

Original Paper

Battle of Poznań of 19 August 1704 between the Saxon and Swedish Armies

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Abstract

The battle of Poznań between the Swedish army commanded by Johann August Meijerfelt and the Saxon army commanded by general Johann Matthias von der Schulenburg began at the dawn of 19 August 1704. The Saxon general had a major advantage in terms of army strength. He was therefore able to push back the Swedish army from the city, but did not capture the tower. The lack of broader researcher interest and the relatively high number of remaining source materials contributed to the tackling the subject. It is worth shedding light on all events that faded into the historical abyss and are forgotten, or worse, are enveloped by false myths. The Republic of Poland, which became an arena for direct military action in 1702-1709 during the Great Northern War, suffered much pain and destruction despite not officially participating in the war. It is perhaps this fact that makes the conflict and its effects difficult to find among valuable Polish historiography works that would objectively show its course and above all the art of war of the early XVIII century. This paper represents only a small droplet of what remains to be done in terms of describing each aspect of the Great Northern War.

Keywords

Schulenburg, Meijerfelt, Poznan, battle, the Great Northern War, Poland, Saxony, Sweden

1. Introduction

Contemporary Poznań, being the capital of the Greater Poland Voivodeship and based in western Poland, was a very important political and economic centre. The city was well based and wealthy, full of merchants, craftsmen, citizens, house owners with Polish, German and Scottish names, with 13,000 residents in early XVIII century. Poznań was also the capital of the most populated and wealthy voivodeship in Poland, adjacent to Brandenburg and Silesia. For nearly two hundred years, the city has not experienced a military threat. It was in existence and was developed until the mid-17th century, when it was captured by a foreign army for the first time since the Middle Ages. In the second half of the XVII

century and in early XVIII century, Poznań suffered much damage due to military action and its effects as well as natural disasters (especially fires and floods). The Swedish invasion of 1655-1657 turned out to be devastating. From that moment, Poznań was besieged, conquered, robbed, destroyed and burned for one hundred fifty years. The above acts were done by Swedish, Brandenburg, Saxon, Russian, Prussian and even Polish troops. Particular armies occupied Poznań for several years or only passed through the city committing heinous acts. From all the conflicts that swept over the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, affecting Poznań directly, the most devastating for the city was the Great Northern War of 1700-1721. Nevertheless, Poznań maintained the status of one of the main political centres in Poland. All sides of the conflict were aiming at holding the city during the war.

The purpose of the paper is to describe the course of the Battle of Poznań of 19 August 1704 to the greatest extent possible. It is also possible to make the thesis that the actions of the Saxon command (August II) were inconsequential. Instead of controlling the Great Poland along with Poznań to maintain communications with Saxony and suppress the Polish opposition that supported the Swedes, August II avoided the conflict with Charles XII and primarily wanted to reclaim Warsaw and wait for Russian reinforcements (Mankell, 1865, p. 360). It is necessary to stress that at an opportune time, he could have attempted to capture Poznań and the Great Poland using the Saxon army and the support of Polish divisions. Such an opportunity came up when Charles XII went to the south-east Poland near Lviv. Instead of cutting off the Swedish king from his operational bases, August II was “toying” with him. August II’s indecisiveness caused Schulenburg to have insufficient forces and resources to capture Poznań in August or September 1704. The battle in which he held off the Swedes near Poznań must be deemed as tactically unresolved, because the Saxons have also withdrawn from city’s vicinity. It is necessary to stress that it was a battle of the Swedish cavalry with the Saxon cavalry and infantry, in which the cavalry played the main role. An interesting fact is the time of day during which the battle took place, i.e., late night or early morning. The battle was not analysed in-depth as of yet.

2. Research Status

An interesting phenomenon in the Polish historiography is that the Great Northern War is insufficiently elaborated on. This is even more interesting, because its military operations were taking place on Polish soil for many years. There are probably many reasons for this state of affairs including, among others, the fact that it was not a “Polish war”, but is that true? After all, Poles and Lithuanians took active part in it. It also contributes to a civil war in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, in which two sides, one supporting Stanisław Leszczyński and the other supporting August II, fought one another with the support of the Swedish army or the Saxon and Russian armies. It is necessary to note that researchers of the Polish historiography usually prefer to describe battles in which the Polish-Lithuanian army was an active side. Other clashes, in which “foreign” armies played the main roles, despite fighting on Polish soil, often weren’t sufficiently elaborated on. That was the case for the Battle of Poznań of 19 August 1704. When taking a look at the last two hundred years and the publications about the happenings in

Poznań and its surroundings, it turned out that only a handful of researchers raised the subject of the battle. The first one was Józef Łukaszewicz, who in the paper titled *Obraz historyczno-statystyczny miasta Poznania w dawniejszych czasach* [Historical and statistical image of the city of Poznań in times past], volume two, devotes only a single page to describe that Poznań was the arena of a battle between the armies of Schulenburg and Meijerfeld. The description features the battle's most important elements, i.e., the splitting of right flanks, the pillage of the Swedish camp by the Saxons and the attack of the Swedish army, Schulenburg's withdrawal and losses on both sides (Łukaszewicz, 1838, pp. 359-360). Another researcher who described the event of interest was a prominent expert on the Saxon times and Poznań's history, Kazimierz Jarochoowski, who in the paper titled *Oblężenie miasta Poznania przez Patkula* [Patkul's siege of Poznań], describes Schulenburg's military campaign. However, the battle itself was depicted only briefly (Jarochoowski, 1879, p. 25). The Polish reader had to wait several dozen years to be again able to read about the clash in Poznań of 19 August 1704. In 1956, Jan Wimmer in the paper titled *Wojsko Rzeczypospolitej w dobie wojny północnej* [Polish army during the Northern War] devoted one page to the happenings around Poznań in the period of interest (Wimmer, 1956, p. 277). A brief reference about the battle can be found in the paper of Zygmunt Boras and Lech Trzeciakowski titled *W dawnym Poznaniu. Fakty i wydarzenia z dziejów miasta do roku 1918* [Poznań of the old. Facts and events in the city's history until 1918], but it is identical to Łukaszewicz's depiction and adds nothing new (Boras & Trzeciakowski, 1971, p. 187). A book dealing with Poznań's military history was published in 1982 by Karol Olejnik with the title *Z wojennej przeszłości Poznania* [On Poznań's military past], which also features little information about the battle of interest (Olejnik, 1982, p. 126). A similar case is the multi-volume and multi-authored paper titled *Dzieje Poznania do roku 1793* [History of Poznań until 1793], in which one of the authors, Marian Drozdowski, wrote only that there was a battle, but didn't include a detailed depiction of it (Drozdowski, 1988, pp. 621-622). A reference about the battle can be found in the book of Zbigniew Pilarczyk, Marcin Danielewski and Karol Kościelniak titled *Wojenny Poznań. Fortyfikacje i walki o miasto do XVIII wieku* [Wartime Poznań. Fortifications and battles for the city until the XVIII century], which only includes a brief depiction (Pilarczyk, Danielewski, & Kościelniak, 2017, p. 198). Most information about the clash in Poznań of 19 August 1704 and Schulenburg's campaign can thus far be found in the paper of Karol Kościelniak titled *Niewykorzystana szansa. Oblężenie Poznania z 1704 r. przez Jana Reinholda Patkula* [A missed opportunity. Johann Reinhold Patkul's siege of Poznań of 1704], in which the author, when depicting the city's situation in 1704, refers to the clash between the Saxon and Swedish armies. However, as mentioned earlier, the paper also does not raise the subject in a satisfactory manner (Kościelniak, 2018, pp. 387-390). Considering the issue of the lack of full elaboration on the battle of interest, the author of this study makes an attempt of analysing it. For this purpose, based on the current historiographic findings, mainly the preserved source materials, the author wants to elaborate on this seemingly small, but extremely interesting battle to a wider range of readers.

3. Poznań's Situation in 1703-1704

The Great Northern war reached Poznań in 1703, when the Swedish King Charles XII took up military action against the armies of August II. By defeating the Saxons on 2 May 1703 at Pułtusk, he opened the path to Kuyavia [Kujawy] where he besieged Toruń (which capitulated in October 1703). This allowed another Swedish corps commanded by general, subsequent field marshal, Carl Gustav Rehnskiöld to undertake an operation in the Great Poland and capture Poznań, which was defended at the time by only 60 soldiers. The Swedes turned up at Poznań on 12 September 1703 (Wagner, 2001, p. 52). Poznań commenced delayed defence preparations. Talks about the city's surrender were held for several days. Ultimately, in the afternoon of 18 September 1703, after earlier preparations and Poznań's lockout, the Swedes assaulted the city walls. The Swedish troops were able to enter and capture the city very quickly (Kościelniak, 2018, pp. 384-387). After the Swedes captured Poznań, the city's commandant became colonel Gabryel Lilliehöök with his subordinates lieutenant colonel Gabriel von Weidenheim and captain Filip Örnstedt with 500 infantry troops, 100 dragoons and 4 cannons (Jarochoński, 1879, p. 20). The Swedes immediately started to introduce their own order and prepare for a possible attempt by August II to reclaim the city. They were safe for a while, because nothing could threaten their rule in Great Poland due to the fact that they were supported by the then established the Great Poland confederacy (Zwierzykowski, 2010, pp. 186-188). The Swedish garrison in Poznań kept the Saxon army in check and crippled the more eager actions of August II's supporters in Great Poland during the spring and summer of 1704. It became clear that if August II wants to win, he must reclaim Poznań and his rule in Great Poland (Olejnik, 1982, p. 125).

The military situation of August II was becoming increasingly difficult. Fortunately, Charles XII remained with a substantial part of his army in Prussia until mid-1704 and Rehnskiöld's corps only forced the Saxon army to withdraw deeper into Poland, thereby cutting off August II's communication lines with the Electorate of Saxony. It was as late as mid-1704 that Charles XII lead his army in pursuit of August to southern Poland. August was able outmanoeuvre Charles XII, who headed for Red Ruthenia and besieged Lviv (Uddgren, 1918, pp. 250-252; Wagner, 2005, pp. 57-70). This enables August to have a substantial freedom of movement in central Poland.

4. Prior to the Battle

In the clash of August II and Charles XII, the possession of Poznań had great political and economic value due to the proximity of both rulers' operational bases. For Charles XII, it was the Pomerania around Stettin [Szczecin], while for August II—Saxony. However, the negligence of August II, who didn't care for Poznań's proper security at all, was exploited by Charles XII, whose army captured the city and made it an important military, political and economic centre. For August II himself, leaving Poznań in Swedish hands was very dangerous and inconvenient (Kaczmarczyk, 1990, p. 209).

It is necessary to note that in early 1704, August II was afraid of a Swedish invasion of Saxony, hence he gathered his army in two camps, one in Gubin, where approx. 10,000 troops were stationed under the command of lieutenant general von Beneckendorff, and the other of 13,000 troops under the command of Johann Matthias von der Schulenburg in Gorlitz. The entire army was commanded by field marshal Adam Heinrich von Steinau (Querengässer, 2019, p. 230). The location of the two camps was a good starting point for taking control over Great Poland and Poznań.

General Schulenburg thought that the most advantageous solution is for the Saxon army to march along the Odra river to the north, towards the Warta river, from where it could head to the east and effectively threaten the Swedish positions in Great Poland. The Swedes themselves were too weak to oppose such a demonstration of strength, because their main army along with Charles XII were located in southern Poland (Querengässer, 2019, p. 232). The Saxons, by wanting to protect themselves against the Swedish invasion, built fortifications around Odra, however they were dealing with big material problems.

Field marshal Steinau was sent to Warsaw and the command over the Saxon army, which was entering Poland, was taken by general Schulenburg, who was ordered to remove the Swedes from the Warta line as soon as possible. Poznań was a key fortress in western Poland and the Swedes stationing there were able to threaten the Saxon army's entry without any problems. When preparing to enter Great Poland, Schulenburg was only able to take a handful of 6-pound cannons, because there wasn't enough pulling power, i.e., sufficiently strong animals that would be able to pull heavier cannons, including 12-pound cannons requested by Schulenburg from the king. August II issued commands to deliver 25 cannons, including 8- and 12-pound cannons as well as 6 mortars to the army. He also ordered to stock up on draft animals (Querengässer, 2019, p. 233). However, Schulenburg did not have such equipment at his disposal when he entered Great Poland. Schulenburg was also lacking money, because Steinau left him only 2,000 thalers. Schulenburg complained to August II back in August that his army was lacking training and discipline (Schulenburg, 1834, p. 164). Due to these problems, the Saxon army was able to enter Great Poland as late as mid-1704.

Schulenburg left Gubin on 27 June 1704 leading 12 infantry battalions, 16 cuirassier squadrons and 8 dragoon squadrons. At first, field marshal von Steinau was in command, but later he was summoned to Warsaw. The corps included general von der Schulenburg as well as generals von Plotz, von Wustromirsky, von Brause, von Orst and von Oertzen. The corps' composition was as follows:

- 2 Leibregiment infantry battalions,
- 1 Queen's regiment infantry battalion,
- 1 Crown Prince's regiment infantry battalion,
- 1 Drost regiment infantry battalion,
- 1 Kanitz regiment infantry battalion,
- 1 Fürstenberg regiment infantry battalion,
- 1 Wustromirsky regiment infantry battalion,
- 1 Schulenburg regiment infantry battalion,

1 Thielau regiment infantry battalion,
1 Wackerborth regiment infantry battalion,
1 Sacken regiment infantry battalion,
1 Leibregiment reiters regiment,
1 Crown Prince's reiters regiment,
1 Eichstädt reiters regiment,
1 Gersdorff reiters regiment,
1 Bahreuth dragoon regiment,
1 Oertzen dragoon regiment,
236 artillerymen and 12 6-pound cannons.

The corps consisted of 7,800 infantry, 3,500 cavalry, 236 artillerymen, i.e., 11,536 soldiers and 12 cannons in total. It is necessary to note that these numbers point to incomplete headcounts of particular units, because with a full headcount the number of soldiers would be equal to 13,152.

In May 1704, general Arvid Axel Mardefeld arrived in Poznań to take the supreme command over all Swedish forces in Great Poland by the order of Charles XII (Jarochoowski, 1879, pp. 26-27). He quickly had to face the threat of losing control over the region due to the entry of the Saxon corps into Great Poland (Olejnik, 1982, pp. 125-126). Upon hearing of the Saxon army's entry into Poland, the Swedes became aware of the threat in Poznań, hence by the order of Charles XII, general Johann August Meijerfelt was to head to Poznań and arrived in the city on 10 August 1704 (Relation, 1704, p. 234).

The Saxon corps left Gubin on 27 June and arrived in Kopanica, where according to relations the Swedes prevented Schulenburg from marching further (Schuster & Francke, 1885, p. 159). Then, they stopped in Międzyrzecze, where Schulenburg started to collect tribute on possessions of Stanisław Leszczyński and his supporters. This resulted from the simple fact that Schulenburg had no money and had to acquire them somehow. The 2,000 thalers received from Steinau wouldn't last him for long and unpaid soldiers would start deserting. It was only after accumulating a greater amount that he was able to calmly march onwards. He was able to accumulate as much as 81,901 thalers (Summarum, 1704, p. 266). The tribute was of course collected only on the possessions of August II's opponents, because it was also aimed at weakening their potential. As stated by Schulenburg himself, his army arrived at Warta, north of Międzyrzecze on 7 August, whereas on 13 August general Brause and his men was in Buszewo, where he learned about the Swedish reinforcements for Poznań (Schulenburg, 1834, p. 162). At that time, Schulenburg was marching towards Poznań. On 14 August, the Saxon camp set up over 20 km from Poznań (Relation, 1704, p. 234). Ultimately, in mid-August, in the village of Cieśle, 27 kilometres west of Poznań, he joined the nobility banners of approx. 500 men commanded by Maciej Radomicki and Adam Śmigielski (Kościelniak, 2018, p. 388).

5. Strengths of Both Sides

In order to strengthen the Swedish garrison in Poznań, Charles XII ordered 1,800 cavalry troops commanded by general Johann August Meijerfelt to relocate from Gdańsk to Great Poland. Meijerfelt arrived in Poznań on 10 August with three cavalry regiments. He asked to reinforce his army with men from the Poznań garrison. After the Swedes' merger, their forces were as follows:

Northern Scania (Norra Skånska) cavalry regiment consisting of 8 squadrons, approx. 816 men;

Meijerfelt dragoon regiment, 8 squadrons, approx. 492 men;

colonel Gustav Adam Taube dragoon regiment, 8 squadrons, approx. 492 men;

Bremiska cavalry regiment, 4 squadrons, approx. 246 men;

2 Södermanland regiment infantry companies, consisting of 246 men and 2 cannons from Poznań.

In total, Meijerfelt commanded approx. 2,292 of Swedish troops ([http://www.wikiwand.com/ca/Batalla_de_Pozna%C5%84_\(1704\)](http://www.wikiwand.com/ca/Batalla_de_Pozna%C5%84_(1704))). In his letter to Charles XII, Meijerfelt stated that he received support of 350 men and 2 cannons from Poznań (Meijerfelt, 1704, pp. 74-75).

Schulenburg led 1,800 infantry and 1,600 cavalry with 4 6-pound cannons—a total of 3,400 men to Poznań against Meijerfelt. Schulenburg commanded the entire army, whereas the cavalry was commanded by general Brause, dragoons—by general Oertzen and infantry by general Drost (Querengässer, 2019, p. 235; [http://www.wikiwand.com/ca/Batalla_de_Pozna%C5%84_\(1704\)](http://www.wikiwand.com/ca/Batalla_de_Pozna%C5%84_(1704))). Meijerfelt himself estimated Schulenburg's forces at 6,000 men, including 2,000 grenadiers, 4 cavalry regiments and 2 dragoon regiments (Meijerfelt, 1704, pp. 74-75). Schulenburg revealed that it was 2,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry (Schulenburg, 1834, p. 162).

6. Battle

Meijerfelt's regiments were camped in Poznań's suburbs, thereby worsening the Poznań garrison's supply. They were stationed near Chwaliszewo in Ostrów Tumski. This was the best location, because of the fact that Chwaliszewo was based on an island surrounded by Warta waters. It is covered by a thick forest and marshland from the north. The Saxons were not able to start a formal siege due to the lack of heavy artillery (Querengässer, 2019, p. 234). In these circumstances, on 16 August, in the camp in Tomice based 25 kilometers to the south-west of Poznań, Schulenburg organised a council with generals Drost, Plötz and Oertzen. All three of them believed that it will be best to withdraw towards Odra in these circumstances. However, Schulenburg decided to attack Meijerfelt's corps at Poznań and ignore the recommendations of the war council. After making the decision on the offensive action, Schulenburg set out towards Poznań on 16 August, taking 3,400 men and leaving the rest in the Tomice camp.

Schulenburg sent 1,800, including all grenadiers with 4 cannons to Warta. He himself went with the infantry division with 1,600 cavalry. On 17 August, the troops rested and continued the march on 18 August. Marching approx. 30 kilometers, thereby circling Poznań from the west and north, he arrived at Warta north of the city. On 18 August, at 16:00, the Saxon army reached Warta and started crossing the

river. The passage took until evening (Relation, 1704, p. 234v). Some infantry crossed the river on bigger boats and the cavalry waded across. Thus, the army crossed Warta to the north of the city. From this spot, it still had 14 kilometers to march to Meijerfelt's camp through a thick forest. In order to secure the crossing, Schulenburg left 500 infantry and 4 cannons. Schulenburg wrote that after crossing Warta he hid in the forest and waited until dawn to attack (Schulenburg 1834, p. 162). However, according to Meijerfelt, the battle started at 3:00 in the morning (Meijerfelt, 1704, pp. 74-75) and lasted for approximately three hours (Mardefeld, 1741, p. 119). Due to the fact that sunrise on 19 August takes place at 5:40 and considering Meijerfelt's account that the battle started at 3:00 in the morning, i.e., before sunrise, it is possible to assume that the battle took place in the dark and it was becoming brighter during it, whereas the accounts speak of a bright moon light during the Saxons' march. The conclusion is that Schulenburg's army took all night to cross the forest and surprise Meijerfelt's troops at dawn, however this was not the case due to treason, because one of the deserters alerted the Swedes (Quereng ässer, 2019, p. 235).

After arriving at a clearing near the Swedes' camp, Schulenburg found out that Meijerfelt was expecting him and his army was combat ready. Schulenburg lined up his troops, which after leaving 500 infantry at the crossing, included 2,900 troops in battle formation. The centre was taken by infantry of 1,300 men commanded by general Drost, including colonels Brose, Röttze and Braun, the left flank was taken by reiters and dragoons, approx. 800 cavalry, commanded by general Oertzen, including colonels Gersdorff and Riebe, while the right flank was taken by reiters of 800 cavalry, commanded by general Brause, including colonels Eichstädt and Goltz. Schulenburg has himself taken the left flank (Relation, 1704, pp. 256-256v; Schulenburg, 1834, p. 162; Quereng ässer, 2019, p. 235).

Meijerfelt split his forces to the centre, commanded by Gabriel Horn, right flank, commanded by Meijerfelt and left flank commanded by Gustav Adam Taube. The right flank included 6 dragoon squadrons from Meijerfelt's regiment (under his command), one infantry company from the Södermanland regiment, commanded by Gabriel von Weidenhajn and 6 cavalry squadrons from the Northern Scania regiment commanded by Gabriel Horn. The second line included two dragoon squadrons from Meijerfelt's regiment and one squadron from the Northern Scania regiment, commanded by Nils Gyllenstiern. The Swedes' left flank also consisted of two lines commanded by colonel Taube. The first line included one infantry company from the Södermanland regiment, commanded by Caspar Adolf Wendel, 6 dragoon squadrons from Taube's regiment (under his command) and 3 cavalry squadrons from Bremisk's regiment. The left flank's second line included one dragoon squadron from Taube's regiment and one dragoon squadron from the Northern Scania regiment. This is how his 2,292 troops were deployed ([http://www.wikiwand.com/ca/Batalla_de_Pozna%C5%84_\(1704\)](http://www.wikiwand.com/ca/Batalla_de_Pozna%C5%84_(1704))).

Schulenburg ordered to attack the Swedes along the entire frontline (Łukaszewicz, 1838, p. 359). The first to attack was the cavalry and then the infantry (Schuster & Francke, 1885, p. 161). In the beginning, the Saxon army outflanked the Swedish right wing and led to its confusion. In order to stop the attack, Meijerfelt had to counterattack with his forces in the centre and right flank, but this move completely

exposed his left flank (Abschrift, 1704, p. 4). The Swedes were able to repel two attacks of the Saxons thanks to a good arrangement of the infantry and artillery. Gustav Horn pulled out a part of the Northern Scania regiment from the centre and attacked the Saxon infantry. The Saxons were however able to form a quadrangle on time and repel the Swedish attack. The Swedes had to withdraw with great casualties. The structure of the Swedish right flank, as well as the centre, became unsettled and two companies from the Södermanland infantry regiment fell into the Saxon hands. Shortly thereafter, two Saxon infantry battalions emerged from behind the gunpowder smoke and forced the Swedish dragoons to withdraw. The Saxons marched onwards and inflicted heavy losses upon the Swedes. The fighting in this section of the front lasted for one and a half hour. Thereafter, Meijerfelt was forced to withdraw towards the city. At the same time, colonel Taube and his cavalry assaulted the Saxon's right flank with reiters commanded by general Brause, thereby breaking them apart and forcing them to leave the battlefield. Afterwards, Taube took off after the runaways through the thick forest on a stone pathway one and half a metre wide (Schulenburg, 1834, p. 162; Abschrift, 1704, p. 4). The Swedes from the right flank and centre were running away towards Poznań walls. Meijerfelt asked the city walls to be open, but the Poznań garrison initially didn't want to do it (Lillienhök, 1918, p. 336). The Swedes were very lucky that the Saxons did not use this opportunity to attack the disorganised Swedish forces amassed under the city walls. After ousting the Swedes to Poznań, Schulenburg's troops seized the Swedish camp. The Saxons were able to intercept all Swedish supplies, including: beer, brandy, Hungarian and French wine and other items. Schulenburg was afraid that his tired and heated troops will want to lunge at the alcohol. While busy drinking, they would be an easy prey for the Swedes. Schulenburg therefore prohibited anybody to enter the enemy camp and ordered everything to be burned (Relation, 1704, p. 256; Querengässer, 2019, p. 237). However, some Saxon troops entered the Swedish camp and started taking anything they could. After the Saxons seized the Swedish camp, colonel Taube returned from the pursuit of the Saxon right flank. After colonel Taube scattered the Saxon flank and chased after the runaway soldiers, the Swedish command having no information about him deemed him dead and his troops defeated. However, after two hours from the start of the battle, a wounded Taube returned to Poznań. He informed Meijerfelt about the situation in the Swedish camp, i.e., that the Saxons are busy plundering it, and proposed to take advantage of the situation and attack the Saxons. So he did. He assaulted Schulenburg's troops in the Swedish camp (Mardefeld, 1741, p. 119; Meijerfelt, 1704, pp. 74-75; Relation, 1704, p. 256). As result, the Swedish troops returning to Poznań counterattacked in a disorganised formation. Schulenburg did not dare to resist them and withdrew from the battlefield (Abschrift, 1704, p. 4; Mardefeld, 1741, p. 120). He entered the forest and marched towards the crossing where his soldiers were stationed. Thereafter, he crossed Warta and returned after two days to the rest of his troops stationed at Tomice (Schulenburg, 1834, p. 162).

Schulenburg captured the Swedish camp, five banners, two pairs of kettles and two cannons as well as took cavalry captains, one captain, two lieutenants and six privates as prisoners (Relation, 1704, p. 256; Schulenburg, 1834, p. 162). The Swedish losses amounted to approx. 800 casualties and wounded. The

Saxons lost approx. 300 killed and wounded men, including major general Brause, who was fatally wounded (Relation, 1704, p. 256; Mardefeld, 1741, p. 120; Quereng ässer, 2019, p. 237). According to Polish sources, the Saxons lost 600 men and the Swedes lost 300 men (Łukaszewicz, 1838, p. 360; Boras & Trzeciakowski, 1971, p. 187).

It is also necessary to note that the commanding officers of both sides disagreed on the result of the battle. Meijerfelt stated that after pushing the Saxon cavalry on both flanks he has successfully attacked Schulenburg's central forces and deemed the battle won (Meijerfelt, 1704, pp. 74-75). On the other hand, Schulenburg stated that the Swedish cavalry of colonel Taube returned to Poznań. Then, after one and a half hour of battling, the Saxon troops encircled the enemy and forced it to abandon its camp and hide behind the bushes, where the Saxons found it and soon thereafter seized the Swedish camp. Then, he returned to his camp, taking with him five Swedish banners and two captured cannons, while the reason for his withdrawal was the alcohol stockpile found in the Swedish camp (Schulenburg, 1834, p. 160). It therefore seems that both sides deemed themselves victorious.

7. After the Battle

After Schulenburg returned to his camp, he decided to besiege Poznań and the situation of his corps improved at the beginning of September when August II promised to provide him with heavy artillery from Gubin and that he will dispatch newly formed battalions (Quereng ässer, 2019, pp. 237-238). However, the battalions, commanded by Reibnitz, Reus and Goltz, were very weak and featured only 717 troops. Schulenburg considered combining them into one battalion under the command of colonel von Beneckendorff, but because their numbers grew to 500 men each at the end of the month, they remained unchanged (Quereng ässer, 2019, p. 238).

When Schulenburg returned to Poznań with all of his forces (Schuster & Francke, 1885, p. 161; Lillienh öck, 1918, p. 337), Mardefeld described this army as very weak and added that particular units were not fully staffed (Mardefeld, 1741, p. 120). Schulenburg approached Poznań, but this time from the south, from Lublin. The two sides then exchanged prisoners. As stressed by Mardefeld, after several requests from Schulenburg, the Swedes agreed to the exchange due to the insufficient food stockpiles in the city, because they had to feed the prisoners and guard them, which detracted many Swedish soldiers from defending the city itself (Mardefeld, 1741, p. 120; Lillienh öck, 1918, p. 336). The Swedes wanted to get rid of the problem and focus on defending Poznań with their small forces.

Schulenburg built a bridge and crossed Warta, then headed north and seized Ostrów Tumski and Chwaliszewo, where he set up his cannon batteries. From this spot he was firing at Poznań. However, on 13 September, after receiving an order from August II, he dismantled the camp and marched towards Warsaw. In order to observe the Swedish garrison, Schulenburg ordered Maciej Radomicki and Adam Śmigielski to remain at the city with the Great Poland militias of approx. 500 men, additionally supported by 100 Saxon infantry and 100 Saxon cavalry who prevented the Swedes from collecting tribute and supplies as much as they could (Wimmer, 1956, p. 277; Jarochoowski, 1879, pp. 24-26). These troops

were very inconvenient for the Poznań garrison. Radomicki operated around Poznań as well as between Stęszewo and Gostyń. He established his main quarters in the palace of Konarzewo and from there he was sending his troops to Poznań to attack the Swedish forces venturing out of the city to seek food. In order to prevent this, the Swedes decided to destroy the bridge over Warta built by Schulenburg and used by Radomicki's and Śmigiel'ski's troops to cross the river. This did not improve the Poznań garrison's situation due to the lack of food and fodder (Kościelniak, 2018, p. 389).

Due to the absence of a part of the Swedish army in central Poland, August II was able to quickly redeploy his army and partially capture Warsaw in September 1704. The forces commanded by Schulenburg and August II were able to combine at Wyszogród in September (Budrowicz-Nowicki, 2013, p. 529). The Russian support corps sent by Peter I to aid August II have also arrived. The army of August II thus grew to 24,000 men and for a while August was hoping that by taking advantageous positions he would be able to hold onto them until the Russian army arrived, but these were false hopes (Wiśniowiecki, 2018, p. 167; Budrowicz-Nowicki, 2013, p. 529).

8. Summary

When viewing the battle at the Poznań walls, it is possible to conclude that from a strategic point of view the Saxons have won, because they held back the relief army commanded by Meijerfelt, weakened the Swedish garrison in Poznań and commenced the siege. It is necessary to note that Schulenburg had much to gain, however despite his greater numbers, the quality of the Saxon army commanded by him left much to be desired. The lack of heavy artillery was the main reason that prevented Poznań's capture. The battle itself can be deemed as Schulenburg's tactical defeat, because despite disbanding the Swedish troops and forcing them to withdraw, he didn't really defeat them and has himself withdrawn his troops from Poznań, thereby leaving the battlefield. He only returned after several days with a greater number of soldiers.

Schulenburg's co-operation with Radomicki and Śmigiel'ski could result in Poznań's capture. However, the withdrawal of the Saxon troops to Warsaw squandered this opportunity. Schulenburg had greater numbers, which he used to hold Meijerfelt back in the battle of Poznań, but lacked the quality. Schulenburg's army was too weak to commence an effective siege of Poznań. As he himself stressed, his soldiers were poorly trained and undisciplined, and he had an insufficient number of cannons and lacked heavy siege artillery which was necessary to capture the Poznań fortress. It is necessary to note that even with such an army, Schulenburg was able to effectively close off the Swedes in Poznań and force them to surrender. However, king August II had other plans that caused such a favourable opportunity of capturing Poznań to be wasted. Nevertheless, the king wasn't going to give up on capturing the city, which is why he left Radomicki's and Śmigiel'ski's troops in Great Poland to weaken the Poznań garrison. Radomicki's and Śmigiel'ski's actions alone weren't able to harm the Swedes. The Polish commandants were self-confident and allowed the Swedes to surprise and disband them (no camp reconnaissance or protection). It is possible to state that instead of weakening the Swedes in Poznań, they strengthened

them with supplies and men, because of the aid provided to them by the arriving Meijerfelt and his dragoons. Schulenburg was able to Meijerfelt away from Poznań, but wasn't able to capture the city! Only after August II's troops joined the Russian reinforcements, the king dispatched a part of Saxon, Russian and Polish forces to Great Poland under the command of Johann Reinhold Patkul to capture Poznań.

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