later.

**References**

* 1. [**Jump up ^**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Ratan_and_S%C3%A4var#cite_ref-Multi.fi_1-0) [Main Document - Swedish-Russian War](http://www.multi.fi/~goranfri/navalwar.html)
  2. ^ [Jump up to: ***a***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Ratan_and_S%C3%A4var#cite_ref-svbattles_2-0) [***b***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Ratan_and_S%C3%A4var#cite_ref-svbattles_2-1) [***c***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Ratan_and_S%C3%A4var#cite_ref-svbattles_2-2) Svenska slag (Swedish battles) [ISBN 91-46-21087-3](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special:BookSources/9146210873)
  3. [**Jump up ^**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Ratan_and_S%C3%A4var#cite_ref-3) [[1]](http://www.savar1809.se/)