

## The Spaniards are coming



## The alliance with Napoleon

2

Sir Arthur Wellesley, later 1st Duke of Wellington (1812-1852)

Britain

Between 1793 and 1814 Britain was almost continuously at war with France, the issues being the balance of power in Europe and dominion over the overseas colonies. The British victory at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805 was followed by a blockade of the French ports, but it was not until after another decade of war that the allied armies, with Wellington as general, achieved decisive victory over Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo.

Ferdinand VII (1808 and 1813-1833)

Spain

In March 1808, Ferdinand VII forced the abdication of his father Charles IV. He opposed the alliance with France and was received as a reformer of absolutism. Later the same year he himself was deposed and replaced by Napoleon's brother, Joseph Bonaparte. This led to the bloody Spanish War of Independence (1808-1814) against the rule of Napoleon. From August 1808, the Spanish forces in Denmark marched in the name of Ferdinand. Ferdinand himself was imprisoned in France until 1813 when he returned to Spain as king. His reign (1813-1833) was dominated by disputes between supporters of the free constitution and the king's authoritarian style of rule.

Emperor Napoleon I (1804-1814 and 1815)

France

The French revolution in 1789 was followed by a number of turbulence which ended in a military coup in 1799. The coup brought to power Napoleon, the young general who had gained honour during campaigns in Italy and Egypt. Napoleon pronounced himself emperor in 1804, and in the years which followed he waged war on many fronts. In 1806 he dissolved the old Holy Roman Empire, and at the same time sought to prevent all trade between Britain and the Continent. The year after, the British attack forced Denmark into the war on the side of the French.

The years after the French Revolution in 1789 were a troubled time for Europe, which had consequences also for the neutral countries. In 1800, Denmark-Norway entered into an armed neutrality pact with Sweden, Russia and Prussia. This was seen in Britain as a hostile act, and on 2nd April 1801 Britain's attempt to force Denmark out of the alliance resulted in a naval battle, the Battle of Copenhagen. In 1807 Denmark was again attacked by Britain, the issue this time being the Danish fleet. Copenhagen was bombarded into submission and the fleet confiscated and taken to Britain. Denmark subsequently entered into the alliance with Napoleon that led to some 33,000 French, Belgian and Spanish troops being stationed in Denmark.

Frederik VI (1808-1839)

Denmark

During the siege of Copenhagen by Britain, King Christian VII stayed first at Koldinghus castle and then at Rendsburg, Schleswig. There he died on 13th March 1808, reportedly from fright at the arrival of the Spanish troops. Owing to his mental illness he had been king in name only, and since 1784 the government had been led by his son, Crown Prince Frederik VI. His attempts to keep Denmark outside the war proved, however, to be of no avail.

Gustav IV Adolf (1792-1809)

Sweden

In 1800, Sweden, Prussia, Denmark and Russia had entered into an armed neutrality pact aimed at securing the freedom of the seas. In the following year the Tsar was murdered and the alliance disintegrated. From 1808, Sweden was at war both with Denmark and Russia, the latter conquering Finland which had been under Swedish rule since the 12th century. In 1810, Marshal Bernadotte of France was appointed successor to the Swedish throne, and in 1812, he allied Sweden with the coalition against Napoleon.

Tsar Alexander I (1801-1825)

Russia

At the end of the Great Northern War in 1721 Sweden had been forced to cede Livonia, Estonia, Ingria and parts of Finland to Russia, which now became the leading Baltic power. Paul I, who was Tsar from 1796 to 1801, fluctuated in his relationship with France and Britain. From 1805, his son, Alexander I, was an ally of Britain and Austria in the war against France, but changed sides in 1807. The Franco-Russian alliance was to last until Napoleon launched his ill-fated campaign against Russia in 1812.

The Spanish troops in Denmark. From a report dating from 1818.

The list states the different regiments and their commanders, followed by the number of rank and file – total 14,220 – and horses – total 2850.

The fate of the commanders is shown on the right.

The Military Archive, Madrid.

“Sketch showing the part of Denmark billeted with Spanish troops under the command of Marquis de la Romana when in August 1808 he effected his remarkable withdrawal to Spain with maritime assistance from the British”

The map shows only the areas where Spanish forces dominated and from which the evacuation of Spanish troops was successful. The troop locations are shown in pencil.

The map was produced by José O’Donell, veteran of “The Expedition to Denmark”, and forming part of his previously unpublished memoirs written in 1818.

The Military Archive, Madrid.

The Danish realm included Denmark and the dukedoms of Schleswig and Holstein. Schleswig had been Danish from time immemorial, while Holstein had always been part of German territory. The Danish king was also King of Norway, Iceland and the Faroes. Greenland was still a colony, and thus shared the same status as Tranquebar and Serampore in India, the three West Indian islands of St. Thomas, St. John and St. Croix, and several forts in what today is Ghana in Africa. While there was great loyalty to the king in the core Danish states, in Norway, which was deeply dependent on trade with Britain, support for Danish foreign policy during the war years was weaker than in other parts of the realm.

“Be not alarmed, but the castle is ablaze!” It was with these words that a maidservant woke up a wife and her seven daughters who were living at Koldinghus castle. They were staying there while their husband and father, a Danish cavalry officer Major Hviid, was stationed in Sealand with his regiment. It was the night of the 29th of March. Marshal Bernadotte was also staying there, and it was his Spanish guards who accidentally started a fire. With no local fire pickets at their posts, efforts to control the blaze only began when it was too late and by the next day Koldinghus castle had been destroyed.

Koldinghus before 1808  
Laurits de Thura's engraving of Koldinghus from 1749 shows how the castle looked when the Spaniards came to Denmark.

Koldinghus after 1808  
When the Spaniards left, Koldinghus was a ruin. W. Alberthsen's water colour from 1930 shows not only the magnitude of the disaster, but also posterity's romantic view of historical ruins.

**Bernadotte**  
Jean-Baptiste Jules Bernadotte, marshal in the French army and later Crown Prince and King of Sweden, had more contact with Denmark than any other of Napoleon's marshals. In March 1808, Bernadotte entered Denmark with his 33,000 strong multinational auxiliary force. His task was to lead a joint Franco-Danish invasion of Scania, Sweden. For various reasons the invasion plans came to nought, but Bernadotte's troops remained in Denmark for some 12 months.

**Christian VII.**  
The mentally ill Christian VII reigned from 1766 to 1808. When aged 17 he married the 15-year-old English princess, Caroline Matilda, and they had a son, the later Frederik VI. Shortly after this event, however, the queen began an affair with the royal physician, Struensee, who for several months reigned in the king's stead. This was an unprecedented situation which was to end with Struensee's execution and the queen's exile. The reins of power were subsequently taken over by the king's stepmother, dowager queen Juliane Marie, and her son. In 1784, however, they were deposed by the 16-year-old crown prince who reigned until his death in 1839.

## Billeting conditions

Roskilde Cathedral seen from Bondetinget, c. 1833.  
Most Danish market towns were humble and unpretentious, with simple conditions and side streets usually lined with modest, half-timbered houses.  
Roskilde had a population of around 1800 inhabitants when the Spaniards were billeted there.  
Jørgen Roed (1808-88)

Half of the 4000 Spanish soldiers in Sealand were encamped at Bistrupgård, 2-3 km west of Roskilde. Of the remainder, some 800 were billeted in the town itself, the rest in the villages to the south and west.  
The position of the Asturias regiment is marked in green, the Guadalajara regiment is shown in red.

At the beginning of the 19th century there were no barracks outside Copenhagen. As was customary, the Spanish troops were therefore billeted in private houses and, in the country, on farms. The billeting regulations were set out in special codes. The billet providers were required to supply their guests with both a bed and food.  
In the towns, 10-12 men might be accommodated in the larger merchant's houses, while 2-5 men were billeted in the homes of smaller artisans. The costs were shared among the town's population so as to, reduce the burden on the billet providers.

## By donkey

12

The troops were accompanied by considerable baggage in the form of weapons, ammunition and private possessions. Some soldiers also brought their wives and children with them - and everything had to be transported. The Danish authorities therefore requisitioned carts and draught animals from the farmers in the villages along the troops' line of march. As the army's stay dragged out, this annoyed the farmers who themselves needed labour and equipment for work in the fields. The Spaniards themselves also brought with them carts, mules and donkeys – a curious sight for the Danish farmers who must have admired the spirited Spanish riding horses. Feeding arrangements for the animals were carefully planned. The stipulated daily feed ration for horses was half a bushel of oats, five pounds of hay and five pounds of straw.

## On horseback

13

Portrait of the Knabstrupper stallion Thor, sired by Unge Mikkel out of the mare Unge Flæbe. Knabstrup Manor c. 1870-80

When the Spanish troops in Sealand were disarmed in September 1808 one Spanish officer had to leave his horse in Holbæk, the mare being bought by a local butcher named Flæbe. In 1812 the animal was sold on to Christian Ditlev Lunn, who added it to his stud at Knabstrup Manor. This mare was famous for its endurance and was to give rise to the Knabstrupper breed of horse. Its first offspring was Mikkel, a stallion sired by a Frederiksborg horse from the Løvenborg Stud. Knabstruppers are very strong and were later used as carriage and riding horses. Early in the 20th century they were also used as circus horses, probably due to their spotted coat and good training ability.

## With guitar and gun

16

What should have been just a brief visit grew into a prolonged stay. The Spanish troops mainly passed the time playing music, singing and gambling. The Danes made the acquaintance of previously unknown instruments like the Spanish guitar. In the towns, military bands would entertain in squares and open spaces. The troops were also fond of ball games and javelin throwing, and they were passionate card players. The Danes did discern a degree of tension between the French and Spanish troops, but their conduct was generally exemplary and they seem to have been well-liked by their Danish hosts. When they had left the locals missed the spirited Spaniards and the life they had brought to town and village during their short stay.

## Stolen glances ...

17

“...surrounded by sweet nymphs who entertain with song and dance”

“I have not yet had the opportunity to play a role such as one reads of in the novels. But my sweetheart will surely tell me what I must do to fulfil the hero's role when, away from the eyes of her aunts and companions, she summons me with a brief note to the shelter of the primitive arbour that I have chosen as the most suitable place for my performance. There, the gardens and woods will have a tale to tell.”

Letter of April 1808 to Artillery Commander Mariano Brezon from his subordinate Velazco.

“In reality, parading, gambling, banqueting and dancing were what we spent our whole time on in the Spanish camp.”

Letter about Roskilde by Captain Antonio Aldao

1.  
In Odense, by day and night,  
The Spanish army grazes,  
Cat and dog alike it eats,  
Its appetite amazes! (ugh!)  
On infants too it fondly dines  
Hence its body with blackness shines.  
Maidens, virtue is white,  
white is the Dane.  
Go not, go not to the dark men of Spain!

2.  
What they do at the midnight hour,  
Well, heaven only knows!  
The very moon pales at the sight,  
Turns its face - and onward goes (Oh!).  
The campfire burns with flames so high!  
For she who goes there, downfall is nigh!  
Maidens, virtue is white,  
white is the Dane.  
Go not, go not to the dark men of Spain!”

Parody of a song teasing the Danish girls from 'Senior Schoolclass' in Hans Christian Andersen's vaudeville 'Parting and Meeting' from 1836.

## **'Øllebrød' and snails**

**19**

Catering for the foreign troops demanded planning. The majority of the Spaniards were billeted in private accommodation, and the hosts were required to provide most of the food and drink for the troops in return for compensation from the authorities.

Gradually, as Funen became the main base for the Spanish troops, obtaining the necessary quantities of provisions became a major undertaking. The rations consisted of bread, beef, vegetables, beer and aquavit. However, these quickly proved inadequate and the visitors also wanted coffee and wine.

The troops had to accustom themselves to 'øllebrød' (bread mixed with beer), while their Danish hosts looked with amazement at the Spaniards' taste for dandelion salad served with an oil and vinegar dressing, accompanied by fried snails garnished with pepper, vinegar and onion.

## **Riots in Spain**

**23**

On the 2nd of May 1808 riots broke out in Madrid in protest at the abduction of the royal family. The riots were quelled and Napoleon installed a government with his brother as king. However, the unrest spread to towns and cities throughout Spain and led to an alternative government based on local revolutionary committees and guerrilla warfare. The Spanish War of Independence (1808 -1814) is remembered for its violence and as the source of the word 'guerrilla', the 'small war' waged by militia groups against a superior army.

From 1809 Napoleon faced a situation he could not win. Only the cities and larger towns were under his control by virtue of an enormous military presence.

The unrest was rooted in the desire for popular suffrage, civil rights and land reform. Spain's first constitution was adopted in 1812 by parliament, which assembled under British protection in the town of Cadiz.

## **In a hail of bullets**

**26**

Spanish soldier, believed to be Colonel Delevielleuze.

Colonel Delevielleuze commanded the Spanish Asturias regiment and was billeted in the town of Roskilde with the 1st battalion; Delevielleuze lived in one of the town's largest merchant's houses.

As senior Spanish officer he tried to keep the soldiers away from the Royal Palace and was instrumental in bringing the French officers to safety. Following the uprising, Delevielleuze was given command of all Spanish forces in Sealand. He died in France around 1815, 81 years old.

Jacob Korerup (1825-1913)

## **In a hail of bullets**

Francois-Nicholas Fririon (1766-1840)

Frederik Julius d'Origny (1774-1838)

Francois-Nicholas Fririon enlisted in the French army at the age of just 16 and participated in almost all Napoleon's campaigns between 1805 and 1811. In 1808 he was in Denmark commanding the 4000 Spanish troops in Sealand.

Fririon, who had sought to establish good relations with the Spanish, found his life under threat by the army uprising in Roskilde. However, he and his staff escaped from their quarters in the Royal Palace under cover of night.

In 1809, Fririon was promoted to Major General and appointed Baron de l'Empire. He ended his career as 'commandant' of Les Invalides, a war veterans organisation in Paris.

On 7 February 1809, Fririon was decorated by Frederik VI with the Grand Cross of the Order of the Dannebrog, which he can be seen wearing in the engraving.

Captain d'Origny was the Danish town major in Roskilde when the Spanish troops were based there. He spoke both French and Spanish and showed great decisiveness during the Roskilde uprising. It was no little thanks to his efforts and calming influence that the situation with the Spanish troops was peacefully resolved. He would receive his reward – the Knight's Cross of the Legion of Honour – in 1825 on the recommendation of General Fririon.

D'Origny had close links with the Danish royal household, something which may have contributed to Frederik VI's decision not to send in Danish troops against the Spaniards.

## **Army uprising in Roskilde**

**27**

In May and June 1808, two Spanish infantry regiments, the Asturias and the Guadalajara, were transferred to Sealand under the command of the French general, Fririon. In accordance with French wishes the 4000 Spanish soldiers of both units were brought together and billeted in and around Roskilde.

At the end of July, all Spanish soldiers in Denmark were required to swear an oath of allegiance to the newly installed King of Spain, Joseph Bonaparte, brother of Napoleon. In Jutland and Funen the event passed off fairly peacefully, but in Roskilde it triggered an outright mutiny targeted at the French officers.

The uprising took place on 31st July during which one French officer was killed. However, the disturbance was quickly put down and 113 insurgents were immediately handed over. In the days that followed the entire force was disarmed, and the soldiers were put in captivity in Copenhagen until released into French hands in October.

## ¡A España o morir!

The Royal Palace, Roskilde, c. 1835. The Royal Palace was requisitioned as the military headquarters, and the French staff, consisting of General Fririon and five other officers, was billeted together with their valets and servants. When the uprising took place the insurgents gathered outside the building shouting "Death to Napoleon" and "Down with the French", shots also being fired.

At six o'clock in the evening of 31st July, the 1st battalion of the Asturias regiment assembled in Roskilde town square for roll-call. Contrary to regulations they were armed. On being told they would have to swear an oath of allegiance to Napoleon, disturbances broke out which ended in outright mutiny. The soldiers surrounded the Palace where the French officers were billeted. The mood was angry and shots were fired, which attracted several battalions encamped west of the town. In the midst of the tumult a French officer, Lieutenant Marabail, was killed. While these scenes were taking place in the Palace courtyard, the French officers escaped into Roskilde Cathedral through a connecting archway, Absalonsbuen. There they remained concealed until midnight when they slipped out disguised in Danish soldiers' uniforms and were escorted to Copenhagen.

## The naval war 1808

Peter Willemoes, Denmark's naval hero from 2 April 1801, organised the transfer of troops between Langeland and Lolland skilfully and efficiently. He was to be among those killed at the Battle of Sealand's Point in March 1808. The death of the brave young naval officer made a deep impression on the time, and the Danish poet Grundtvig, who had met Willemoes in Langeland, wrote a very emotional verse in his memory.

With their victory over the combined Danish and Norwegian fleet the British gained control of Danish waters. Denmark was virtually defenceless. Coastal batteries were built with all possible speed. To disrupt the enemy's many convoys through the Great Belt and the Sound, the king granted permission for privateering, ie. legal piracy. In March 1808, Prinds Christian, the last Danish ship of the line was destroyed by four British warships off Sealand's Point while en route to the Great Belt to protect the transfer of Spanish troops from Funen to Sealand. Denmark also had gunboats. In calm weather they could attack the enemy's warships, and they were a thorn in the side of the British navy and merchant fleet for the duration of hostilities.

## The escape plan 1808

32

The Spanish rebel government and the British were aware of the Spanish expeditionary force in Denmark. Early in August a Spanish naval officer arrived in the Great Belt by ship and made contact with the Spanish general staff in Nyborg. Together, the British and Spanish hatched an escape plan: The troops would be assembled in Langeland where they would be embarked on British ships and taken to Spain. All Spanish regiments were immediately ordered to Nyborg or to make their way to Langeland. The plan was a success. The Spanish troops in northern Jutland came by ship, the others marching to Nyborg or being ferried from Svendborg to Langeland. Only one cavalry regiment was detained.

## The escape route

33

Rear Admiral Keats was one of a number of able British admirals overshadowed by Nelson both at the time and subsequently. In his younger years he had lived for several years in France, taken part in a number of naval battles, and tasted victory over a joint Spanish-French naval force. Together with la Romana, Keats was the architect behind the evacuation of the rebel Spanish troops, and like la Romana he wished to avoid unnecessary strife and confrontation.

## The capture of Nyborg

16

On 9th August 1808, aided by the British fleet which had gathered offshore, the Spanish forces stormed the fortress of Nyborg. The few Danish troops forces submitted without struggle, but two Danish warships in the fjord did put up brief resistance. More than 50 Danish cargo vessels were anchored in the fjord. These were seized by the British and used together with the warships to convey the 7000 soldiers to Langeland.

All this had taken place before either the Danish or French forces had time to react. In Langeland the Danish forces were disarmed, but the Spanish feared a French attack. The French forces did reach Odense and Svendborg but made only a minor attack with a few Danish gunboats.

## In Langeland

35

Count Frederik Ahlefeldt was general in charge of Danish forces on the island of Langeland. Together with the British fleet, the rebel Spanish troops who arrived on 12 August 1808 represented a vastly superior force to his own. Ahlefeldt elected to negotiate with the foe, thereby saving his subjects and his property from becoming victim to the war. General la Romana and Frederik Ahlefeldt – two officers and aristocrats – were entirely of one mind.

It was agreed that everything should be done in an orderly manner. The Danes would help water and provision the ships for the voyage. The Spaniards would maintain strict order and prevent any depredations among the local population.

The Spanish troops had been assembled in Langeland to provide time for securing sufficient ships and provisions. Due to inadequate supplies, however, their stay could only be a short one. On 21st August, the 9000 troops marched to the foreshore at Spodsbjerg where they were rowed out to the ships. On setting sail the fleet numbered 95 vessels in all, and viewed from the shore the Great Belt seemed to be alive with ships. The population of Langeland breathed a sigh of relief. The uninvited guests were gone.

## The journey home in autumn 1808

37

The ships were filled to overflowing. Off Nyborg the fleet was joined by more ships and the human cargo was redistributed. The British admiral gave orders for good ventilation to be maintained and recommended that the soldiers stay on deck. The food for the troops was the same as for the ships' crews. The first part of the voyage ended at Gothenburg. Other ships joined them, these having to be provisioned before the fleet could set sail. The second part of the voyage was across the North Sea, through the English Channel, and across the Bay of Biscay to the Spanish port of La Coruña. Storms made the crossing of the Bay of Biscay an ordeal. The convoy became separated and the troops suffered agonies from seasickness. The ships reached their destination at the start of October.

British convoy in the Great Belt off Røsnæs. During the events of 1808 the protection of the great merchant fleets remained a task for the British warships. When the Spanish troops had been disembarked in Gothenburg, Admiral Keats immediately returned to his station in the Great Belt and remained there until maritime traffic was halted by the winter. National Maritime Museum, UK

London, 4th September 1808: Census of the Spanish army in Denmark. A total of 9046 officers and rank and file were evacuated. 4209 troops "were disarmed by the French". The evacuated forces are mentioned first, followed by those that remained in Denmark. The figures are listed regiment by regiment, with commanders, officers and rank and file being stated separately. The number of women and children aboard the evacuation ships appears on the right: 212 women and 60 children. Of the 67 female servants, 30 served with the general staff. The Military Archive, Madrid.

## Britain

The real victor in the Napoleonic conflict was Britain, which maintained and strengthened its global mastery of the seas. In Europe, Hanover came under British control, and the British also acquired the strategically important islands of Malta and Heligoland. South Africa and Ceylon too entered British hands.

## Spain

The Spanish War of Independence (1808-1814) changed the Spanish state and Spanish society fundamentally. The old absolutist system had definitively collapsed, and with local autonomy during the war came the introduction of democratic ideas.

Desire for reforms and new parliamentary systems of government spread rapidly to Latin America, which in the following decades split into independent states.

The extensive war damage, however, threw shadows over Spain's economic development for many years and made the former global empire dependent on Britain, France and Germany.

The Danish fleet, the monarchy's greatest asset in foreign policy, was lost in the British attack of 1807, and the link with Norway was severed. In 1813, Britain assured Sweden of its support for conquest of Norway. The fortunes of war went against the French; the allied powers – Russia, Prussia, Britain and Sweden – held the upper hand. At the Treaty of Kiel in January 1814, the Danish king was forced to cede the whole of Norway, and the British retained possession of the Danish fleet.

Politically, the end of the Napoleonic wars strengthened the European monarchies. But not in Denmark. On the contrary, Frederik VI discovered that he, and not France, was the biggest loser. He had lost two thirds of his territory and around one quarter of his population.

## Sweden

When peace came, Sweden was granted Norway, which compensated for Sweden's loss of Finland. However, Norway was not disposed to relinquish the constitution that had been adopted at Eidsvoll and the outcome was a personal union between the two countries. The former Marshal Bernadotte was then Swedish Crown Prince, and in 1818 he was crowned King Charles XIV John.

## France

The great loser in 1814 was France. The conquests made by France during the Republic and the years of empire were lost, although the frontiers from 1792 were retained. Heavy war reparations were also imposed on the country. The monarchy was reintroduced, and key areas of northern France were for many years occupied by foreign troops, for which France had to bear the cost.

## Russia

The Tsar was one of the victors of the war. He became Grand Duke of Finland and gained considerable influence over the kingdom of Poland. By the end of the war, however, it was already clear that Britain and Austria viewed Russia's expansion to the west and south with disquiet.

## Don Rafael's Journey 1806-13.

Rafael de Llança y de Valls, 1772 – 1833, was captain of the Spanish Guadalajara regiment in Roskilde. He was a professional soldier from the age of 14 to 47. Each day he would note down his position and distance marched, along with details of nature and history, and make ironic remarks about sense of honour.

His pocket book depicts a dramatic journey covering the years 1806 to 1813 when he was stationed in Italy, Germany, Poland and Denmark. He was a prisoner of war in France and forced into French military service, but escaped to the Russian lines during the campaign against Russia in 1812, and returned to Spain in a British warship.

## Declaration of war 1809

“Either Denmark must consider herself independent and able to act in freedom, or Denmark is enslaved and subject to Napoleon's will”. The revolutionary junta reproached Denmark for behaving like a French province blindly obeying Napoleon's dictates. It complained that Spaniards were being detained, that the Danes were refusing to speak to Spanish diplomats, and that Spanish ships were being denied entry to Danish ports.

The declaration of war on Denmark was passed on 4th October 1809 and sent to all Spanish authorities for public display in city squares, on town gates and in sea ports. Example from Tarragona issued by the commander of the town's fortress.

The Military Archive, Madrid.

Tribute to la Romana as leader of the Spanish evacuation from Denmark.

The figure on the right, 'Victory', points to the cannon and the map of Spain. 'The Nation', the figure on the left, points her left hand at la Romana. In her right hand she holds la Romana's baton, pointing it at the base of the column which depicts the evacuation from Langeland with the Spanish troops boarding the British vessels in disciplined fashion. Her gaze rests on a lion – the symbol of Spain – which has just destroyed an eagle – the symbol of Napoleon. La Romana is surrounded by the flags of the British and Spanish navies. Citation: “He fought against treachery and injustice, he rescued his military forces and saved Galicia”.

## Adios gute Danese

41

There are several reports of Danish girls being sweethearts with Spanish soldiers and becoming pregnant. It goes without saying that little is known about the precise circumstances of these love affairs. Contemporary society did not look kindly on children born out of wedlock so the girls would certainly have kept the matter quiet, except that the law demanded that the name of the father be revealed. One report tells of a young baker's daughter from Roskilde who was inconsolable when the soldiers left. She was much distressed by the thought that she would never be able understand what her child was saying as she herself found Spanish very difficult. In Langeland a number of items, such as needle cases and yarn winders, made by Spanish soldiers as gifts for Danish girls, still exist.

## Descendant

44

One of the few Spanish soldiers compelled to remain in Denmark was Isodoro Panduro. In 1808, en route to Nyborg, he broke his leg and was taken to an army hospital in Kerteminde. While he was there the Spanish army sailed for home. When discharged, Isodoro obtained work at Hverringe Manor. He married the owner's daughter, Maria, and a house was provided for the couple.

Isodoro Panduro and Maria had 10 children, three of whom died as infants. Apart from one son, who ended as a goldminer in California, all the children stayed in Denmark. The sons made a living as craftsmen, and the next generation also numbered fishermen and fishmongers in its ranks.

Today, the Panduro family has branches all over Denmark, its best known representatives being the author Leif Panduro and the company Panduro Hobby. The family's dark-haired and brown-eyed children are still known as Isodoro's "Spanish succession".

Leif Panduro

Isodoro's great-great-grandchild Leif Panduro is the family's most famous member. Born in 1923 he trained as a dentist, but it was as the author of satirical and socio-critical works, such as his debut novel "Av, min guldtand" and the classic "Rend mig i traditionerne" (Kick me in the traditions), that he became known nationwide. Leif Panduro also wrote film scripts and TV plays, including the crime series "Ka' De li' østers?" By his death in 1977, Leif Panduro had long since become one of Denmark's most popular contemporary authors and dramatists.

## Brown eyes?

45

Many Danish families talk of having a Spanish soldier among their ancestors, and features such as black hair, brown eyes and a fiery temperament are attributed to Spanish blood. Virtually the only sources of paternity details are church records, but the question is whether all women who became pregnant by Spanish soldiers would admit it. A number of church records have also been lost. So whether or not someone really does have Spanish blood in their veins is often a matter of surmise rather than evidence.

We have invited genealogists in Denmark to take part in the project to determine the numbers of children of Danish-Spanish descent. Only a small number of hitherto unknown, verified descendants have turned up.

## Genealogy

46

Genealogists use a variety of tools in their work. Church records contain details of christenings, confirmations, weddings and deaths in the relevant parish. The oldest such records date back to the 17th century. Another important source of information are the population censuses, which list everyone living in Denmark in a specific year. The first Danish census dates from 1787.

Other genealogical sources are military records, police and bailiffs' records, land registers, registers of deeds of tenure and probate books. Today, much of this information is available on the internet, including church records until the year 1891 and most of the censuses. There are also a number of websites, including that of the Danish Genealogical Society (DIS-Danmark), which provide guidance on tracing ancestors.

## **General la Romana**

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Marquis de la Romana was born in 1761. Like his father before him he chose a military career, and in 1807 he was given charge of a 14,000 strong Spanish expeditionary force stationed in northern Germany, from where the troops entered Denmark in March 1808. When the plan to invade Scania was abandoned, General la Romana established his headquarters in Nyborg. On receiving news of the Madrid riots of 2nd May 1808, many of the Spanish troops wished to return home. Contact was made with British whose fleet was stationed in the Great Belt, and a plan of evacuation was drawn up. In August, when the Spaniards were compelled to swear an oath of allegiance to the new French king, riotous scenes ensued. That the violent events did not result in death and destruction was principally due to la Romana's efforts to maintain peace and order and to sustain minimum casualties.



## **Antonio Costa – a romantic suicide**

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“Recuerdos a España de Antonio Costa”. These were reportedly Antonio Costa's last words and appear on a gravestone in St. Knud's Church, Frederica. Antonio Costa (1767-1808) was a captain with the only Spanish regiment in Jutland not returned to Spain by the British ships. His superiors had revealed the escape plans to the French, but Costa nevertheless tried to slip across the Little Belt together with two squadrons. 30 men managed to reach Funen, the rest being surrounded by French and Danish soldiers. Costa surrendered after asking his men if they wished to fight to the death. He declared that he alone was guilty, gave his watch and money to his servant, and shot himself. Latter-day Spaniards have called Costa's decease “a romantic death”. He sought adventure in life, pursued the grand ideals and accepted tragedy as a consequence of his concept of honour.