

Cambridge University Press
0521411610 - Scandinavia and the Great Powers 1890-1940
Patrick Salmon
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

At the beginning of the twentieth century Scandinavia lay on the margin of European power politics. With the polarisation of international relations in the era of the two world wars, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden became the point where the spheres of influence of three great powers – Great Britain, Germany and Russia – intersected. From the turn of the century the demands of modern warfare led the European powers to take a closer interest in Scandinavian affairs.

In this book, Patrick Salmon uses his extensive research in British, German and Scandinavian archives to examine the position of the Nordic countries in the great-power rivalries and conflicts of the period 1890–1940. However, it does not treat the Nordic countries merely as passive victims. It seeks to show that, despite the disparity in strength between the great powers and the small states of northern Europe, the latter had means of adapting to great-power pressures and even influencing the policies of their formidable neighbours.

Cambridge University Press
0521411610 - Scandinavia and the Great Powers 1890-1940
Patrick Salmon
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Scandinavia and the great powers 1890–1940

Cambridge University Press
0521411610 - Scandinavia and the Great Powers 1890-1940
Patrick Salmon
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Scandinavia and the great powers 1890–1940

PATRICK SALMON

University of Newcastle upon Tyne



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
 0521411610 - Scandinavia and the Great Powers 1890-1940
 Patrick Salmon
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
 The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
 The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
 40 West 20th Street, New York NY 10011-4211, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
 Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa
<http://www.cambridge.org>

© Cambridge University Press 1997

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
 and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
 no reproduction of any part may take place without
 the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1997
 First paperback edition 2004

Typeset in 9½/12pt Plantin [CE]

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress cataloguing in publication data

Salmon, Patrick, 1952–
 Scandinavia and the great powers 1890–1940 / Patrick Salmon.
 p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 41161 0 hardback

1. Scandinavia – History – 20th century.

2. Scandinavia – Foreign relations – Great Britain.

3. Great Britain – Foreign relations – Scandinavia.

4. Scandinavia – Foreign relations – Germany.

5. Germany – Foreign relations – Scandinavia.

6. Scandinavia – Foreign relations – Russia/Soviet Union.

7. Russia/Soviet Union – Foreign relations – Scandinavia. I. Title.

DL83.S35 1997

327.48'009'041 – dc21 96-53310 CIP

ISBN 0 521 41161 0 hardback
 ISBN 0 521 89102 7 paperback

Transferred to digital printing 2004

Cambridge University Press
0521411610 - Scandinavia and the Great Powers 1890-1940
Patrick Salmon
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

For Karen, Katie and Jessica

Contents

<i>List of tables</i>	<i>page</i> xi
<i>Preface</i>	xiii
<i>Definitions</i>	xv
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	xvii
<i>Map 1: Scandinavia and the Baltic 1939</i>	xxi
<i>Map 2: The Gulf of Finland</i>	xxii
<i>Map 3: Entrances to the Baltic</i>	xxiv
Introduction	1
Small states and great powers in the international system	1
Constraints and opportunities in Nordic policy making	4
The great powers and Scandinavia	16
1 The end of isolation: Scandinavia and the modern world	20
Modernisation and dependence	21
Problems of Scandinavian security	26
Economic development and national sovereignty	33
Patterns of influence	41
2 Scandinavia in European diplomacy 1890–1914	53
Scandinavia and the great powers	55
Germany, Russia and the Baltic 1903–1905	63
The Scandinavian crisis 1905–1908	71
3 The war of the future: Scandinavia in the strategic plans of the great powers	83
The search for a naval offensive: Great Britain and Germany	85
Russia, Finland and the defence of St Petersburg	99
The German General Staff and Scandinavia	103
British planning for economic warfare against Germany	112
4 Neutrality preserved: Scandinavia and the First World War	118
The outbreak of war	123
Economic warfare and the northern neutrals 1914–1918	129
Scandinavian involvement in the war?	146
The Åland question	162
Scandinavian neutrality and the First World War	167
	ix

x	Contents	
5	The Nordic countries between the wars	169
	Scandinavia and the post-war world	170
	Democracy and foreign policy	174
	Problems of Nordic security and cooperation	180
6	Confrontation and co-existence: Scandinavia and the great powers after the First World War	206
	Institutions and ideologies: great-power relations with the Nordic states	207
	Great Britain, the Paris peace conference and the problem of Soviet Russia	218
	The Soviet Union and the Nordic countries	227
7	Britain, Germany and the Nordic economies 1916–1936	235
	The British challenge to German trade 1916–1921	236
	Germany from <i>Mitteleuropa</i> to revisionism 1916–1932	245
	The British commercial offensive 1931–1935	258
	The recovery of Germany 1933–1936	264
8	Power, ideology and markets: Great Britain, Germany and Scandinavia 1933–1939	274
	Scandinavia as a British sphere of influence?	278
	<i>Nordische Schicksalsgemeinschaft</i>	284
	Great Britain and the German challenge in Scandinavia	290
	The contest for markets and influence in Scandinavia 1937–1939	305
9	Scandinavia and the coming of the Second World War 1933–1940	317
	Raw materials and naval strategy: Germany and the role of Scandinavia in a future war	319
	Scandinavia and the Baltic in British strategy	334
	The Soviet Union, Finland and the defence of Leningrad	350
	Epilogue	357
	1939–1940: Looking backward	357
	1940–1949: Looking forward	362
	<i>Bibliography</i>	371
	<i>Index</i>	400

Tables

1	Exports and imports as a percentage of the total output (GNP) of the Nordic countries	<i>page</i> 5
2	Foreign trade of the Nordic countries by commodity groups (%)	6
3	Foreign trade of the Nordic countries with main trading partners (%)	9
4	The combined trade of Germany and the United Kingdom as a percentage of the total trade of the Nordic countries: averages over ten-year periods (1874–1913)	42
5	Trade with Germany and the United Kingdom as a percentage of the total trade of the Nordic countries: averages over ten-year periods (1874–1913)	45
6	British and German exports as a percentage of the total imports of the Nordic countries 1919–1929	242
7	British and German exports as a percentage of the total imports of the Nordic countries 1929–1939	275
8	British and German trade with the Nordic countries expressed in terms of value (US \$m) and as a percentage of each other’s trade	275

Preface

I have been working on this book for a long time, and on various aspects of Scandinavian history for much longer. I can now appreciate what Professor W. R. Mead meant when he wrote in the preface to his *Historical Geography of Scandinavia* (1981) of ‘the recurrent fear that it is over ambitious – indeed naïve – to embark on such an undertaking’. I can also sympathise with his other reasons for writing more slowly than he had intended: the difficulty of keeping pace with Scandinavian scholarship, and concern for the opinion of colleagues in the Nordic countries and elsewhere. In some sections of the book I have been able to draw upon my own earlier publications. I owe much, however, to the work of others in the field, and am only too well aware of the limits of my own knowledge and expertise (my inability to read Finnish or Russian remains the most nagging defect).

During the writing of this book I have incurred many debts of gratitude. Research in foreign countries always involves expense, in the Nordic countries more than most. When I first visited Norway in 1976, as a penurious research student, Great Britain was in the grip of a sterling crisis and Norway was at the height of the oil boom. I recall going without food for longer periods than I could manage now. Since then I have become more affluent; the disparities between the British and Nordic currencies have diminished; and Norwegian cuisine has improved. At an age when I would not mind losing some weight, I can now visit Scandinavia without doing so. I am therefore grateful to a large number of organisations and individuals who have helped to sustain my research over a long period.

I would like to acknowledge first the support of three people who have acted as mentors at successive stages of my career: first Harry Hinsley, my doctoral supervisor at Cambridge; second Hans-Jürgen Schröder, who introduced me to the world of German scholarship at Mainz; and third Olav Riste, who gave me my first opportunities to visit Scandinavia and to publish my work, and who has continued to give me much encouragement.

I wish to thank the following bodies for financial support: the British Council; the Institut für Europäische Geschichte, Mainz; the Institutt for forsvarsstudier, Oslo; Norsk Forskningsråd; the Staff Travel Fund and the Small Grants Research Sub-Committee of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne.

Cambridge University Press

0521411610 - Scandinavia and the Great Powers 1890-1940

Patrick Salmon

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xiv Preface

The archivists and librarians of a large number of institutions provided invaluable assistance in making available the archival material in their care. I should particularly like to mention Herr Ernst-Wilhelm Norman, formerly of Utenriksdepartementets arkiv (Norway); Professor Wilhelm Carlgren, formerly of Utrikesdepartementets arkiv (Sweden); Herr Klaus Kjølsten of Udenrigsministeriet (Denmark); Frau Dr Maria Keipert of the Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Bonn; the officials of the former Deutsches Zentralarchiv at Potsdam and of the Public Record Office in London; Mr Henry Gillett of the Bank of England Archive; and Mr Robert Firth of the Robinson Library, University of Newcastle upon Tyne. I am grateful to the late Lord Amery and Mr George Hohler for allowing me to consult papers in their possession.

It is a pleasure to thank the many other people who have given me advice, information or hospitality, and often all three. They include: Rolf Ahmann, David Aldridge, Karl Otmar Freiherr von Aretin, Tony Badger, Roald Berg, Kathy Burk, Dan Christensen, Maurice Cowling, Andrew Croft, Martin Dyrbye, Max Engman, Carl-Axel Gemzell, Philip Giltner, Klaas Hartmann, John Hiden, Sven Holtsmark, Kalervo Hovi, Merja-Liisa Hinkkanen, the late Walther Hubatsch, Alf Johansson, Sune Jungar, David Kirby, Hans Kirchhoff, Tom Kristiansen, Andrew Lambert, Aleksander Loit, Peter Ludlow, Thomas Magnusson, Alan Milward, Svend Aage Mogensen, Thomas Munch-Petersen, Timo Myllyntaus, Lutz Oberdörfer, Herbert Olbrich, Jukka Nevakivi, Torbjörn Norman, Mieczysław Nurek, Helge Pharo, the late Stephen Roskill, David Saunders, Harm Schröter, Magne Skodvin, Richard Smith, Zara Steiner, Esa Sundbäck, Martti Turtola, Donald Cameron Watt, Philip Williamson and Clemens Wurm.

I must also thank the organisers of various conferences in Scandinavia, whose invitations have enabled me to combine archival research with meeting colleagues in congenial surroundings. I am grateful in particular to Professor Olav Riste and other members of the research project *Norsk utenrikspolitikkshistorie* for taking the trouble, at their meeting in November 1995, to read and comment on a draft of part of my book. Odd-Bjørn Fure, author of the third volume of *Norsk utenrikspolitikkshistorie*, was kind enough to let me see draft chapters of his book prior to publication.

I have also received constant encouragement from Richard Fisher of Cambridge University Press. My greatest debt, however, is to my family: for their support and for keeping me in touch with real life.

Definitions

‘Scandinavia’ and ‘the Nordic states’

The difficulty of defining these terms reflects real problems of national and regional identity. ‘Scandinavia’ refers to a geographically distinct region of Europe; ‘the Nordic states’ signifies four countries (Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland), not three (Denmark, Norway and Sweden) or five (the first four plus Iceland). Until the end of the First World War, ‘Scandinavia’ and ‘the Scandinavian states’ were identical. Following the emergence of an independent Finnish state, culturally but not (apart from a Swedish-speaking minority) ethnically related to Scandinavia, the term ‘Nordic’ came to be favoured as a means of referring to the states and societies which together composed ‘Norden’.

The latter term, now universally employed in the countries concerned, remains virtually untranslatable. ‘Northern Europe’ and ‘The North’ are the nearest equivalents, but neither is sufficiently precise to make it wholly acceptable (though both crop up occasionally in this book). To outsiders, at least, ‘Scandinavia’ remains a term which refers to the whole region including Finland. I have followed this familiar though inconsistent usage but have tried to be consistent, when referring to its component states, in distinguishing between ‘the Scandinavian states’ (three) and ‘the Nordic states’ (four). Four, not five, because Iceland appears in the book only incidentally. There are a number of reasons for this. Iceland is widely separated geographically from the four continental Nordic countries; it is much smaller in terms of population, and has an entirely different and much less diversified economic structure. Finally, between 1918 and its achievement of full independence in 1944 Iceland was an independent kingdom in association with Denmark and was unable to conduct an independent foreign policy.

Place names and geographical features

The names of places and geographical features are generally those current in the periods and countries concerned except where there are obvious English equivalents, e.g. Gothenburg, Jutland, Copenhagen; the Sound, the Belts etc.

Kristiania (alternative spelling: Christiania) is used for the Norwegian

xvi Definitions

capital before 1925, when it was renamed Oslo. Trondheim is preferred to Trondhjem.

The duchies of Schleswig/Slesvig and Holstein/Holsten, disputed for centuries between Germany and Denmark, present special problems. Schleswig (German) and Slesvig (Danish) are used interchangeably according to context. Holstein, the more ‘German’ of the two provinces, is given the German spelling throughout.

For Finland, Finnish-language place-names are preferred to Swedish – e.g. Helsinki, not Helsingfors – but sometimes Swedish equivalents are given in parentheses: e.g. Vaasa (Vasa).

Place-names in present-day Poland, Latvia, Estonia and Russia are given in the language appropriate to the period (usually German), but sometimes modern equivalents are given in parentheses: e.g. Reval (Tallinn).

Abbreviations

AA	Auswärtiges Amt
AB	Aktiebolag(et)
Abt.	Abteilung
ADAP	<i>Akten zur Deutschen Auswärtigen Politik</i> , series B (21 vols., Göttingen, 1966–83)
ADM	Admiralty
AEG	Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft
AG	Aktiengesellschaft
AO	Auslands-Organisation (of NSDAP)
APA	Aussenpolitisches Amt (of NSDAP)
BA	Bundesarchiv, Koblenz
BASF	Badische Anilin und Sodafabrik
BD	Gooch, G. P., and H. W. V. Temperley (eds.), <i>British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898–1914</i> (11 vols. in 13, London, 1926–38)
Bd	Band (volume)
BDFA	Bourne, Kenneth, and Donald Cameron Watt (eds.) <i>British Documents on Foreign Affairs</i> , part I, series F
BEA	Bank of England Archive
BEF	British Expeditionary Force
BT	Board of Trade
BUL	Birmingham University Library
CAB	Cabinet
CAC	Churchill Archive Centre
CID	Committee of Imperial Defence
CIGS	chief of the imperial general staff
COS	chiefs of staff
CUL	Cambridge University Library
DAAD	Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst
DBFP	<i>Documents on British Foreign Policy</i> , series 1–3
DCNS	deputy chief of the naval staff
DDF	<i>Documents diplomatiques français</i> , series 2 and 3 (Paris, 1930–53)
DDWV	Deutsch–Dänische Wirtschaftsvereinigung
DFDS	Det forenede Dampskib Selskab

Cambridge University Press

0521411610 - Scandinavia and the Great Powers 1890-1940

Patrick Salmon

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

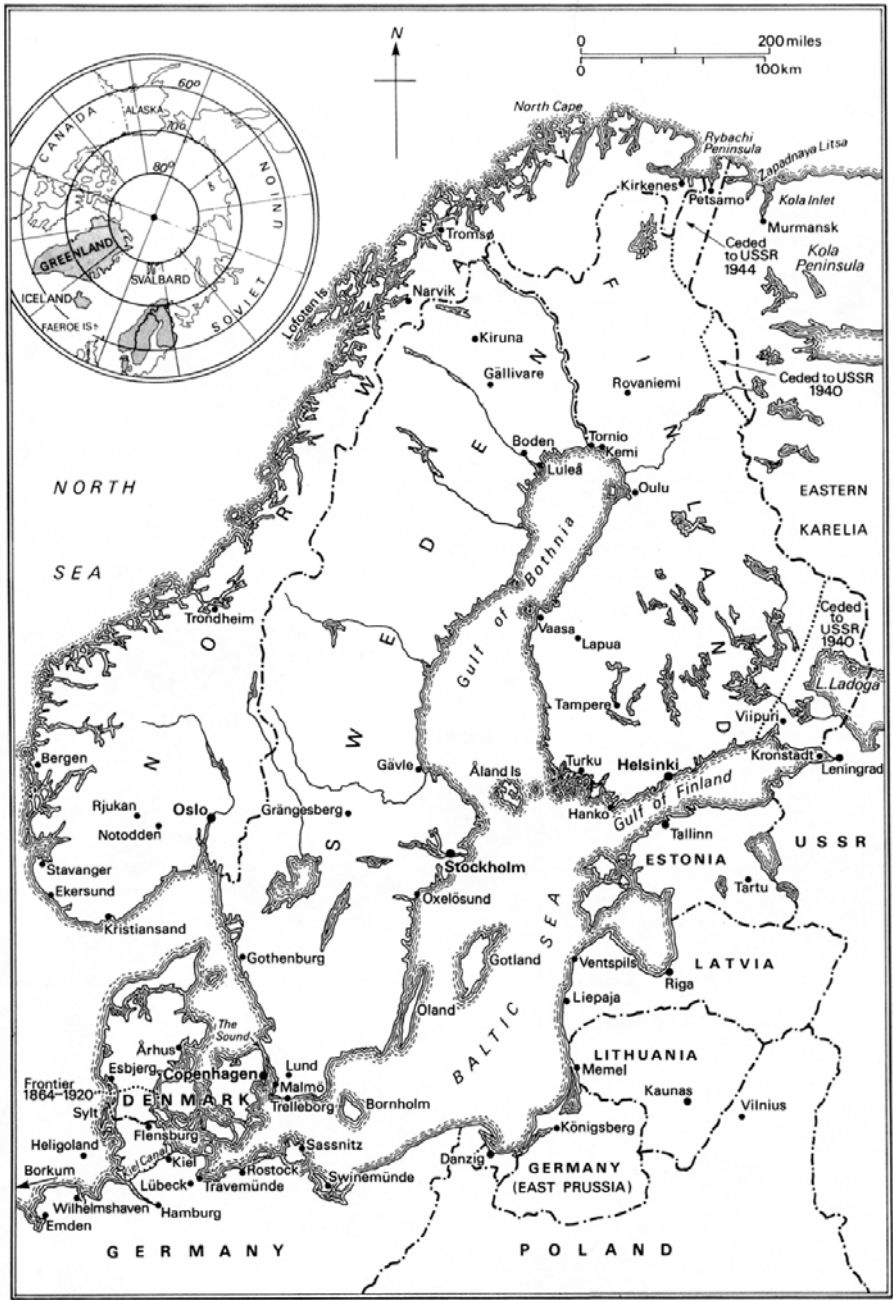
xviii List of abbreviations

<i>DGFP</i>	<i>Documents on German Foreign Policy</i> , series C and D
DMO	director of military operations
DNI	director of naval intelligence
DNO	director of naval operations
DNVP	Deutschnationale Volkspartei
DOT	Department of Overseas Trade
FBI	Federation of British Industries
FO	Foreign Office
<i>GP</i>	Lepsius, J., A. Mendelssohn-Bartholdy and F. Thimme (eds.), <i>Die grosse Politik der europäischen Kabinette 1871–1914</i> (40 vols. in 54, Berlin, 1922–7)
HaPol	Handelspolitische Abteilung
HPA	Handelspolitische Ausschuss
ICI	Imperial Chemical Industries
IG Farben	Interessengemeinschaft Farbenindustrie AG
IIC	Industrial Intelligence Centre
IWM	Imperial War Museum
LKAB	Luossavaara-Kiirunavaare Aktiebolag
MEW	Ministry of Economic Warfare
MP	member of parliament
NA	naval attaché
Nd	Norden
NG	Nordische Gesellschaft
NOT	Netherlands Overseas Trust
NSDAP	Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei
NUD	Utenriksdepartementet (Norway)
OKM	Oberkommando der Kriegsmarine
OKW	Oberkommando der Wehrmacht
PA	Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Bonn
PEP	Political and Economic Planning
PID	Political Intelligence Department
PRO	Public Record Office
RA	Rigsarkiv, Copenhagen
RAO	Riksarkiv, Oslo
RDI	Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie
RfdA	Reichsstelle für den Aussenhandel
RI	Reichsgruppe Industrie
RIIA	Royal Institute of International Affairs
RL	Robinson Library, University of Newcastle upon Tyne
RWM	Reichswirtschaftsministerium
SA	Stortingets arkiv, Oslo
SD	Sicherheitsdienst
SIS	Secret Intelligence Service
SKL	Seekriegsleitung

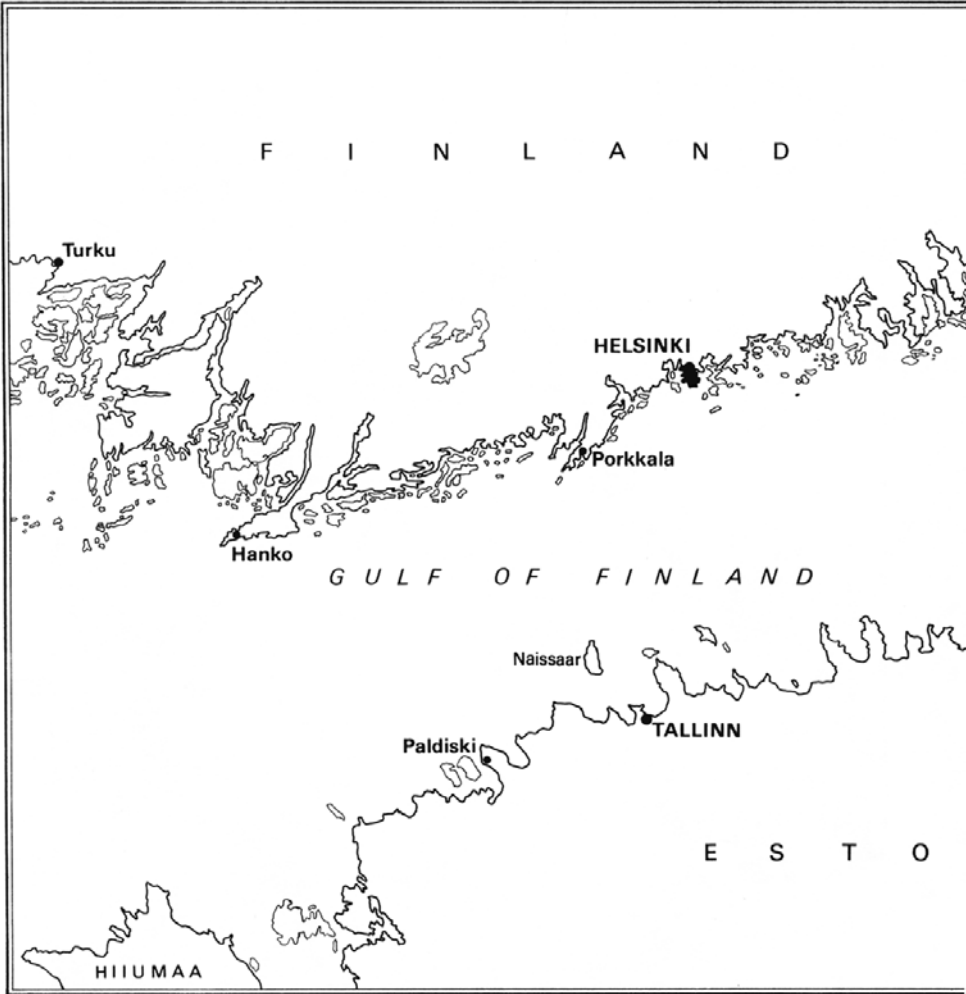
Cambridge University Press
0521411610 - Scandinavia and the Great Powers 1890-1940
Patrick Salmon
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

List of abbreviations xix

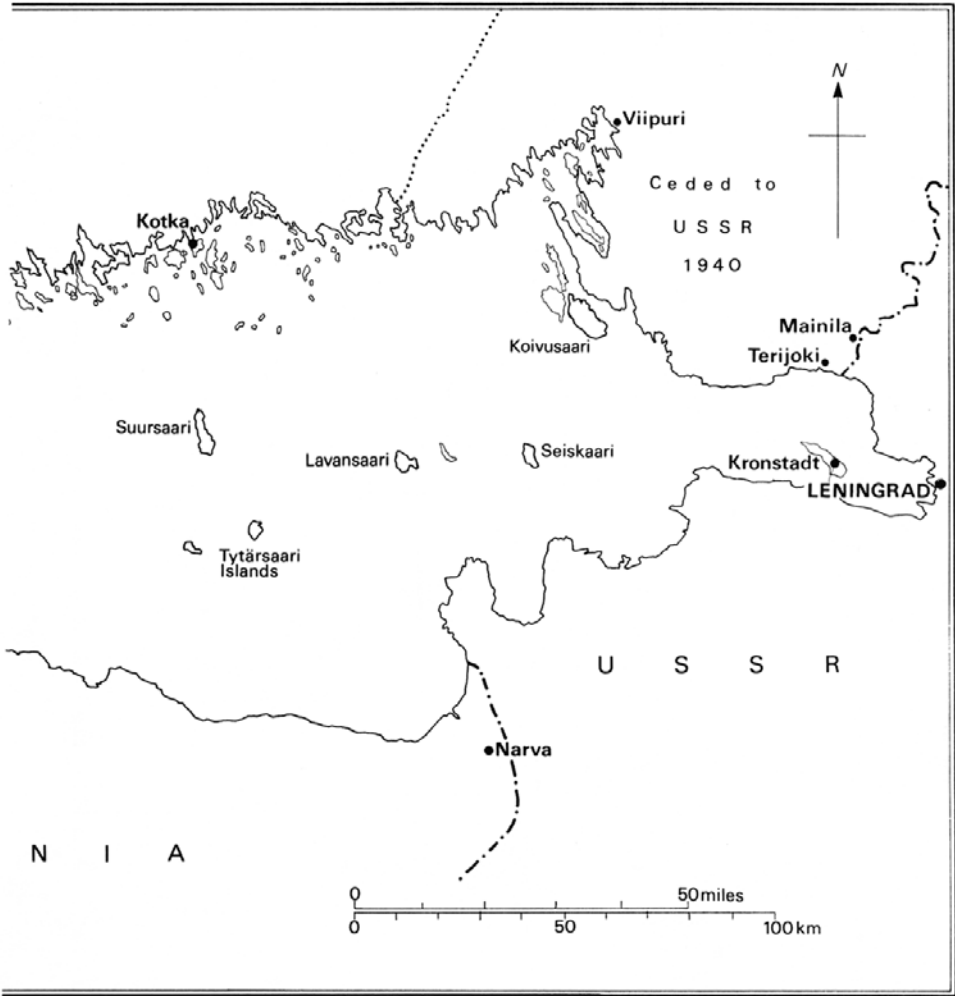
SS	Schutzstaffel
SUD	Utrikesdepartementet (Sweden)
T	Treasury
TGO	Trafikaktiebolag Grängesberg–Oxelösund
UM	Udenrigsministeriet (Denmark)
Vowi	Volkswirtschaftliche Abteilung (of IG Farben)
WO	War Office
ZfdA	Zentralstelle für den Aussenhandel
ZSta	Zentrales Staatarchiv, Potsdam

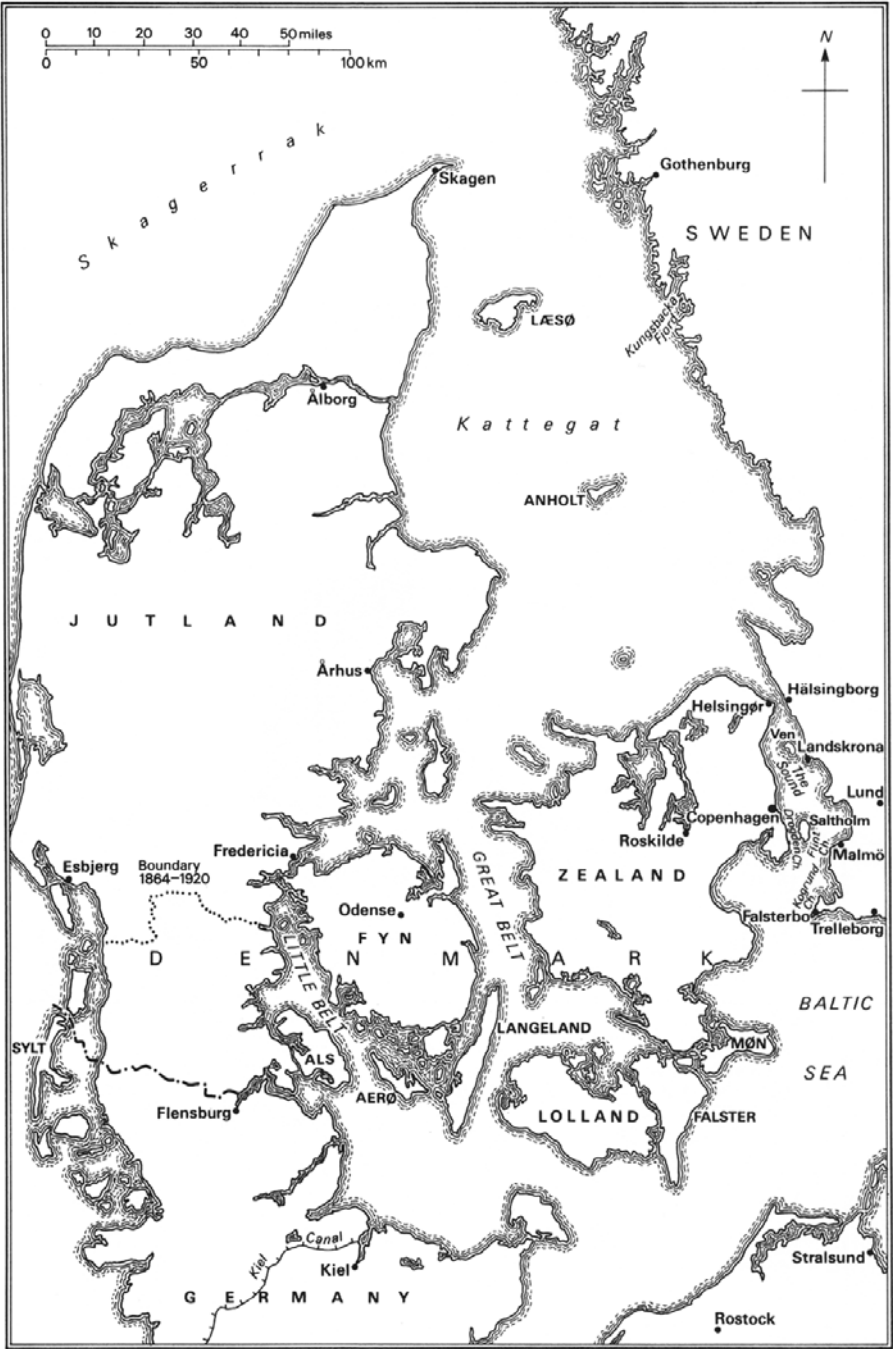


Map 1 Scandinavia and the Baltic 1939



Map 2 The Gulf of Finland





Map 3 Entrances to the Baltic