

STORA HÄLSINGEGÅRDARS VÄG

Gundbo and its surrounding villages

LEAVING ALFTA, THE TRAIL HEADS NORTH through fertile farming country with a great number of big and well-preserved farms dating from the early 18th to late 19th century. The most valuable village environments in terms of cultural heritage are Långhed and Näsbyn, but Gundbo and the villages to the east of it are also important. The farms have commanding positions on hills and uplands around the meandering Hässaån stream. Along the trail you can also see how master builder Jonas Holm's cowsheds and farmhouses, which date from the turn of the last century, harmonise with older buildings. Thanks to

Jonas Holm, the big Hälsingland farmhouses came to be built in a new, more practical architectural style. The farmhouse, brewery shed and cowshed were all linked, and simplicity and rationalism were the order of the day.

Extravagant woodwork and painting

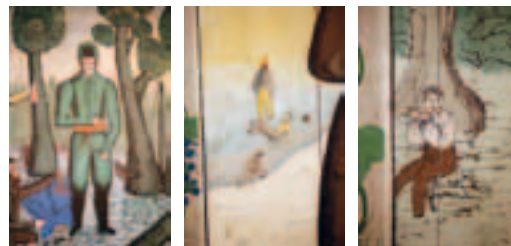
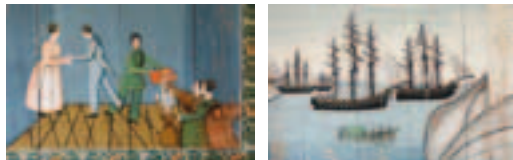
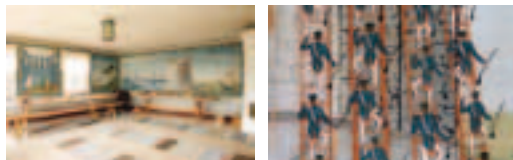
These villages and districts contain countless examples of the extravagant mid-19th century woodwork and painting that are so characteristic of Alfta parish. You can see it on eaves, window casings, porches, doors, interiors and furniture.

Brunkes farm, home of master carpenter and wheelwright Olof Brunk (who carved the pulpit) is located in the village of Näsbyn. Farmers in Hälsingland were among the first to decorate their rooms and cottages with paintings on walls, fabric and paper.

In the late 18th century, it was often painters from Dalarna who came to do the work; by the late 19th century, they had almost taken over all wall painting in Hälsingland. They painted using vivid colours, depicting lively figures, big castles and swaying trees. Nygårds Erik Andersson from Gulleråsen village in Rättvik was one of them. At the Ol-Anders farm, he left a self-portrait discreetly painted next to the fireplace. Rättvik painter Svärds Hans Ersson was another industrious man who was busy in the area. The grapevines on columns that frame decoratively painted panels are common on the farms.

Details from the vivid wall paintings of the farms.

Painters from Dalarna decorated the walls and ceilings of the big farmhouses.



Interiors from the farm Löka.



Löka farm sits on a hill – a typical traditional position for farms.

One of many anonymous local painters working the district is known as the 'Blue Painter'. The wealth of paintings in Alfta and Ovanåker parishes has been inventoried and documented.

The farm Löka

The farm Löka lies on a hill in the village of Gundbo. The history of this former family farm can be traced back to the early 17th century. Alfta Heritage Association bought the farm in the 1950s, after having had use of it since 1923.

The farm originally lay to the south of the present location, but it was moved to its present site by Lökabäcken stream in the 1840s. The stream was used to power a thresh-

er, a mill and a flax scutchery. Löka is now open to visitors, and is a heritage museum with a fine collection of textiles. The farm is open during the summer months.

Master carpenter Olof Brunk made this cupboard in 1811.



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