

PAGE OF READING FOR THE FAMILY

FINLAND'S ISLANDS



Making Hay in the Alands.

Prepared by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

IN THE north of the Baltic sea, where the breast of Finland swells toward the Swedish coast, there are 6,000 islands, to which belong all the surviving big sailing ships in the world; or, to be more exact, there are 6,554 islands, rock islets, tree-spattered specks of sea-encircled territory whose name is Aland and in whose small ports are registered 26 of the surviving square-rigged ships in commission in the world. Altogether there may be 31 now, counting a German, two Swedes, an American, and a Dane.

Aland is Finnish; but its people are Swedes, speaking Swedish. Their colors are the blue and gold of Sweden, though the white and blue flag of Finland floats officially from the Government House. The strange cadences of the Finnish tongue are little heard here, though by law Finnish is taught in the schools are in the nautical academy.

The Finns have their own name for the islands, in their own language; to them they are Ahvenanmaa, and their capital of Mariehamn (which is Maryport in English) becomes Maarianhamina.

What Mariehamn Is Like.

Around a point between two islands is Mariehamn quay. On the slope above it are houses and a wood; then some more houses and a great wood, down each side of which a road has been made. This parklike forest with lanes is the Esplanade, main street of Mariehamn. There one may walk in the cool shade of the trees, past rows of clean spacious houses. It is all ships, this street, with shipowners living there and sailors walking up and down, and at the bottom the harbor, on both sides (for Mariehamn crosses a narrow peninsula), with the masts and yards of the barks growing there above the pines, as if they, like the pines, had begun there and grown there and always belonged there.

At one end of the Esplanade is the town's hotel, Societetshuset, where the visitors live when they come from Sweden. The summer business is good, and at week-ends a special excursion steamer from Stockholm brings hundreds more visitors to the little town. The tourists dance, eat, swim, and bathe, and the Alanders, bent over their tasks in the fields, pay them no attention at all.

Built Up a Merchant Marine.

There were always timber and fish in Aland, and these, with the surplus products of the farms, were the first cargoes. After a while, when the restrictions imposed by rival ports had been broken down, the Alanders were allowed to send

their vessels out into the Baltic. Now they built larger ships, schooners, and brigs. They carried their own goods so successfully that soon they began to carry other people's; and so the beginnings of their merchant service grew. For a long time it was only in the Baltic and the Gulf of Bothnia. Politics still kept world trade the monopoly of a few nations, and no Aland ship was seen beyond the Danish sound.

In the great discard of sail the Alanders, unworried by steam, bought up such vessels as appeared to be good bargains. They acquired Nova Scotian barks, Bluenose barkentines. Down East full-riggers. They bought ships cheaply, and they bought good ships. One of their principles was that a ship should return her cost in three years. If freights did not pay, they laid their ships up and waited for better times. Whenever sailing ships went, the Aland ships were seen; but still no one dreamed that here sail would last when it had died in all other waters.

Through the World war Aland ships suffered heavily. Eight were lost in one month. After the war some of the older ship owners had had enough and bought no more ships. But new ones arose; and one of these was Gustaf Erikson. In 1920 he began building up what now has become the last great fleet of sail in the world.

Erikson's Fine Ships.

Erikson bought up the beautiful German training ship Herzogin Cecilie, paying some \$20,000 for her as she lay in a French port. He sent her to Australia for grain and to Chile for nitrates, and in two years she had returned her purchase price and more besides. He bought the big Lawhill, and with one lucky freight from Buenos Aires cleared \$200,000. Now he has a corner on

AND FINDING CASH



"Suffer much from the heat?"  
"I should say so. Nearly had a sunstroke rushing around to lay in next winter's coal."

all the commissioned sailing ships of the world, and those Cape Horners which do not fly his house flag may be counted upon the fingers of one hand.

Ordinarily a small Aland boy can pull a boat almost as soon as he can walk, and sail one not long afterwards. At the age of ten or so he makes a Baltic voyage, helping in a "sump" taking firewood and fish to Stockholm or to Turku. From these he graduates to the Baltic schooners, and so to the North sea barks; thereafter it is an easy step to deep water, Cape Horn, and the grain trade from Australia.

A Finnish law restricts berths before the mast to Finnish nationals, and the forecastles of the ships are ordinarily filled with Alanders. But the half-decks, where the apprentices live, contain all the nationalities of the world. He who wishes to become a sail-trained sailor now must sail in Aland ships—and pay \$250 to the owner for that privilege.

Quiet, Careful People.

They are quiet, these Alanders. It takes a long time to know them: They are not given to the utterance of long dissertations upon the burning problems of the day. They are a quiet and careful race, hard-bitten, hard raised. To them waste is shameful and a loud mouth an abomination. They have little time for progress that means only change.

The crews of the ships are steady boys, blue-eyed and competent. When their Australian voyage is over and the grain discharged into some English mill, they bring the ships home to Mariehamn, to lie there while the new grain ripens in Australian fields, 13,000 miles away, and there they repair their vessels and make ready for another voyage.

Washington Had No Salary

A salary as such was not accepted by Washington when he was President. As a matter of expediency and to establish a precedent, congress voted \$25,000 for expenses. As a matter of fact, the President's expenses exceeded this sum.

BEDTIME STORY  
By THORNTON W. BURGESS

DANNY FINDS A REFUGE

AS DANNY MEADOW MOUSE anxiously looked this way and that way for a place to hide from Buster Bear, a sharp, squeaky voice almost in his very ear made him jump. "What are you doing over here, Cousin Danny? Aren't you lost?" said the sharp, squeaky voice.

Danny turned quickly to find a little round hole in the ground



"Now," said Whitefoot, "You Have Nothing to Worry About From Buster Bear."

between the roots of the tree, and just inside was the trim little head of his cousin, Whitefoot the Woodmouse.

"Oh!" cried Danny, "Buster Bear is trying to catch me, and I don't know what to do."

"Come in here," replied Whitefoot promptly.

Danny didn't need a second invitation. He darted in just as Buster Bear reached the tree on the other side. Buster promptly tried again the trick by which he had so nearly caught Danny. He reached a great paw around the

trunk of the tree and brought it down swiftly. But he was too late. There was no one under that big paw. Buster watched and listened, but he saw nothing and heard nothing. Then he walked around the tree to investigate. There was no sign of Danny Meadow Mouse. But between the roots of the tree was a little round hole.

"Huh!" grunted Buster Bear, and began to dig furiously.

Now Buster Bear's claws are long and stout and when he sets out to dig he makes things fly. But Whitefoot the Woodmouse knew all about those great claws, and when he made that little round hole he made it right under the big roots of that tree. It didn't take Buster long to find out that it was quite useless to try to dig out Danny Meadow Mouse. You see, those big roots were in the way. So after a minute or two of useless digging Buster gave up. It was foolish to waste time there when he might be hunting for and finding sweet little beechnuts. So, grumbling deep in his throat, Buster walked off and once more began to rake over the leaves in search of beechnuts.

Meanwhile Danny Meadow Mouse had followed his cousin, Whitefoot the Woodmouse, along a little tunnel among the roots that led him some distance away from where he had entered. It was a very nice little tunnel. Danny said as much as he scampered along after Whitefoot. Whitefoot was pleased but he didn't say anything. He just scampered along and Danny followed. After a while they came out in the heart of a big, hollow stump.

"Now," said Whitefoot, "you have nothing to worry about from Buster Bear. Tell me what happened and what are you doing so far away from home."

© T. W. Burgess.—WNU Service.

Simple Explanation of Origin of Giant Myths

A recent dispatch from India reporting that natives have found bones of a giant's skeleton no less than 31 feet high has torn up all records of this particular myth. Not even the imaginative Doctor Mazurier, who fabricated in 1613 the circumstantial tale of a brick tomb not only containing his giant, but provided with equally gigantic swords and other weapons, and even labeled with the name and titles which the giant had borne, dared to make his imagined relic more than 26 feet tall. The famous Giant of Lucerne, who involved scores of Swiss and German scientists in acrimonious controversies from 1577 until after 1600, was credited with only 19 feet. England's Giant of Thorne, in Cumberland, said to have been found in armor which has conveniently disappeared, measured but 14 feet, by contemporary accounts.

No doubt the new 31-foot marvel of Calcutta belongs with these others among the long list of confusions between human bones and those of fossil animals, mostly elephants. A few thousand years ago several types of elephants, such as the mammoths and mastodons, were much more numerous and widespread than any kind of elephant is today. Being comparatively recent in geologic history, their bones lie close to the ground and frequently are found by diggers or plowed up by farmers, something which is not true of bones

of still larger animals of earlier ages, such as the gigantic dinosaurs. Some elephants' leg bones look superficially not unlike human bones. It is small wonder that they and human giants have been confused, although even in 1620 the famous William Harvey remarked of the supposed Giant of Gloucester that his bones evidently belonged in reality to "some exceedingly great beast, such as an elephant." There is less excuse for Doctor Mazurier's manufacture out of whole cloth of the brick tomb, weapons and inscriptions which he said he found with the 26-foot previous holder of the giant record.

To students of folklore these misconceptions about elephant bones supply one possible explanation of the virtually worldwide belief that giants once existed, but not the only one. Another suggestion is the recollection by primitive people of other human beings able to walk on stilts, as fen dwellers still do in eastern England or dune dwellers in southwestern France. Thus probably originated the tale of the fast-moving seven-league boots. Still another possible origin of giant myths is garbled tales of men standing on towers or platforms, like the movable siege towers used in ancient warfare. And perhaps some giant myths date from days when relatively short races, such as the Celts, were in conflict with relatively tall

ones, like the Danes or Saxons. But not even folklore has recorded giants 31 feet high.—New York Herald Tribune.

Humanism, Religious Movement

Humanism is a religious movement emphasizing faith in man instead of belief in the supernatural. In the United States it has arisen largely from and in the left wing of Unitarianism, although it is spreading in other liberal religious groups. The tendency is toward minimizing or abolition of prayer worship and Bible reading, and the maintenance of an agnostic attitude on immortality and the existence of God. It is estimated that there are at least 10,000 Humanists in the United States.

ON THE UP AND UP



"So your engagement with Annette is up?"  
"Yes."  
"What became of the engagement ring?"  
"That's up, too."