

The Adventures of John Dietrich

Folk-Lore And Legends: Scandinavia

Scandinavian

Intermediate
36 min read

Author's note: This story comes from the Isle of Rugen.

There once lived in Ramin an honest, industrious man, named James Dietrich. He had several children, all of a good disposition, especially the youngest, whose name was John. John Dietrich was a handsome, smart boy, diligent at school, and obedient at home. His great passion was for hearing stories, and whenever he met any one who was well stored he never let him go till he had heard them all.

When John was about eight years old he was sent to spend a summer with his uncle, a farmer, in Rodenkirchen. Here John had to keep cows with other boys, and they used to drive them to graze about the Nine-hills. There was an old cowherd, one Klas Starkwolt who used frequently to join the boys, and then they would sit down together and tell stories. Klas abounded in these, and he became John Dietrich's dearest friend. In particular, he knew a number of stories of the Nine-hills, and the underground people in the old times, when the giants disappeared from the country and the little ones came into the hills. These tales John swallowed so eagerly that he thought of nothing else, and was for ever talking of golden cups, and crowns, and glass shoes, and pockets full of ducats, and gold rings, and diamond coronets, and snow-white brides, and such like. Old Klas used often to shake his head at him, and say—

“John! John! what are you about? The spade and scythe will be your sceptre and crown, and your bride will wear a garland of rosemary, and a gown of striped drill.”

Still John almost longed to get into the Nine-hills, for Klas told him that every one who by luck or cunning should get a cap of the little ones might go down with safety, and instead of their making a servant of him, he would be their master. The person whose cap he got would be his servant, and obey all his commands.

St. John's day, when the days were longest and the nights shortest, was now come. Old and young kept the holiday, had all sorts of plays, and told all kinds of stories. John could now no longer contain himself, but the day after the festival he slipt away to the Nine-hills, and when it grew dark laid himself down on the top of the highest of them, where Klas had told him the underground people had their principal dancing-place. John lay quite still from ten till twelve at night. At last it struck twelve. Immediately there was a ringing and a singing in the hills, and then a whispering and a lispng, and a whiz and a buzz all about him, for the little people were now, some whirling round and round in the dance, and others sporting and tumbling about in the moonshine, and playing a thousand merry pranks and tricks. He felt a secret dread come over him at this whispering and buzzing, for he could see nothing of them, as the caps they wore made them invisible, but he lay quite still with his face in the grass, and his eyes fast shut, snoring a little, just as if he were asleep. Now and then he ventured to open his eyes a little and peep out, but not the slightest trace of them could he see, though it was bright moonlight.

It was not long before three of the underground people came jumping up to where he was lying, but they took no heed of him, and flung their brown caps up into the air, and caught them from one another. At length one snatched the cap out of the hand of another and flung it away. It flew direct, and fell upon John's head. The moment he felt it he caught hold of it, and, standing up, bid farewell to sleep. He flung his cap about for joy and made the little silver bell of it jingle, then set it upon his head, and—oh wonderful! that instant he saw the countless and merry swarm of the little people.

The three little men came sliily up to him, and thought by their nimbleness to get back the cap, but he held his prize fast, and they saw clearly that nothing was to be done in this way with him, for in size and strength John was a giant in comparison with these little fellows, who hardly came up to his knee. The owner of the cap now came up very humbly to the finder, and begged, in as supplicating a tone as if his life depended upon it, that he would give him back his cap.

“No,” said John, “you sly little rogue, you will get the cap no more. That's not the sort of thing one gives away

for buttered cake. I should be in a nice way with you if I had not something of yours, but now you have no power over me, but must do what I please. I will go down with you and see how you live down below, and you shall be my servant. Nay, no grumbling. You know you must. I know that just as well as you do, for Klas Starkwolt told it to me often and often!”

The little man made as if he had not heard or understood one word of all this. He began his crying and whining over again, and wept and screamed and howled most piteously for his little cap. John, however, cut the matter short by saying—

“Have done. You are my servant, and I intend to make a trip with you.”

So he gave up, especially as the others told him there was no remedy.

John now flung away his old hat, and put on the cap, and set it firm on his head lest it should slip off or fly away, for all his power lay in the cap. He lost no time in trying its virtues, and commanded his new servant to fetch him food and drink. The servant ran away like the wind, and in a second was there again with bottles of wine, and bread, and rich fruits. So John ate and drank, and looked at the sports and dancing of the little ones, and it pleased him right well, and he behaved himself stoutly and wisely, as if he had been a born master.

When the cock had now crowed for the third time, and the little larks had made their first twirl in the sky, and the infant light appeared in solitary white streaks in the east, then it went hush, hush, hush, through the bushes and flowers and stalks, and the hills rent again, and opened up, and the little men went down. John gave close attention to everything, and found that it was exactly as he had been told, and, behold! on the top of the hill, where they had just been dancing, and where all was full of grass and flowers, as people see it by day, there rose of a sudden, when the retreat was sounded, a bright glass point. Whoever wanted to go in stepped upon this. It opened, and he glided gently in, the grass closing again after him; and when they had all entered it vanished, and there was no further trace of it to be seen. Those who descended through the glass point sank quite gently into a wide silver tun, which held them all, and could have easily harboured a thousand such little people. John and his man went down into such a one along with several others, all of whom screamed out, and prayed him not to tread on them, for if his weight came on them they were dead men. He was, however, careful, and acted in a very friendly way towards them. Several tuns of this kind went up and down after each other, until all were in. They hung by long silver chains, which were drawn and hung without.

In his descent John was amazed at the brilliancy of the walls between which the tun glided down. They were all, as it were, beset with pearls and diamonds, glittering and sparkling brightly, and below him he heard the most beautiful music tinkling at a distance, so that he did not know what was become of him, and from excess of pleasure he fell fast asleep.

He slept a long time, and when he awoke he found himself in the most beautiful bed that could be, such as he had never seen the like of in his father's house, and it was in the prettiest chamber in the world, and his servant was beside him with a fan to keep away the flies and gnats. He had hardly opened his eyes when his little servant brought him a basin and towel, and held him the nicest new clothes of brown silk to put on, most beautifully made. With these was a pair of new black shoes with red ribbons, such as John had never beheld in Rambin or in Rodinkirchen either. There were also there several pairs of beautiful shining glass shoes, such as are only used on great occasions. John was, as we may well suppose, delighted to have such clothes to wear, and he put them upon him joyfully. His servant then flew like lightning, and returned with a breakfast of wine and milk, and beautiful white bread and fruits, and such other things as boys are fond of. He now perceived every moment more and more, that Klas Starkwolt, the old cowherd, knew what he was talking about, for the splendour and magnificence he saw here surpassed anything he had ever dreamt of. His servant, too, was the

most obedient one possible, a nod or a sign was enough for him, for he was as wise as a bee, as all these little people are by nature John's bedchamber was all covered with emeralds and other precious stones, and in the ceiling was a diamond as big as a nine-pin bowl, that gave light to the whole chamber. In this place they have neither sun nor moon nor stars to give them light, neither do they use lamps or candlesticks of any kind, but they live in the midst of precious stones, and have the purest of gold and silver in abundance, and the skill to make it light both by day and night, though indeed, properly speaking, as there is no sun there, there is no distinction between day and night, and they reckon only by weeks. They set the brightest and clearest precious stones in their dwellings, and in the ways and passages leading underground, and in the places where they had their large halls, and their dances and their feasts, where they sparkled so as to make it eternal day.

When John had finished breakfast, his servant opened a little door in the wall, where was a closet with the most beautiful silver and gold cups and dishes and other vessels and baskets filled with ducats and boxes of jewels and precious stones. There were also charming pictures, and the most delightful books he had seen in the whole course of his life.

John spent the morning looking at these things, and when it was midday a bell rang, and his servant said—

“Will you dine alone, sir, or with the large company?”

“With the large company, to be sure,” replied John. So his servant led him out. John, however, saw nothing but solitary halls lighted up with precious stones, and here and there little men and women, who appeared to him to glide in and out of the clefts and fissures of the rocks. Wondering what it was the bells rang for, he said to his servant—

“But where is the company?”

Scarcely had he spoken when the hall they were in opened out to a great extent, and a canopy set with diamonds and precious stones was drawn over it. At the same moment he saw an immense throng of nicely dressed little men and women pouring in through several open doors. The floor opened in several places, and tables, covered with the most beautiful ware, and the most luscious meats and fruits and wines, placed themselves beside each other, and the chairs arranged themselves along the tables, and then the men and women took their seats.

The principal persons now came forward and bowed to John, and led him to their table, where they placed him among their most beautiful maidens, a distinction which pleased John well. The party, too, was very merry, for the underground people are extremely lively and cheerful, and can never stay long quiet. Then the most charming music sounded over their heads, and beautiful birds, flying about, sang most sweetly, and these were not real birds but artificial ones which the little men make so ingeniously that they can fly about and sing like natural ones.

The servants of both sexes who waited at table and handed about the golden cups, and the silver and crystal baskets with fruit, were children belonging to this world, whom some casualty or other had thrown among the underground people, and who, having come down without securing any pledge, were fallen into the power of the little ones. These were differently clad. The boys and girls were dressed in short white coats and jackets, and wore glass shoes so fine that their step could never be heard, with blue caps on their heads, and silver belts round their waists.

John at first pitied them, seeing how they were forced to run about and wait on the little people, but as they looked cheerful and happy, and were handsomely dressed, and had such rosy cheeks, he said to himself—"After all, they are not so badly off, and I was myself much worse when I had to be running after the cows and bullocks. To be sure I am now a master here, and they are servants, but there is no help for it. Why were they so foolish as to let themselves be taken and not get some pledge beforehand? At any rate the time must come when they will be set at liberty, and they will certainly not be longer than fifty years here."

With these thoughts he consoled himself, and sported and played away with his little play-fellows, and ate, and drank, and made his servant tell him stories, for he would know everything exactly.

They sat at table about two hours. The principal person then rang a bell, and the tables and chairs all vanished in a whiff, leaving all the company on their feet. The birds now struck up a most lively air, and the little people danced their rounds most merrily. When they were done, the joyous sets jumped and leaped, and whirled themselves round and round, as if the world was grown dizzy. The pretty girls who sat next John caught hold of him and whirled him about, and, without making any resistance, he danced round and round with them for two good hours. Every afternoon while he remained there he used to dance thus merrily with them, and, to the last hour of his life, he used to speak of it with the greatest glee. His language was—that the joys of heaven and the songs and music of the angels, which the righteous hope to enjoy there, might be excessively beautiful, but that he could conceive nothing to surpass the music and the dancing under the earth, the beautiful and lively little men, the wonderful birds in the branches, and the tinkling silver bells in their caps.

“No one,” said he, “who has not seen and heard it, can form any idea whatever of it.”

When the music and dancing were over it might be about four o'clock. The little people then disappeared, and went each about his own business or pleasure. After supper they sported and danced in the same way, and at midnight, especially on star-light nights, they slipped out of their hills to dance in the open air. John used then to say his prayers, a duty he never neglected either in the evening or in the morning, and go to sleep.

For the first week John was in the glass hill, he only went from his chamber to the great hall and back again. After the first week, however, he began to walk about, making his servant show and explain everything to him. He found that there were in that place the most beautiful walks in which he might ramble about for miles, in all directions, without ever finding an end to them, so immensely large was the hill in which the little people lived, and yet outwardly it seemed but a little place, with a few bushes and trees growing on it.

It was extraordinary that, between the meads and fields, which were thick sown with hills and lakes and islands, and ornamented with trees and flowers in great variety, there ran, as it were, small lanes, through which, as through crystal rocks, one was obliged to pass to come to any new place; and the single meads and fields were often a mile long, and the flowers were so brilliant and so fragrant, and the songs of the numerous birds so sweet, that John had never seen anything on earth like it. There was a breeze, and yet one did not feel the wind. It was quite clear and bright, and yet there was no heat. The waves were dashing, still there was no danger, and the most beautiful little barks and canoes came, like white swans, when one wanted to cross the

water, and went backwards and forwards of themselves. Whence all this came no one knew, nor could John's servant tell anything about it, but one thing John saw plainly, which was, that the large carbuncles and diamonds that were set in the roof and walls gave light instead of the sun, moon, and stars.

These lovely meads and plains were, for the most part, all lonesome. Few of the underground people were to be seen upon them, and those that were just glided across them as if in the greatest hurry. It very rarely happened that any of them danced out there in the open air. Sometimes about three of them did so, or, at the most, half a dozen. John never saw a greater number together. The meads were never cheerful except when the servants, of whom there might be some hundreds, were let out to walk. This, however, happened but twice a week, for they were mostly kept employed in the great hall and adjoining apartments or at school.

For John soon found they had schools there also. He had been there about ten months when one day he saw something snow-white gliding into a rock and disappearing.

“What!” said he to his servant, “are there some of you that wear white like the servants?”

He was informed that there were, but they were few in number, and never appeared at the large tables or the dances, except once a year, on the birthday of the great Hill-king, who dwelt many thousand miles below in the great deep. These were the oldest among them, some of them many thousand years old, who knew all things and could tell of the beginning of the world, and were called the Wise. They lived all alone, and only left their chambers to instruct the underground children and the attendants of both sexes, for whom there was a great school.

John was much pleased with this intelligence, and he determined to take advantage of it; so next morning he made his servant conduct him to the school, and was so well pleased with it that he never missed a day going there. They were there taught reading, writing, and accounts, to compose and relate histories, stories, and many elegant kinds of work, so that many came out of the hills, both men and women, very prudent and knowing people in consequence of what they were taught there. The biggest, and those of best capacity, received instruction in natural science and astronomy, and in poetry and in riddle-making, arts highly esteemed among the little people. John was very diligent, and soon became a most clever painter and drawer. He wrought, too, most ingeniously in gold and silver and stones, and in verse and riddle-making he had no fellow.

John had spent many a happy year here without ever thinking of the upper world, or of those he had left behind, so pleasantly passed the time—so many agreeable companions had he.

Of all of them there was none of whom he was so fond as of a fair-haired girl named Elizabeth Krabbe. She was from his own village, and was the daughter of Frederick Krabbe, the minister of Rambin. She was but four years old when she was taken away, and John had often heard tell of her. She was not, however, stolen by the little people, but had come into their power in this manner. One day in summer she and other children ran out into the fields. In their rambles they went to the Nine-hills, where little Elizabeth fell asleep, and was forgotten by the rest. At night when she awoke, she found herself under the ground among the little people. It was not merely because she was from his own village that John was so fond of Elizabeth, but she was very beautiful, with clear blue eyes and ringlets of fair hair, and a most angelic smile. Time flew away unperceived. John was now eighteen, and Elizabeth sixteen. Their childish fondness was now become love, and the little people were pleased to see it, thinking that by means of her they might get John to renounce his power, and become their servant, for they were fond of him, and would willingly have had him to wait upon them, for the love of dominion is their vice. They were, however, mistaken. John had learned too much from his servant to be caught in that way.

John's chief delight was walking about with Elizabeth, for he now knew every place so well that he could dispense with the attendance of his servant. In these rambles he was always gay and lively, but his companion was frequently sad and melancholy, thinking on the land above, where men live, and where the sun, moon, and

stars shine. Now it happened in one of their walks, as they talked of their love, and it was after midnight, they passed under the place where the tops of the glass hills used to open and let the underground people in and out. As they went along, they heard of a sudden the crowing of several cocks above. At this sound, which she had not heard for several years, Elizabeth felt her heart so affected that she could contain herself no longer, but throwing her arms about John's neck, she bathed his cheek with her tears. At length she said—

“Dearest John, everything down here is very beautiful, and the little people are kind and do nothing to injure me, but still I have been always uneasy, nor ever felt any pleasure till I began to love you; and yet that is not pure pleasure, for this is not a right way of living, such as is fit for human beings. Every night I dream of my father and mother, and of our churchyard where the people stand so pious at the church door waiting for my father, and I could weep tears of blood that I cannot go into the church with them and worship God as a human being should, for this is no Christian life we lead down here, but a delusive half-heathen one. And only think, dear John, that we can never marry, as there is no priest to join us. Do, then, plan some way for us to leave this place, for I cannot tell you how I long to get once more to my father, and among pious Christians.”

John, too, had not been unaffected by the crowing of the cocks, and he felt what he had never felt there before, a longing after the land where the sun shines.

“Dear Elizabeth,” said he, “all you say is true, and I now feel it is a sin for Christians to stay here, and it seems to me as if our Lord said to us in that cry of the cocks, ‘Come up, ye Christian children, out of those abodes of illusion and magic. Come to the light of the stars, and act as children of the light.’ I now feel that it was a great sin for me to come down here, but I trust I shall be forgiven on account of my youth, for I was only a boy, and knew not what I did. But now I will not stay a day longer. They cannot keep *me* here.”

At these last words Elizabeth turned pale, for she recollected that she was a servant, and must serve her fifty years.

“And what will it avail me,” cried she, “that I shall continue young, and be but as of twenty years when I go out, for my father and mother will be dead, and all my companions old and grey; and you, dearest John, will be old and grey also,” cried she, throwing herself on his bosom.

John was thunderstruck at this, for it had never before occurred to him. He, however, comforted her as well as

he could, and declared he would never leave the place without her. He spent the whole night in forming various plans. At last he fixed on one, and in the morning he despatched his servant to summon to his apartment six of the principal of the little people. When they came, John thus mildly addressed them—

“My friends, you know how I came here, not as a prisoner or servant, but as a lord and master over one of you, and of consequence over all. You have now for the ten years I have been with you treated me with respect and attention, and for that I am your debtor. But you are still more my debtors, for I might have given you every sort of vexation and annoyance, and you must have submitted to it. I have, however, not done so, but have behaved as your equal, and have sported and played with you rather than ruled over you. I have now one request to make. There is a girl among your servants whom I love, Elizabeth Krabbe, of Rambin, where I was born. Give her to me and let us depart, for I will return to where the sun shines and the plough goes through the land. I ask to take nothing with me but her and the ornaments and furniture of my chamber.”

He spoke in a determined tone, and they hesitated and cast their eyes upon the ground. At last the oldest of them replied—

“Sir, you ask what we cannot grant. It is a fixed law that no servant can leave this place before the appointed time. Were we to break through this law our whole subterranean empire would fall. Anything else you desire, for we love and respect you, but we cannot give up Elizabeth.”

“You can, and you shall, give her up!” cried John in a rage. “Go, think of it till to-morrow. Return then at this hour. I will show you whether or not I can triumph over your hypocritical and cunning stratagems.”

The six retired. Next morning, on their return, John addressed them in the kindest manner, but to no purpose. They persisted in their refusal. He gave them till the next day, threatening them severely in case they still proved refractory.

Next day, when the six little people appeared before him, John looked at them sternly, and made no return to their salutations, but said to them shortly—

“Yes, or No?”

They answered, with one voice, “No.” He then ordered his servant to summon twenty-four more of the

principal persons, with their wives and children. When they came they were in all five hundred men, women, and children. John ordered them forthwith to go and fetch pick-axes, spades, and bars, which they did in a second.

He now led them out to a rock in one of the fields, and ordered them to fall to work at blasting, hewing, and dragging stones. They toiled patiently, and made as if it were only sport to them.

From morning till night their task-master made them labour without ceasing, standing over them constantly to prevent them resting. Still their obstinacy was inflexible, and at the end of some weeks his pity for them was so great that he was obliged to give over.

He now thought of a new species of punishment for them. He ordered them to appear before him next morning, each provided with a new whip. They obeyed, and John commanded them to lash one another, and he stood looking on while they did it, as grim and cruel as an Eastern tyrant. Still the little people cut and slashed themselves and mocked at John, and refused to comply with his wishes. This he did for three or four days.

Several other courses did he try, but all in vain. His temper was too gentle to struggle with their obstinacy, and he commenced to despair of ever accomplishing his dearest wish. He began now to hate the little people of whom he had before been so fond. He kept away from their banquets and dances, and associated with none but Elizabeth, and ate and drank quite solitary in his chamber. In short, he became almost a hermit, and sank into moodiness and melancholy.

While in this temper, as he was taking a solitary walk in the evening, and, to divert his melancholy, was flinging the stones that lay in his path against each other, he happened to break a tolerably large one, and out of it jumped a toad. The moment John saw the ugly animal he caught him up in ecstasy, and put him in his pocket and ran home, crying—

“Now I have her! I have my Elizabeth! Now you shall get it, you little mischievous rascals!”

On getting home he put the toad into a costly silver casket, as if it was the greatest treasure.

To account for John's joy, you must know that Klas Starkwolt had often told him that the underground people

could not endure any ill smell, and that the sight, or even the smell, of a toad made them faint, and suffer the most dreadful tortures, and that by means of one of those odious animals one could compel them to do anything. Hence there are no bad smells to be found in the whole glass empire, and a toad is a thing unheard of there. This toad must certainly have been enclosed in the stone from the creation, as it were, for the sake of John and Elizabeth.

Resolved to try the effect of his toad, John took the casket under his arm and went out, and on the way he met two of the little people in a lonesome place. The moment he approached they fell to the ground, and whimpered and howled most lamentably as long as he was near them.

Satisfied now of his power, he, the next morning, summoned the fifty principal persons, with their wives and children, to his apartment. When they came he addressed them, reminding them once again of his kindness and gentleness towards them, and of the good terms on which they had hitherto lived. He reproached them with their ingratitude in refusing him the only favour he had ever asked of them, but firmly declared that he would not give way to their obstinacy.

“Therefore,” said he, “for the last time, think for a minute, and if you then say ‘No,’ you shall feel that pain which is to you and your children the most terrible of all pains.”

They did not take long to deliberate, but unanimously replied “No”; and they thought to themselves, “What new scheme has the youth hit on with which he thinks to frighten wise ones like us?” and they smiled as they said “No.” Their smiling enraged John above all, and he ran back a few hundred paces to where he had laid the casket with the toad under a bush.

He was hardly come within a few hundred paces of them when they all fell to the ground as if struck with a thunderbolt, and began to howl and whimper, and to writhe, as if suffering the most excruciating pain. They stretched out their hands, and cried—

“Have mercy, have mercy! We feel you have a toad, and there is no escape for us. Take the odious beast away, and we will do all you require.”

He let them kick a few seconds longer, and then took the toad away. They then stood up and felt no more pain. John let all depart but the six chief persons, to whom he said—

“This night, between twelve and one, Elizabeth and I will depart. Load then for me three waggons with gold and silver and precious stones. I might, you know, take all that is in the hill, and you deserve it; but I will be merciful. Further, you must put all the furniture of my chamber in two waggons, and get ready for me the handsomest travelling carriage that is in the hill, with six black horses. Moreover, you must set at liberty all the servants who have been so long here that on earth they would be twenty years old and upwards; and you must give them as much silver and gold as will make them rich for life, and make a law that no one shall be detained here longer than his twentieth year.”

The six took the oath, and went away quite melancholy; and John buried his toad deep in the ground. The little people laboured hard, and prepared everything. At midnight everything was out of the hill; and John and Elizabeth got into the silver tun, and were drawn up.

It was then one o'clock, and it was midsummer, the very time that, twelve years before, John had gone down into the hill. Music sounded around them, and they saw the glass hill open, and the rays of the light of heaven shine on them after so many years. And when they got out, they saw the first streaks of dawn already in the east. Crowds of the underground people were around them, busied about the waggons. John bid them a last farewell, waved his brown cap three times in the air, and then flung it among them. At the same moment he ceased to see them. He beheld nothing but a green hill, and the well-known bushes and fields, and heard the town-clock of Rambin strike two. When all was still, save a few larks, who were tuning their morning songs, they all fell on their knees and worshipped God, resolving henceforth to live a pious and a Christian life.

When the sun rose, John arranged the procession, and they set out for Rambin. Every well-known object that they saw awoke pleasing recollections in the bosom of John and his bride; and as they passed by Rodenkirchen, John recognised, among the people that gazed at and followed them, his old friend Klas Starkwolt, the cowherd, and his dog Speed. It was about four in the morning when they entered Rambin, and they halted in the middle of the village, about twenty paces from the house where John was born. The whole village poured out to gaze on these Asiatic princes, for such the old sexton, who had in his youth been at Constantinople and at Moscow, said they were. There John saw his father and mother, and his brother Andrew, and his sister

Trine. The old minister Krabbe stood there too, in his black slippers and white nightcap, gaping and staring with the rest.

John discovered himself to his parents, and Elizabeth to hers; and the wedding-day was soon fixed. And such a wedding was never seen before or since in the island of Rügen, for John sent to Stralsund and Greifswald for whole boat-loads of wine and sugar and coffee; and whole herds of oxen, sheep, and pigs were driven to the feast. The quantity of harts and roes and hares that were shot upon the occasion it were vain to attempt to tell, or to count the fish that was caught. There was not a musician in Rügen or in Pomerania that was not engaged, for John was immensely rich, and he wished to display his wealth.

John did not neglect his old friend Klas Starkwolt, the cowherd. He gave him enough to make him comfortable for the rest of his days, and insisted on his coming and staying with him as often and as long as he wished.

After his marriage John made a progress through the country with his wife; and he purchased towns and villages and lands until he became master of nearly half Rügen and a very considerable Count in the country. His father, old James Dietrich, was made a nobleman, and his brothers and sisters gentlemen and ladies—for what cannot money do? John and his wife spent their days in doing acts of piety and charity. They built several churches, and had the blessing of every one that knew them, and died universally lamented. It was Count John Dietrich that built and richly endowed the present church of Rambin. He built it on the site of his father's house, and presented to it several of the cups and plates made by the underground people, and his own and Elizabeth's glass-shoes, in memory of what had befallen them in their youth. But they were taken away in the time of the great Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, when the Russians came on the island and the Cossacks plundered even the churches, and took away everything.

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