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THE FINNS IN MINNESOTA

PREFACE

INTRODUCTION

I. THE FINNS OF MINNESOTA TODAY

A. Population Distribution. According to the 1930 census, 60,610 of Minnesota's 2,563,000 population were foreign born Finns or of Finnish descent. These sixty thousand represent one-fifth of the number in the United States. They are concentrated largely in the Arrowhead country bordering the north shore of Lake Superior, and practically all of them speak Finnish as well as English. With the portions of the Superior-Huron drainage basin included in the states of Wisconsin and Michigan, this segment of Minnesota forms a geographic area in which more than half the Finns who came to the United States have settled.

The Arrowhead country, the northeast section of Minnesota, is cold, marshy; and lake-spotted. In it are the Vermilion, the Mesabi, and part of the Cuyuna ranges, from which more iron ore is extracted than in any other district in the world. Much of the country is covered with second-growth forest, and threaded by rivers and meandered lakes, a popular summer playground. Lumbering operations are still carried on in this region, although large scale cutting ended in 1933.

In this land of marsh, woods and lakes so similar in scenery and climate to Finland, the Finnish immigrants have settled.

Many of them live in the Range Towns, mining communities on or near the various ore deposits. More than half of them however, are farmers, and it has been estimated that in St. Louis county, which extends from Duluth to the Canadian border and forms the base of the Arrowhead, more than 90 percent of the farms are owned by families of Finnish extraction. Older centers of the Finns are in Minneapolis, Cokato, New York Mills, and Wadena, where the first Finnish immigrants settled and bought farms.

B. Occupations. The first Finns who came to Minnesota were farmers. Many of their countrymen at the same time migrated to Michigan as copper miners and when the iron mines of Minnesota opened up, they came to the Arrowhead. The logging industry attracted some of the immigrants. Many Finns work in the iron mines and lumber camps today, but with the depression and waning of the lumbering industry great numbers have returned to the soil for their living.

Farming has always been the preferred occupation of the Finns. Their characteristic farm, marked by the number of buildings scattered across its fields, distinctive hay-barns with the walls sloping inward at the bottom, and the ubiquitous bathhouse, is a familiar sight in northern Minnesota.

The Finnish immigrants who homesteaded or bought the cut-over land of the north were hard pressed to eke out a living. Their familiarity with the difficulties of farming in frost-bitten areas have made life possible if not prosperous for them.

In addition to their prominence as the labor supply for what remains of the lumber industry in the state, the Finns have

found employment in the paper mills of the region, where their experience in the industry back in the mother country and their adaptability as factory labor have made them good hands. They also love to fish the many Minnesota lakes, and the cheapness of fresh-water fish in Minnesota markets is partly because of them. They are excellent fishermen as a result of their former dependence on Finland's lakes for a large part of their diet.

C. Social, Political and Economic Importance of the Group. An outstanding characteristic of the Finnish settler is his habit of reading extensively. More than 30 Finnish-language newspapers exist in America, and many of them circulate in Minnesota. Many Finnish homes have on the parlor table copies of the Kalevala, the Finnish national epic. Numerous classes in cooperation, farming and trade union problems, and cultural subjects are held throughout the area, and the per capita book sale is high.

The Finns long have been highly literate and reading is an ingrained habit. Another cultural activity is dramatics. Tabulation of a four-month period in 1917, showed that more than fifty Finnish-language plays were given in the north-central states. Strindberg, Selma Lagerlof, and Hall Caine were among the literary figures whose works were offered.

The political viewpoint of the Finnish-American is almost unanimously progressive, and he has been solidly behind both the Farmer-Labor party of Minnesota, and the New Deal nationally. This attitude is in accordance with the traditional ideology of the Finn, developed in the long struggle against oppression by Tsarist Russia and Sweden, and strengthened by

successful experimentation with state-owned industry and cooperative action. Factors in the Finns' experiences in this country which have made them politically progressive are their experiences with the labor policy of the mining and logging companies, decreased opportunity in farming because little good land was available at the time of their arrival, and the fact that their attempts in the fields of consumers' cooperation have been signally successful. This latter movement has made the concept of a cooperative commonwealth a familiar and cherished ideal in the minds of most of the group.

Finns are beginning to participate in government as aggressively as their Scandinavian neighbors. They play an active part in local politics and form a solid progressive front. They are strong in support of mass education, with the result that the Iron Range, with the large mining companies furnishing a convenient source for taxes, has the best and biggest county school system in the state.

In religious inclinations the whole group is Lutheran Protestant, although far fewer in this country belong to the national church than did in Finland.

The most significant contribution the Finn has made to the economic life of Minnesota is the fostering and development of the northern consumers' cooperative movement. In Cloquet, a paper-manufacturing and lumbering town, is one of the largest consumers' cooperative stores in the country. The enterprize has been so successful that it has driven many other stores out of town. Cooperatives are common wherever Finns live.

Following the Old World inclination for dairying, the Finnish farmer bears out the adage "here there is a Finn, there is a cow." The farmers usually patronize a cooperative creamery. With rare exception, the Finn is a man of moderate means. There are no great fortunes listed in the group, and usually he is dependent on his farm or his wages for his livelihood.

II. OLD WORLD BACKGROUND

A. Racial History. The Finnic tribes, originating somewhere on the vast central plains of Eurasia at a locality not yet definitely determined, were relatively late in attaining a high degree of civilization. From the beginning of the Bronze Age until the Christian era, they were migratory tribes, pushing slowly toward the northwest and the present nation of Finland. On this 2,000-year trek their occupations were chiefly hunting and fishing, grazing of a few sheep, and a primitive form of agriculture.

These people were blonde, like the Swedes, but shorter and more stocky, and often slant-eyed. Classified as "roundheads" they were of a race different from their European neighbors, the "long heads."

Upon entering Finland, they continued their mode of life for many centuries and were regarded as savages by Othere, the ninth-century Norwegian adventurer-explorer whose remarks were preserved in the writings of Alfred the Great. Being a pacific people, they had little trouble with their Swedish neighbors on the coast of Finland. However, their skill as seamen led them before long to piracy, a vocation in which they were successful for many years until Swedish rule of the country and the coming to power of the Hanseatic League

made it too precarious an occupation.

B. Finland, the Buffer State. The Christianization of Finland and its subjugation to Sweden were both accomplished by the sword in the Twelfth Century. This period was marked by Sporadic fighting, with political domination coming in 1157 and Christianity later, after Bishop Henry, now patron saint of Finland, had been drowned under the ice by his unwilling converts.

Under Swedish rule a nobility was created from the rich chieftains to help the Swedes keep the country, and levies of soldiers were frequent in the long wars which marked Sweden's expansion toward the East. When the country was made into the Duchy of Finland as a reward for military service, a Diet was formed, and by experience in this body Finland learned early the lessons in self-government which were to make its people familiar with democratic processes when independence was won. Swedish rule contributed to the development of agriculture and trade. With the help of the Hansa traders the Finns began to send butter and wood products out of the country to the German cities. Contact with the outside world brought the usual blessings of civilization, including steel for tools and weapons, cloth, jewelry and art objects, and the Black Plague, which ravaged the country every now and then for the next five hundred years.

Before the end of the Middle Ages, however, a new threat arose on the east. This was the growing state, Russia, which began to contend with Sweden for the supremacy of the north. Many Finns were marched off to war along the eastern border, and in the bitter struggles Russia gained more and more of what had been

Finnish territory. Finally, when Swedish rule had degenerated so much as to make the Finns fearful of their future if they continued as loyal subjects of their King, they connived with Alexander and in 1809 were taken into the Russian Empire.

Alexander allowed the Finns to keep their privilege of self-government, and for many years they were undisturbed by the pan-slavic theories of their new masters. But as the lessons learned from the French Revolution wore off, their freedom was threatened, and the nation faced unfriendly tariff, military service, and land laws. Finally, opposition crystallized in the general strike of 1905, when all over Finland work stopped until the Tsar made short-lived concessions to the demand of the Finns for self-rule. With the return of the oppressive tactics of the Russian government, Finnish patriots waited their time, and with the rise of the Bolsheviks they accepted the chance to make their country an independent nation.

C. Causes of Emigration. Equal to California in area, Finland's population has always been slight. Living conditions were extremely hard because of its barren soil, its cloudy, frosty climate, and its lack of mineral wealth. Famines have been frequent in Finnish history, and every peasant knows the taste of bread made from straw and bark, the diet in lean years. The unproductiveness of the land has been the greatest single cause for emigration, for good farms were scarce and the Finn had to seek another land to earn enough money to buy a farm. Failing such a move, he faced a

life of near-beggary, and it was estimated in 1899 that one-third of the peasant population was landless, working for infinitesimal day-wages. The greatest emigration has been from the provinces of Oulu and Vaasa, two barren counties at the head of the Gulf of Bothnia. The coastal plains, fertile and populated largely by Swedes, yielded few emigrants to the stream. In the nineteenth century, as the population grew at a rapid pace, more and more emigrants came to the new lands across the Atlantic.

Later, this movement was intensified by political unrest under Russian rule, and large number of exiles, voluntary or enforced, joined the movement overseas. Most of these emigrants left in the early years of the twentieth century.

The motive in the minds of many emigrants was to save enough money in the new land to enable them to go back to Finland and buy a good farm. Return migration has averaged 29 per cent.

III. THE FIRST FINNS ARRIVE IN 1864

A. Specific Causes of their Immigration. Aside from isolated instances of sailors "jumping ship" in Massachusetts and California, the first Finnish immigrants came through Norway. "America fever" in Norway was an important motivating factor in the migration.

During the 1850's Norwegian immigration to Minnesota got underway in earnest. Letters from the settlers and newspaper reports fired the imagination of their countrymen and helped to swell the tide. Hard times still dogged the Finns who had left their native land to work in the mines of northern Norway, and they were

receptive to the idea of further migration as an economic solution.

The United States was actively promoting immigration through O. B. Dreutger, consul in Bergen, Norway. In 1863 the consul issued a pamphlet stating that the Indian rebellion was over, that wages were good and that the future looked bright for the American republic. Christian Taftesen, employed by the Michigan copper mining companies to recruit contract labor, had begun his promotional activities. He is credited with prompting the migration of 589 persons from Tromsö, Norway in 1864.

B. Voyage Landing and Arrival at St. Peter. In the spring of 1864 three sailing vessels loaded with emigrants left Tromsö. Aboard the first boat were several Finns. Peter Lahti, Matti Niemi, and Antti Rovainen brought their families. Mikko Heppa, (Solomen?) Nulus and Matti Niemi were also in the party.

After a seven-week voyage the ship docked at Montreal. The immigrants proceeded by lake boat to Chicago, and by rail and river boat to St. Peter, on the Minnesota River in the south central part of the state. This part of the journey took three months.

On arriving at St. Peter the Norwegian immigrants took homesteads in Lake Prairie Township where a settlement of their countrymen had already been established. The Finns, lacking equipment to begin farming found employment breaking sod, making hay and building homes in the settlement.

On the journey a child was born in the Niemi family and the youngest Lahti child died. Late in 1864, Peter Lahti and Matti Niemi, Jr., joined the Minnesota Heavy Artillery Battalion and went to war in the South.

The following year the Finns pushed out to Renville County and took homesteads about 40 miles west of St. Peter. This territory two years before had been the battle ground of the last Sioux uprising. Leaving their families at Fort Ridgley for safety, the pioneers built their cabins, with logs from the woods along the Minnesota River. Muskrats, trapped in the marshes, was the main item of their diet in the early years, and muskrat furs, marketed at St. Peter, was the major source of income.

A son of Matti Niemi, Nicolae, who was ten years old when he arrived in this country, resides two miles east of Franklin on the homestead claimed by his father in 1865. The family name has been "Americanized" and changed to Johnson.

Late in the summer of 1864 the second group of Finnish immigrants arrived at Red Wing, on the Mississippi River in southeastern Minnesota. Here the men found work cutting wood for the river boats.

In the party were Matti Taperi and family of five, Elias Peltopera, Enass Kajala and Matti Maata. Cholera struck Red Wing and the survivors moved up river to Minneapolis, and then pushed westward 50 miles to Cokato. There they were joined by Matias Karjenako, Olaf Westerberg and Johan Viinikka. Karjenako and Peltopera soon sold their claims and moved farther west, but in 1866 another small group came to Cokato. These were Isak Branstrom and wife, Isak Barberg, Barba, wife and son, Nels Selvala (Johnson) and wife, and Adam Onjamo. These people came as the result of enthusiastic letters by Westerberg and Viinikka. Others followed. Johan Piippo, Isak Jaakon, Hati and August Peteri started a new

settlement farther north near Holmes City, Minnesota, in 1868.

Minneapolis became the distribution point for immigrants from Finland and settlement fanned out to the northwest, with concentration points at Cokato, Kingston, Holmes City, New York Mills and Monagha.

IV. THE WAVE OF IMMIGRATION GAINS MOMENTUM

A. Specific Reasons for Leaving Their Home Provinces. The first Finnish immigrants had come from Norway. But in the 1870's immigration from Finland itself began. Five years of farming or poor crops in Finland after 1865 was the chief cause. The first Finnish settlers in Minnesota kept in touch with their relatives back in Oulu and Vaasa provinces. "American letters" contributed a great deal to building up the communities of Cokato and New York Mills. James J. Hill's policy of attracting immigrants to his railroad grant lands also helped to populate New York Mills. Settlement there began at the time that the community was the western terminus of the railroad.

The policy of the Michigan mining companies also was important in helping to populate the Finnish farming communities of Minnesota. Christian Toftesen recruited Finns to the Hancock mines. The newcomers would work long enough to save some money, buy a farm, and leave the mines, their places being taken by later arrivals. Many of the miners settled in Minnesota, buying land near one of the established communities of Finns.

V. THE CREST OF THE WAVE

A. Influx into the Arrowhead. The northeastern part of the state, the Arrowhead country, saw its first Finnish immigrant

in 1870, when a few Finnish fishermen set up their shacks on Minnesota Point, Duluth. It was not long before the first Finnish farmers in the territory followed them, settling in Midway township, St. Louis county. In 1876 more immigrants found work in a sawmill in adjacent Carlton county, now a center of the Finnish settlement. After working in the mill for a few years many of the sawmill hands bought land and began farming.

B. The Turn of the Century--Causes for Increased Immigration. Forces in the Old World were beginning to make the lot of the Finns there so unattractive that in the years following the turn of the century many left their home land for the United States. Chiefly responsible for the migration was the discontent which the Finns felt under Russian rule. The Russification policies of Bobrikoff, the Tsar's governor, were in full swing. It was announced that the Finnish Army (in which young Finns had served their military conscription, under Finnish officers and Finnish army methods) would be disbanded, and henceforth conscription periods would be served in the Imperial Army. This was an unwelcome change to the Finns, who knew from experience that the life of the conscripts would be a hard one, under unsympathetic alien officers using an alien tongue.

Another Russian policy that contributed to the discontent was embodied in the land laws, which were squeezing out the small farmer. It was estimated at the start of the period that one-third of the peasants were homeless, doing day labor on the farms and sleeping wherever they could. Contrasting to this picture were the letters written back from the first emigrants to America. There a

man, according to them, could "whittle gold with a wood knife." Prominent in the propaganda barrage were the Finnish-language newspapers printed in the new country, optimistic and full of success stories. With them came maps printed by land companies and railroads offering farms in the state for $5 an acre. The railroads, holding enormous tracts of land in the north of the state were especially active in this work and many land agents hired by them were active in Finland.

A third reason why the Finns came to Minnesota in such numbers at this time was the opening of the Minnesota Iron mines. This had coincided roughly with the slackening of production in the copper mines of Michigan, and Finns employed there had moved on to Minnesota, where the mine operators took advantage of the new labor supply. Wages were comparatively good, and many Finns came from the homeland to join relatives and friends in the big pits.

C. Occupational Attractions. Mining was the biggest occupational attraction for the newly-arriving Finns. The mines were expanding their production. Superintendents had hired Finnish foremen to handle the Finns, most of whom even after a number of years could speak only Finnish with any degree of ease, and the arrivals found it easy to get jobs there. Eveleth, Hibbing, Gilbert, Virginia and Crosby-Ironton, and Duluth became the homes of many Finns, most of whom were dependent on the mines for their living.

The booming lumber industry in the northern part of the state also provided jobs for many of the newcomers, many of whom

had experience in logging in their native land. Some of the lumbermen bought farms, cultivating them in the summer and working in the forests in the winter.

VI. PROBLEMS MET IN THE NEW WORLD

A. Problems of Social Adjustment. There were many problems to be faced by the newcomers, and today assimilation in the social structure of the United States is not complete, although with the sharp drop in immigration following the post-war quotas provisions, the Americanization of the Finn has proceeded at a great pace. Many of them were political exiles from Russian rule, outspoken and set in their beliefs. They were pacifistic largely. During the war hysteria they suffered from the enmity of their patriot neighbors, in some instances going to jail rather than obeying the draft call. The Industrial Workers of the World became an organization powerful in the north, with Finn miners and lumberjacks prominent in its militant membership. The ensuing labor wars were bitter in these industries, and many Finns, blacklisted after the mines strike of 1915, were forced to turn to the land for a living. Those who remained in the mines have transferred their affiliation to the Steel Workers Organizing Committee, CIO.

Social adjustment between the Finns and their neighbors also proved difficult. Difficulty in learning English led the first generation Finns toward clannishness. They were distrusted by, and in turn looked with suspicion upon, their neighbors. They encountered the usual disdain of the old settler for people who could not speak English. Being literate and intelligent people, they smarted under the assumption that they were inferior to the

assimilated inhabitants. They are proud of their own culture and strive to keep it alive in this country.

To fight these problems, the Finns have had the indomitable drive to work that has made life possible for them on the meager "stump-farms" of the north. It has been said that the Finn believes he can solve all problems by work, and their history in this country would appear to bear out the statement. Also, as it became clear to the majority that the United States was indeed to become their new homeland, the impetus toward assimilation was increased by the whole-hearted activities of the various societies and organizations set up for social and economic purposes. These have carried on Americanization activities and at the present day the younger Finns are indistinguishable from their neighbors save in physical characteristics.

B. Working and Living Conditions. Fortitude of the Finns has been proven by the winters of Northern Minnesota.

In mining communities they live in company houses or on a patch of land where each family keeps a cow and raises some vegetables. Timber workers live in bunk houses or have a "stump-farm."

Much was said in the early days of Finnish settlement about the frailty of the Finns. They were especially susceptible to tuberculosis, and the disease made heavy inroads on the settlers. One reason given for this disease finding such a fertile breeding-place among the Finns is their custom of sealing their houses tight in winter to prevent the escape of heat. The Finnish steam bath was thought to be a factor, too, in the high tuberculosis rate.

Deficiencies in diet, a direct result of low income, is now recognized as the chief cause of tuberculosis. Pulmonary irritation

from silica dust in the mines, a major hazard in the industry, is also a factor in the spread of the disease.

The Finnish housewife is extremely clean, and her house will usually shine with the traditional brightness accredited to the Dutch. The fare she puts on the table is simple, much like the rye-bread, milk, fish, pork and tuber diet of the Old Country.

The most spectacular feature of the Finn's life to outsiders is his method of taking the Saturday night bath. This is the celebrated Finnish bath, taken in a specially built bathhouse where steam is produced by throwing water on heated stones while the occupants of the bathhouse beat themselves with birch twigs to produce perspiration. The heat in the house becomes intense and when the bather has had enough he runs outside for a roll in the snow or a plunge in a lake.

VII. ROLE OF THE FINNS IN THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PICTURE

A. Cooperatives. The cooperatives owe a great deal of their success to the support and active organization of Finnish farmers and workers. Today practically all of the officials in the Superior Cooperative Wholesale are Finns. Many producers' organizations, such as the Cooperative Livestock Association of New York Mills, owe their existence to the Finns. Through the north the Finns have pioneered in this work.

B. Trade Unions in Mass Production Industries. Much support has been given the formation of unions by the Finns, and many of them were brothers in the ill-fated Western Federation of Miners. Subsequently their "union men" tradition took them into the Industrial Workers of the World and later to the CIO steel and

timber workers' unions. Their history in northern Minnesota in connection with these labor movements is fascinating, an epic story of struggle against a formidable foe.

C. Progressive Role in the Farmer-Labor Party. Districts in which Finns are to be found form the backbone of voting strength of the Farmer-Labor Party. Because of their experiences in the struggle of organized labor, the Finns of Minnesota are usually found the progressive vanguard of the party. They are earnest in their convictions and intolerant of political irregularities.

D. Cultural and Social Societies. Church societies, athletic clubs, educational societies, cooperative courses and schools, political clubs, literary troups, Americanization units, temperance societies, bands, orchestras and choruses, as well as auxiliary functions of the unions and cooperatives, constitute the main social and cultural activities engaged in by the Finns. Finnish-language papers are filled by accounts of the activities of these organizations, indicating that they played an important part in the social life of the settlers. The Finns in Minnesota help to support Suomi ("Finland") College, at Hancock, Michigan. They are active in cooperative schools founded to teach the principles of cooperation and business management of cooperative stores. They have outlets for musical and literary activity, two of the arts in which they take great interest because of their pride in their national contributions. Also prominent in the cultural life of the Finns is the fraternal organization, the Sons of Kaleval.

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Finns

PLACE: Gilbert, Minnesota.

SUBJECT: Social Ethnic
SUBMITTED BY: Toivo Torma
DATE: Oct. 14, 1938.

FINLAND (Suomen Tasavalta)

Finland, "the land of a thousand lakes," was a grand duchy under Russian sovereignty prior to 1917. However, on December 6, 1917, Finland declared her independence.

Geographically, Finland has as its extreme length, North to South, a distance of 700 miles. Finland is bordered on the North by Norwegian Lapland, on the East by Russia, on the South by the Gulf of Finland, and on the West by Sweden and the Gulf of Bothnia. Finland has an area of 149,588 square miles, 35% being forests, 11% lakes, 3% areable and 5% grass land. Its largest lake is Ladoga, also the largest in Europe. Finland's lakes provide means for transportation to a better extent than do the rivers. Of the rivers, the Muonio is the most important, and it flows between Finland and Sweden.

Geologically, it is similar to the Scandinavian Penninsula, showing granite, with traces of rock before and after the glacier era.

Climatically, Finland is a land of extreme cold and long winters, with short spring and autumn; the summer is about two to two and one half months long.

Economically

Finlands climate hinders the agricultural district, making the agricultural supply smaller than the demand. The principal items in descending order are: hay, potatoes, oats, rye, barley, wheat, etc; value equal to 5000,000 marks per year.

In 1926 Finland had 3,526 factories, employing 149,367 workers, and yielding 10,935,000 marks. Chief industries are: wood, paper, iron and mechanical works, textiles, leather, etc.

The merchantile marine of Finland, January 1, 1927, was composed of 4,930 vessels; it also had in 1927, two airlines, The Helsinki-Stockholm and Helsinki Reval.

Finland has 15,700 miles of primary roads, and 16,00 miles of secondary roads. By 1927, 2,866 miles of railroad, 2,706 miles were owned by the state.

There are 2,811 telegraph offices, 14,170 miles of telegraph, and 5,264 miles of telephone, all state owned.

Population (According to data of 1926)

Total population amounted to 3,558,059; 17.1% urban, the remainder in country districts. Classified according to language: Finnish 88.7%, Swedish 11%, others 3%. Religiously: Protestant 97%, Greek Orthodox, 1.7%, Roman Catholics, .02%, others 1.28%. According to occupation: agriculture 65%, industry 15%, transport 3%, public administration 2%, miscellaneaous, 10%.

1926 birth rates are as follows: 21.7 per thousand and death rate 13.4 per thousand. This means an increase of people to the extent of 8.3 per thousand, or 29,349 during the year of 1936. The population in 1930 was 3,667,067.

Source - Encyclopedia Britannica Volume 9, 14th edition.

Distribution and Occupation of The Finns

We find the greatest numbers inhabiting the northern states of our country. They are most numerous in Michigan, Minnesota, Massachusetts, New York, Washington, Oregon, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The first Finns came to the

"so-called" Copper Country of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan because they had been imported by one of the large mining companies operating there. When the first Finns were settled there, they called others of their friends and relatives. Thus the Finn, who had never been a miner in his native country, became a miner at America, which occupation he has followed ever since.

But why didn't he settle in Iowa, or Illinois, or Ohio or in some other fertile section of the United States. The Immigrant knows from solid facts of reality that he has no chance there without means. Homesteads were not to be procured in them states any longer when he came. The only chance he had was to stick to any kind of a job until he had saved enough to feel independent. But by this time he had become acquainted with his work and the surroundings; others followed him, and in a short time there was a large community of his countrymen about him. If he now thought of settling on a farm he didn't have money enough to buy one in a valuable farming section, neither was he acquainted with such places. The thing to do was to buy a farm in some neighborhood where other Finns had settled before him, or take a homestead in some far away unsettled region in Northern Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota or some other northern state. This is the main reason why the Finns have settled so largely in the colder and unfertile sections of the United States.

The Finns in the Mines

We shall consider this occupation first because it was the first occupation the Finn was engaged in on coming to America. In Finland mining does not exist as we know of it in America. No doubt, there are mineral deposits there, but they have not been developed as yet. Yet the first comers to America were led into this occupation, and as he was an industrious and hard worker, he made good, and has ever since been known as a miner of the first rank. From the copper mines of Houghton and Keweenaw Counties many found their way to the iron districts in Marquette County, that were just

opening about this time. Later we find them coming to the large Iron district known as the Gogebic Range.

The iron mines in northern Minnesota were opened up considerably later than in Michigan. By that time the Finn had become recognized as a good miner, and found, therefore, no difficulty in getting work on the Vermillion and Mesaba Ranges of Minnesota. The mines developed very fast in this section, being mostly open-pit mines from which ore could be dug up very easily. More Finns kept coming right along, until at the present time there are nearly as many Finns in Minnesota as in Michigan.

Besides the iron and copper mines, Finns are also found employed in the coal mines of Pennsylvania, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, and Illinois. Some have entered mining fields in Colorado, Arizona, Alaska, and other places, so that it is not a rare thing to find a Finn almost anywhere.

The Finn as a Farmer

Over 50% of the Finns have come from agricultural life so that it is not surprising if we find their steps leading back to farm life even in America. "If I could only get about forty acres of land, I could live more comfortably on a farm. That is an ideal place to bring up your family; and then if a man should be sick, his pay-roll would not be affected by it right away; and a farmer is independent and free." Thoughts like these are often expressed by men living in towns or cities. It seems to be quite a general desire to settle on a farm sometime, and hundreds are realizing this hope every year. After laboring in a mine or at some other work for a few years, until he has saved enough to give him a stingy start, he buys land, from 40-120 acres, and takes up his cherished occupation. He generally secures a cut-over strip of land in Michigan, files a Homestead in Minnesota, or purchases an old farm in western New York, Connecticut, or elsewhere. The stumpy land looks very forlorn and challenging. But the Finn settles down to work and clears acre after acre, although compelled

to leave his home many a time to work in the mines or the woods during the winter months in order to earn means of subsistence for himself, and his family. For this reason Mr. J. H. Jasberg, land agent of the D.D.D. & A. R. R., who has sold more land to the Finns than any other man in America, said that the only language the stumps understand in Upper Michigan, is the Finnish language.

Source - From "Americanization of the Finns"
by J. Wargelin A.M. Book written 1924.

Causes of Immigration from Finland

The first cause for immigration from Finland has been, with the first comes from Norway and Sweden, as well as with the later ones, meager earnings and uncertainy of subsistence. This can be readily seen from the rise and fall of immigration according to financial conditions in America.

The second important cause has been the compulsory military service law which was enacted in 1878, just about the time that immigration from Finland began to grow. An explanation for this is not that the Finn is afraid to fight,--on the contrary it must be said that he is a great warrior, as the histories of the Thirty Years War, Turko-Russian War of 1877, the World War, The Red Rebellion of Finland in 1918 etc. prove--but naturally peace loving he has seen too much of war. His country has been a battlefield for centuries in the struggle for supremacy between the Slavs and the Scandinavians in the Baltic countries. He had shed his blood on nearly every foreign battlefield where nations have assembled. As a result of this, there is instilled into the mind of the Finn a dread and abhorrence of war. This sentiment has been instilled in him by his mother while he was being taught his nursery rhymes. No, a Finn is not a coward where a righteous war is neccessary, but as he could not quite sympathize with the plans of the old Russian regime for military aggrandizement, he left his country in order to avoid unpopular military

service.

An important cause is also found in the restless, dissatisfied mind of youth, the so called "wander-lust". No other reason can be attributed to the emigration of so many young men and even married people, who are not moved by any financial pressure.

Professor Kilpi strikes the heart of this problem when he states that the development has gone in Finland as well as in other countries from the agricultural to technical and industrial conditions. "Emigration from a country always appears, as far as time is concerned, during that period of social-economic transition which is caused by an industrial and capitalistic revolution in an old traditional agricultural community." This transition he terms "social capillarity." And he quotes Kautsky who has figured that during the seven year period from 1901-1908, 5,740,000 persons from agricultural life emigrated from Europe." It is true that they not only leave the country but move into cities and industrial centers. Thus the "Pohjalaiset" (inhabitants of the provinces of Wasa and Oulu) have formed the bulk of the immigrants as well as of the industrial workers.

A further reason for immigration among the "Pohjalaiset" is found to exist in their nature and characteristics. They are active, possess physical vitality, and are daring and enterprising. They were found early as sailors or fisherman on the Norwegian coast, and as shipbuilders and carpenters in many cities. They thus became fortune seekers who could undergo the severities and trials of a stranger trying to establish himself amid new and strange conditions.

In 1891 it was stated in the Diet of Finland, that one who understands the conditions in Northern Europe, understands the reason for immigration to America. "As long as Finland can not pay like wages to laborers as America does, where wages are three or four times as high as ours, emigration from

Finland will never cease." The large number of immigrants who return to Finland for a short stay, and those who reside permanently there, spread the knowledge of our better wages to everyone who is interested in finding out.

This fact of immigrants informing others, or helping them in securing transportation tickets, is to be considered as an important factor.

Many other cause have been contributed to the immigration of the Finn but they are to be considered more or less accidental rather than real, permanent causes. All these factors, taken together, have been powerful enough to separate about one-tenth of the population of Finland from their home and native land.

Source - From "Americanization of the Finns" by J. Wargelin, A.M. Book written 1924.

The Priest

The Finnish church was a Lutheran church and usually there was one church in each parish. However, there were two priests, one of them receiving more pay than the other and also acting as a general supervisor over the problems of the parish.

In the case of a priest's death, the remaining priest designates three consecutive Sundays during which priests at large (priest from all over Finland) may give a trial sermon. The entrees were to have gone through the usual education necessary for priesthood, and thus this practice of trial sermons will give any one interested a valuable opportunity. As soon as the parishoners have heard the entrees, a mass meeting is called by the priest. At this meeting they nominate and vote for their priest-to-be. Democratic as this sounds, it was, however, usually determined by the upper classes or those who own more land and capital that the others. As soon as the priest is elected, he is notified; for the next Sunday he will begin his practice. The

priest thereby goes on the next Sunday, a short but exacting ceremony by which he will become wedded into the parish, and thus into the hearts and lives of the parishoners.

The priests were tax exempt, the taxes were paid by their parishoners. Their salary was 40,000 marks each year and in addition to this, the parishoners contributed to the church and priest in the following fashion: Each family was to pay every year one barrel of rye, five pounds of wool, one half bushel of barley and each family also had to sew him one pair of woolen stockings, and these were supposed to be at least a half a foot above the knees, and with these stockings, two woolen stocking binder, 5 to 6 feet long and an inch and a half in width. The binders or laces were to be well sewed and designed in order to please the priest, for he usually reprimanded the donaters in case the givers donations were below par.

In addition to the above tithes, the father or son of every family was to work one day every year on the priests farm, or pay one mark and 50 pennies as a substitute. Whenever the church or graveyard needed repairs, the priest had certain parishoners repair them free of wages, and since it was to be on equal basis, the remainder of the parish paid an equal amount which was thereby given to the priest. Two or three days a year was put aside each year for the repairs of the graveyard and each farmer or townsfolk did their respective amount.

However, the priest was at times lenient with the problem of tithes and did not suppress the poorer to the extent that he did the wealthier.

In the church proceedings, the wealthiest sat in the front rows, with the rest situated in their pews according to rank and wealth. At the church the priest often gave the official news of the weeks happenings each Sunday and on New Years Day he gave the year's births, deaths, etc. in order that that occurred. It is from the priest that any census taken might get the

best data, and although they had an assessor to determine the rate of taxes, he was not compelled to know the status of the population.

A Finnish Funeral

Finland had in the bygone days and even till the time I left Finland, a unique custom, a custom unduplicated in any other European country. This custom is the manner or practice of officiating the death of a person in the village or parish in which he lived. The best place from which to proceed is the beginning, and thus eventually culminating at the last rites, or when the final call of the churchside bell had sent its echoes into the hearts of the men and women, who standing beside the open grave, are giving their last token of courtesy and respect to the member deceased.

Finland was segregated into divisions, first there was the "kyla," or village, next came the "pitaja," which was often times comprised of many villages or townships. The parishes then were grouped into districts or "laanis." Each parish had its church, the Lutheran, and the uniquity of my story hinges upon the ringing of the churchbells.

In Finland, when any person, young or old, poor or rich, died, a nearby neighbor or member of the deceased's family went immediately to notify the priest of the news and then the priest summoned the church bell ringer to ring the death call, which slowly and monotonously issued its message to the nearby families of the village or farms.

The practice of embalming was not used, but a certain mid-wife in the village washed and clothed the body, and a traveling coffin maker was asked to make a coffin for a fixed price, with the lumber obtained from the deceased families woodland.

On the day of the funeral, a neighbors horse and a wagon were borrowed and used as a hearse. The wagon and horse were plain and mediocre, the wagon usually were rented free of charge, and the owner of the horse and wagon drove

the vehicle to the graveyard. When the march from the home of the deceased began, the priest walked in front of the procession, then came the horse and wagon with its board coffin placed in a lengthwise position in the wagon, and following the hearse, came the relatives of the deceased in order of their relationship to the family of the dead person. Last in the grim procession were the hardy, and mournful parishoners, usually walking, but in time of rain, they used covered one horse shays provided they possessed that luxury.

As the procession began from the home, the priest oftentimes sang a psalm or recited a parable from his book, and as they appeared within a 100 yards or so of the church, the bells began ringing, and continued to ring until the sermon commenced. Again when the body was brought from the church to the grave, the bells slowly rang, appearing to keep time with the walking of the parishoners. However, the bell usually rang regularly and methodically, giving the scene an aspect of saddened weirdness. There was a small interlude when the bells did not ring, but when the procession reached the churchyard the bells again knolled three final soundings until the moment when the priest said "Earth to Earth," and with his hand he gave the signal to the man in the belfry of the church to stop ringing. Thus ended the burial, with only the covering of the grave to be completed.

Usually, however, the people of the parish were united for luncheon with the deceased's family immediately after the funeral, and at the feast they served certain rolls and biscuits appropriate for the occasion.

In connection with the expenses; if the father of a family died, a horse was to be given to the priest. But if a woman died, a cow was given. The priest chose the animal, and usually did a good job of it. Nothing was charged if a child died, but in all cases, no matter who died, a nominal fee of two marks were paid to the priest. This fee was variable, and the price rose according to the wealth of the family. Also the death notification to

the priest cost the family one mark and 60 pennies or 160 pennies. If the priest did not receive the best cow or horse, the family was said to be haunted with ill luck indefinitely.

Source - As given by Mr. John Backman.

Brief History of the Finnish Press in America

1. The first Finnish newspaper in America was the "Amerikan Suomalainen Lehti," published in Hancock, Michigan, on April 14, 1876. It was a paper of four columns, and four pages, edited by A. J. Muikku, a student from Finland. The paper lived, however, only a short time; eleven and one-half issues in all were printed. The total number of subscribers had been 300.

2. The second paper was started by Matt Fred (died in 1922) in 1878, the name of the paper "Swen Dufa." It lasted only for three years, because of lack of support.

3. In 1879, July 4th, was published the third Finnish paper in America by Alex Leinonen, one of the early Pioneers among the Finnish immigrants to America. Out of this paper was formed, in 1895, a paper whose name has become very well known among the Finns. This paper was named "Siirtolainen," (The Immigrant). It is still published as a weekly paper, but its circulation is very small, due to the fact that the owners of it are more interested in their daily paper, "Paivalehti," published at Duluth, Minnesota.

4. The next in order was the "Uusi Kotimaa," (The New Homeland), published in 1881 by August Nylund, at Minneapolis, later moved to New York Mills, Minn. This paper has enjoyed comparatively good support, due to the character of the paper and the acquaintance of its publishers with the people in general. It is still published in New York Mills, Minnesota, but it is now owned by the Non-Partisan League in Minnesota. It is the oldest of the Finnish papers now in existence.

5. "Yhdysvltain Sanomat," organized at Ashtabula Harbor, Ohio, by

August Edwards, in 1884, was moved to Minneapolis later, then brought to Calumet, Michigan, where it was finally discontinued.

6. "Walvoja," the first religious paper, first publication in 1885, at Ashtabula Harbor, edited by J. W. Lahede, J. J. Hoikka and J. K. Nikander. (The two last named, ministers, became five years later the founders of the Finnish Lutheran Church in America.) This publication ceased in 1888.

7. "New Yorkin Lehti," in 1890, by Gronlund.

8. "Lannetar," at Astoria, Oregon, in 1891, founded by J. E. Sarri, Adolph Riipa and A. Ketonen.

9. "Amerikan Uutiset," in 1894, at Minneapolis, later moved to Calumet, Michigan, founded by Fred Karinen.

10. "Kuparisaaren Sanomat," at Hancock, Michigan in 1895, editor Victor M. Burman, sold in 1899 to a publishing company at Calumet, Michigan, and was published for a few years under the name of "Suometar."

11. In 1897, August Edwards, of Ashtabula Harbor, Ohio, who had already been identified with some Finnish newspaper projects, began to publish a paper by the name of "Amerikan Sanomat." In 1903 the "Suometar" of Calumet was united with it under a new name of "Amerikan Sanomat ja Suometar." This paper has enjoyed at times as many as 12,000 subscribers, but in 1913 its publication was discontinued because of the lack of support.

12. In June, 1899 a paper was organized which has had considerable influence over the religious and educational work of the Finns, and is still in existence. The name of this paper is the "Amerikan Suometar." It was founded by K. L. Tolonen, J. K. Nikander and John Back, ministers of Suomi Synod, and laymen J. H. Jasberg, Isaac Sillberg, Alex Leinonen and Jacob Holmlund. In 1900 the paper changed owners and became the property of the Suomi Synod through its publishing concern, which was organized by the name of the Finnish Lutheran Book Concern, with headquarters at Hancock, Michigan. The purpose for the

founding of the "Amerikan Suometar," in the 20th Anniversary publication of the paper. He says: "In the minds of some of the leading men of the church (Suomi Synod), rose the thought that a newspaper devoted to religious and educational work, and presenting this work from the standpoint of those who were to make their homes here, would be of value. As the church was organized permanently for active work in America, such a paper became a necessity."

Source: From the "Americanization of the Finns"
by J. Wargelin A. M. Book written 1924.

Cultural Life of the Finns

The educational system in Finland has become well established, both in Elementary and Secondary schools. The church has been a great factor in the early education of the people here as in other Protestant countries. According to the belief of the religious leaders it was necessary for every individual to be able to read the Word of God and thus understand the fundamentals of Christianity. Instruction was first given at home, and general public examination, known as "kinkerit," was held yearly, where the youth, and also the older people, were examined as to their ability to read and understand the Christian doctrines. It is interesting to note in this connection, that every person who wished to be married, first had to satisfy the minister that he was able to read; this insured intelligent parentage in the country. This explains the fact why the percentage of illiteracy in Finland is so small.

The majority of the young men and women coming to America from Finland, have had at least an elementary school education. The Finnish "Kansakoulu," public school, comprises, in the writer's estimation, a year or two of high school work, with such subjects as practical geometry, general history, and manual training. Many have attended higher institutions of learning. Finland was the first country to organize manual training as a part of its school instruction, for as early as 1858, Uno Cygnaeus outlined a course for manual train-

ing involving bench and metal work, wood carving, and basket weaving. In 1896 this work was made compulsory for boys in all rural schools. So when the Finn comes to America, and finds public schools in the community in which he locates, he is glad to send his children there. Compulsory education laws do not bother him, for he has been able to use them in Finland. In general it may be said that school authorities dod not have any more trouble in compelling Finnish children to attend school than they have in compelling those of other nationalities.

Source - From "Americanization of the Finns"
by J. Wargelin - Written 1924.

It is easy for a Finn to learn English? For those who come to America very young it offers no difficulties. He is able to learn English quite easily, and this in spite of the fact that he had learned his mother tongue first. The two languages are so different that there is no possibility of mixing the two. But it must be admitted, as is well known from the study of the languages in general, that the idioms of one language affect the use of another language at times. One thinks in the idioms of a certain language and translates these into another, thus bringing strange constructions into the language which is not his native tongue. Those who have come as immigrants at a later age, say about the age of 17 or 18 years, find it difficult to learn English perfectly. The Finnish language lacks such sounds as wh, th, sh, ch, and a mistake is quite often made in pronouncing words like "which," "there," "share," "church" etc. The distinction between the letters b and p, t and d, also causes some confusion for Finnish has only the p and t letters; while b is found only in words of foreign origin, and d never stands at the beginning of a word. Of the pronunciation of English words, it might be said in general that they offer infinite difficulties to immigrants whose language happens to be phonetic, as the Finnish is. We are not, however, arguing for the phonetic spelling in English for the sake of the Finn unless other weightier reasons are found for introducing the change.

To what extent do Finnish parents send their children to colleges and higher institutions of learning? From our knowledge we could name at this moment several Finnish students attending the universities of Michigan, Chicago, Minnesota, Illinois, Ohio, Boston, Oregon, and California, Dartmouth College, Michigan College of Mines, Chicago Art Institute, and numerous Normal Colleges and Musical Conservatories. The University of Minnesota reports that there are enrolled this fall (1923) in that institution about 100 Finnish students. It would be very interesting to give a list of Finnish university graduates, but we do not know that any such list exists. From our knowledge we shall point out a few, without making it personal nor exhaustive. From the University of Michigan, we can think of seven, four from the Law Department (one of these men became the First Finnish Congressman in America two years ago), two from the college of Literature, Science, and the Arts, and two in Medicine; one from Columbia, three from Chicago, and four from Minnesota, without trying to name others. In justice to the Finnish medical men, we should add that we are acquainted with a large number of them, who have received their professional education in America. The teaching profession, however, has attracted the largest number of Finnish young men and women. It has been estimated by some authorities that there are as many as 1,000 of them in this profession in America.

RM

Gilbert, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic
Walter Kykyri
Nov. 30, 1938.

CO-OP STORE

The International Work Peoples Co-operative Association was organized during the 1916 strike of the miners of the Mesaba Range. It was a defensive move on the part of the miners in their struggle for higher wages, lower hours and union contracts.

As in the 1907 strike of the miners,* the businessmen of Gilbert refused credit to the striking miners hoping to starve the miners back to work and thereby doing their bit to help the mining companies. For this assistance the mining companies allowed the businessmen the opportunity to place their friends to work.

The local strike leaders of Gilbert discussed the situation and came to the conclusion that a co-operative store must be organized so that the miners could get food. Gust Byman, Alfred Kangas and Sam Aho, three Finnish miners, were the most active in organizing the store. A committee was formed to work out the details and a lawyer from Eveleth, James J. Giblin, was hired to draw up the by-laws and constitution in accordance to the wishes of the miners and the existing state laws.

The name "International Work Peoples Co-operative Association" was chosen for two purposes; first, because workers of different nationalities had become members of the new Co-Op by purchasing shares and secondly, because the workers were conscious of the necessity of international solidarity if they were to be freed of the yoke of oppression.

*Duluth News-Tribune, July 23, 1907.

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It took several months before enough shares were sold to start the store. Many miners would not buy shares because they thought the store might go bankrupt. Section XV of the by-laws stated that "they are liable according to law, one for all and all for one." Some of the miners interpreted this to mean that they would have to pay for any and all losses in case the store was to go bankrupt. They were afraid they might lose whatever small savings or homes they might possess; others could not buy shares because they had spent their savings during the strike. The largest portion of shares were purchased by the socialist and the International Workers of the World, as these workers were more class conscious.

A building which is now the Aho and Laine Garage was chosen as the site of the new store. Fixtures were purchased, rent paid and everything was in readiness to receive the first carload of merchandise and to start business. The great day arrived, the first carload of groceries was at the railroad siding waiting to be unloaded. But it was sent C.O.D. and the new store had no bank balance. The money derived from the sale of shares had disappeared in lawyers fees, incorporation chargest, rent, fixtures, etc. The bank wouldn't loan money and the miners again had to dig deep into their pockets and give "toveri" (comrade) loans to the new enterprise. These loans were secured only by a receipt stating that so and so worker had loaned money to the association. These loans carried no interest charge or date of maturity.

Finally everything was set, groceries to be sold, men to sell them are enthusiastic customers to purchase but these customers resources had been drained by the strike and in the expense of setting up of the store. Credit was given the striking miners. Business boomed but little cash was rung up in the cash register--new purchases had to be made to replenish the diminishing

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supply of goods. The board of directors were very busy in these days, trying to get new loans and selling more shares in order to raise enough money to keep the store alive.

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Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Subject: Social Ethnic
Sub. by: N. A. Fryer
Date: Oct. 24, 1938.

FINNS -- FINLAND, MINNESOTA

The Finland Community represents an eddy or backwater in which misfits from other areas have accumulated. Located in Lake County, northwest of Little Marais on Lake Superior, the community is a singular one in the state. Here laborers and workers from the lumber camps, the mines, and the larger towns and cities have gathered. The forces that brought them here are as numerous as the boulders that are strewn all over the land. Unemployment, lack of initiative, unability to endure hardships of mining and lumbering, and lack of money are some of them. There is, however, one conclusion that fits them all, and it is this: When they have failed in everything they have undertaken, they have come back to make a living from the woods. Here we have one of the last frontiers in America. Due to the climate and the soil, it will always be an agricultural frontier region.

Normally the population of the community is a little less than two hundred. The causes that make the inhabitants come to the place are also the causes that make them leave. When work is obtainable, they leave; when the rigors of frontier life become too trying they leave for the towns and cities where assistance for the handicapped is more organized. With the younger members of the permanent families there is a constant coming and going. When the cities offer opportunities they leave, when employment closes down they return to the farm.

Another peculiar feature of the population is the excessive percentage in the older age group. Of the total population, 13% are more than 65 years of age. Between the ages of 45 and 65 there is an additional 12%.

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Only 16% are in the age group of 15 to 24 years.

The Finland Community is essentially a homogeneous group regarding racial extraction. Being such an isolated area a high degree of inter-relationship must be expected. A single family may be related by blood or through marriage to 25% or more of the total population. It is also interesting to note that the ratio of males to females is 130 to 100. Sixty-one houses shelter this group, and again a singular instance, 22 of them are occupied by men living alone or with other men.

In comparison with people of the same economic level, living in the cities, the people of this community are much better off. They have come here of their own choice, and many are content to eke out a bar existence. They would resent any attempt at displacement, and in fact that would be a grave mistake. They are needed to maintain and build roads. They can be gainfully employed in preventing and fighting forest fires, and harvesting the forest crops as they mature. When such employment is made more steady and regular, and together with what they can produce off the land, the Finland Community should be able to provide a primitive prosperity for its settlers.

Source: Geographical Review. New York, July, 1935.
The Finland Community, Minnesota. Darrell H. Davis.
P. 382-6.

In 1889 the largest settlement of Finns to be found in the United States was at New York Mills, Minnesota. The place got its name from a land and lumbering company, formed in New York about the time the Northern Pacific Railroad was built in 1870 and 1871. In the little colony of Finns

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that arrived to work in the woods and the sawmills were two or three men of superior intelligence, who wrote letters to Finland describing the advantages of the country, got into relations with an emigrating agency in New York, and thus drew a steady stream of their countrymen to the forests and "openings" of this section of Northern Minnesota. In course of time a small newspaper in the Finnish language was established, and the copies that were mailed to Finland were the most effective kind of emigration literature. The community of Finns in and around New York Mills, at this time, numbered nearly 4,000.

The newspaper that was sent to friends and relatives back in Finland was the "Amerikan Suometar" or the "Finnish American." The Finns call their country Suomi, Finland being its Swedish name. Thus suometar is the feminine for a native of Finland. It was a well-printed little sheet of six columns, and its editor was J. W. Lahde. He, however, was not the founder of the newspaper. For five years it was published by August Nilund, under the name of "Unsi Kotimaa." In 1884, Mr. Nilund moved to Astoria, Oregon and took the name of his newspaper with him. The plant and equipment he sold to Mr. Lahde.

Another prominent Finn, who was an influence in the bringing over to this community many of his countrymen, was Olof Pary. He was the most influential merchant in the settlement, and his big brick store was the meeting place. At one time four hundred men were in his employ in the forests cutting ties and cordwood. It was Olof Pary who gave the emigrants a start in the new country. He had a job waiting for them, and he was willing and wise in assisting them to finally obtain their parcel of land, and begin their long hoped for work of breaking the soil. On these prairie openings they planted wheat, rye, oats, and potatoes. In the winter time they returned to the cutting of fire-wood and railway ties. At all times they went to Olof Pary

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for counsel, so that the general conditions of the people became very good and they prospered.

Within two or three years they were at a comparative state of independence, and that was an accomplishment because many arrived with very little means. However, they had the greatests of assets, industry and thrift. Then, too, they were homemakers. Their homes were well built and neat. In the clean kitchens and bedrooms they had rag rugs on the floor, and white muslin curtains at the windows. The walls were papered with old newspapers and during the winter months geraniums and other plants added to the comfort of the house. A stove of Finnish construction heated the two or three downstairs rooms, and sometimes the one or two above. It was a stove solidly constructed of brick, covered with white plaster and fitted with iron doors. It heated the house with a great economy of fuel, and without the excessive heat that iron stoves give. And in all the homes a copy of the "Kalevala," the Finnish epic poem, was found.

Very little that had a foreign look, except the numerous bird houses stuck up on long poles and the bands of red or green paint around the window casings of some of the houses, could be seen in the village. The architecture of both dwellings and stores were typical of the forms seen in all American western villages of this period.

Whatever was peculiar in the costume of the newly arrived Finn soon disappeared when he replaced his garments from the stock of ready-made clothing in the village stores. The women did not readily Americanize their garments. They clung to the kerchief as the headgear for all occasions, a cotton kerchief for week-days, and a silk one to wear to church and on Sundays. In winter they wore a stout woolen skirt and a heavy shawl; in summer a calico

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skirt and a short jacket. Their shoes were thick and heavy soled of coarse leather. When they were free from the cares of the farm, they spun and wove with flax and wool.

Source: The Northwest Magazine, St. Paul, March, 1889.
A Finnish Settlement in Minnesota. E. V. Smalley.
Vol. III, No. 3, P. 3-5.

Of all the states, Minnesota, has the largest Finnish rural-farm population. In 1873, a Swedish agent sent two hundred and thirty Finns to the territory being settled by the Northern Pacific Railroad. It was in July when they came to Minnesota and settled in the fertile plains of New York Mills and Detroit Lakes.

The number of Finns migrating in this manner was very small because they had insufficient funds and were unable to pay passage or buy land from the railroad land companies which were so active among the immigrants in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The main influx of Finnish settlers to Minnesota began in 1890, most of them settling in the "Arrowhead Country," and especially in St. Louis County. At first the number was negligible, but by 1895 there were 7,652 Finns in Minnesota. The "Arrowhead Country" was open to homesteading and the Finns took advantage of this opportunity to acquire a parcel of land. The climate seems to have been a big factor in selecting a place to live. This particular country being somewhat similar to Finland with countless lakes and rocky swamps and peat lands.

Source: Agricultural History, Washington, D. C. April, 1937.
The Finnish Farmer in America. Horace H. Russell.
Vol. III, No. 2, P. 65-79.

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Subject: Social Ethnic
Sub. by: N. A. Fryer
Date: Oct. 24, 1938.

CENSUS REPORTS OF THE FINNS IN MINNESOTA

The foreign-born white are classified by country of birth; the native white of foreign or mixed parentage are classified according to country of birth of father, except where the father is native and the mother foreign born, and then according to country of birth of mother.

1930

Number - 60,610	Male - 32,687	Female - 27,923
Foreign-born - 24,360	Male - 14,186	Female - 10,174
Native born of foreign or mixed parentage - 36,250	Male - 18,501	Female - 17,749

1920

Foreign-born - 29,108	Male - 17,803	Female - 11,305

1910

Number - 44,463	Foreign-born - 26,637	Native born of foreign for mixed parentage - 17,826

1900

Foreign born - 10,727

RM

Gilbert, Minnesota.

Subject: Social Ethnic
Submitted by: Toivo Torma
Date: Nov. 15, 1938.

THE FINNS IN MINNESOTA

Interview With First Settler

Name of Person Interviewed: Mr. Herman Bodas
Address: R.F.D. Box 60, Gilbert, Minn.
Age: 62
Born: Wright County, Cokato, Minn.

The following interview is of special significance, for it reveals the development of the St. Louis River Community as well as the relative growth of various other locations.

Mr. Herman Bodas was born in Cokato, Wright County, Minnesota in the year 1876. In 1895 he moved north, to Sparta, Minnesota. Sparta in 1895 was quite a large sized village; it had a two room school near the lake shore, a mayor, village council, postmaster, and a relatively large sized hotel. In 1898, Sparta received water and light from the Minnesota Water and Light Company, showing well the growth of Sparta's prestige and personnel strength.

In 1901, while still living in Sparta, Mr. Bodas went exploring down the Miller Trunk Trail, cut off and traveled up stream along the St. Louis River, and located a favorable site for a future home, a home upon which he lives today. The next year he filed claim for a homestead site along the St. Louis River; an area of land 160 acres, with an abundance of virgin timber, and the woods full of deer, wolves and other small game.

Meanwhile, other locations on the Range were being settled, Biwabik had a population almost equal to that of Sparta, Gilbert had only one or two early settlers, Virginia was a bit larger than Gilbert. Of the roads leading to the Range, the Miller Trunk was only a winding, narrow wagon

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road; the Vermillion Trail was in a better predicament for it had a layer of gravel scattered about various marshy locations. There were no other roads between the various locations, so they traveled and cut open the deer paths leading in the general direction of their destination. Obviously, the length of time needed to travel was uncomfortable long, tedious, and discouraging.

Coming back to Mr. Bodas, in 1904, Mr. Bodas and his wife packed their baggage of food, took a team of horses, and when the ice formed on the streams and lake the two of them began their trek of seven miles toward their wild homestead. They cut their road through the brush, and got to their homestead two days later. During the winter they built a cabin, cleared a spot of land about their home. Also during the spring months of 1905 they built a bathhouse, the first bathhouse in the community. Also a few other families founded their future homes in the community the same year. During the winter months Mr. Bodas felled the timber and logged them to the bank of the river, from where the Cloquet Lumber Co. would put them in the spring. Norway pines cost $7 per 1,000 feet and spruce was $8 a double cord, with railroad ties costing 21 cents apiece.

In 1907, Mr. Bodas bought a sawmill from New York Mills, a distance of 550 miles by railroad at the time. To send the 12,000 sawmill from New York Mills to Biwabik cost $97, and from the Biwabik the sawmill was run along a road between the Bodas farm and Biwabik, a distance of 13 miles. He also bought a carload of cattle from St. Cloud, and sold them to his neighbors at an average of $50 a piece for the best of cows, with the poorer cow costing about 30-35 dollars. During this period, St. Louis River community had a school erected, with approximately 10 pupils attend-

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ing. Prices were low during this period; you could have bought 12# of coffee for one dollar, butter was 20¢ a pound, etc., and corresponding to the prices were the wages, approximately $45 a month.

In 1908, having lived on the farm for four years they moved to Gilbert. As yet there were no roads leading to Gilbert, so in the winter when the lakes were frozen, they moved across the lake. Gilbert in 1908, still was very small, it had only five or six houses in it and the faintest beginning of a street.

Living in Gilbert, Mr. Bodas in 1910 was elected overseer of roads in the Mesaba Mountain Township. At the time Mesaba Mountain Township was quite large having approximately 2,000 votes. It was during this period of 3 years while he occupied the capacity of overseer that many of the present roads were started. The Virginia-Tower road was begun under his supervision, also the Vermillion Trail was widened, graveled, ditched, etc. from Biwabik towards Duluth. Small stretches of road between Gilbert and Virginia, Eveleth, Sparta and McKinley were also constructed. Average wage per month was 40-45 dollars, and a 10 hour day was in use.

In 1914, no longer an overseer, he was chosen to superintend the construction of various roads, one of these being the project which widened and straightened the Miller Trunk. Simultaneously, during the winters he hired men and began contracting various timber settlements, one of which was near Biwabik, and what now is called Allen Junction. Here he had a group of 80 men, huge camps in the woods, and four cooks. He had twelve teams of horses working, logging the timber to the St. Louis River.

In 1922, they moved back to their homestead, with a remarkable change in the whole community. During the 16 years away from the farm,

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his sons had cleared the land, built the present home etc., and now, back on the farm they are ready to begin not where they left off, but on an equal basis to their neighbors. During this time the present school was built, rural mail delivery had begun and new roads were in the making. No longer was horse travel needed, for with a Jeffrey they came to live the second time on their homestead.

Social Activities as a Whole

I wrote a bit of information previous to this which was concerned with the social relationship between the Finns and Finn-Swedes of the community and probably has led the reader to the impression that the community is one busy and happy turmoil of social doings. This is not wholly true, if St. Louis River Community's activities were to be compared to those of neighboring communities.

The majority of activities sponsored by the community are actuated by the younger generation. It can be safely said that at present there is not a single active social organization, in the community that has as its officers the older generation. The Hall Club, as an example, is active, but it does not expend its activities for the social welfare of the community directly; its activities are largely financial, namely collecting dues, fines, rent, etc. from social activities sponsored by the younger generation.

Summarizing all this, it can be stated that the older generation has seceded the work of social doings to their offspring and they in return act as a protectorate over their activities.

In comparison to the neighboring communities, the community may be considered dormant, and unfortunately the hybernation is on an increase,

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instead of waking up to face the situation and thereby attempting to keep up with its neighbors. The St. Louis River community has no quilting bees, sewing circles, etc. amongst the older people as does the neighboring community, Makinen, for instance.

The cause for this is difficult to ascertain, but it probably can be traced to the depression period, when bitter jealousy and ill feeling ran throughout the whole community. This feeling, of course, was universal, but in a small secluded section, domestic friction is expanded to immense proportions, and its effects are hard to erase. Economically, during 1931-34, the community as a whole was in a difficult financial status, money was scarce, prices high, and farm produce prices were on a slump. The reason it struck the St. Louis River Community so hard, is due to the fact that it was, and still is, an unorganized township, in contrast to the organized neighboring townships, and therefore employment was harder to attain. The community had no organized, united force necessary to aid the communities economic welfare. All this caused considerable controversy, domestic friction and strife, with results apparent even now.

The fact that certain parties or families gained a few more days or hours work from the county etc. kept the community on pins and needles, the people became temporarily clannish, political propaganda and politics in general kept the flame of bitterness raging in the flues of the depressive period. All this is probably the main reason why social activities are not on the same basis as before, and also the reason that as far as social aspects are concerned, the community of St. Louis River is called dormant.

The Finnish Bathhouse

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The Finnish bathhouse originated before the Thirty Years War in Europe, 1618-48. In close approximation it may have come into use in the early part of the 17th century.

The first bathhouses were obviously quite primitive, consisting of a log house, in which were benches upon which a person may sit. The steam was supplied by a fireplace, with racks directly above the fire. There was no chimney, and all the smoke, gas, and carbon settled onto the walls of the room, thus giving it the so called term -- "smoking bathhouse."

Later on, with the advent of various machines, and the increasod experience in using these bathhouse, a chimney was installed. That, and the addition of the hot water barrel, comprises the second stage in bathhouse evolution.

The present bathhouse, has its rocks, fire, hot water, electric lights etc., and a method of quick warming is used. But, in contrast to the older type, a fire has to be kept within the stove during use. The main difference therefore between the second and third stage bathhouse is the speed in warming, and the use of modern gadgets in the latter.

In Finland various superstitions paralleled the use of the bathhouse. In order that a person be born free of all evils, he must be born in the bathhouse. Certain mid-wives, practiced the art of presenting the world with a new soul, and usually the child bearer had to be sanctified by the priest before permitted to work again. This means that the women will have to be in idleness for two weeks or so before she begins to work, and the child was usually baptized at the same time as the women was given permission to resume her household duties. This custom was supposed to keep away any forboding evils and also, give the bearer of the child a much needed rest.

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When a person became sick in Finland, they warmed the bathhouse, made a tar solution out of the rich, pine tar of Finland and when the person cleaned himself in the bathhouse, he was supposed to utilize the tar solution instead of soap. This practice supposedly made the person well.

A familiar saying, heard even today amongst the Finns is as follows: "If tar and bathhouse don't help, its then death." (translated)

None of these superstitions have been carried to this country, but the use of the bathhouse is in existence. Every Saturday evening the Finns make use of its cleansing properties and a few also consider that it has healing properties. It does, however, refreshen a person, and possibly limbers the joints, but as a substitute for medical care, I have my doubt.

Source: Mrs. Aina Ranta.

Material in Relation to the Pictures

The number of the picture is on the back of the pictures and I will refer to the pictures by the numbers.

#1 and 2 are of the St. Louis River hall taken during the first summer of its construction. They used it for dancing purposes during the summer time and as you can see from the picture, they seem to be having a good time. The dance stand is the present floor of the new hall of which I will attempt to have a picture as soon as possible. It is reported that they danced every other night at the hall after it was completed and charged admission in order that the hall would soon be paid.

#3 and 4 are pictures of the hall's social rival, the school. Number 4 is of the school first built and #4 is the present day school

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built on the same site as the former one.

Number 5 is a picture of Gilbert in 1915, showing the streets at that time.

Number 6 is a picture of the first Finnish settler in The Community. the picture is of him in 1911. (Herman Bodas)

Number 7 is a picture of the first settlers home as it looks at present.

Number 8,9,10,11,12, are pictures of the building of the Virginia Tower road of which I will attempt to get information as soon as possible.

Number 13 is a picture of a scene taken during the building of the Vermillion Trail road, now one of the most important roads leading to the Range from Duluth and is also the first road built to the Range. (Built by the Merrit brothers in the 80's, that is, the path was built, not the road itself.)

Number 14 is the first tractor used in the community of St. Louis River in the year of 1921. The picture is taken at the Herman Bodas homestead, with his son, Walter, driving.

Number 15 is the picture of the first hayload lifted into a hayloft and taken on Herman Bodas farm, around the year of 1921, according to their statement.

Number 16 is a picture of the first hunting season taken on the Bodas homestead when men came from the city of Gilbert to hunt deer. Here they are all ready to begin on an afternoon hunt after having hunted the whole morning. The fellow with the jug is Mr. Bodas.

I also received a book of Finnish songs that I have enclosed.

All of this material except pictures #3 and 4 and the cyclone

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picture are received from Mr. and Mrs. Herman Bodas, R.R.D. Box 61, Gilbert, Minnesota.

The other three are from Mr. and Mrs. Walter Bodas, R.F.D., Gilbert, Minnesota.

These pictures were given to me with the understanding that they would be eventually returned to me and that I would then forward them to the respective sources. In the future I will try to get more pictures and in the meanwhile attempt to get information for the pictures that I have just sent in to you.

Social Relationship Between Finns and Finn-Swedes

There is a huge majority of Finns in the community compared to the number of Finn-Swedes. Consequently it can be expected that all social or non-social functions would be controlled to a large extent by the Finnish faction. The majority, if not all of the officers of the various clubs, are Finnish, although the Finn-Swedes do attend both social and political functions sponsored either by the community itself or by an exterior organization.

The Finnish and Swedish are quite well mixed through marriage, and there is a whole one third of the St. Louir River communities population tied together both by blood and marriage relationships. Of this group there is approximately an equal amount of Finns and Swedes.

The Finns and Finn-Swedes are not prone to visit each other's families to any extent, because of a lack of verbal understanding, but there is no clannish tendency between the two groups. Both groups have mutual interest, and display in equal quantities, their interest in social activities.

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In contrast to the Finnish, the Finn-Swedes have no young generation as a result of marriage. All the youth (up to age of 20) are of the Finnish nationality. The reason for this I do not know, except as a surmise, it can probably be accounted for by considering the number of Finn-Swede bachelors, or single men, in the community.

Neither the Finns or Finn-Swedes sponsor any functions without the cooperation of the other; there are no social activities which exclude the minority due to nationality, and all in all, a democratic feeling arises within a person when he observes the mutual understanding and friendship between the two groups while at either work or leisure.

The Community of St. Louis River

Government: St. Louis River community is located wholly in Township 57. It, however, is an unorganized township, thereby lacking the officers requisite of an organized township. The Gilbert School District has as every school election, six members of the St. Louis River community acting as election officers; the polls being held at the former St. Louis River school. All county or state elections, etc., have in the election board, 3 members, and at this community, the polls are held at the community hall. This is about the only semblance of governmental organization in the community.

Dwellings: There is no typical Finnish style of architecture in the community, except for the trend towards the use of white buildings, for white colored homes are considered typical of a Finnish home. This does not mean that other nationalities don't use or have white homes for living purposes, for they do, but not to the extent that do the Finns.

RM

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic
Runar Gustafson and William Liukkonen
Dec. 6, 1938.

FINNS IN MINNESOTA

Mrs. Mary Beck, 230 Mesabe Avenue. Born 1863 in Vaasanlääni, Finland. Her parents were farmers.

She completed grammar school only, for she was the only child in the family, so was compelled to work in the home.

Her main occupations have been in boarding house and restaurants.

In 1897 her husband left Finland to go to the United States, leaving her with the three children to care for. Three years she spent waiting for word to come from him, but none came, so in 1900 she left Finland in search of him. In this country she met a friend of hers who told her that her husband was in Fairport, Ohio, so there she went. She lived with him there for eight years, then not being able to live with him any longer, she left, and went to Two Harbors, Minnesota. There she lived for one year. From there she moved to Duluth, Minnesota where she has resided ever since.

During the years prior to 1900 there was lots of work to be had in Finland, but the wages were low, 1 mark per day, and the hours were long. It was possible to exist on these wages but not to live. It was during this time that the greatest migration of the Finns from Vaasanlääni occurred. This probably accounts for the lack of unemployment there at this time (1900).

She is a member of the Methodist Church here in Duluth.

RM

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MILFORD, MINNESOTA DISASTER

One of the saddest catastrophes in the history of the Cuyuna Range or in Minnesota happened at the Milford Mine, four miles north of Crosby, on the afternoon of Feb. 5th, 1924. Forty-one miners met almost instant death when the mine was flooded by the waters of Foley Lake.

The Milford mine was an underground mine first opened in 1917 by Franklin W. Merritt. It was then known as the Ida Mae mine, but was taken over by the Whitmarsh Mining Company in 1922. This company had its offices in Crosby under the management of George H. Crosby, Jr. During its period of operation, the mine was busily engaged in the production of manganiferous iron ore. At the time of the disaster it employed 115 men and worked on a day and night basis. The shaft was 200 feet deep, the ore body lying under 120 feet of sand. Local mining men are of the opinion that the water from Foley Lake nearby had been seeping into the sand and gradually worked down toward the lower level of the mine, until the earth could no longer resist its pressure, thus forcing itself into the mine. Only fifteen minutes elapsed after the intrusion of the water, before the mine was filled to within twenty feet of the top of the shaft. From that it is not so difficult to imagine the terrific rate of speed at which the water charged into the mine when one stops to consider than an underground mine is a complex labyrinth of horizontal and vertical tunnels.

The flood came at 3:45 p.m. without any warning, the water rushing in at a terrific rate giving little chance for anyone to escape. Those who

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were fortunate enough to escape had no time to ring for the cage (a device suspended on a cable used to transport men into and out of the mine) but were obliged to climb up the ladder to the top of the shaft. Emil Kainu, pumpman at the mine, was at the bottom level operating a pump when he noticed his power giving out. This happened twice and he immediately sensed danger. Within a few minutes the water was rushing in and he started at once for the shaft, a short distance away. As he started climbing up the ladder, he yelled at A. E. Woeford, the cage man, and then proceeded to climb. Upon reaching one of the landings on his way up, he paused to catch his breath and to regain strength for the remainder of his journey to the top when six other men passed him in a panicky, frenzied flight to safety. He does not know why Woeford paid no attention to his warning. Kainu was the last man to get out of the mine alive.

The following are the miners who escaped by climbing the ladder: Matti Kangas, Jacob Ravnick, Mike Zakatnik, Frank Hrvatin, Jr. (whose father was one of the unfortunate victims) Emil Kainu, Henry Hasford and Carl Frals. Of these survivors only two, Jacob Ravmek and Mike Zakotvik, live in the vicinity of Crosby. The others have, since the disaster, left the Cuyuna Range.

The victims were: William Johnson, Clyde Renard, John Minerich, Mike Bizal, A. Woeford, Fred Harti, Frank Hrvatin, Sr., Elmer Houg, Mike Tomac, Marko Toejan, L. J. La Brask, Art Myhers, Frank Geitz, Joseph Snyder, Alex Jykla, Jerome Ryan, Emil Carlson, Roy Cunningham, Victor Ketola, George Hackevas, Nela Ritahi, John Yoklich, John Hlasker, John Maurich, Ronald McDonald, Captain Evan Crillin, Valentine Cole, John Hendrickson, Nick Badich, Martin Valencich, Minor Graves, Henry Maki, G. H. Revord, Herman Holm, Harvy Lehti, George Butkovich, Tony Slack, Peter Magelich, Oliver Burns, C. A. Harris, Earl

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Bedard.

Of the victims, only five were without descendants. Thirty-six of the miners had families of varying sizes, ranging from one to nine children. It was a tribute to the people of the Cuyuna Range in the wholesome, unselfish and willing manner in which they offered their cooperation and services to relieve the distress of those left fatherless. Businessmen, miners, and everybody offered donations to the community relief fund. Doctors, hospitals, nurses, the Boy Scouts and the national guardsmen offered their services, gratis, to make the desolate families as comfortable as possible. The local chapter of the Red Cross let not a single family to suffer for want of the necessities of life. The spirit of brotherhood, of love, of concern for the needy, entered the very souls of the people in their sincere effort to make the gruesome, sorrowful disaster as easy as humanly possible for those who were to continue life without the guiding hand of a father. The spirit of cooperation between all bodies reigned supreme--a tribute, indeed.

According to the compensation laws of Minnesota the families of the married man, who sacrificed his life, received $7,500 which was paid on monthly installments. On the average, the compensation paid to the dependents of the victims continued for about seven years. The adjustment and payment of these claims involved the largest single amount ever recorded in Minnesota since the passage of the Workmen's Compensation law.

Work to recover the bodies of the victims commenced the following day on February 6, 1924. It was necessary to pump out the water from Foley Lake and from the mine. To do this pumps of a large capacity were needed. These were obtained from the other mining companies operating on the Cuyuna Range and from several companies on the Mesabi Range. These volunteer

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companies not only furnished material to help the work program, but also, sent experts in various lines of work to hasten the task of recovery.

The men worked night and day, but the work was so complicated it had to be divided into sections, each part under the direction of an expert. The recovery work progressed slowly and favorably, although at times obstacles arose which retarded and handicapped the men in their work. The workers did the work of heroes daily and yet proceeded about their duties so silently and unostentatiously that the general public considered the men as carrying on necessary operations which were merely disagreeable and distressing.

On March 21, 1934, after 4,000,000 cubic feet of water had been pumped from the mine and the lake, two bodies were recovered by rescue workers. They were Valentine Cole and Minar Graves. They were found in a leaning position behind a car with arms clasped around each other and a timber across them. The heads were quite badly distorted and the men were recognized by their number checks which they carried in their packets.

Hampered by the huge supply of mud and other debris, the recovery work continued until Nov. 4th, 1924, when the body of Arvid Lehti was found, the last body to be recovered.

According to the report submitted by an investigation committee, established by the then Governor Preus, it was proved that: the operating company did not send its men to work out under Foley Lake; that it followed the safest mining practices; that the engineers of the company watched the caving of the surface when rooms were blasted down under the edge of the muskeg swamp that overlay the east end of the ore body; that the rooms were brought down as quickly as possible and that the entire staff of officials were constantly aware of the necessity of making all the working places as safe as possible.

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The testimony showed that no one connected with the mine had any fear that the water and mud of the pond or the soft muskeg surrounding it could possibly get into the workings.

The fact that at the point where the mud broke through, the surface was covered with a rather heavy growth of evergreen and tamarack trees 4 to 5 inches in diameter, coupled with the fact that the lake was so distant aided in giving those in charge a feeling of security and lent assurance to the opinion that this portion of the mine could be blasted and caved and would behave in the same manner as other caved and blasted portions. This, however, was not the case.

As was the usual and customary mining practice, the rooms were blasted as the men were going off shift. This was done in four periods between Feb. 1 and Feb. 5th and nothing happened then. When the entire ground was shaking from these blasts, it would appear that the disaster should have happened at that time, when the mine was vacated.

But some power decreed that the water should break through in the middle of the afternoon of Feb. 5th when all the men were peacefully working in their places and expecting nothing out of the usual routine of their work.

In connection with this catastrophe, the writer, though scarcely ten years old, remembers quite vividly the screeching and screaming of a neighbor woman, running in a frenzy up and down the street, pulling her hair, waving her arms and bemoaning the loss of her dear husband. So stunning was the sudden shock, upon hearing the news, that she had completely lost possession of her mind, forgetting that her husband was in bed, asleep, for he was scheduled to go to work that night. Imagine her display of emotion upon discovering the unpleasant error.

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The writer also recalls the story,in regard to the fatal accident, told by Frank Hrvatin, Jr., one of the seven to escape. His narration happened at the funeral of one of the victims. My first thought referred to a ventriloquist, but upon closer scrutiny it became obvious that he was doing the talking - but in a tangy voice. Certainly not the tone of voice one would associate with a man of his husky physique.

He told his story, I thought, as a contrast. He began by depicting the quiet peace of the warning, the shafts of the early sun piercing the dark grey. He continued by picturing the men in their preparations for descending into the bowels of the earth, some with sleepy eyes, some rubbing their eyes, others puckering their lips to prime their salivary glands, some who "hit the hay" late holding their heads and emitting gutterals of brain-ache. He elaborately described the greetings, salutations and light hearted remarks exchanged by those going to work and the homeward bound night crew. Those departing ones looked peculiarily happy. Satisfied smiles swept from ear to ear, and brighteness occupied their eyes. "They're going home. Lucky stiffs." As though premonitory fate had whispered.

Then time and events moved swiftly. The descent into the mine, the steady drone, whir and buzz of industry, the metallic clanging of motors and cars, the hustle and bustle of the industrious miners, were ever constant. And then, a furious gust of wind was followed by a moment of silence as though everyone had paused from his work simultaneously--a moment that had been feared by some of the mines, but a moment everyone hoped would not occur.

The temporary silence was suddenly shattered deafeningly. All pandemonium reigned. The moment of reckoning had arrived. The surging, gurgling,

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splashing of the rampant sea, bent on destruction, mingled with the cries of helpless victims caught in its fury created a fearful gruesome atmosphere. Cries of the bewildered and confused miners. Some stifled slowly, others quickly of "Run, Run," "The lake's broke in," "Help, help" seemed to be gathered up by the made water and hurled with a greater violence down the various tunnel.

The immensity of the volume of the thundering advance of the demon interspiced with the hysterical shouts and cries of the men trapped like mice in its murderous wake temporarily confused this young man. He was in this moment of severe crisis, torn between two desires with time the limiting element. He was confronted with a choice - Life if he hurried up the ladder before the onrushing wave seized and destroyed him or the extinction of life if he were to woo death in an attempt to save his father. His father seemed to realize and said, "Beat it. Goodbye."

He chose life and after he had chosen he was borne forward, powerless to resist, on the tide of the implication of his choice. He looked through his catalogue of alibis one at a time. They all leave him uneasy.

And why shouldn't he? Didn't he witness his friends dropping their lives. Didn't he have to go through life meeting and contacting the wives, mothers and daughters of those unfortunates who made the supreme sacrifice -- women with far away looks in their eyes -- looking and waiting and for what? For that which could never be theirs again. Of course, he could rationalize and say, "It was the will of fate", but what weak rationalizing that is.

It was not so much the will of fate as it was the false sense of security. When one pauses, momentarily, to consider the simple, precautionary

measures which would have positively averted that disaster, he begins to lose faith in humanity.

The lake could have been and should have been pumped out under an order from Mr. Swanson of Brainerd, then the county inspector of mines -- but such an order failed to be made. Nevertheless, the lives of forty-one miners should have received more consideration than the added expense of eliminating the hazard which eventually deprived them of their right to live.

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CROSBY BRANCH OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY

The Socialist Party made its debut on the Cuyuna Range in 1911. It was at this time that the national body of the organization sent organizers into the iron mining field to solicit membership for the party. Four organizers were assigned to operate and work on the then new Cuyuna Range. Their efforts along this line in this locality met with a fair degree of success. This success can be primarily attributed to the fact that at that time the majority of the population was of the foreign element. Many and perhaps most of the population had migrated from their native land because of adverse political, economic and social conditions. Their minds, as a result of those conditions, were inclined to be possessed by radical ideas and inclined to be receptive to the principles expounded by the representatives of the Socialist Party.

By degrees the enrolled membership grew larger and larger so that by early 1913 the total membership exceeded 600. Practically all of the underground miners of foreign descent joined the ranks of the party.

Meetings were held regularily, at first once every week, then later twice a month. Each successive meeting presented the need for a meeting place. The membership was so large that meetings had to be held in the open at the outskirts of town, in the absence of an available meeting place. This, in turn, presented the problem of contending with spies. At one of the open meetings a man of questionable character, who had previously been denied membership, was seized, but was allowed to go upon promise to never molest,

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interfere or spie upon the organization. This specific incident led to the construction of a permanent meeting place. Herman Heikenen assumed the responsibility of making the necessary arrangements. It is mainly through his effort that the "Crosby Workers' Hall was built.

Money was borrowed from the membership. Many of them contributed without remuneration. Donations were solicited and received from non-members sympathetic to the cause. In this manner about 2000 dollars was accumulated. A lot and the necessary building material was purchased with the money. During the construction of the building the members of the party donated their labor and services gratis. In Dec. 1913 the structure was completed and a gala opening, celebrating the event, took place on Christmas Day, 1913. From that day on all the labor meetings were held in the hall which has a seating capacity of 500. The erection of the hall assured the workers of the much desired privacy.

During the spring and summer of 1913, prior to the construction of the "Crosby Workers' Hall" the "Industrial Workers of the World" began to solicit membership on the Cuyuna Range. This endeavor of the "Wobblies," as the I.W.W. is generally called, was not conducive to harmony within the ranks of labor. Dissention prevailed and, amid the confusion, a split began to develop. At the same time a labor and industrial controversy arose involving two underground mines, the Mucham of Crosby and the Kennedy of Cuyuna. The Socialist leadership and organizers were quick to realize that unless they provided the necessary leadership and guidance and unless they assumed their just share of the responsibility in this controversy, that their organizational activities would fail. Consequently, they stepped into the front ranks and commenced a series of negotiations with the corporate

mine owners for a reduction in working hours and an increase in the hourly wage rate. (The miners at that time worked ten hours and sometimes 12 hours a day.) The negotiations were continued for a period of a week or so but to no advantages for the workers. A special meeting of the employees of these two mines was called and by ballot it was decided that the miners execute a complete walkout.

The strike continued for a period of about two months during which negotiations were carried on. Sometime, shortly after the second month, a compromise was reached by which the strikers were awarded a slight reduction in working hours and a nominal increase in pay. It is the opinion of one of the older residents of Crosby, Charles Syreen by name, that the strike would have been a greater success were it not for the fact that the striking miners were pressed for the essential of life, food, clothing, etc. since their credit at the stores was curtailed. They were obliged, of necessity, to come to an early compromising settlement.

Upon the heels of this strike came a short business and industrial recession which continued through part of 1913 and part of 1914 up to the beginning of the World War. During this lean period the organization began to dismember, interest waned and the branch began to disintegrate. The leaders and most active members of the strike were discriminated against and were refused employment. They were the first victims of lay offs and of the notorious "blacklist" system. With the spirit of the rank and file of the organization at a vanishing point coupled with the loss of the active members and because of the energetic organizational efforts of the I.W.W., the Socialist local began to disintegrate rapidly.

To make a bad matter worse, at a meeting of the Socialist Party in

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May, 1915, a resolution was presented whereby the organization was to be named "The Finnish Socialist Society". This resolution met with much opposition because the members of the party were of hetorogeneous nationalities. Nevertheless, when the resolution was put to a vote, it was carried because of the fact that the majority of the remaining membership were Finns.

This action, in view of the fact that at this same time the I.W.W. was growing rapidly, was not favorable to the longevity of the Socialist local. Consequently, as a result of this action, many members of the branch withdrew and became associated with the I.W.W.

This process of disintegration continued so that even the Finns began to join the I.W.W. By 1916 the membership of the local branch of the Socialist Party dwindled to some twenty members. Incidently, these remaining members of the Socialist Party were among the first to "scab" on the strikers of 1916. As a result the small Socialist group came into disrespect and scorn in the eyes of labor on the Range.

This small group continued to cling together but in 1921 the "Finnish Socialist Society" disbanded and ceased to exist.

SOCIAL BRANCH OF THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD

The national organ of the "Industrial Workers of the World" was founded in Chicago in 1905. The program and policies of this organization had been introduced to the western coast and to other industrial fields of endeavor some years sooner than to the iron ore mining industry in Minnesota. However, the "Western Federation of Miners" created the backbone of the I.W.W. and gave it many of its leaders and principles.

Prior to 1913, very little effort was made to organize the iron ore

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miners. One of the main reasons being that unskilled workers were considered to be detrimental to a labor union. Shortly before the World War, leaders of the I.W.W. began to realize that an organization embracing the unskilled workers would be an agency of tremendous help in improving and maintaining certain wage standards and in the struggle to improve working conditions.

The I.W.W. was first introduced to the iron ore workers here on the Cuyuna Range in 1913. The finances for carrying on organization work at that time were very limited, causing the first attempt to establish a local I.W.W. to fail. The Socialist Party too at this time was very strong, embracing more than 600 members. It considered the organizational efforts of the I. W.W. as an attempt to destroy and split the labor movement and gave the I.W.W. no encouragement, but instead, fought it severely. The ultimate result of this struggle between the Socialist Party and the I.W.W. coupled with the limited finances of the I.W.W. was the complete failure of the I.W.W. to establish a local branch.

For several years following 1913, the I.W.W. grew by leaps and bounds on a national scale, and in 1916 another attempt was made to organize the iron ore miners on the Cuyuna Range. This attempt proved to be successful. The apathy with which the Socialists looked upon this organization had grown to a heated tension and that, too, came to a head. The issue was presented clearly to the membership of the socialist party. There was to be no compromise. Either party was acceptable to the miners but they realized that a split would gain them nothing. Consequently, because of the energetic organizational activities of the Industrial Workers of the World, the members of the Socialist Party began to severe connections with that body and to associate themselves

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with the I. W.W. This trend continued for a time so that by the early fall of 1916 the I.W.W. membership exceeded the 600 mark. This left the Socialists in a crippled state of affairs.

The I.W.W. was composed of men of various nationalities, but the Finns and the Slavs were by far in the majority although the Finns dominated the organization and they do so even to this day. Organizational control never was a problem; instead the membership accepted, in good faith, the democratic principles advanced by the organization.

In 1916 the miners on the range began to rebel against the speed-up system under their contract work and began to feel that a demand for increased wages was necessary. The demand expressed itself in the form of a strike in which all of the Cuyuna Range underground mines ceased production simultaneously, under the guidance and direction of the I.W.W. Picket lines were set up near all the mines and the efforts to break the strike by force failed. The mining companies did hire thugs to break the strike, but to no avail. Several incidents of hostility occurred in which no one was seriously hurt. In one case one of the active organizers was kidnapped by a group of thugs and taken about four miles out of town. Here he was beaten into unconsciousness, whiskey was poured over his clothing, overshoes and gloves removed, and then left to perish in the cold of the wintry night so as to make it appear that he died because of alcoholic intoxication. Fortunately for him, he regained consciousness, built a fire and after he had expelled the chills from his body he walked into town. Investigations were started immediately but to no avail. He was unable to identify any of his assailants and the case came to a close. The writer was unable to learn his name.

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In another case the thugs kidnapped an active member, Maurice Palm by name, who was mistaken for an organizer. He was held in captivity and severely beaten. One George Payne, who is still a resident of Crosby, was brought to trial and convicted of the assault and battery charge.

In spite of the obstacles that arose during the strike, the efforts of the strikers brought a fair measure of success. There was an increase in wages, an improvement of working conditions, recognition by the companies of union job stewards and the companies also agreed to work in cooperation with the grievance committees.

However, the companies were not satisfied with the organization and its activities. In their desire to defeat labor organization and its purposes and objectives an active campaign with all its machinery was launched. Labor spies were hired, active leaders and members discharged and refused employment and the blacklist system was inaugurated with renewed vigor and devastating results to the organization.

During the periods before and after the entrance of the United States into the World War, the I.W.W. took a militant stand in opposition to those who advocated and propagated the idea that the United States should enter. It was the belief of the I.W.W. that the war was a commercial one and that the United States should stay clear of the conflict. This caused the organization to lose much prestige nationally as well as locally. As a matter of fact, public opinion grew to such an extent that in the city of Chicago, 166 I.W.W. organizers were convicted and sent to prison on the ground that they were sabotaging the government in the emergency. In Crosby several organizers were arrested but were permitted to go scot free because of the lack of evid-

ence. These incidents had retarding and damaging effects on the growth of the organization in Crosby. Many of the members found it to be to their advantage to severe all connections with the I.W.W. as the "blacklist" system coupled with the hostile public sentiment made it increasingly difficult for individual members to obtain work.

The effects of the war and of the notorious "blacklist" left the organization without capable and responsible leadership. The costly court trials left the national treasury of the I.W.W. in the red. As a result the national organ began to dwindle and slip into the background of the American labor movement. Locally the membership began to lose faith in the organization because of the still existant prosecutions by public opinion. As early as 1919 the membership of the I.W.W. local branch dropped from over 600 to approximately 400.

In 1921 on May day, though the local branch of the I.W.W. was in its stage of decay, an incident of interest happened. A 24 hour strike was called by the I.W.W. and practically all of the miners on the Cuyuna Range responded to the call by ceasing production on that day. It was merely a demonstration protesting, mainly, the imprisonment of Tom Mooney, California labor leader, and other political and industrial prisoners or "class war" prisoners as members of the I.W.W. express it.

Since 1921 the membership of the I.W.W. local slowly and steadily decreased so that today there are only 11 or 12 members in the organization. Since that time some have died, others moved to other localities. Some became associated with the Farmer-Labor party. Some were absorbed by the local branch of the Communist party and more recently many of them became

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affiliated with the C.I.O.

Today, the few remaining members still valiently uphold the principles of industrial unionism as advanced by the I.W.W. As an active union it does not function but they give programs and other benefit events in support of and in behalf of "class war" prisoners. The main purpose of the organization, it seems, is to lend support to the Finnish newspaper located in Duluth, "The Industrialist," an I.W.W. organizer. The local membership solicits subscriptions and advertising ads for the paper and helps financially by holding benefit dances, parties, etc.

The "Work People's College" in Duluth, an I.W.W. school, also receives active moral and financial support from the I.W.W. local.

The local branch has abandoned the idea of rebuilding its union, having been replaced by the C.I.O., and functions only when staging benefit social activities.

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Submitted by: Paul Lekatz
Date: Nov. 15, 1938.

THE FINNS IN MINNESOTA

Racial Background

From where did the Finn originally come? To whom are they related? These are legitimate questions that enter the mind of those interested in the study of the Finn and particularly the American Finn.

With the Swedes on the west, with the Lapps on the north and the Russians on the east, it is a difficult problem to determine the real origin of the Finn. There are several schools of thought on that particular issue. Anthropologists, believing physical traits the most reliable basis, trace a West-European origin. Geographers and geologists stress the Finno-Scandia classification. Archaeologists believe that the lower Volga district is the original, primary seat of origin. Ethnographers do not commit themselves but follow a middle course among these various theories. However, the most widely accepted belief or theory is that the Finns belong to the linguistic if not racial group of languages known as the Finno-Ugric. first advanced by the Finnish ethnologist, Mathias A. Castren. Recent research and studies argue that the original abode of the Finnish race was not on the Altai Mountains in Asia, as formerly believed, but somewhere along the middle of the Volga.

The Finns undoubtedly have been in contact with the Teutons, the Slavs, Swedes and Russians for centuries so it is reasonable to believe that the modern Finnish race does not represent any pure racial stock but a mixture of Scandinavian, German and Slavic blood. These recent studies have

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succeeded to a great extent to disrupt the theory that the Finns and Mongolians are related. Incidently, it is extremely offensive to the Finn for anyone to link him along racial lines to the Mongolian. The Finns are determined that they are to be considered not Scandinanvian, not Slavs, least of all Mongols, but Finns, a western and not eastern people.

The Finns call themselves, in their native tongue, "Suomalaiset," the people of the marshes. The word "suomi" appears to be derived from "suo," a marsh and "maa," land seems to indicate that Finland means "the land of marshes."

The words "Finn" and "Finnish" cannot be applied strictly and solely to the inhabitants of Finland but also to similar tribes found in Russia. But since we are concerned with Finland proper, they shall be construed to apply to the Finns proper which may be grouped into two main divisions; the "Hamalaiset" or Tavasts who occupy the southern and western parts of Finland, and the Karjalaiset or Karelians, who occupy the eastern and northern parts. These main divisions have numerous subdivisions but they are purely dialectic and of no great difference.

Finish Characteristics

The Finnish people possess many physical and mental characteristics with which many of us are not familiar. The popular consensus of opinion among us as regards the physical stature and characteristics of the Finns is that as expressed by the "Encyclopaedia Britannica," a strong, hardy race, of low stature, etc.--complexion also somewhat brown." As regards the physical stature as expressed by the "Britannica" Prof R. Tigerstedt has presented evidence proving this conception of the Finns to be false. According to his study the Finns are not of low stature but belong to the tallest group of

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Europeans. According to the Finnish official publication, "the people of Finland are strong and comparatively tall." It also states, "the majority are fair--about 78% of the people are blue eyed and about 57% are light haired. This, surely disputes "Britannica's" statement as to complexion.

"Britannica" also reputes the Finns to be, "morally upright, hospitable, faithful, and submissive with a keen sense of personal freedom and independence." Most of the Finnish writers seem to agree in that respect.

The Finnish sense of freedom and independence can best be realized and understood by a study of Finnish history. For centuries the Finns were involved in a continuous series of wars and battle to free themselves of Swedish influence and domination and particularly of Russian intolerance, oppression and reaction which finally culminated in the establishment of the Finnish republic in 1917. These political conditions are of primary importance since they formed the background for the large immigration of Finns into the U.S. since 1899.

Immigration

Fairchild in his book on Immigration divides the causes for immigration into two divisions--the natural and unnatural causes. Among the natural he names the inferiority of economic conditions in the country from which he comes as compared to the conditions in the U.S. Under the unnatural causes he lists the religious and political causes. The later were the main causes of Finnish immigration.

The first cause for the immigration of the First Finns into the U.S. was the economic superiority of the U.S. to that of Finland. In the U.S. the wages were considerably higher and jobs much more plentiful.

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The second cause for immigration was the compulsory military service law which was enacted in 1878. This may lead the reader to believe that the Finn is a coward. That, however, is not the case. On the contrary, the Finn has proved himself to be a brave warrior. But years of constant warfare and bloodshed instilled in the Finn a dread of war and the desire for peace. Indeed, the Finn is not a coward but rather than submit to the Russian policy of compulsory military drill, many of them left their homes.

The third cause, and perhaps the most important and significant, made its appearance in 1899. It was in 1899 that Czar Nikolas II declared his "February Manifesto" against Finland. By this proclamation Finland became the unfortunate victim of Russian Russification by which most, if not all, of the civil and personal liberties of the Finns were removed. Rather than suffer the consequences of this policy, many Finns migrated to the U.S. Wargelin in his book, "The Americanization of the Finns" states that "immigration increased about 400% in 1899 until it had risen to about 700% in 1902 from that of 1899."

Another major reason is the restless dissatisfied mind and spirit of the younger Finns. Many of them did not come into the U.S. because of economic, political or financial reasons but because of the desire to wander and seek adventure. This cause can be said to exist in the nature and character of the Finns. They are active, daring and enterprising. They became fortune hunters. They were found early as sailors and fishermen on the coast of Norway. It is even the popular contention among many Finns that certain members of Leif Erickson's crew, on his expedition to America, were Finns.

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Another important factor is the large number of Finnish immigrants who return to Finland for a permanent or temporary stay. They spread the knowledge of American superiority, of better wages to everyone interested. Then again, the letters of Finns in the U.S. to their countrymen serve the same purpose. Many of these letters were accompanied by transportation tickets, or money with which to purchase one, for a brother, relative or a friend.

The first authentic arrival of Finns in America occurred in 1639 when they arrived with a group of Swedes to colonize Delaware. It is rumored that these early Finns were, in all probability, slaves and servants to the Swedes.

During the California gold rush in 1850, two hundred Finns settled on that coast. About 1855, during the Crimean War, many of the Finnish sailors, who sailed for Russia at the time, remained in America. During the Civil War when the U.S. needed sailors, about a hundred Finns entered the U.S. naval service.

Finnish immigration began on a larger scale in 1864 when the Quincy Mining Company of Hancock, Michigan engaged the services of some Norwegians along with many of the Finns who resided in Norway at the time. Some of these early arrivers did not engage themselves in the mining business for long, for we find that some of them left the mining field to push westward into Minnesota where they settled between 1864 and 1865 in Franklin, Holmes City and Cokato. That, most likely, was the first arrival of Finns into Minnesota.

It can be said that the early immigration of Finns was slow, sluggish and undertermined with a sharp increase during the early nineties

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and a still greater rise in 1899 through 1902, when, apparently, a climax was reached. From there immigration dropped considerably. The following is a table on Finnish immigration as extracted from Wargelin's "Americanization of the Finns."

Between 1871-75 about 224 immigrants from Finland.
" 1876-80 " 220 " " "
" 1881-85 "3,717 " " "
" 1886-90 "21,968 " " "

And then, the number of immigrants between 1893 and 1902, inclusive.

Year	Number
1893	9,117
1894	1,380
1895	4,020
1896	5,185
1897	1,916
1898	3,467
1899	12,075
1900	10,397
1901	12,561
1902	23,152

According to statistics compiled by S. Ilmonen in "Kirkollinen Kalenteri" there was in 1922 a total of 352,550 Finns and American born Finns in the U.S., including Alaska. This may not agree with the U.S. census reports, due to the fact that clear records have not been previously kept. There exists a discrepancy between the U.S. Census reports and the official reports of Finland.

Distribution

Of all the Finns in the U.S. the greater portion of them are found to be residing in the northern states. Of their total 74 1/7% of the Finns in the U.S. reside in eight northern states, namely: Michigan, Minnesota, Massachusetts, New York, Washington, Ohio, Wisconsin and Oregon. In Minnesota alone there are approximately 64,000 Finns, according to S. Ilmonen in

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"Kirkollinen Kalenteri."

Why did the Finns settle in the northern part of the U.S.? This can be accounted for easily. First, but perhaps not the most important reason, the similarity of climatic conditions and similarity of topography to that of Finland. Second, and by far the most important reason, the immigrant naturally seeks employment in the industrial sections and more particularily in industries where the demand for unskilled labor is great. Such was the case in the copper country of Michigan where the Finns were first induced to settle by the Quincy Mining Company. From the copper country we find many Finns moving into Wisconsin. Later they were found to be coming in large numbers to the Minnesota iron district, the Gegebic Range. Later they were found moving southward onto the Cuyuna iron range after the opening of the first mine in 1911.

The writer does not mean to imply that prior to 1911 there were no Finns in Crow Wing county. It is an established fact that as early as 1873 there were Finns residing in Brainerd, the county seat and in Deerwood. Both Deerwood and Brainerd were born with the construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad from Duluth to Brainerd in 1871. These early Finns were lured into Crow Wing county by the railroad company since there was a shortage of labor at the time and because the Finns were reputed to be good workers. Upon completion of the railroad they occupied themselves otherwise. Some entered the then prosperous logging, timbering and paper industry. Some took up farming. Later, upon the opening and development of mining in Crosby, Ironton and Cuyuna, we find another influx of people coming into the county which increased and kept in step with the development of mining. A great portion of these people that came with the open-

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ing of the mine were Finns. Today the Finns in Crow Wing county number over 1,150 or about 4.5% of the total county population and about 9% of the foreign white stock.

Of the total number of Finns in Crow Wing County 576 reside in Crosby. There are 123 families and 111 Finnish owned homes in Crosby. Few of the Finns are tenants.

Immigration Journey

Perhaps we should, at this time, follow the typical Finn from his homeland to the U.S. Mr. Charles Makie of Crosby, Minnesota through his experiences and adventures on his journey from Finland to the U. S. presents a picture of the typical Finnish immigrant.

Charlie, as he is popularily known, was born and reared on a farm about four hours walking distance from Hanga, a seaport village on the North Sea. He was the second oldest son of a family of eleven--seven boys and four sisters.

To rear a family of that size was a problem of severe dimensions. Consequently, at the age of fifteen, Isaac, Charlie's brother left home to work as a dock hand in Hanga. There he toiled for three years, helping the family and at the same time saving money with which he journeyed to America, the land of promise.

On Charlie's eighteenth birthday, June 17, 1908, he received a letter from his brother, Isaac, who worked in the gold mines in Hancock, Michigan. The letter described America as a land of superb opportunity, a land of fortune. Plenty of jobs and big pay. It also described, to some extent, the similarity of Michigan to Finland--the long, cold winters, the forests, the lakes, etc. The letter concluded something like this, "Charlie, I am sending you some money with which you can come to America if you wish. If not, give it to

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father. He needs it. Charlie, do come. Your future will be secure. It is not necessary that you die here. You can work with me for a few years and then, we can go home together."

The appeal of the letter was too great for Charlie to resist. He immediately made plans and preparations for the new, exciting adventure.

He donned the families best wearing apparel. His mother gave him the best socks, and best shoes, and father's best trousers. The personal possessions he placed in a small sack along with a new cake of cheese, a loaf of rye bread and some cold meat.

Amid tears, laughter, hugs and kisses, words of advice and caution, Charlie left his happy home.

In Hanga he purchased his transportation ticket for 360 marks or the equivalent of 90 dollars and made all the necessary arrangements. He boarded a small tramp freighter that plied between England and Finland. In London he was confronted by the English immigration authorities. There he was besieged by a barrage of questions and gesticulations he could not understand. Thereupon the official reached into Charlie's pocket and helped himself to his passport and other credentials. The official, satisfied that everything was in order, wrote on a card and pinned it on Charlie's chest, at the same time slapping him on the back and saying,"Good boy. Good boy." Later Charlie learned that upon the card was written his destination for the benefit of railroad and steamship employees. He also learned the meaning of the expression, "Good boy." He uses it today when pleased about anything.

From London he journeyed by rail to Liverpool. At Liverpool he boarded another freighter as a third class passenger--destination New York.

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The sea voyage is one that Charlie shall never forget. After the second day at sea, he began to become ill which seemed to turn for the worse with each passing day. He desired privacy, but had none. His cabin was occupied by eight others who felt as badly as he did. The evil stench and odor created by nine sick people gagged him. For seven days he ate nothing and slept little. However, he managed to live through it, although he had his doubts about it, and arrived in New York City on June 30, 1908.

Occupations

Here again, Charlie was confronted by immigration officials (pesky people, Charlie thinks). Imagine his surprise and joy when he discovered that one of them spoke Finnish. To this day Charlie lists that moment among his happiest in his life.

From New York, with the aid of a tag or label on his chest, he progressed by painful degrees and with no little difficulty to Cleveland, Chicago and finally Hancock, Michigan. His long, tedious journey came to a very much welcomed end.

After several days of almost constant joy, conversation and rejoicing, Charlie went to work. He was employed as a timberman for three years. From the mines he moved into the timber industry where he worked for two years. From Michigan he moved to the Mesabi Range in Minnesota where he received employment as a brakeman with the Winston Brother's Company. By hard, diligent work he advanced to locomotive fireman and finally to a locomotive engineer.

In 1917 he moved to the Cuyuna Range where he has been employed almost constantly.

It is a matter of fact that other Finns have traveled as Charles

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did. Moving from Finland to the U.S. to Michigan, Minnesota and other industrial sections.

Occupational Distribution

The Finns of Crosby, with a few exceptions, are found to be engaged in menial occupations. This does not mean that they lack capacity, ability or aptitude for skilled or technical services. J. H. Jasberg, a Finnish humorist, says that when the Finn arrives in America he does not seek to peddle buttons and needles, nor sell bananas on our city streets, but seeks for the hardiest job and biggest pay.

During normal periods of mining production, practically all the male Finns of employable age in Crosby are employed in the mines. The Finn has no difficulty in getting a job in the mines. He is recognized as an industrious and hard worker and is known as a miner of the first rank. In efficiency, he is reputed to be "tops." Because of the proficiency with the axe and log, he is among the best as a timberman in the underground mines. Some of the Finns possess considerable mechanical and technical aptitude and skill. The writer has had occasion several times to hear comments passed by the manager and superintendent of the Evergreen Mines Co. in Crosby, as regards the efficiency of two Finnish locomotive engineers, Charles Maki and Nestor Kivi. The remark, expressed colloquially is "The best "hoggers" on the range." And again, there is the case of Mr. Kangas, a mining engineer employed by the Evergreen Mining Co. He is a man of Finnish descent who learned his difficult trade through a correspondence course. He is recognized as a very good engineer.

Mr. Isaac Talvitie, of Crosby, sets a good example as an enterprising Finn. Shortly after his arrival to Crosby in 1917, he found employment in a

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shoe repair shop. Three months later he purchased the business and today he has the largest, best equipped shoe shop on the Range. He is, at present, a member of the board of directors of the Crosby Cooperative Store.

Mr. Kivisto, an employee of the Pickands Mathers Mining Co. is employed as a blacksmith. He is popularily recognized as one of the best. His oldest son, John, has a responsible position with the same concern. He is intrusted with the operation of an expensive electric shovel used in the mining of iron are in the Maknomen open pit mine.

Miss Lussa Kangas, not related to the engineer, spends her leisure moments writing plays, stories and poems a few of which have been published in several Finnish publications.

These few people of Finnish extraction surely prove that the Finns have the inherent, natural capacities, apitudes and intelligence along mechanical, professional and literary lives.

The Finns, like so many other people, have suffered the effects of our industrial and economic recession. The mines, at present, are not operating; logging is extinct. They, too, like many others have had to seek employment elsewhere. Today we find all of the Finns in Crosby, with a few exceptions, dependent upon the government for a means of livelihood. The WPA seems to be the only alternative and it has coped with the situation fairly well. Nevertheless the Finns are not at all pleased with the prospect of being continually confronted with the unpleasant realization that they are receiving alms, so to speak. They desire to be able to have a real job, to produce, to contribute to the wealth of the nation. Their pride is hurt but they are compelled of necessity, of a sense of responsibility and dog-eddness to grasp the only immediate opportunity of livelihood. That,

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incidently, can be applied to many other people in the U.S. and should not be restricted to apply only to Finns.

Over 50% of the Finns have come from agricultural life so it is not uncommon to find Finns in farm life in the vicinity of Crosby. Among the Finns it seems to be a general desire to own a farm. All of the Finnish farm owners in this immediate vicinity have labored in the iron ore mines until he had saved enough to purchase a piece of land to take up his cherished occupation. Some of them continued mining at the same time. At present we have in this vicinity about a dozen Finnish farmers. The largest farm extends over an area of 160 acres, owned by Edward Hill. He has, during this depression, developed a thriving dairy business.

At present there are ten Finns employed by the Inland Steel Mining Company of Ironton, Minnesota. That, for the time being seems to be the total extent of the Finns employed as miners. These miners are engaged in the form of iron ore, from the deep bowels of the earth, a job that is quite safe but not completely void of danger. But miners are a brave lot because they toil under dangerous conditions where death stalks close at hand, never imminent, but always close at hand, nevertheless. They get accustomed to being brave without knowing how brave they are and their work developes in them a reckless, fearless, fantastic spirit that makes them seem aggressive and seemingly formidable. It is this spirit, probably, that cost the lives of forty-four miners in the Milford Mine disaster of 1934.

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List of the sources of information

1. Finland, the New Nation by Agner Rothery
2. Immigrant Races in North America by Peter Roberts
3. Americanization of the Finns by John Wargelin
4. "Kirkallinen Kalenteri by S. Ilmonen

Interviews with

1. Charles Maki, Crosby, Minnesota.
2. Nestor Kivi, Crosby, Minnesota.
3. Maurice Erkila, Crosby, Minnesota.
4. Aino Vartiainen, Editor "Paivalehti", Duluth, Minn.
5. Mrs. Jokinin, Cuyuna
6. Walfrid Jokinen, Worker's Socialist Publishing Company of Duluth, Minnesota.
7. Vaino Konga, Minnesota Ave., Duluth, Minn.
8. Mr. Kuski, Deerwood, Minn.
9. Lusa Kangas, Crosby, Minn.
10. John Martinson, Crosby, Minnesota.
11. Frank Enqman, Deerwood, Minnesota.
12. Einio Niemala, Crosby Workers Store, Crosby, Minnesota.

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CROSBY COOPERATIVES

The cooperative movement entered the Cuyuna Range rather slowly and by installments. It was not until after dire need, want, necessity and lack of credit confronted the workers and miners, that they realized the advantages to be gained by the establishment of a permanent cooperative.

The first attempt to establish a workers' cooperative retail store in Crosby occurred in 1913. It was at this time, during a small labor strike affecting two mines, the Kennedy mine of Cuyuna and the Muckam mine of Crosby, that the workers were confronted with the severe problem of obtaining food and clothing for their families. Incidently, this strike was of a short duration, only three months, and was instigated by the local branch of the Socialist party, of which many of the miners were member. The strikers were regarded by the local independent merchants and retailers as radicals, as undesirables and as slackers. As the strike continued, with little hope of an immediate settlement, and as the strikers' supply of cash money vanished, these merchants proceeded to place their business on a strict cash and carry basis. Consequently most of the strikers found themselves in a desperate predicament. (In those times the miners saved very little, but spent their earnings from month to month.) However, these men that possessed the courage to defy their employers (we had no Wagner Labor Act at that time) possessed the courage to cope with this situation. The strikers, faced with their struggle with the mining companies on one side, and the curtailment of credit on the other, were forced, of necessity, to do something constructive to

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alleviate their sorry plight. It was under the leadership and guidance of Gus Jutenberg that the first cooperative was organized. He, with the assistance of a group of aides, proceeded to sell shares at five dollars per share. With the several hundred dollars thus accumulated, a small, one room, frame structure was erected, which they stocked with merchandise. The store did quite well, being dependent, however, on the miners who were employed. This store was not destined to remain in business for long. Shortly after the settlement of the strike and the return of prosperous, industrial conditions, the store closed its doors. It had served its immediate purpose to help the strikers survive the period of the strike dispute. That was the first attemtp to establish a cooperative in Crosby.

Again, in 1916, a second cooperative store made its appearance. The cause for the rebirth of the cooperative movement was the reappearance of conditions similar to that of 1913. It was in 1916 that a general strike involving all of the underground mines on the Cuyuna Range was instigated by the local branch of the Industrial Workers of the World, whose local membership at that time was in excess of 500 members and many more sympathizers. The purpose of the strike was identical to the objectives of present day labor disputes--the securing of a higher wage and better working conditions. Again, as in 1913, the strikers were caught between two fires--the strike on the one side and the discrimination and curtailment of credit on the other. This time, however, the strike assumed larger proportions--all of the mines were involved. The predicament of the strikers, this time, was much more severe. Again the miners pooled their available resources and established the "Crosby Workers Store" in an effort to help them survive the effect of the industrial struggle.

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Fortunately, the strike was a short one enduring for a period of only four months. Had the strike continued for a longer period of time, the cooperative movement would probably have been terminated at that time. Nevertheless, the strike did have its retarding effects upon the cooperative. Upon settlement of the strike many of the mines and coop leaders were obliged to leave the Cuyuna Range. The mining companies, in an effort to rid the Range of labor troubles, refused to rehire these leaders because of their intense and sincere activities in the strikes, in the organization of the radical Socialist Party and the Industrial Workers of the World. These men, however, comprised the backbone of the coop movement and upon their desertion, of necessity, the store started on the road to decline and dismemberment.

In 1919 an effort to rejuvenate and salvage the remains of the coop was launched by a group of Finns. Most active amongst them were Charles Siren, Adam Soari, Issaac Jaskari and Alexander Polso. They realized that unless the cooperative was reorganized, rebuilt and expanded, it was doomed to dismal failure and total dismemberment. They launched an educational campaign by issuing and distributing leaflets and pamphlets printed in Finnish in an effort to bring to the people the real advantageous gains of a cooperative. The almost immediate response was startling. Sales of shares increased tremendously and most of the Finns began to patronize the cooperative store which was christianed "The Crosby Workers Cooperative."

By degrees the coop store grew larger and financially stronger and in 1925 a large store building located on the main street was purchased for the sum of $5,985. The old store building was sold and the proceeds used toward the purchase of the new structure.

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On July 25th, 1932, at a meeting of the stockholders held in the Crosby Workers' Hall, it was voted that the Crosby Workers' Cooperative be incorporated for a period of thirty years under the new name, "The Crosby Workers' Cooperative Association."

The first officers of the newly formed association were: Adam Saari, President; Issaac Jaskaai, Vice-president; Herman Karby, Secretary; Alexander Polso, treasurer.

The management of the association is vested in a board of eleven directors who are members of the association and who are elected by ballot at the annual meetings of the association. The board of directors elects the officers. The first board of directors were: Adam Saari, Isaac Jaskari, Herman Karby, Alexander Polso, Charles Mattson, George Kaski, Matt Kunnari, Gust Gunderson, Henry Maki, John Jetenberg and Elias Mattson. All of these were instrumental in the organization of the original Crosby Workers' Store and in its advancement and progress through the following years.

The present board of directors are Finnish, namely: Leo Alholm, President, Carl Reko, Secretary; Charles Siien, Treasurer; August Mikkela, Vice-president; Emi Maki; Isaac Talvitii; Charles Kentala; John Syria; Emil Saari; Victor Saari; Emil H. Maki.

The capital stock of the association is $15,000 and is divided into 1500 shares at $10.00 per share, and no individual stockholders is permitted to own more than 20 shares. Interest on shares is non-cumulative and is never in excess of eight percent, although it is frequently less, depending entirely upon the net profit of the business at the termination of the fiscal period, which in this case is from Jan. 11 to Dec. 31. The net income of the association is distributed amongst the patrons on the basis of patronage; that is,

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the more one purchases at the coop the greater is his share of the profits or discount. It is not necessary that the patron be a shareholder in the association to share, annually, in the profits in proportion to his purchases. A small percentage of the net income is set aside annually as a reserve fund to be used in the event of a crisis and in such an event, should the need present itself, this reserve fund is made available, by a vote of the shareholders, for distribution among the members. No one stock or shareholder is entitled to more than one vote, irrespective of the numbers of shares he may own. Each member of the association shares in the profits, but at the same time assumes a liability risk which is fixed on the value of each share.

For the past few years, the Crosby Workers' Cooperative Association had the largest overturn of goods and the largest volume of business as compared to the private, individual enterprises. For 1936, its net sales amounted to $80,588.52. The net income, aside from the reserve fund, was $2,311.78 all of which was distributed back to the patrons in the form of a discount based, of course, on the patron's purchases for that particular year. The present manager Eino Niemala, recently stated that the sales for 1937 neared the $100,000 mark.

The notable point of the Crosby Workers' Cooperative Association is its success. This success can be attributed, mainly, to the activity of the Finns for they had experienced, to a very great extent, the advantages of cooperatives in Finland. Finland is often referred to as the "land of cooperatives." The Finns, in their struggle to meet the cost of living during the periods of industrial strife on the Cuyuna Range, early saw the necessity of helping one another and early approved of the principle that profit should not be used for individual speculation but for the maintenance of the

common good. It was, undoubtedly, this feeling and desire for the social improvement of the workers, on the part of the Finns, that the Crosby Workers' Cooperative Association is what it is today.

RM

SILICOSIS

In addition to admitted factors of dry-drilling, poor ventilation and blasting causing silicosis, many miners feel that the speed-up and use of tuggers to transport ore is also a cause of silicosis. The harder the miners have to work, the harder they have to 'suck for wind', as they commonly put it. With this larger amount of air passing through their lungs, there is more silica and iron dust lodged in the lung tissue. Also in some mines the foreman insists on the miners going back into their work places shortly after blasting, before the smoke and dust have had time to clear away. It is natural that the dust content of the air is much higher immediately after blasting and so the mining companies great hunger for 'dirt', rides roughshod over any consideration of safety and health measures. "Get the dirt out, boys," is usually the order from the foreman five to ten minutes after the blast.

A year ago I was often sent back into our work place when the smoke was 'hot', that is, the acid content of the air was high, causing irritation of the mucous membranes of the nose and throat, which causes violent fits of sneezing and coughing and often vomiting. Under such working conditions, I can well believe Mr. Morris Greenberg when he stated that 75% of the underground miners who have worked 15 to 25 years in the mines have contracted silicosis.

The modern high speed, double-drum tuggers and pulling scrapers long distances stir up much dust. The cables winding and unwinding on the drums throws the dust almost directly into the face of the operator.I do not believe any tests have been made at any time on the dust content of the air immediately surrounding the operation of tuggers.

Hand-Book of Labor Statistics, 1936 Edition, Bulletin No. 616, page 345, says:

'attention is also called to the attitude of some employers, who deny the existence of any dust disease among their employees, and of the miners themselves, who frequently oppose all attempts at physical examination or the use of any remedial equipment or methods. It is claimed that there appears in many instances a concerted effort to hide facts.'

It is true that the miners refuse physical examinations but mainly in fear that they will be found suffering from 'miner's consumption' and summarily laid off. There are many cases of lay-offs immediately after physical examinations with no explanations. The miners refuse to allow their names to be mentioned in fear of further oppression by the companies.

As to the use of remedial equipment and methods, the miners were told merely to use this equipment but no reasons were given. As this made work slower, the miners usually discarded the suggestion. If an educational campaign had been carried on undoubtedly the miners would have used all precautions to prevent silicosis.

The following are brief case-histories of silicosis cases on the range. In most cases I am not allowed to give names because the family fears black-listing by the companies.

Mr. A.

Mr. A., Eveleth, died of silicosis in 1930. He was laid off one and a half to two years before death, after one of the company's medical examinations and told he need never apply for a job at the Oliver. Worked 28-29 years for the Oliver Iron Mining Company, of which the last ten years was spent raise mining. Dr. Burns of Two Harbors first discovered silicosis and told Mrs. A. that her husband should get the best of care as he did not have very long to live. Dr. Laird of Nopeming showed the plates of Mr. A. to Mrs. A. and a friend of Eveleth. After his death he performed and autopsy and told another friend (who is still at Nopeming according to latest reports) that it was a miracle how any man with that much dust in his lungs could live. Shortly after his death, Mrs.A. asked a lawyer in Eveleth if she couldn't collect compensation from the company. The lawyer stated that she couldn't collect on a case like that as it was a natural death due to hard work and that all people who work too hard must die. She wants to push this case so as to help save the lives of the miners now employed. She says if the company had used precautionary methods her husband would be alive.

Mr. B.

Mr. B. of Eveleth died of tuberculosis in 1928. Widow believes husband died of silicosis as he worked as Mr. A's partner.

Mr. C.

Dr. Burkland of the Ruud Hospital of Hibbing first examined

Mr. C. of Keewatin and told him he had iron dust in his lungs. Dr. Bouchard of Hibbing confirmed this and he was sent to a clinic. Two years later Dr. Harris of the Adams Hospital of Hibbing x-rayed his lungs and told him he had a few months left to live. The state tuberculosis clinic examined him and said his lungs were all right; no x-rays taken. Mr. C. worked for Hannah Mining Company, the National Steel and Iron Company and at the Mississippi Mine at Keewatin. This mine was very dusty because of poor ventilation. Miners had to push timber up an incline causing miners to gasp for breath.

Mr. D.

Mr. D. is now at the Nopeming sanitorium suffering from silicosis. Mr. D. receives $4o. a month under the Carnegie plan. Family refuses to take any action as company has been so good to them.

Julius Mutabyia

Julius Mutabyia, Keewatin, Box 314. This man worked at the Sargent mine in Keewatin for 7-8 years. Laid off April 20, 1935. Hired Lommen of Eveleth for an attorney, who settled the case out of court for $750 and took $350. in lawyer's fees. Has a complete record of medical examinations and correspondence with Lommen. Dr. Barton of the Duluth Clinic gave him an affidavit proving he had silicosis which he turned over to Lommen who kept it. When Julius tried to get another one the doctor refused and said he wasn't giving anymore affidavits to anyone but Lommen. Also had an injured back but that matter was not settled.

Mr. E.

Mr. E. died of silicosis in 1937 at the age of 34. Was a raise miner for many years. The foreman at the mine where Mr. E. had worked told some of the men that Mr. E. died because he worked too much as a raise miner in rock. Mr. E's mother has affidavits of doctors in possession claiming her son died of silicosis and tuberculosis. Also has the promise of testimony of five doctors at Nopeming. When Mr. E. went to the Duluth Clinic his case was diagnosed as pneumonia. He was sent to St. Marys Hospital in Duluth where he was placed in the tuberculosis ward. Mr. Lommen when consulted conerning compensation stated that the case was very weak.

Silicosis information was obtained from Mr. George Peterson and Mr. Greenberg of Eveleth., Tony Mudrovich, Mike Lukich of Keewatin, William wallin, John Korpi of Gilbert and also from personal experience as a miner.

I received information on the Gilbert Workmen's Society from interviews with the following persons: Nestor Vuori, Hilma Torma, Ivar Torma, Victor Aho, William Wallin, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Sorilla, Mrs. Sulo Kallin, allof Gilbert, and also from the minutes of the Socialist party for the years of 1912-13-14 and 15.

Gilbert, Minnesota.

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THE FINNS IN MINNESOTA

Gilbert is a town with a population of 2,334. Originally it was a mining camp, today there are no mines working. This is due to the fact that all the mines are private property and the companies prefer to work out the leased state-owned mines in the neighboring towns of Virginia and Eveleth. There are three underground mines and three open-pits in and around Gilbert which contain a good merchantable ore but have not been worked to any extent.

Only a few miners travel to Eveleth or Virginia to work in the mines. The bulk of the people in Gilbert earn their living on WPA or working for the Village of Gilbert, the school district, county or state. Seven hundred and sixty-three people are classified as unemployed in this town.

In Gilbert there are 423 Finnish people comprising 120 families. The Finns are 18% of the total population of Gilbert and the average size of the family is 3.5 persons.

Sparta 'location' located about 1½ miles from Gilbert could be called the parent of Gilbert. Most of the early settlers of Gilbert owned homes in Sparta but through trickery and fraud the Oliver Iron Mining Company was able to get the people to move to the present site of Gilbert. Only a very few families stayed. Recently since the Oliver Iron Mining Co. and the Republic Iron Mining Co. moved their "locations" away from Gilbert, the Sparta "location" began to grow. Today the population is 417 of which 333 are of Finnish extraction (or 79%). There were 83 Finnish families whose average size is 4 persons per family. Of these 333 Finnish people, 214 are

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native born whereas in Gilbert there are 217 native born Finns.

Since 1911 there have been graduated from Gilbert High School, 1,444 graduates, 383 of these are Finns or 26%. For the last 15 years for which I was able to get figures, 9 of the 15 valedictorians or 60% are Finns; Salutorians 7 our of 15 or 46%, and of the Honor Students 20 out of 46 or 43% were Finns.

This to me indicates that the Students of Finnish extraction are more serious in securing an education. I don't believe that it is any indication of superior intelligence.

Jack Hill
Gilbert, Minn. R.F.D.
November 3, 1938.

Jack Hill, informant, was born May 12, 1881 at Haapavesi, Oulun Laani, Finland. Haapavesi is a farming community and had a creamery and an agricultural school. The soil was very poor and therefore the farms were larger in proportion to farms in other parts of Finland.

Mr. Hill's parents owned land valued at one-eighth mantali, and it was approximately 120 acres according to American measurements. They had eight cows and sold cream to the creamery. Machinery was unknown on most of the farms and all work was done by human labor. Hay was cut and raked by hand and carried with a sling to the hay-lofts and stacks. Grain was cut with a sickle. Most grain was also threshed by hand. The bundles were placed with the grain ends together on the floor of the luuri[1] and

1. Luuri is the building in which the threshing is done.

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the men would beat the grain with vartas.[2] Rye was threshed by pounding the bundles against the walls of the luuri.

Kernels were separated from the chaff by throwing a hand-full across the room; the heavier grains would land against the wall and the chaff would go only part way.

Before threshing began the bundles of grain would be dried very thoroughly in a specially constructed drying room heated by a large stove.

Potatoes were planted, cultivated and harvested by hand. Only enough was raised for consumption on the farm as this required a tremendous amount of human labor.

In Haapavesi pitaja, there was a youth club-house which was the center of athletics in the territory. National skiing tournaments were sponsored and usually the local Haapavesi athletes took the greatest share of the prizes. This territory is renowned in Finland for the ability of the skiers.

The Haapavesi youth club also sponsored national boat racing. Dancing was not very popular with the young men of the district. Dances were held in the threshing rooms after the crops were harvested.

Mr. Hill emigrated to this country for two reasons. First, to evade military service, and secondly, to improve economic conditions.

All the male youth of the age of twenty, had to register for mil-

2. A varta is a device with which the grain is pounded from the bundles. It consists of a pole about six feet in length. There is a slot around one end into which is fitted a leather strap. A sixteen-inch pyramid-shaped block of wood about four inches square at the base is attached to the strap. This block whirls around the pole, thus giving more power in beating the grains from the bundles.

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itary duty and have a medical examination. Then those fit for service were required to draw lots to see who would serve three-year terms in the infantry and cavalry of northern Finland and who would take three months of military training. Those who were lucky enough to draw the three months training were placed in the reserves subject to further service on 48 hour notice.

In February 1900, Mr. Hill and his sister left Finland for America via Liverpool. There wasn't a boat leaving for America from Liverpool for two weeks so they went to Glasgow and took a White Star Liner, landing at Philadelphia 14 days later after a very rough voyage. Mr. and Miss Hill traveled third-class as did most Finnish emigrants. There were many Finnish people on the same boat and accommodations better than usual so the trip was very pleasant.

From Philadelphia Mr. Hill went to Centerville, Mass. where he worked as a section hand on a railroad and he also picked cranberries. He remained in Centerville for three years and then began wandering from one Finnish colony to another. He does not remember dates but states that he was in the Dakotas, Washington, Butte, Montana and Michigan before going to Soudan, Minnesota. He started working for the Pickands Mather Company as a miner. In 1906 he moved to Elcor, Minnesota where he worked in the Corsica mine as a miner until 1929 when the mine closed temporarily. He bought a forty-acre farm in the Hutter district, a few miles from Gilbert. He bought the farm feeling that it would add to his security in his old age. The catastrophic fall in farm prices forced Mr. Hill to go back to the mines to earn a living. He has worked approximately 30 years for the Pickands Mather Co.

Mr. Hill has been a member of the Co-operative Store of Gilbert

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since its beginning. This membership was his only attempt to solve his economic problems.

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