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Victor Haapakoski

Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
Alfred Backman  
Jan. 18, 1939.

No 17

#### FINNS IN MINNESOTA

Victor Haapakoski was born at Kauhajoki, Waasa Province, Finland in 1890. At the age of 16 he emigrated to America with his parents in 1906. Victor, with his mother and father, left the port of Hankoniemi, Finland, for Liverpool, England and thence to Boston on the Cunard liner, Ivernia.

The nine days they spent on the Atlantic was considered, he said, by the liner officials, as a record run between Liverpool and Boston. There were 400 young and happy Finns on board dancing and playing their native games and singing folk songs every evening. All the Finnish immigrants were of the poorest class of peasants and laboring people who all felt, as they were approaching the "Land of the Free," that the millstone of poverty and oppression was being lefted from their tired backs. Several hundred immigrants of other nationalities were also on board "but," says Haapakoski, "they did not enjoy the voyage as we did."

Ironwood, Michigan was the destination. Their friends wrote to Finland that jobs for all Finns are assured as soon as they arrive. And for that reason the friends, knowing them as honest hard-working fellow countrymen, advanced money for their passage to this country, and enough more to sustain them until the first pay day in the mines came due. This was done quite frequently throughout America at the time when immigration to the country was practically without restrictions. Mining industry was booming and everybody had jobs. Wages in the mines were \$2.5 to \$2.25 for a ten hour day. Board, room and washing could be had at \$12 to \$15 per month. Mr. Haapakoski's opinion is that much more money could be saved at the time than at present although wages are two to three times higher and

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hours shorter.

Although only sixteen years old when he left Finland, Mr. Haapakoski had already served his apprenticeship as shoemaker. His father and grandfather were poor peasants. Haapakoski's father was so poor that he was forced to place his son, Victor, at the disposal of a greedy shoemaker who almost worked him to death. Victor says that his life was literally saved when he left the country. The trade he learned, however bitter experience it may have been, helped him in later years. After spending several years working in the silver mines in eastern Canada he returned to the United States and for nearly 20 years he worked in the shoe repair industry. He has owned shoe shops in Cokato, Minnesota, Kenosha, Wisconsin and at the present time he operates a shop in Minneapolis, at 158 Cedar Lake Road.

Victor Haapakoski's education was very badly neglected. However, he received a few months schooling, but only during the winter months in Finland. By consistent reading and two terms in the Labor College at Duluth, he acquired a very good knowledge of the Finnish language and an excellent understanding of world's history, particularly from labor's point of view. At the College he made a study of American history which helped him to secure his citizenship papers in 1914 in Minneapolis. The Labor College terms were four months each.

Mr. Haapakoski's mother and father live at Oak Knoll, near the outskirts of West Minneapolis.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic

William Liukkonen and Runar Gustafson

Nov. 12, 1938.

FINNS

Mrs. Olga Hakala, 305 East 3rd Street, Duluth, Minnesota. Born at Vaasanlääni, Finland, 1896.

She has had a grammar school education.

She was a farm hand in Finland. Her parents were farmers. There were four children in the family.

Her parents were very poor, so they were unable to give their children very much of an education. Mrs. Hakala was forced to go out to work as soon as she was able. The women had to do the same work as the men, but they were paid less wages. Women had to tend the cattle and cook the meals besides working in the fields, so their day was much longer than that of the men.

Mrs. Hakala is the wife of Heming Hakala. They have two children.

FINNISH

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William Liukkonen and  
Runar Gustafson  
December 8, 1938

John Hallio, 105 Mesabe Avenue, Duluth. Born in Tuurinlääni, Finland, 1886. His parents were farmers. There were six children in the family.

Mr. Hallio had three years of grade school.

He gave up farming in Finland to come to Canada, in 1906. In 1909 he moved to Fitchburg, Massachusetts, where he lived for three months. He moved to Park Falls, Wisconsin, where he lived until 1911. In 1911 he came to Duluth, and has lived here ever since.

Mr. Hallio has worked in a silver mine in Canada, and on the Grand Trunk Railroad. He has worked in logging camps around Park Falls, Wisconsin, and around Duluth, Minnesota, in harvest fields of the Dakotas and Minnesota, and on the freight docks in Duluth. He has worked on the freight docks in Duluth, since 1923.

He heard in Finland that one could pick the gold off the trees in America, so he left Finland to help out in the picking.

The year, 1906 was the peak year of the Finnish migration to America. Everyone was talking about America. In order to get passage to this country, a person had to book it months in advance. Every boat that left Finland was crowded with immigrants coming to America.

Mr. Hallio is a member of the International Longshoremen's Union.

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Subject: Social Ethnic  
Sub. by: William Liukkonen  
Runar Gustafson  
Date: Nov. 3, 1938.

The Finns in Minnesota

Mrs. Fannie Halmi, 3 Mesabe Place. Born in Seikajoki Oulu Laani, Finland, 1891. Left Finland for Quincy, Massachusetts in 1914. Lived there for three years. Left there in 1917 to come to Duluth. Lived here ever since.

Education consisted of grammar school only. Came to this country to improve her living conditions. Wages in Finland at that time were three marks a day. There was lots of work in that part of Finland because they were starting to log in the woods and the sawmills were going good.

Jobs were plentiful for women when she first arrived in the United States. Housemaids were paid \$4 per week and board.

Has a picture of one of the heroes in Kaleva which is made entirely of silk thread stitched into a pattern.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
Stanley Levine  
Nov. 23, 1938.

#### FINNS

Mrs. Lydia Harju, 321 N. 5th Avenue East, Duluth, Minnesota.

Born at Kaupio, Finland, 1895. She has two sisters, and her parents are living. She has no brothers.

She had no opportunity for education in Finland. She did, however, go up to the 5th grade in Duluth schools.

Mrs. Harju came directly to Duluth from Kaupio, in 1904. She left Finland because her father, who was in America, sent money for herself and sisters to come over.

Her first job in Duluth was housework. She was unusually lucky in getting this job, from which she received \$25 per month, for the average pay for housework was only about \$10 per month at that time.

The only sports and recreation she ever had as a child was at economic labor; picking berries, mushrooms, bark and other things which were sold.

The climate in Duluth is about the same as in Kaupio, Finland, in her opinion.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
Stanley Levine  
Oct. 19, 1938.

#### FINNS

Dr. Konstant Hartman, 7 E. Superior St., Duluth, Minnesota.

Born April 30, 1883 at Karvia, Finland, central part of Finland. Both parents were son and daughter of Finnish farmers. Six in family--parents, three sisters and himself. Came to America in 1902, stayed at Boston a few months and then came to Duluth.

Went to Astoria, Oregon to edit Finnish newspaper there for two years during 1913-1915. Worked in Ely iron mines in 1902-03, then in woods. Went west 1904--came back in 1907. Went through public school in Finland 1896-1899. Went to Teachers College for three years in Finland. Went to University of Valpariazo, Indiana for two years, 1919-20. Then went to National College of Chiropractic at Chicago for 3 years from 1921-22-23. Then went to Ludlar's College for 7 months in 1925 (post graduate course). Took post graduate course at Lahmar's at Dresden, Germany. Has been a miner, timber worker, newspaperman, and chiropractor. Writes poetry and literature. Is active in the Duluth Labor movement. When he came to America, times were good. A man could get work anywhere. Wages were comparatively high and prices low. A person could buy a dress suit for \$5.00, exactly what he paid for his.

When he came here, he found himself in rather a difficult situation because of his ignorance of the English language. He had a hard time making connections because of that. He now speaks a fluent English.

FINNISH

Duluth, Minnesota  
Socio Ethnic  
William Liukkonen and  
Runar Gustafson  
November 21, 1938

John Hautala, 244 So. 1st Avenue East, Duluth. Born in Lapua, Vaasanlääni,  
1879.

He was educated in confirmation school.

He worked as a farmhand in Finland.

Because economic conditions were very poor in Finland, and because he heard that there was lots of work in the United States, he left Finland in 1906, and came to the United States. The first city in which he made his home in the United States was Hibbing, Minnesota, where he worked in the iron ore mines. He worked there until the miners' strike of 1907. When he came to Hibbing the wages in the mines were from \$2.00 to \$2.50 per day, and the work was hard and dangerous. Safety was a minor consideration. The miners went on strike in 1907. The strike lasted about four months. The strike was lost by the miners because the leader sold out, and because the company hired scabs to break the strike. After the strike, Mr. Hautala moved to Duluth, where he has been ever since. He has worked in lumber camps here.

Mr. Hautala is a member of the Timber Workers' Union.

Gilbert, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
Walter Kykyri  
Dec. 20, 1938.

# FINNS

Matt Heikkila, 107 Nebraska Ave., Gilbert, Minnesota.  
Father: Matt Heikkila Mother: Kaisa Heikkila  
Born: Kauha Joki pitaja, Vasan laani, Finland, September 20, 1886.  
Wife: Justina Son: Filmore Daughter: Eila.

Interviewed - December 20, 1938 - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.  
" December 22, 1938 - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The interview took place in the living room in the home of Mr. Heikkila, with Mrs. Heikkila being present during the interview.

The house occupied by the Heikkila family is a two-story frame building with sun porches at both the front and rear ends of the house. Downstairs there are three rooms, kitchen, dining room and living room, all well furnished. There are three bedroom upstairs. In the basement Mr. Heikkila has fixed a steam bath. The entire house is heated with two stoves. The rooms were neat and clean with ample space for the family.

There were two Heikkila's, upper and lower. The upper family were the decendents of the oldest son of the first Heikkila to settle in this territory. The lower Heikkila's were the decendents of the youngest son. Mr. Matt Heikkila belonged to the latter. There were only two children in the family.

When Mr. Heikkila came to this country with his wife, he settled in Sparta in May 1907, where he lived until September 1910 when he went back to Finland for a nine-months visit. He arrived back in Sparta in July 1911 and moved to Gilbert in June 1912. Here he lived until 1916. Then he built a bathhouse (public steam) in Aurora, Minnesota and lived there until 1920. He left the United States for Finland with intentions

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Social Ethnic  
Walter Kykyri  
Dec. 20, 1938.

of staying there, but in 1922 he became dissatisfied and returned to America. He traveled around Canada but decided to settle again in Gilbert, Minnesota.

He began going to an ambulatory school in 1893 at the age of seven. He continued going every year for two months until 1898 when he entered the public school which he quit after two years. Attended a religious school for one summer in 1900 in preparation for confirmation.

He is a miner by occupation: May - Sept. 1907 was dumpman at the Gilbert Mine for Oliver Iron Mining Company; Sept. 1907, underground miner at Petitt Mine, Republic Iron and Steel Co.; 1907 - July 1910, underground miner at Sparta Mine, Oliver Iron Co.; June 1911 - Sept. 1915, underground miner Geneva Mine, Oliver Iron Co.; April 1916 - Sept. 1920, owner of steam bathhouse in Aurora, Minnesota. Was a man of leisure in Finland until 1922. July 1922, miner at Hobart Mine, Hanna Iron Mining Co.; August 1922 - July 1926, miner at Corsica Mine, Pickands-Mather Co.; August 1926 - May 1933 miner at Leonidas Mine, Oliver Iron Mining Co. He has also worked one year on ERA and went on WPA when the first project began operations and is still working there. He has been drill-man and mason but at the present is working as a common-laborer.

Matt Heikkila is an accomplished carpenter and mason and often does odd jobs for friends. He has a semi-public bathhouse. His main hobby is fishing.

He is not a member of any religious sect or church, but is a member of the Finnish Civic Club which is a political organization to protect the welfare of the Finnish people. He is also a member of the International Work Peoples Co-op Association of Gilbert, The Workers Alliance,

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Social Ethnic  
Walter Kykyri  
Dec. 20, 1938.

and the Farmer Labor Club.

Mr. Heikkila is about 5' 8" tall and weighs 165 pounds. He has a thin, pleasant face, twinkling blue eyes and a fairly large mouth that appears continually ready to break out into a smile. His hair is nut-brown in color and quite thin. His back is bent as is common with all workers who work with a pick and shovel. He walks with a long, easy stride as one accustomed to much walking.

Mr. Heikkila's parents in Finland belonged to the upper class of farmers as they owned one-sixteenth maantali of land and had twenty cows and four horses. The farm was situated on Kauha River, which had many rapids and falls, one of which was utilized to generate power for a flour mill owned by the Heikkila family. They also owned their own creamery.

Matt was married in Finland in 1907, and emigrated to this country with the idea of earning a stake so that he could have his own farm in Finland.

On the boat coming over there were about three to four hundred Finnish emigrants. Dancing every day on the deck and gambling were the chief amusements. They first went to Copenhagen, then to Liverpool, London and Southhampton, then landing at Ellis Island.

When they arrived in Sparta, Minnesota they were quite disappointed as they viewed a dismal, hastily-built town. All the houses were covered with tar paper, they were poorly constructed and had very few windows. Mrs. Heikkila recalls crying the whole first night.

Mr. Heikkila soon obtained employment at \$1.50 a day, working from six in the morning to six at night. The wages were not sufficient to maintain them at the standard of living they were accustomed to. Their furniture

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Social Ethnic  
Walter Kykyri  
Dec. 20, 1938.

in their first home consisted of boxes for chairs, a table constructed out of box boards by Mr. Heikkila, and a bed which was purchased. Mrs. Heikkila's first dress made in United States was of cloth purchased at five cents a yard.

The 1907 strike broke out about a month after Mr. Heikkila obtained employment and he went on the picket lines with the men. Every morning at four o'clock a picket would rap on the walls of the house to wake up the family so they could go on picket duty. During the 1916 strike he was in the steam bath business.

In 1920 he figured he had made his stake, so he went back to Finland but wasn't satisfied, so he returned to this country in 1922. This trip cost him over four thousand dollars traveling through Canada, to Finland and back. He also got a tough break on the fluctuations in the rates of exchange. When he went to Finland and exchanged the dollars to marks he received eight marks per dollar. When he changed the marks to dollars he had to pay forty marks per dollar.

Mr. Heikkila owns his own home, and has a forty-acre piece of land, covered with brush, in the Biwabik township. He intended to farm but the fall in farm prices discouraged him.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
Stanley Levine  
Nov. 30, 1938.

#### FINNS

Mrs. Ida Heiskari, 315 East 2nd Street, Duluth, Minnesota. Born at Ouluberg, North Finland. She is 44 years of age. She had two sisters and one brother.

Her education consisted of four years of public school, and six years of high school in Finland.

Mrs. Heiskari came directly to Astoria, Oregon, from Ouluberg, Finland, when she was fourteen years of age. Her uncle, who was living in Astoria, had written to her continually, urging her to come, and when she consented, sent the ticket fare. After a year's stay in Astoria she went to Portland, Oregon, where she lived for two years. Then she moved to Aberdeen, Washington, where she stayed for a year. She moved to Hibbing, Minnesota, and stayed until 1923. In 1923 she moved to Duluth.

Conditions for her in Finland were very secure. Her father owned a farm implement factory. He owned very much land as well. As a youth, she had everything she needed or wanted, such as clothes, etc.

When she came to Astoria, Oregon, she was quickly disillusioned, and she was disgusted with the low standard of living of the working population. Her uncle was not of any financial means at all, in fact, he was making only as much as the average industrial worker. Soon after her arrival at Astoria she had to go to work to maintain her existence. Her pay, in the first job she held, a restaurant waitress in Astoria, Oregon, was three dollars per week. She is generally very disappointed in American social and economic conditions.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
Runar Gustafson and William Liukkonen  
Nov. 14, 1938.

#### FINNS

Edward Hendrickson, Big River Vaasa Lääni, Finland. Born in 1885. Came to Duluth in 1902. Left Duluth for Blackberry, Minnesota where he worked for the Great Northern R.R. as a section hand. Then went to Bovey where he worked in the mines for three years. Then moved to Floodwood where he lived for two years on the farms and in the woods. Moved back to Blackberry where he lived three years on a farm and on the RR; from there he moved to Duluth where he has worked as a shoemaker for the last 20 years.

Came to this country to make a lot of money. Had very little education.

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Gilbert, Minnesota.

Subject: Social Ethnic  
 Submitted by: Walter Kykyri  
 Date: Nov. 7, 1938.

The Finns in Minnesota

Jack Hill  
 Gilbert, Minnesota, 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<sup>1</sup> and the men would beat the grain with vartas.<sup>2</sup> 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.

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

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

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Alfred Backman  
Jan. 3, 1939.

### The Finns In Minnesota

Matias Emil Hill, father's name Pynttari, was born on a farm in Alavus, Waasa Province, Finland in 1893. His father was a small farmer operating his own farm. At 16 years of age young Matias left his homeland in quest of better life and for adventure. Upon his arrival in Cobalt, Ontario, Canada, he went to work cutting cord wood, used for fuel, at the boarding house where he stayed. After about six months working for board and room Matias secured a job in the Cognac silver mine, one of the world's richest. There he worked two years as a miner and joined the Canadian Miners Union after which he moved to Copper Cliff, a mining town 50 miles east of Cobalt.

Wages at the mines were \$4.50 for an eight hour day which was considered a good wage at the time compared with other industries. The miners were 100% organized which in all probability was the strongest factor in keeping up the wage scale.

Mr. Hill left Canada in 1912, after four years in the Ontario mine, and came to Duluth, Minnesota, where he worked in the lumber industry for the Virginia Rainy Lake Lumber Company. The Alger-Smith chain of lumber camps were well known to all lumber jacks throughout the Northwest, and cut timber for the Rainy Lake concern. Wages, according to Mr. Hill, were \$60 for experienced sawyers and other common labor was getting as low as \$35 per month for working 12-14 hours a day. This monthly wage also included housing and board. Following the lumber industry throughout Northern Minnesota, working in logging camps, Mr. Hill was attracted to Wadena County which is thickly populated by Finns. Menahga, Wadena County, Minnesota became more or less a home to Mr. Hill for several years up to the beginning

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of the World War, from where he was called to serve in the United States army in 1918. At the close of the war, Mr. Hill came back to Wadena County and was married to Marie Temperi in 1921. Shortly after being married Matias and Marie Hill came to Minneapolis where they have made their home ever since.

Mr. Hill has been employed in Minneapolis as carpenter, plasterer and common laborer. During the past four years Mr. Hill worked as a "sand hog" in the Metropolitan Interceptor sewer which was recently completed. This new sewer is over 15 miles long and is 175 feet below the surface at some points. Mr. Hill was one of the workers at the point where the tunneling caved in, in the fall of 1937. As an experienced miner, Mr. Hill said he never came closer to getting killed than at the time the tunnel began collapsing almost directly above his head. He escaped getting crushed by falling rocks and dirt by only a few seconds, thanks to the quick action on the part of the elevator operator. At the point where Mr. Hill was working the tunnel was 150 feet below the surface, the street caved in <sup>for</sup> a distance of two blocks, almost wrecking a half-a-dozen or more houses which were left hanging over the ledge of the cave-in. The disaster took place at four o'clock in the morning. People living in the houses above the cave-in ran out ~~scrambling~~ <sup>believing</sup> screaming with fear that an earthquake had destroyed the whole town.

Soon after arriving in Minneapolis Mr. Hill was employed also several seasons by the Street Car Company and the Carnegie Coal Company.

Mr. Hill, for a number of years, has been a member of the Building and Construction Laborers Union (A.F. of L.), the Finnish Federation Club. He joined the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1924. Marie and Matias Hill have one son age 20 and 3 daughters age 10, 14 and 16.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
William Liukkonen and Runar Gustafson  
Nov. 14, 1938.

#### FINNS

Matt Hill, Viborg Lääni. Born 1874. Came to Proctor, Vermont in 1906. Lived there 7 months while he worked in a marble works. Then came to Duluth where he worked in the Minnesota woods and railroads. Wages were \$35 per month and room and board. Conditions in this country were good. Conditions were fair although it was hard to make very much money so he came to this country where it was supposed to be easier to gain an independent life.

Education consisted of confirmation school solely.

Has taken no part in Finnish social or cultural life.

Life in the lumber camps was bad. Three decker bunks in the bunk-houses; no windows or floors; straw for a mattress. Work was very hard and it was only a question of saving money so they could get away from the camps and on a farm, which was the goal that most of them had set. The Finns were willing to withstand any hardships as long as there was a chance for a better life in the future.

Interviewed: Matt Holmi

Interviewer: Toivo Torma

Person instrumental in suggesting him as prospective person for Interview:

My father, Mr. Arthur Torma

Date of Interview: Tuesday, January 10, 1939 , 5:00 to 9:00

Wednesday, January 11, 1939 5:30 to 9:30

Thursday, January 11, 1939 , 6:00 to 8:00

Description of interviewed:

Appeared like an "aristocratic gentleman of England, " that is, white haired, dignified, bearing, etc., 64 years old thin, 5' 8" tall, slightly stooped.

Pleasant, and a willing talker. Gave impression of intelligence.

Description of Room: Large, wall-papered in plain, dignified tone. Electric lights. New modernistic stove, other furniture older. Aspect of peace and ~~orderli~~ orderliness.

the end

No 30  
Interviewed: Matt Holmi

Interviewer: Toivo Torma

Person instrumental in suggesting him as prospective person for Interview:

My father, Mr. Arthur Torma

Date of Interview: Tuesday, January 10, 1939 , 5:00 to 9:00  
Wednesday, January 11, 1939 5:30 to 9:30

Thursday, January 12, 1939 , 6:00 to 8:00

Description of interviewed:

Appeared like an "aristocratic gentleman of England," that is, white haired, dignified, bearing, etc., 64 years old thin, 5' 8" tall, slightly stooped.

Pleasant, and a willing talker. Gave impression of intelligence.

Description of Room: Large, wall-papered in plain, dignified tone. Electric lights. New modernistic stove, other furniture older. Aspect of peace and ~~orderli~~ orderliness.

the end

## Interview

Name: Matt Holmi

Where born: Isokyro, Finland

When to United States: 1899

Age 64

Address: Matt Holmi, Box--- Gilbert, Minnesota

### Life in Finland:

I was born in 1875, at Isokyro, Finland, which is one of the richest farming sections of the whole country. Farm life there is similar to ours, except that the general standard of living was lower. During my early years I herded cattle in the pastures of some ~~xx~~ my wealthier neighbors and of special interest and excitement was the number of snakes I killed. In the locality a certain poisonous snake often bit cows, so it was necessary to have a person tending to the welfare of the cattle.

Wages in Finland were generally low; 25 cents a day during the winter and 100 cents, or one mark, in the summer. This variation was due to the difference in the length of seasonal days, and also because work in the summer was much harder. To send a letter to America necessitated the purchase of a 25 penny stamp, or a days winter wages, but we did not complain because we dreamed of no better

Finland during this period was under the Russian Tzar. The country was divided into counties, districts, etc., in a manner similar to the United States.

In general the Finnish people did not like the Russian dominance over Finnish affairs. There were many reasons of complaint, one of them being the fact that the Swedes who lived in Finland received preference over the Finns. The Swedish language was the official language in public affairs, it was also the Swedes who received a majority of governmental positions, although the major offices were occupied by Russians. The passports from Finland to America were first written in Russian with the Swedish language substituted later, and consequently the Finnish did not like it. As a result of this, the Swedish language

was taught as a compulsory course in school, therefore we today find many Finns who also know the Swedish language. Personally the Finns and Swedes did not get along together very well; the Swedish considered themselves as superior. This condition, however, is not apparent in the United States. This problem may well be compared to the White-Negro status of affairs of to-day.

Finland had no suffrage at that time. The Russian policy of government desired that everyone learn at least to read the Finnish or Swedish language. Most of the education was quite informal, or at least, poorly planned. The teachers went from farm to farm instructing the children living at the place, and possibly a few neighbors children also. The father of the home usually paid the instructor for his two or three week's stay, and in consideration his sons and daughters were taught to read. Only 4 years of this compulsory education was necessary, and it was equivalent to 8 years in American schools, I started to school at the age of six, to a nearby farmhouse. My parents were very poor--in the morning my mother would bake a few potatoes, and when I went to school I would put them into my pocket. Usually the potatoes froze before we ate them, and we would have to thaw them out on the stove in the schoolhouse. Quite often I did not have the opportunity of eating anything the whole time.

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Continued on another page

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I immediately secured a job in a Biwabik mine after the Christmas holidays, and I worked in the mines for 9 years, with the wages varying from \$1.45 to a little over 2 dollars a day. It certainly felt wonderful to be able to receive \$2 a day, of which I was able to save over one half. Possible my thriftiness was due to the strict training I had received at home in the handling of little money. Food was cheap--so was the clothing, which in my estimation was my chief extravagance. The rent and board each month was \$14 or \$15.

Nine years later, in 1909, I moved one winter morning to Hutter, a location 5 or 6 miles west of Biwabik. I was the first settler to go to the community and on December 20, 1908, with my wife and 10 children, we went into the woods. One month later; January 20, 1909, we had for ourselves a one room camp capitulating 12 people. It was truly a miserable winter, without sufficient food, clothing and shelter. During the winter months I began cutting a straight-away for a road to be made next summer into McKinley, a nearby mining settlement.

The next summer we built the first road to Hutter. By then my children had to go to school, so the next winter I drove them to McKinley with a coal wagon. I also transported some neighbors children who had appeared during the preceeding summer.

I also, in the meanwhile chopped some mining timber for the Elba Iron Mining Company at \$4 a cord. Of this amount I received \$1.75, with the rest given to the transporter with his team.

In 1912, I was an engineer, or surveyor assistant in surveying out the Biwabik township. The job took 2 months. This land was owned by the Boca Iron Mining Company, and at first sold for \$7 an acre, and by 1915, the price was up to \$18. Of the 9 sections of land surveyed, I sold most of it; usually in tracts amounting to 40 or 80 acres. The place had quite a rich source of pure timber, which now, unfortunately is all spent.

The first car came ther in 1912, a Model T Ford.

A school was also built near by to which attended approximately 20 students and was built by the Gilbert School District 18. It burned, however,

I was a janitor at the school, which received its lighting from a oil burner, and heat from a huge stove. During the 3 years as janitor my wages were \$9, 12 dollars and 15 dollars a month respectively.

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The rural mail route was begun in 1916, with its office in Gilbert. Although we at first received the mail from McKinley.

I have lived here through the 20's and 30's with only myself of the family left, with my wife dying a few weeks ago.

Even so, I would never care to have lived in Finland, for I realize that the United States is the world of the future.

### 1900--Cyclone in Biwabik

This cyclone took place, according to the word of Mr. Matt Holmi, on Sept. 20, 1900, a Saturday. I will look up in the records to see if a more accurate date is prevalent. Mr. Holmi was the first to see the cyclone appear, so I will record his account of it.

"One Saturday afternoon about 2 or 3 o'clock, September of 1900, I was working with an Irishman, Charles Worley, driving rails to the railway with a team of horses.

I looked toward the west and happened to notice a queer configuration of smoke arising from the ground toward the sky, in successive order. It appeared like a great amount of smoke from a train, except that, as I watched, it appeared to be coming toward Biwabik.

I soon realized that it wasn't smoke or steam, so I told my partner, "Look at that!" (I knew few broken words of English).

He looked in the general direction and immediately called aloud, "A cyclone!" and in saying so he began to run towards the town. ~~I knew~~ I understood having heard the word cyclone mentioned before, that it was a strong whirly wind of terrific force which can uproot trees and destroy villages, so I also ran away from my location of work and left the horses and wagon behind.

I ran to my brother's shop in the village and told him a cyclone is coming. BY This time all the people of Biwabik were on the streets facing the oncoming cyclone, the air was becoming stifling, and dusty, with a rapid approach of darkness. Being quite frightened, I did not know what to do, where to go for shelter or how I could possibly be saved from its scowaging powers of destruction.

My brother came to me and said that we should go to the steamshovel and hide within the "spoon" part of it. We went, and we were saved, I realized, as we listened to the scouring and purifying effects of the rainfall immediately succeeding the savage wind storm.

After the rain had subsided, my brother and I left the haven of safety, and looked about us. Many buildings were wrecked, some were entirely obliterated, and next to us we saw a fallen railway car. We both intuitively understood by

now the severity of the storm and in a quiet manner we traced our steps back to the center of the wreckage.

By now the whole group were standing about, the street next to a blacksmith shop in which a large number had been saved. Either 4 or 5 people were killed in the storm and many were injured. The storm would have been more severe had it not been for the fact that it went over the edge of Biwabik.

In Hutter, the direction from which it developed, it had uprooted a wide path of trees along its course. For 10 or so years <sup>all</sup> preceding the cyclone, the results of its work could be detected by observing the barren stream of ground through Hutter and the Biwabik Township in general.

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## Interview

Name: Matt Holmi

Where born: Isokyro, Finland

When to United States: 1899

Age 64

Address: Matt Holmi, Box--- Gilbert, Minnesota

### Life in Finland:

I was born in 1875, at Isokyra, Finland, which is one of the richest farming sections of the whole country. Farm life there is similar to ours, except that the general standard of living was lower. During my early years I herded cattle in the pastures of some ~~xxx~~ my wealthier neighbors and of special interest and excitement was the number of snakes I killed. In the locality a certain poisonous snake often bit cows, so it was necessary to have a person tending to the welfare of the cattle.

Wages in Finland were generally low; 25 cents a day during the winter and 100 cents, or one mark, in the summer. This variation was due to the difference in the length of seasonal days, and also because work in the summer was much harder. To send a letter to America necessitated the purchase of a 25 penny stamp, or a days winter wages, but we did not complain because we dreamed of no better

Finland during this period was under the Russian Tzar. The country was divided into counties, districts, etc., in a manner similar to the United States.

In general the Finnish people did not like the Russian dominance over Finnish affairs. There were many reasons of complaint, one of them being the fact that the Swedes who lived in Finland received preference over the Finns. The Swedish language was the official language in public affairs, it was also the Swedes who received a majority of governmental positions, although the major offices were occupied by Russians. The passports from Finland to America were first written in Russian with the Swedish language substituted later, and consequently the Finnish did not like it. As a result of this, the Swedish language

was taught as a compulsory course in school, therefore we today find many Finns who also know the Swedish language. Personally the Finns and Swedes did not get along together very well; the Swedish considered themselves as superior. This condition, however, is not apparent in the United States. This problem may well be compared to the White-Negro status of affairs of to-day.

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Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
William Liukkonen and  
Runar Gustafson  
Nov. 28, 1938.

#### FINNS

Ero Homppi, 246 Lake Avenue South, Duluth, Minnesota. Born in Karstula, Vaasanlääni, Finland, 1888. There were ten children in the family.

He had only three years of grammar school.

Mr. Homppi worked with his father, who was a carpenter.

Mr. Homppi came to Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, in 1910. Then he went to Ely, Minnesota, where he worked in the sawmill for two years. He moved to Virginia, Minnesota. For six years he worked with contractors there. In 1917 he went to Marquette, Michigan, where, for three years, he worked as a car repairman. He left there, and came to Duluth, where he has resided since.

Because the family was large, and there was no money, he was unable to get more schooling.

Mr. Homppi came to this country to get some of the gold that travel agents claimed this country was loaded with.

No 32

FORM A

Circumstances of Interview

Minnesota

William Liukkonen and Runar Gustafson

January 5th, 1939

"Finns of Minnesota"

1. Mrs. Carl Hultkrantz, 326 W. 3rd St., Duluth, Minnesota
2. January 5, 1939, 1:30 P.M. to 4:05 P.M.
3. 326 W. 3rd St., Duluth, Minnesota
4. Informant known to Interviewer Liukkonen
5. Accompanied by Gustafson
6. Three family apartment house. Apartment well furnished with modern furniture.

FINNISH

Duluth, Minnesota  
Socio Ethnic  
William Liukkonen and  
Runar Gustafson  
January 5, 1939

Mrs. Carl Hultkrantz, 326 W. 3rd Street, Duluth, Minnesota. Born in Superior, Wisconsin, 1906.

She is a high school graduate. She had one year of business college.

Her parents were born at Vaasanlääni, Finland. Her father was born in 1880 and her mother in 1881. Her father's occupation in Finland was farming, which he continued after he arrived in this country. Her father came to Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada, in 1897. He lived there a short time, then moved to the Dakotas, where he had relatives. He lived there a short time, then went to Ely, Minnesota, where he worked in the mines. From Ely he went to Superior, Wisconsin, where he opened a tavern.

Her mother came to Ironwood, Michigan, where she had relatives, in 1900. She lived in Ironwood for a year, then moved to Superior, Wisconsin, where she worked in a laundry.

They were married in Superior, Wisconsin, and continued to live there for the next two and a half years. Then they bought a farm near Elde's Corner. They spent their last cent to buy the farm and did not leave enough to live on.

They could not make a living on the farm so her father had to go out and buy stumpage to cut cordwood from. The cordwood was sold in Duluth and surrounding territory. From the proceeds of this he was able to build up the farm. He built an eight-room modern house, barn and other structures.

Both of her parents are still living, as are the seven children and one grandchild.

She is a bookkeeper and clerk. She helps her husband in their grocery store.

Mathematics, the working out of difficult problems in accounting and other mathematics, is her chief hobby. Sewing and crocheting are her other hobbies. She is a member of the Ladies' Aux. of Grocers' Association. She is a member of the Swedish Lutheran Church.

7  
Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
William Liukkonen and Runar Gustafson  
Dec. 13, 1938.

FINNS

Rev. Walter Isaacs, Deer River, Minnesota. Born at Calumet,  
Michigan, 1873.

The Rev. Mr. Isaacs is self educated.

He is a minister at the Finnish Apostolic Lutheran Church, Deer  
River, Minnesota.

With his parents, he left Calumet in 1877, to come to Wright  
County, Minnesota. He lived there until 1883, then moved to Brown County,  
South Dakota. He lived in the Dakotas until 1930 and then moved to Deer  
River, where he now is residing.

His parents were farmers.

Farming is his occupation outside of the Ministry. He entered  
the Ministry in 1908.

He married in 1896, and has thirteen children.

✓

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
William Liukkonen and Runar Gustafson  
Nov. 23, 1938.

#### FINNS

Carl Jackla, Toverila Hotel, 108 E. 1st Street, Duluth, Minnesota.

Born at Cokato, Minnesota, 1879.

He was educated in grade school, and gained further knowledge by means of self study.

He left Cokato, Minnesota, at the age of 18, to travel. He landed at Seattle. For a number of years, while he was on the West Coast, he worked in the woods, and sold novelties in the cities. He returned to the middle west, and to Duluth, after ten years. He has been an interpreter, novelty salesman and employment clerk in Duluth, for the last thirty years.

Farm life was hard in the early days, everyone had to work in order to exist. All of the work was done by hand and by oxtteam. The schools were very inadequate, one room was the average. Teachers were rough, and were always ready to use the buggy whip. Very few children were able to finish school, because as soon as a child was able to, he was forced to work on the farm. The father was the law at that time.

Cokato was a wilderness when he father first came there. The roads were only deer trails through the woods.

Mother and father were fisher folk, but it was too dangerous for the mother, so she wanted a farm. It was very hard to get land in the old country, so they came to America, where cheap land was available.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
Stanley Levine  
Nov. 23, 1938.

#### FINNS IN MINNESOTA

Eino Johnson, 20 $\frac{1}{2}$  E. 4th Street, Duluth. He was born at Mansfield, Michigan, September 1908.

Mr. Johnson has had an 8th grade education. He completed his schooling at Mansfield, Michigan.

He moved to Duluth at a very early age, and lived here until he was old enough to work in Minnesota timber camps.

"I like Finnish dishes because it's heavier food and lasts longer. Mojaka stew is my favorite dish. It's better than an American dish of any sort that I know of. I'll bet 99 out of a hundred Finns will say that too. It's got everything; meat, potatoes and what-not.

"I was confirmed at the regular age of fifteen. It's my feeling that the Finnish church is losing influence because the young people do not care or want to go to church. The church, it seems, doesn't offer any solutions to the Finnish people's life problems and therefore the young people have lost interest."

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
William Liukkonen and Runar Gustafson  
Nov. 16, 1938.

#### FINNS

Mr. M. H. Johnson, 5 West 4th Street, Duluth, Minnesota. Born  
at Vaasanlaani, Finland, 1876.

He was educated in grade school. Later he entered a trade school,  
where he took up shoemaking.

After he completed the course in shoemaking he went to work for a  
shoemaker in his home town, but not being satisfied with his place of work,  
he sought a place to start a business of his own. Economic conditions were  
such at that time as to make it impossible for a tradesman to set himself  
up in business, so he, hearing that any man with a trade could start on a  
shoestring and build up a business for himself in America, left Finland.  
He came to Worchester, Massachusetts in 1899. There he worked as a shoe-  
maker for two years.

In 1901 he came to Duluth, Minnesota. He immediately set him-  
self up in the shoemaker business at the location he occupies today.

Mr. Johnson is a member of the Pentecostal Church.

Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
Walter A. Harju  
Nov. 30, 1938.

### FINNS IN MINNESOTA

Interview with Nicolas (Niemi) Johnson on his farm east of Franklin, Minnesota.

Nov. 25, 1938.

Interviewed by W. A. Harju and Raymond Munson.

The old Johnson or (Niemi) homestead is located near Franklin, Minnesota, the third farm on the north side of the road going east from town. Nicolas Johnson now owns the farm and has lived on the place since childhood with the exception of a couple of years in the early days when he left the family and went to Sierra County, California to earn money in the gold mines. Nicolas is the son of Matti (Niemi) Johnson who was with his family among the first Finnish people who migrated to America after 1860. Matti (Niemi) Johnson came from Norway to St. Peter, Minnesota in the early summer of 1864 with Peter Lahti, Antti Rovainen, Mikko Heikka (Solomon) Nulus and Matti Niemi Jr. his son. Nicolas was 10 years old at the time of the arrival of the family in St. Peter and is therefore at the present time one of the two survivors of the earliest Finnish immigrants to Minnesota. The other survivor is Ida Juhanna Isakka who lives at 254 Humboldt Ave. North, Minneapolis, Minnesota. She is the daughter of Antti Roanen Rovainen and was less than a year old when she came to St. Peter.

Nicolas (Niemi) Johnson was born in Norway, February 11th, 1854 and is now 84 years old. Because of his old age he does not remember very many of the early happenings. He says, however, that when they came to

Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
Walter A. Harju  
Nov. 30, 1938.

Franklin from St. Peter in 1865 they first came to Peter Lahtis homestead from where they immediately went to their own claim. He also remembers the Grasshopper plagues of the early days as well as times when they were so hard up that they could not get any white flour so they made their bread from middlings. He recalls too that the cash income in the pioneer period was provided from sales of muskrat pelts, and that muskrats were also used for food.

Nicolas (Niemi) Johnson married Erika Maunu who came to Franklin from the old country in 1870. In the course of years they have reared a large family most of the children now living in different places. On son Ludvig, is still with the parents on the home place.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Nicolas (Niemi) Johnson say that the life on the farm has been a life of hard work.

In their reminences they told us about the life in the early days of which especially interesting was the description of John Wittikko an early settler in the community who possessed esoteric wisdom. This man according to their description was able to cure animals with charms, which he had learned from the bible. He could also according to them foretell death. He was also reputed to know before hand when he neighbors came after him. In many instances the people who went for him would find him ready waiting when they would come with his tools, all packed up for whatever work he was to do. At one time this Wittikko came to their place with perspiration flowing from his face. They inquired about the perspiration and excitement. He told them that he had to fight little people when he came across the road, that he had to put up a struggle to sweep them aside before he could get through. On

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Social Ethnic  
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further inquiry he had stated that there were thousands of these little people, like fairies on the road and that they were on their way to a cemetery. He had said that it fortells the death of a child in the neighborhood. A short time afterwards a child death took place among their neighbors.

Another description of his esoteric powers was the story about their sick horse for which Wittikko prepared a medicine from whiskey and dirt and by placing his hand on the horse it was suddenly cured.

They also told about a time when they were children and Wittikko stayed at their place. He had to go somewhere so he left a little bag hanging on the wall and he told the children that if they would touch it they would have to stand in their tracks until he came back to release them from the charm. No one touched the bag Mrs. Johnson says because they were afraid that what he said would happen to them.


Mrs. Johnson related that at one time during a hot summer night Wittikko stayed overnight with them. Because of the heat he slept on the floor. On the next morning Mrs. Johnson had taken severely ill. In the morning when Wittikko woke up he had told Mrs. Johnson that he saw the sickness coming at night. He had described it as a black ball that rolled in through the door from the outside and it first came toward him but that he had pulled the covers over his head so it passed him and went into Mrs. Johnson's bedroom.

Mrs. Johnson describes another instance where Wittikko failed to accomplish his cure but had an excuse for it. The story as told was the following: Mrs. Johnson when she was a young girl had contracted some kind of poisoning from water with which she washed her face while visit-

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ing at a neighbor's house. Wittikko was immediately consulted. He had told her that if it came from the earth he would be able to cure it, but if it came from a different source he would fail. The poisoning was very painful and spread rapidly so that one side of her face was completely covered by the infection. In the attempt to cure it Wittikko took her into a room alone which Mrs. Johnson said frightened her a little. He had brought with him a bowl of slough water and some moss. She sat on a chair while he chanted his charms at the same time dipping the moss in the water and with the moss bathing the infection. This was to effect the cure. She later, however, had to go to a doctor who treated the infected face and cured it. Wittikko explained that the reason why he was not able to effect a cure was because the infection did not come from the earth.



No 38

To be copied

FORM A

1. Mrs. Olga Joki
2. January 3rd, 1939, 9:30 A.M. to 11:15 A.M.
3. 124 W. 3rd Street, Duluth, Minnesota.
4. Informant known to Interviewer Liukkonen.
5. Accompanied by Gustafson
6. Three story, brown, wood apartment house. Informant's apartment in rear. Comfortably furnished with modern upholstered furniture.

FINNISH

Duluth, Minnesota  
Socio Ethnic  
William Liukkonen and  
Runar Gustafson  
January 3rd, 1939

Mrs. Olga Joki, 124 West 3rd Street, Duluth, Minnesota. Born at Oululääni, Finland, 1900.

Her father was a shoemaker in Finland and a farmer in the United States.

She had an eighth grade education.

She came to Biwabik, Minnesota in 1901. She lived there for a year.

In 1903 the family moved to Palo, Minnesota, where her father had taken a homestead. Mrs. Joki left home when she was thirteen and came to Duluth, Minnesota. She worked in a restaurant for four years, then she married. She has been living in Duluth ever since she first came.

She has two children.

"Ever since I was six years old I had to go out and work with my father. There was four of us girls before we had a brother, so we had to work with father, clearing brush and cultivating the land.

"We had two and a half miles to go to school, and in the fall and spring we had to wade in water up to our knees. It was very seldom that we had a pair of shoes. School was very fine. Our school was a two room affair and we really were given an education.


"We led mostly a hand to mouth existence on the farm. It was poverty of the worst kind. We had no road into Biwabik, which was 13 miles away. The only way to get through was by deer trail, and then only in the winter time. In the summer this was was flooded, so we had to go out and trap deer and rabbits for food.

"The wolves were very bad around our farm. I remember once when three of us girls and the neighbor were walking home from school. A pack of wolves attacked

us. Our neighbor had an army rifle so he started shooting. I don't know how we got out of there, but we did, because I'm here to tell about it.

"One night my mother took a lantern and went out to the well to clean some rabbits. A wolf came running and grabbed the rabbit out of her hand, She grabbed the lantern and ran for the house.

"When we went out at night we had a rope tied to us so that they could pull us in the house in case of wolves coming around."



[

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
William Liukkonen and Stanley Levine  
Nov. 10, 1938.

#### FINNS

Mrs. Ida M. Jurva, 319 North 14th Ave. East. Born March 26, 1874 at Tyravanto, Finland. Parents came from Hämeenlinna, Finland. She is a practicing chiropractor.

Came to United States from Helsingfors in 1900. Education: public school, two years high school. Nursing training school and massage school in Finland, Dr. Karl Heilberg's Massage Institute at Helsingfors. Full chiropractic course at Pacific School of Chiropractic, Portland, Oregon. She came to Republic Michigan from Helsingfors and stayed there three years. Then went to Hot Springs, Ark. to practice massage. Then to British Columbia at a cooperative colony for six months. There were 300 persons there at that cooperative island, at Malcolm Island, Canada. She was only doctor there.

She married in Canada and then went to Seattle. Having practiced one year here, she went to Astoria, Oregon and then to Los Angeles, California, Portland, Oregon and to Menahga, Minnesota. Came to Duluth in 1925, after 7 years in Menahga where she managed a sanatorium.

Conditions when she arrived at Republic, Michigan were much better than at present. There were more jobs and better times. Prices for food were much cheaper.

Everybody had work but not at such wage levels as today.

People in earlier days were more interested in Temperance and Church Societies. Very few people attended dances and such when she was young. Most of the dances held were at Temperance Societies.

There was a very marked social difference between the persons who went to affairs sponsored by tavern keepers and saloon-keepers. In those day there were very few women in the taverns. Those who did go to taverns were looked

Duluth, Minnesota.

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down upon. One never saw young ladies smoke but often old ladies would  
smoke a great deal.

RM

Duluth, Minnesota.

Subject: Social Ethnic  
 Sub. by: Stanley Levine  
 William Liukkonen  
 Date: Oct. 4, 1938.

### The Finns in Minnesota

#### Breakfast

Oat meal--coffee with cream  
 Wheat flour pancakes  
 Dark rye--limppu-bread-and butter

#### Dinner

Meat stew--"mujaka"  
 Salt fish--bread and butter  
 Milk or buttermilk  
 Rice pudding or fruit sauce

#### Supper

Meat (beef or pork) and potatoes  
 Salt fish--"Silakka"  
 Milk or buttermilk-bread and butter  
 A fruit sauce

#### Habit

The Finns are inveterate coffee drinkers, but contrary to popular opinion, do not drink coffee at every meal. Coffee is drunk at breakfasts and between meals, rarely at dinner or supper.

#### Silakka

This is a small fish that is eaten in great quantities by the Finns. Whole bucketfuls are pickled in salted water brine. Then they are eaten at both dinner and supper in addition to the regular fare.

The Silakka is translated: Baltic Herring.

Informant: Gust Kaatiala, 109 4th Ave. East, Duluth. Born at Laupa, Finland, Feb. 20, 1872. Parents were both from Laupa, Finland. Has been a dock worker and mill worker in Helsingfors, Finland.

Gilbert, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
Walter Kykyri  
Dec. 19, 1938.

FINNS

INFORMANT: Henry Kainula, 109 New Jersey Avenue, Gilbert, Minnesota.  
INTERVIEWED: from 9 a.m. to 12 a.m.

The interview took place in the kitchen in the home of Mr. Kainula. Mr. Kainula's home is a six-room two-story frame structure. There are three bedrooms upstairs and a kitchen, dining room and living room downstairs. Each room downstairs has at least two windows. The kitchen is located on the southwestern corner of the building and is quite large and well lighted. It contains a minimum of furniture: a stove, a cupboard, a table and a sewing machine. It was apparent that Mrs. Kainula is an excellent housekeeper as the floors were spotless and the walls and ceiling were well-painted and clean.

Mr. Kainula is a short, heavy-set man, standing five feet six inches tall and weighing 210 pounds. His head is large with the eyes set close together, his nose is straight and of medium size. He has a shuffling walk and lisps when he talks.

Henry Kainula, the informant, was born April 20, 1880 in Kuiruvesi pitaja, Kuopio lansi, which is located about the middle of Finland. This territory is mainly farming although there was some timber operations. The township had a co-operative creamery.

His parents at one time owned their own land but had to sell and become crofters. The family owned four cows and a horse. To pay for the rental of the land one person had to work two weeks during haying and one

Gilbert, Minnesota.

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week in the spring. There were five children in the family--four boys and one girl.

Mr. Kainula attended the public school and while there joined the skiing club. The club would go every Saturday to the public schools in other townships. Community singing was the main diversion on these trips.

In 1904 the informant was drafted for service in the Czars Finnish Guard. Each summer the Guard was required to journey to Rasino Selo about 260 miles south of St. Petersburg for ten weeks of war manueurs. All the officers of the Guard were Finnish and as they were the Czars they received better clothing, shelter and food than did the other Finnish soldiers. These troops had their headquarters in Helsingki. All those assigned for duty in the Czars Guard had to put in two years of service.

After his two years of service Mr. Kainula left for America. His reason for leaving was to establish a home in the United States if reports were true that the economic condition was better than in Finland. When he left he vowed he would never go back again.

He boarded a small steamer July 11, 1916, on the first leg of his trip to America. He landed first at Hamburg, Germany and immediately took another boat destined for Liverpool. This ship was also very small and the sea was very rough. Food on this ship was very poor, consisting mainly of salt herring and potatoes cooked with the skins. At Liverpool he took passage on a trans-Atlantic liner bound for Quebec. On this ship the food was excellent and the quarters fair. Each room had accommodation for four men. The immigrants consisted mainly of Russians, Swedes and Finns. The Russians and Jews were ostracized on this boat. Because of the similarity

Gilbert, Minnesota.

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of their cultural life, the Swedes and the Finns intermingled. They held dances on the deck every day. Also they had athletic contests such as tug-of-war, weight-lifting, etc.

The ship landed at Quebec August 13th, and all immigrants were loaded on trains and ferried across to the United States. Mr. Kainula headed straight for the Mesaba Range, arriving at Elcor where he made his home until 1913 when he moved to Gilbert. Three days after arriving in Elcor, Captain Binney of the Corsica Mine asked him to go to work. He was given an experienced Finnish miner for a partner and so he started his life in the United States. He worked as an underground miner for the Pickands-Mather Company for 13 years. When the underground working ceased, he became drill-man in the pit where he worked for four years.

During the 1907 strike, Mr. Kainula was in the hospital, recuperating from an appendix operation. When the 1916 strike began, the Corsica mine was closed for the duration of the strike and so he became a striker.

Mr. Kainula worked as laborer four years at the Petitt Mine of the Republic Iron and Steel Company located at Gilbert. He also put in two years as timber-lander at the Hobart Mine of the Hanna Mining Company. Since mining stopped around Gilbert, he has worked for various road contractors, the Village of Gilbert, and the Gilbert school system. During the last three years he has been on WPA.

He owns his own home, a two-story frame structure located on New Jersey Avenue in Gilbert. He became a citizen in 1932 and is a member of the International Work Peoples Co-operative Association of Gilbert and at one time was a member of the board of directors.

Walter Kykyri  
Gilbert, Minn.  
Oct. 31, 1938.

1.

Onni Kaivos  
Eveleth, Minn. R. F. D.  
October 28, 1938 at 1:00 P.M.

#### SOCIAL-ETHNIC

Onni Kaivos, informant, was born in Wirra township, Vasa County, Finland, in 1882. His parents own a small farm and hired three or four men throughout the year.

Wirra township was mostly comprised of small farms with only one rich farmer who owned three maantalle\* of land and had 150 milk cows. Every farm had squatters, some as high as twenty. These squatters furnish the hired farm labor, being paid at a rate of 100-150 marks a year for men, 35-50 marks a year for women, plus clothes, food and shelter. One member of each squatter family on a farm also worked without compensation to pay the rent and taxes on the squatter's home.

There was only one church in Wirra township--a Lutheran church; and the minister had to start all prayers with the following words, "Alexander the Third, Blessed by God, Czar of all Russia, Duke of Finland, Czar of Poland, etc."

It was customary, as there were no newspapers, for the minister to read in church during services the manifestos and decrees of the Czar and the Governor General of Finland. Often some of the ministers would refuse. Those that refused were persecuted and often sent to Siberia in exile.

\*Maantalle -- a maantalle of land is not a measure of land, but value placed upon land. For example, forty acres of good land would be say three maantalles of land, whereas forty acres of poor land could be rated as one-half maantalle of land. The value of soil was measured by the grain. The best soil, for example, was rated 8-grain soil, the poorest was one-half grain soil.

Cultural life was limited to plays that were shown by students at the public schools or by the farmers at the 'seurran talo' (clubhouse). Plays were shown about once a month at the clubhouse, the actors and actresses were sons and daughters of the farmers. The director usually was the best actor of the community. Any and all profit was used for charity--to buy clothes for those too poor to buy them.

Dances were held usually Saturday nights at various farm homes. The farm homes were very large and a fairly large crowd could dance. As a rule, local fiddlers would furnish the music.

In 1898 Governor General Poprefkoff of Finland began draining a large swamp in Wirra township. This swamp land was then sold to the small farmers and squatters in lots of 50 to 100 hectares on small annual payments.

Mr. Omni Kaivos left Finland for America in 1901, going first to Liverpool, from there to Glasgow where he had to wait three days for a boat which landed him in New York. The voyage was very smooth and pleasant. Many of Mr. Kaivo's friends were on the same boat which made the trip seem like a holiday excursion. The food served was of better quality and greater variety than he was accustomed to in Finland. He claimed that the journey was so much fun that he always wanted to make a return trip to recapture the thrill of that first trip.

Mr. Kaivos came to this country for two reasons. First, because of economic pressure, and secondly to escape serving in the Russian army. Had Mr. Kaivos waited until he was twenty years of age, he would have been unable to secure a passport for longer than six months, thus having to return to Finland and serve a term in the army.

The informant went directly to Hancock, Michigan from New York. He immediately secured work at \$2.25 a day as a miner in the copper mines where

he stayed one year. In the summer of 1902, he went to Butte, Montana where he worked as a contract miner in the copper mines. When he was there he joined the Western Federation of Miners. The union had a contract with the mining companies and as a result the wages of \$3.50 were considerably higher in Butte than in other mining regions. The winter of 1902 found Mr. Kaivos restless and he moved to Eveleth, Minnesota. As labor was very scarce, Mr. Kaivos went to work for the Oliver Iron Mining Company on the day of his arrival in Eveleth. In 1904 he moved to Sparta, Minnesota, but continued to work in Eveleth. He worked mostly at contract, sinking shafts or driving water drifts. His work was always in wet places and as a result he is suffering from rheumatism and his joints are very stiff.

When the 1907 strike started he walked out with the miners. The strikers formed a band which played at all demonstrations and on the picket lines to pep up the strikers. Mr. Kaivos was a member of the band and recalls that early every morning the band would start out leading the strikers from one mine to another until late at night. Mr. Kaivos left the band and the strike in disgust and went to work in Iron River, Wisconsin for the duration of the strike. His only comment on the results of the strike was that the Montenegrin population of the Iron Range increased considerably. (Montenegrins were imported as strike breakers.

After  $22\frac{1}{2}$  years of service for the Oliver Iron Mining Company, Mr. Kaivos was laid off. He secured work almost immediately at the Hobart mine in Gilbert. When the Hanna Iron Mining Company closed down the Hobart mine eight years later, Mr. Kaivos was again laid off and since then has not worked in the mines. He has managed to eke out a living by working part-time for the Village of Gilbert and St. Louis County.

Mr. Kaivos was married in 1905 and he has four children. His wife died in 1921.

Walter Kykyri  
Social-Ethnic  
Oct. 31, 1938.

4.

He has not taken out his final papers for citizenship yet, but is going to night school now to qualify. When asked why he waited so long before becoming a citizen he stated, "I've been waiting twenty years to die because of my rheumatism and seeing that I'll not die soon, it's better late than never to become a citizen."

RM

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic

William Liukkonen and Runar Gustafson

Nov. 18, 1938.

#### FINNS IN MINNESOTA

John P. Kanerva, Duluth, Minnesota. Born in Kajaani, Oulunlääni, Finland, 1883.

His education included two years at the Valparaiso, Indiana, University.

Mr. Kanerva is a businessman. His father was a skilled shoemaker and a Notary in Finland.

Mr. Kanerva came to Finlayson, Minnesota, in 1900. He lived there for a while then moved to Sandstone. From Sandstone they moved to Hibbing, when Hibbing was just a boom town, or typical mining town, in 1901 or 1902. He worked in the iron mines there. From the money he earned in the mines he was able to enter the University. He was only able to complete two years of the University course, for he ran short of funds. He spent the following year traveling around the country, ending up in New York, where he worked on the stage, in the show business for four years. Then he went on the road. Later on he and his brother ran a show of their own in circusses and vaudeville. His act was a specialty juggling and wire walking act. In 1919 he started in business in Duluth and has been working in and out of Duluth ever since.

It was due to the influence of a relative in the United States that he came to this country, otherwise he would have probably never come. Economic conditions were fair in Finland at that time.

Compulsory military training was one of the main reasons why the

Duluth, Minnesota.

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Finnish young men left Finland to come to America.

Because his father was the only person who could draw up legal papers, he was a notary for a district in Finland. His father was very religious, if it was impossible to attend church on any Sunday, he would conduct the services in the home.

Mr. Kanerva is a member of the Knights of Kaleva.

Interviewed: Mrs. Anna Kangas

Date of Interview: Friday, January 6, 1939

Time: 4:00 o'clock

Name of interviewer: Toivo Torma

Source of information causing me to interview: Indefinite-no one person- a lot of talk has been made of their trip.

Circumstances of interview: A white house, four rooms, basement, bedrooms upstairs, room of interviewed-kitchen, papered walls and ceiling, table, bench, four chairs, new stove, contained separator, etc.

Description of Interviewed: Looked about 45 years of age, stocky, not fat, black hair, light blue eyes, good natured and amiable. Age 51

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## Interview

Name: Anne Kangas

Place of Birth-Hailusto, Finland

Date of Birth- 1888

Address: R.F.D. Box 21, Gilbert, Minnesota

Age-51

### Purpose of Interview:

Editor: This summer Mrs. Hjalmer Kangas, and daughter Ailie visitied ~~Fin~~ Finland. I believed it might be interesting to see her views on the changes occurring in Finland as a visitor from the United States sees it after a period of living in the United States. (Toivo Torma)

Our trip lasted two and one half months, with a 6 week stay in Finland. We started from home on June 6, 1938, and got back to New York on August, 20, 1938. The first thing which struck me with surprise was the apparent development of Trans-Atlantic Ocean service. When I first came to America in 1909, the ship which carried me from Helsinki, Finland, to London, England, was an example of dirt and ungentlemanly service.

The food was plain, consisting mainly of hardtack, jacketed potatoes, and salt herring or "silaka", a typical Finnish food. The rooms within the ship were dirty, with cobwebs hanging on the walls and corners. This condition, however, may be justified by the fact that there were no women working aboard the ship. I was sick most of the time, but I did not have a doctor attend to me; I still don't know whether there was a doctor aboard the ship. The food was rationed to us in a manner similar to feeding animals. We did not object. Coming from the rural sections of Finland, illiterate, not knowing a word of English, we took this accursed treatment for granted.

However, now, when I went back to Finland, 29 years later, I was sincerely surprised to see the luxurious conditions aboard the ship. I, of course, have read of the marvelous service in newspapers, but I was skeptical and did not believe the

news accounts until I beheld, before me, the truth of the matter.

On our arrival in Finland, we immediately visited Helsinki, the capitol. We had looked at New York a whole day, so we decided to do likewise in Finland, looking at Helsinki. To me Helsinki appeared a lot more sanitary and beautiful. Helsinki truly has beautiful buildings, very white and clean, with clean cut, well assembled streets, partly of cement, and others of cobblestone.

After our arrival, and with a quite thorough inspection of my native country's capitol, we decided to immediately begin our journey to my rural home. As well as I can remember, the roads have not changed much since my youth. They still were narrow, hilly, and curvy. No, I don't believe that the roads, especially those farther in the interior have changed much to the better.

On a comparative basis with American roads, I was astounded, and I believe, for very good reasons. I noticed no advertisements or political signs strung about on the sides of the roads. I do not know the reason for the lack of billboards by possibly Finnish politics is so simplified that they are unnecessary. There was also an apparent lack of safety signs and signals as compared to the United States. We would go upon a steep hill and directly upon its apex was a railroad track; such conditions, I believe, are dangerous. In our country we have come to depend quite greatly upon a sign preceeding a point of danger, but Finland obviously, seems to find no need for safety signals. The reason for this I think, is due to the lack of automobiles, especially in the interior of the country. Another reason may be that thenature of the roads does not encourage fast driving. I don't believe they have the hurry of the American traveler either.

I noticed that the exterior of the homes and buildings in the rural section have not changed much. The majority of the people still use the same structure and architecture. Very little cementis utilized in the construction of the buildings.

The interior of the homes, though, were increasingly modernized, better lighted, ventilated and sanitated. Lighter paint and wallpaper is now used. Telephones are common, although the community where we visitied has bery few.

Another thing which interested me was their newspapers. Oh, there was nothing radically unique about them except that I noticed in the classified advertisements

the need for teachers, nurses, etc. It appears that Finland has a lack of teachers, etc., or in other words, men and women of the professions.

Their educational system is also unique if compared to our own. Compulsory education is necessary up to the age of 16. Very few further their education, and those who do usually go to the Helsinki University. Finnish, of course, is the basic language taught in school, but the Swedish Language was also required ~~until~~ although now they are gradually dropping it out of their curriculum and are having the English Language as a required course in school.

Both men and women teach; the instructors board within the school itself, and very often they buy farms adjacent to the school ground, and in such fashion can make their work more convenient. Very often the men and women teachers get married, and living on a nearby farm, both go to teach in the morning. The salaries of the teachers are very low and it appears that the main goal of many of the teachers is to earn enough money so they can get to America. In asking a certain Mr. Haapamaki, a young rural school teacher whether he intends to come to visit America, he said, "It certainly is the object of my efforts, but at present I am discouraged because I must teach at least ten years, scrimping on food, clothers and board, and possibly then I may have enough to secure a ticket and other necessities vital to the trip."

Many of the people to whom I spoke, expressed a surging curiosity concerning America, its social and economic welfare, and so forth. They did not care to learn much about the political views, but they did, however, desire to know how Mr. ~~Roosevelt~~ Roosevelt, the president, was liked, in our country.

The Finnish, in a round about way, attempted to estimate the true extent of my wealth. They believe that in order that an American may visit a foreign country, he or she must be immensely rich. This reasoning is quite well justified since the dollar in Finland is equivalent to 40 marks; consequently it is capable of purchasing a comparatively huge amount. I tried to explain that I am not rich, that I have saved for many years in order to be able to come, but my explanation was futile, and eventually I gave up.

I have seen the movies coming from Finland and they all very well exemplified the mode of livelihood found in Finland.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
Runar Gustafson  
Dec. 1, 1938.

#### FINNS

Emil Karkkanen, 20 $\frac{1}{2}$  E. 4th Street, Duluth, Minnesota. Born at  
Turrin, Hammenlaani, Finland, 1894.

He was educated in grade school.

When Mr. Karkkanen finished grade school he went to work for the  
Finnish Government Railroad.

In 1913, dissatisfied with the low pay and the outlook for the  
future in general, and hearing of the possibilities for obtaining financial  
independence in the United States, he left Finland.

The first city in which he made his home was De Kalb, Illinois.  
There he worked in the steel mills for 10 years, as a machinist.

In 1922 he moved to Duluth, Minnesota, where he worked for the  
Clyde Iron Works for 10 years. During the last six years he has been  
employed on various Federal Works Projects.

Long working hours and hard work which did not leave him very much  
time for social affairs, is the reason for his lack of interest in them,  
although for a short time he was a member of the Finnish Workers' Club.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic

Runar Gustafson and William Liukkonen

Nov. 8, 1938.

#### FINNS

Henry Karonen, Rantala, Oulu Lääni, Finland. Born in 1872.

Came to Calumet, Michigan in 1903. He worked here for 4 years in the copper mines. Then moved to Duluth where he has worked ever since as a lumberjack.

Wages in the mines at that time was \$52.00 per month for a ten hour day, 6 days per week. Room and board was \$15.00 per month. They worked hard and it was dangerous in the mines.

Came to this country to make a better living. There was no scarcity of work, but the wages were very low in Finland.

No education other than confirmation school. Learned to read and write from a traveling teacher who traveled around the country conducting classes in the farm homes. This was one of the principal educational systems practices in Finland.

In Calumet, Michigan he belonged to the Temperance Society there. In Minnesota he belonged to the I.W.W. Movement.

FINNISH

Duluth, Minnesota  
Socio Ethnic  
Runar Gustafson  
October 7, 1938

Aili Kastell. Cromwell, Minnesota. Family Finnish. Born 1900 Superior, Wisconsin.  
3 yrs old when we moved to Cromwell. Occupation Farm Wife.

Parents John Erkkila and Kate Erkkila. Mother born in Pyhalaute, Finland in 1863.  
Came to Duluth in the spring of 1896. That winter while she was working in the St. Louis Hotel it caught fire and burned. Then she went to Moose Lake to her sister's place. From there she went to Superior where she married my father. They lived in Superior until 1903 when we moved to Cromwell.

I started in at 8 yrs of age in Cromwell. Didn't know any English whatsoever. Went to school until the fifth grade. From then on my schooling was scattered because of being forced to work out. Later I was able to finish the eighth and some high school. At present working as a Children's Instructor at summer camps.

Folklore Handed Down to Me by My Mother

When the cows had their calves they would burn 3 cedar torches in the barn. One person would carry three lighted torches three times around the cows starting at the head and going clockwise. This was to drive away evil spirit.

All ills were caused by evil spirits.

If you hear the first crow in the spring when you're in bed it means either violent illness or death.

If the first snow in the fall fell in the early morning it meant that in the community young children would die.

If the first snow fell at noon, middle aged people would die. If late in the evening it would be the old people.

Butter was given in a hot drink to cow after she had calved so that she would give richer milk.

The cow also was given fresh cooked coffee with the grounds, spirits of nitre, turpentine and a little pine tar with a few cobwebs out of the barn only mixed in it.

My husband's father being ship's Captain was renamed as soon as he rose to that position because the captain said we'll drop your old name into the bottom of the sea

and rename you from some part of the ship. the forecastle being part of the ship I'll name you Kastell.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Subject: Social Ethnic  
Sub. by: William Liukkonen  
Runar Gustafson  
Date: Oct. 7, 1938.

The Finns in Minnesota

Chas. Kauppi, 6-63rd Ave. W., Duluth. Born in Lummijoki, Finland, in 1865. Left Finland 1879. Came to Duluth with parents October 15, 1879. Worked with his father as fisherman and farming. Lived on Minnesota Point about 5 years. Worked in store as clerk for Mayor Henry Truelsn. Married in 1884. Moved to homestead near Nopeming. Lived there 4 years. Moved back to West Duluth. Started in grocery store business (26 years). Was alderman in West Duluth when West Duluth was village. When lived on farm near Nopeming was township clerk. Was elected County Commissioner of 5th district 1896. Was commissioner for 16 years. Was in draying business for a few years. Now with game fish department.

Medicine--pine tar, sauna.

Cure for itch--pine tar, sauna, cream. Rub pine tar and cream on itching parts.

Folks did not believe in superstitions.

No roads for transportation when first moved to country. Everything carried in pack sacks.

His home, a farm, was a one room log cabin with a stove in one corner and bunk in other. Home made wooden table in center of room. Helped to build the foundation of First National Bank Building.

County courthouse was built while commissioner. Introduced the original resolution to build courthouse where it now stands.

[  
Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
William Liukkonen and Runar Gustafson  
Dec. 14, 1938.

FINNS

John F. Kauppi, 621 W. 1st. Street, Duluth, Minnesota. Born at Imatra, Viiporinlääni, Finland. There were three children in the family.

He had three years of grade school education. He took up apprenticeship in a machine shop for three years.

He was a machinist in Finland.

Mr. Kauppi left Finland in 1910, and landed in Port Arthur, Canada. He worked there, in the woods and on the railroad, until 1914. In 1914 he began sailing on the Great Lakes. He worked at that for seven seasons, making his home port at Duluth, Minnesota. He left the lakes, and went to work as a saw filer and blacksmith in the woods.

"My buddy got the fever to come to America a week before we left. We had always chummed around together, so of course I got the fever too. I had a girl in Finland, so I told her that I was going to America to make a stake, then I'd come back and we would get married. The next week we bought tickets to Port Arthur. When we landed there, we got a job in the woods right away as a cookee and blacksmith. The wages were thirty-five and forty dollars per month, with room and board. Cookees worked sixteen hours a day. The food and living conditions were fair.

"They were hiring men to work on the boats in Fort William, so we went there and hired out as firemen. Sailed for seven seasons. Worked six hours shifts, twelve hours a day. The pay was fifty-two dollars a month, with board."

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Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
Stanley Levine  
Nov. 17, 1938.

#### THE FINNS IN MINNESOTA

Mrs. A. Kehto, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  East Fifth Street, Duluth. Born at Siikanen, Finland, in 1882. Her parents were farmers.

She is a housewife.

Mrs. Kehto had desired to come to the United States ever since she was a child in Finland, because of the many rosy stories told of conditions in America. In Finland there was great poverty for her. Work was to be had, but wages were pitifully low.

She left Finland at the age of 19 when her sister sent her the funds for the trip. He came directly to Crystal Falls, Michigan, where her sister lived, and stayed there until 1922, when she moved to Duluth. She has been here since.

Her first job in Crystal Falls was in a boarding house. The hours were from 4 a.m. to 9 p.m. It was always a 16-18 hour workday. She received \$10.00 per month.

Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
Walter Harju  
Jan. 6, 1939.

FINNS

Interview with Hilda Gustaava Kinnunen.

Interviewed by W. A. Harju, 1309-5th Ave. No., Mpls., Minn.

Hilda Gustaava Kinnunen is now 69 years old, born in Finland, Nov. 12, 1869. Most of her life in America has been spent on the Farm homestead in Menagha, Minnesota. After her husband died, she lived with part of the family on the farm, but during the depression the farm was foreclosed by the bank and she lost her home. The last few years she has spent her time looking for work and doing some house work occasionally wherever she has been able to get a job. Like all mothers she is interested in her children and spends much time with them. Wadena County gives her an old age pension of \$12 per month which of course does not come close to providing for her.

The maiden name of Mrs. Kinnunen was Hilda Gustaava Jaaska. She was born in Marrasjarvi township near Rovaniemi in the Province of Oulu in Finland. She married Peter Kinnunen at Rovaniemi in 1890. Because of the hard times in Finland, Peter Kinnunen, after their marriage, hearing from a friend in the United States, telling him that there was land to be had came to America. He came alone leaving his wife and son behind in 1891. He left Hankoniemi, Finland on June 3rd of that year. He came directly to New York Mills Minnesota from Finland and the trip took several weeks. Mr. Kinnunen was a young man of 28 at the time and had great hopes for the future. He was born in the Province of Kuopio, October 2nd, 1862. Before being married he had moved to northern Finland and worked on the highways

Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
Walter Harju  
Jan. 6, 1939.

and railroads. He also worked in the woods in the old country which experience helped him when he took his homestead near Menagha. It was in Rovaniemi that he met Hilda Gustaava Jaaska and they were married there in 1890. Mrs. Kinnunen came to Menagha with her son about two years later. They also began their voyage from Hankoniemi, Finland and from there came to Copenhagen, Denmark, from there again to Hull, England, across England by train to Liverpool and from Liverpool to Quebec, Canada. From Canada they came through Sault St. Marie, Michigan to Minneapolis and from Minneapolis to New York Mills, Minnesota.

The Allan Steamship Company at the time operated many vessels carrying immigrants to this country. It was on this line that she and her son came. Mrs. Kinnunen says that it was in England already where her troubles began after leaving Finland. She said that she had over a hundred Finnish marks of money and her husband had written to her that she should get it exchanged into American money immediately on arrival. She said that she met a Finnish man in Hull who claimed that he had been in America before and that he was also on his way to New York. On the trip while in England he had been very kind and helpful which Mrs. Kinnunen rewarded with confidence. Since her husband had told her to get the money exchanged she gave the money to him so that the matter could be taken care of properly and with dispatch.

When they went on the ship in Liverpool the man had already disappeared with her money and she has not seen him since. Coming on the ship she says that one could get by even though there was no money. But upon landing at Quebec, even though they had their railroad ticket, made continuing the journey very difficult when they were penniless. They went for

Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic

Walter Harju

Jan. 6, 1939.

many days without food before they arrived in New York Mills which was their destination.

When they arrived, Mr. Kinnunen was at the station waiting for them and they were immediately taken to the homestead where he had built a small log cabin which is the basis for the present day house which has been built by addition to the original log cabin.

Mrs. Kinnunen says that she has always worked hard from the pioneer days on. She took care of the chores while Mr. Kinnunen prepared the land for cultivation. In later years, just before the depression the family milked as high as twenty-three cows. In the early days they made hay with a scythe and raked it up with hand rakes. All the family during haying season worked in the fields. During the early days the times were hard. Picking blueberries at one time was their greatest source of cash income.

Mr. and Mrs. Kinnunen reared a family of 12 children on the homestead. The Kinnunen family from the time that they left Finland were progressive minded having been connected there with the early labor movement.

Mrs. Kinnunen thinks that there are a number of old people in the New York Mills, Menagha and Sebekka who should be consulted on the pioneer life of the region. She says that these people are getting old and if the information is not gathered soon it will be completely lost.

This interview took place at W. A. Harju's home, 1309-5th Ave. No. during which time several helpings of coffee were consumed in the customary Finnish manner.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Subject: Social Ethnic  
Sub. by: William Liukkonen  
Runar Gustafson  
Date: Oct. 18, 1938.

The Finns in Minnesota

Joseph Kinunen, 464 Mesabe Ave., Duluth, Minn. Oulu Laani Finland  
1894, Nov. 6. Came to Cloquet, Minnesota in 1912. Lived there until the  
fire in 1918. Moved to Duluth 1918 and has resided here ever since. Worked  
first in a sawmill, then a paper mill and then a clothing store. Am now  
working as a powder man.

Can play the violin, piano and accordion. Was educated in grammar  
school and two years high, two years night school here.

One way to make the children behave was to frighten by telling them  
that they would steer the wild animals on them. When they (the children) were  
doing wrong, the evil spirit in the children would come out and call all the  
wild animals to eat the children.

Recreation was hunting and fishing both summer and winter.

One way to hunt bear in the winter time was to search for tracks and  
then when the tracks were found, a huge circle was made around the tracks, if  
the bear track stayed within the circle, we knew the bear was inside and if he  
had walked outside another circle was made. Then the hunters would march in  
from all sides until the bear was found.

Skis were made entirely by hand out of white birch knot tree. The  
wood was split, and the ends would warp. This curve was used as the natural  
center of the ski. One end was curved for the point by placing it in a form  
and steaming. They were then planed and smoothed, pine tar was used to color  
and preserve them. The pine tar and skis were placed in a long oven and  
heated, and then the pine tar was brushed on the skis. Then the ski was  
again placed in the oven until the surplus tar bubbled up, then this surplus

Duluth, Minnesota.

Subject: Social Ethnic  
Sub. by: William Liukkonen  
Runar Gustafson  
Date: Oct. 18, 1938.

was rubbed off and another coat applied. This was done 6 times until the ski was perfectly saturated with tar. This acted both as a perfect gliding surface and as a preservative, no oils or waxes were used. Regular skis were  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide, 8 to 10 ft. long. Racing skis were  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide, 9 ft. long.

For stomach disorders the bark of the Mountain Ash is boiled and then strained and then cooled and drunk. This topped the pains and healed the stomach.

For sprains, bruises and cuts, and other skin diseases a pitch was made from spruce gum, and smeared over the wound until they healed.

The pitch was smeared on, left over night, in the morning washed off and left bare for four hours, and then the pitch was applied again.

Pine tar or Pitch Tar (Pikitarva) was used for cold, chills. The tar was mixed with hot water and sugar thoroughly shaken and then drunk.

2  
Duluth, Minnesota.

Subject: Social Ethnic  
Submitted by: Stanley Levine  
Date: Oct. 20, 1938.

The Finns in Minnesota

Mrs. N. Kivi, 225 E. 5th St., Duluth. Parents were both son and daughter of farmers in North Finland. There were five sisters, and three brothers, besides herself and parents in family. She came to Thompson, Minn., at age of 12, stayed there a short while, and then went to New York Mills where she lived 28 years. Came to Duluth in 1923.

Fourth grade education in New York Mills and night school in Duluth. Has done mostly housework.

Attends Finnish Lutheran Church.

Is rather stout and has hard time getting around. Her father came here three years before she came to America with her mother and the rest of the family. Her father had purchased a 28 acre farm at New York Mills. There were mostly rabbits and fishing at Lief Lake and Russ Lake, and a few small deer. There is all small timber around that territory. She had to make dresses, shoes and other things for her family and herself. She cured hides to make leather by cleaning the hides, laying it over with lye, washing it, and then putting it into willow water for a few days. After that, let the leather dry, then cut it for shoe leather.

She learned her shoe-making from her father. He was a professional shoemaker for neighbor farmers in Finland.

There were never any forest fires around New York Mills. There were lots of Indians around there. They had small acres and shacks. They grew mostly potatoes and corn; hunted and fished.

When her father plowed the land, he found many bows and arrows, pearls, shells, and other Indian things.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Subject: Social Ethnic  
Submitted by: Stanley Levine  
Date: Oct. 20, 1938.

The Indians, to her mind, acted very strange. They would come around to the shores of Lief Lake at night and dig holes. Nobody knew what they found by the digging, and everybody was afraid to go out at night and watch them dig.

To complete financial transactions and the like, they had to go to Fergus Falls, a distance of about 60 miles.

The N. P. Railroad was already there when she came and then the Soo Line came in a number of years after she was there.

They had two oxtteams at home. She didn't like oxtteams, as they were too slow. There were lots of oxtteam around there at that time. Every big farm had five or six teams.

They used to use 22 men during threshing season. Now, with machinery, her farm would only use three or four. They can now do in one hour what used to take a day and with fewer men. Machinery are taking the places of men. What about the future?

Many men went to the World War from our territory. They all came back but one. He was killed in action.

There was also a large German territory around New York Mills. The Finns and Germans inter-married quite frequently. She can't believe that Germany could be so hard on Jews and Catholics, thinks Hitler does not represent the will of the German populace.

Her father came to America because there were tales of good times in this country.

Conditions were comparatively good when she came. Farm prices were fairly good and crops plentiful. Anybody who wanted one could get a job, on farm or in rising industry.

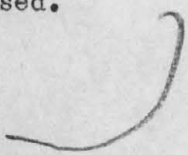
Duluth, Minnesota.

Subject: Social Ethnic  
Submitted by: Stanley Levine  
Date: Oct. 20, 1938.

There were many wolves in that territory. They killed sheep quite often. The County would pay \$12 for a wolf-skin. The skins had to be taken to Fergus Falls, the County Seat. It was a 7 day trip. Three days each way, and a day's rest in Fergus Falls. Now that same trip would take only three hours back and forth.

When she saw her first automobile she was struck staggering with laughter. It was a local doctor who bought the first automobile. He gave her a three mile ride and she walked back. It seemed funny to her that there were no oxen or horses pulling the machine. The noises made her laugh for many weeks after.

Soon after the doctor appeared with his car, all the farmers began to buy cars. The old people were at first very scared of the cars. When they saw the cars coming down the road they would run into their houses. They would cry, in Finnish, "The devil is coming! The devil is coming! The animals were very scared at the sight and sounds of the cars, too. People had a hard time making them behave when a car passed.



RM

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
William Liukkonen and Runar Gustafson  
Nov. 9, 1938.

#### FINNS

Sam Koivunen, Cook Home. Born in Tuurin Laani Finland, 1860.

Came to Massachusetts, Worchester, in 1901. Stayed there two months and then came to Duluth, moved to Tower, where he lived for 3 years. Worked as a lumberjack at a wage between 30 and 35 dollars per month; work was plentiful at that ime. Came to this country to better his living conditions as times were poor in Finland when he left there.

Filed a homestead in Cook in 1903 on which he has lived off and on there ever since. Lumbering has been his chief occupation.

Was educated in the army in Finland while he served his 4 years as a soldier (compulsory military training). Schools were very scarce in Finland at that time.

The only medicine that they had at that time was pine tar and the sauna. If these two didn't cure you, you died.

Has not taken part in any social or cultural activities in this country at all.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Subject: Social Ethnic  
 Sub. by: William Liukkonen  
 Runar Gustafson  
 Date: Oct. 11, 1938.

The Finns in Minnesota

Charles Kolander, 505 W. 3rd St. Born in Pori, Finland, 1877.

Came to Hibbing, Minnesota in 1900. Late the same year moved to Chisholm, Minn. In 1905 moved to Korvankyla. Lived there  $13\frac{1}{2}$  years. First resident in Korvankyla. Three men left Chisholm to set up homesteads. Andrew Wyland named the Township of Korvankyla. The three families were Otto Maki, Oscar Wirta and Charles Kolander. Charles Kolander was named the king of the Township because he was the oldest settler and the largest man. Moved from there to Kinney, Minnesota. Lived there 4 years from Kinney. Moved to Zim, Minn. Lived there  $7\frac{1}{2}$  years.

The men went to Korvankyla first in the fall and built there homesteads. Then went to Chisholm and got their womenfolks and brought them there the following spring. There was so much water there that they had to carry their women most of the way. There was only six miles of road, so the rest of the way had to be made on deer trails. Midsummer Day he arrived with three small children. The lumber for the cabins were hand sawed from timber cut on the homestead. The cabin was 12 x 16', no floor and only one small window. The cows were kept in the same building. The second day that they arrived, Mr. Kolander cut himself with axe and was laid up for two weeks. Wolves used to howl all night long around the cabin.

The land was cleared by axe, saw and grubhoe. The homestead consisted of 150 acres. The closest neighbor was Otto Maki one mile away. Kinney was the closest town 16 miles away. There was no road into there until later. Mail was carried by being packed on the back across country following deer trails. Chisholm, Minnesota burned while they were at their

Duluth, Minnesota.

Subject: Social Ethnic  
Sub. by: William Liukkonen  
Runar Gustafson  
Date: Oct. 11, 1938.

new home and they didn't receive word until 3 weeks later.

One hundred pounds of flour, box stove and \$8 in money. They lived on black coffee and salted raw deer meat. The following summer after they arrived they started to get milk from the cow and vegetables from the garden. They used to exchange with other families for the food that they needed. It took him seven years to clear on forty acre plot. A river ran through his land so it was comparatively easy to get land cleared for hay for the cow and a garden. The river is now named Paavola. Good land.

The first school was built on Makis land after they had been there for five years. In the spring because of floods corduroy roads had to be built so the children could go to school. The first teacher was Edmund Anderson who is now residing in Duluth.

Theirs was the first white child born in that section. He was born in the following spring after they settled there. The mosquitos were so thick there that some of the settlers had to leave there.

For cuts and bruises they used Balsam Pitch. The cut that he received the second day he cured by using the pitch.

For stomach cramps they used the salt water that they had used for salting fish and meat.

One of the neighbor ladies assisted her with the birth of her first baby in that district. Mrs. Lindholm was the lady.

The Virginia & Rainy Lake Co. was the first logging company in that district.

When the horses got sick and they tried to cure him, a man would

Duluth, Minnesota.

Subject: Social Ethnic  
Sub. by: William Liukkonen  
Runar Gustafson  
Date: Oct. 11, 1938.

cover himself with a blanket and then jump out unexpectedly in front of the horse, and the scare was supposed to cure the horse.

One of the neighbors was afraid of thunder, and whenever that happened he used to call the neighbors together because he believed that it would not strike them if they were all together.

There was no means of recreation. In fact they never had time for recreation. They worked seven days a week.

Later on they used to gather at each other's houses and having no instrument one would sing and the others would dance.

At night one of the neighbors used to fill the cowbells with hay so that the bells wouldn't bring the wolves. This was unnecessary because the wolves would never bother the cattle as there were plenty of deer for them to feed on. It wasn't until the country became heavily settled and the game killed off that the wolves began to bother the cattle.

The first automobile that he ever saw was when he came to Duluth to get his citizenship paper. This was in 1909. He was so inquisitive that he asked the driver for a ride and was given one for a few blocks.

Came to Minnesota because there was a shortage of labor. Miner.

Built their own home in Chisholm--two room, and when they left there they sold it for twenty dollars. He built it of hand hewed timber. Two families lived together in this house. Later an addition was added and Otto Maki lived in that making three families in a three room house.

Moved to America to find a better country to live in.

The reason they built the sauna was because of a passion that all Finns have to keep clean and that was the best plan to do it.

The only way that they knew that there were any neighbors moving in was

Duluth, Minnesota.

Subject: Social Ethnic  
Sub. by: William Liukkonen  
Rumar Gustafson  
Date: Oct. 11, 1938.

by the sound of their axes, clearing the land in the distance. They would then take out their compass and line it up with the sound, and then blaze a trail into them.

RM



Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic

William Liukkonen and Runar Gustafson

Nov. 28, 1938.

#### FINNS

Eli Komanti, 246 Lake Avenue South, Duluth, Minnesota. Born at Vaasanlaani, Finland, 1888. There were nine in the family.

He was educated in Confirmation school.

Mr. Komanti came to Republic, Michigan, in 1909. He worked in the iron mines there for six months. Then he went to Winona, Michigan, where, for three months, he worked in the copper mines. He then went to work in the copper mines at Hancock, Michigan. He worked there for four years. He went to Ironwood, Michigan, then, where he worked in the iron mines for the next five years. He then moved to Montreal, Wisconsin. He worked in the iron mines there for four years. He moved to a farm at Owens, Wisconsin. He lived on the farm for nine months, then he moved to Duluth, Minnesota, where he has resided since.

At present he is an electrician's helper at the Zenith Furnace Co.

He left Finland because the wages were too low there. Heard that wages were good and easy to earn, so he came to the United States.

Work in the mines was very dangerous so the miners would move from mine to mine trying to find a safer place to work. Wages were \$2.00 per day. Room and board cost the miner \$12.00 per month.

His father and mother were tenant farmers in Finland.

Duluth, Minnesota

Subject: Social Ethnic  
Submitted by: Stanley Levine  
Date: October 18, 1938.

The Finns in Minnesota

Mrs. Fannie Korpela, 1004 W. 1st St. Born in Oulu, Finland, Dec. 19, 1886. Has two sisters. Five in family, including herself. Mother is still living. Father died in 1931.

Her mother born on farm in territory of Rantsila, Finland. Father in Oulu, Finland, a city of about 50,000 population.

She came directly to New York Mills in 1895. Her father had been there 5 years before she came over with mother and sisters.

She left New York Mills at age of 16. Moved to Virginia, Minnesota, alone and stayed there about 25 years. Went to San Francisco for 4 years and then to Duluth for the last 7 years.

Had a public school education up to the 4th grade in Finland. Also night school in Virginia, as well as public school in New York Mills.

Occupation: Dress making, housework.

Finnish Lutheran Church member. Was member of Finnish Unitarian Church in Virginia for many years.

"When I came to New York Mills, there were terrible hard times. The men couldn't get any work on the railroads or any place else.

"Conditions were so bad that the farmers that year couldn't afford to pay anything but meals to the threshers and so the men had to work for board and room. Things stayed that way for about 4 years. We got our food by bartering it for stuff at stores and with other farmers.

"There were only a few country roads when I came there. Now there are big roads. We had lots of neighbors. One about every half mile.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Subject: Social Ethnic  
Submitted by: Stanley Levine  
Date: Oct. 18, 1938.

"The old settlers used to say that they got the land from the Indians in the first place by giving a package or two of tobacco and the Indians would then leave the land. The Indians didn't seem to want to live near the whites.

"There are still a lot of Indians Northwest of New York Mills, around Deer River, Cass Lake, and other places that went there from New York Mills territory.

"My father used to catch a lot of fish for our own use at Leif Lake, about three miles from our farm.

"The country was very scarce in game. There were mostly rabbits and small game like that around.

"We got all our meat from our stock of chickens, swine and cattle.

"There is an old custom on Midsummer Day Night in Finland, according to my mother, when young girls looked into Lakes and Wells until they saw their future husband.

"One fellow in Finland was in love with a girl. He found out that the girl was going to her father's well to look into it to see her future husband. So the lover lowered himself into the well and hung there. The girl came and looked down into the well. She saw the fellow who was in love with her, there. She didn't like him at all, but when she saw him there she thought he was her ordained lover and so she married him.

"When I was very young, I was walking across a creek on a board, and someone yelled to me to stop. I was so frightened I fell down, and though I didn't hurt myself, my face began to swell up and turn blue. The doctor could do nothing. Then an old herb-woman brought herbs for me to take with water out of the creek I was crossing, when I fell. A sauna was given me every

Duluth, Minnesota.

Subject: Social Ethnic  
Submitted by: Stanley Levine  
Date: Oct. 18, 1938.

day. I soon became well.

"My brother once told me that a friend of his in Finland was walking along the road home when suddenly something peculiar, all red-colored, flitted across the road. The fellow could not figure out what it was. Then when he got home he found his house was on fire.

"When my mother was married, and all through the old days in Finland, people were married in black. There were no marriages in white.

"In Finland we washed clothes in winter by going out on the lake and making a hole in the ice.

"One of the best winter sports was using the 'Patska Helka.' This was a chair with runners under it. A person would run behind and push it."

RM

FINNISH

Duluth, Minnesota  
Socio Ethnic  
Stanley Levine and William Liukkonen  
October 23, 1938

Mrs. S. Korpela, 325 E. 5th St. Both parents were Finnish townspeople. She was born in Pari, Finland.

Came to the United States in 1908, to Duluth and has been here ever since.

She had grammar school education in Finland. Housework her sole occupation. Attends Finnish Lutheran Church.

She was married when she came here. There were fairly good times then. Prices were much cheaper. Pork chops were 15¢ per pound at that time. Milk 7¢ per quart. Men's laboring wages from \$2 to \$2.25 per day when she came.

She says there is no truth to the statement that the winters are getting warmer in Duluth. It is just like the weather in earlier times: one winter would be warm and the next one cold, and vice versa. Coal was very cheap at that time.

The weather in Duluth is just about the same as Pari, Finland, she states.

FINNISH

Duluth, Minnesota  
Socio Ethnic  
William Liukkonen and Runar  
Gustafson  
November 18, 1938

Heikki Koskela, 217 No. 2nd Ave. E., Duluth. Born at Kuortani, Finland,  
August 24, 1887.

Mr. Koskela graduated from the public school and agricultural school.

He was a farmer's son.

He left Finland to come to America in 1907, Boston, then left Boston for Wallace, Idaho, left there for Montana where he worked in the lumber camps. Traveled around the country for a while and then returned to Finland where he stayed for 4 years. He then came back to the United States and entered Valparaiso University, Indiana. This was the most popular college for the Finns in the United States. The tuition and lodgings were very reasonable, so it was termed "The Poor Man's College". He studied there for 2 years. After he left college he worked as a seaman on the lakes for one season. Has worked for the Duluth Steam Bath Company ever since.

Mr. Koskela is a member of the Knights of Kaleva and a member of the Finnish Lutheran Church, also a member of the Moose Lodge.

## DULUTH, MINNESOTA.

Social Ethnic  
Stanley Levine  
Nov. 22, 1938.

## FINNS

Aldrich Koski, Duluth, Minnesota. Born at Calumet, Michigan, 1900.

He had an 8th grade education at Calumet, Michigan.

He is a timber worker and dairy worker. He is a member of the Farmer-Labor Party, Finnish Workers' Federation and the Minnesota Timber Workers' Union.

Mr. Koski came to Duluth from Calumet in 1915 and has worked between Minnesota and Washington, largely in timber camps.

Forty percent of the timber workers of Minnesota, about 4,000 men, are Finnish according to his estimate.

In the days previous to union conditions in the timber camps, he states that wages were only \$20 per month plus board, called "slop" by the timber workers. This "slop" was made with second-rate foods bought at cheap prices. Today the timber workers receive \$45 per month plus board. The board today is the best of food, consisting of substantial meats and pastries at least three times a week.

In the old days, the beds were wood bunkers. They were very small and two men crowded into them. Because of the fact that the men had to crawl into the bunkers from one narrow end, the bunkers were known as "muzzle loaders," from the way in which the set-up resembled the muzzle of a gun.

There was absolutely no ventilation in the rooms where the men slept. Clothing hung up in the rooms all night.

Shower baths, the existence of which is now compulsory to the operation of camps, never were dreamt of in those days. Sometimes men did not

## DULUTH, MINNESOTA.

Social Ethnic  
Stanley Levine  
Nov. 22, 1938.

take a bath all winter. Men went to work at 5 a.m. and did not finish until 5 p.m., or even later.

Today the hours are only a maximum of eight, with time and a quarter for overtime work. In the old days they worked a 75 hour week, today they work a 48 hour week.

The conditions of camps in former days are somewhat expressed by the regulations of the Industrial Commission of the State of Minnesota, effective June, 1937.

## FINNISH

Duluth, Minnesota  
 Socio Ethnic  
 William Liukkonen and  
 Runar Gustafson  
 December 6, 1938

1. Name and address of informant --- John Kuikka, 469 Mesabe Avenue.  
 Duluth, Minnesota
2. Place and date of birth --- Born 1902 in Kuopionlääni, Finland.
3. Family --- There were eleven children in the family. Parents had a small farm.
4. Places lived in, with dates --- Kuopio, Finland 1902 to 1923.  
 Duluth, Minnesota 1923 to 1938.
5. Education, with dates --- 2 years of grade school.  
 4 years of trade school.
6. Occupations and accomplishments --- Shoemaker.
7. Other points gained in interview. --- Wages at the time that he left Finland were very low, one could barely exist on them. Friends wrote and told him to come to Duluth where he could start up his own shop and be independent for life.  
 It was his opinion that Finns generally take great pride in their work. Using only the best of materials and always striving for perfection. It was a great surprise to them when they first came to this country and saw the articles produced and the methods used in producing them. They thought it was a crime for the American manufacturers to sell such poor goods as they sold and demand such high prices for them.

## TRADE OR CRAFT SCHOOLS

Attending Craft schools is compulsory for everyone wishing to learn a trade in Finland. These trade schools are under the supervision of the various trade unions. Only on completion of the course could one enter a factory in which this craft is practised, or start up a business of one's own.

Those that have had preliminary training in a craft were allowed to enter the school free of charge. Those that have not had any preliminary training must pay the tuition of five hundred marks for the first year.

The craft schools are run on practically the same basis as factories except that the workers are paid no wages for the first two years, although they receive room and board

from the school. After the first two years they are paid a small salary.

(The following case deals with shoemaking.) Each student is given a part of the shoe and taught how to make it. When he becomes adept in making one part he is given another, and so on, until he is able to make the complete shoe.

At the completion of the four year term, the student is given all the material to make a complete pair of shoes. He then goes to work, and when it is completed, he presents it to the board of Master Shoe Makers. The board inspects it, if it passes their inspection the student is given a Diploma. If not, the student has to continue working until he is able to make a pair of shoes that will pass the board.

Finnish Proverbs? & Omens.

Folklore handed down to me by my mother. Aili Kastell, Cromwell, Minn. Interview by Runar Gustafson, Oct.7, 1938. Superior, Wisc.

When the cows had their calves they would burn three cedar torches in the barn. One person would carry three lighted torches three times around the cows starting at the head and going clockwise. This was to drive away evil spirits.

All ills were caused by evil spirits.

If you hear the first crow in the spring when you're in bed it means either violent illness or death.

If the first snow in the fall fell in the early morning, it meant that in the community young children would die.

If the first snow fell at noon, middle aged people would die. If late in the evening it would be the old people.

Butter was given in a hot drink to a cow after she had calved so that she would give richer milk.

The cow was also given fresh cooked coffee with the grounds, spirits of nitre, turpentine and a little pine tar with a few cobwebs out of the barn only, mixed in it.

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By William Kuittunen, Duluth, Minn. Interview by William Liukkonen and Runar Gustafson. Oct.19,1938.

North and south could be told by splitting a tree in two and bending each split half. The south half would bend but the north half would break.

It is believed that, in the early spring when cattle are taken out for the first time, if a-lade the lady of the farm stands straddled on the roof and the bull let out backwards, the cattle will always come home in the evenings without anyone getting them; unless this is done the cattle will not come home without being driven in.

Duluth, Minnesota  
Socio Ethnic  
William Liukkonen and Runar Gustafson  
October 19, 1938

## FINNISH

William Kuittunen, Room 6, Salena Hotel.

Laani, Finland on a farm. Came to Winton, Minn. in 1909. Worked for the St. Croix Lumber Co. as a sawyer. Stayed there until the spring break up. Wages \$30 per month. Then worked for the Swallow-Hopkins Lumber Co. Worked all that following summer, and piled lumber there for 5 years. Worked alternately for the St. Croix Co. and the Swallow Hopkins Co. for 17 years. Came to Duluth ten years ago and has been working here ever since. Came to the U.S. because he couldn't make any money in Finland.

Had to work from dark to dark in the lumber camps. The men were taken to their jobs before dawn and had to work until they could no longer see the following evening. Pay was \$30.00 per month and board. The noon meal had to be eaten out in the woods; as soon as one had eaten he had to start to work. They had to work under all weather regardless of what it was. The food was usually good enough to get along. The bunk houses were so poorly built that the snow used to cover the bunks. Worked six days a week, with one day of rest. Christmas was the only holiday besides Sunday.

Had only one year of Grammar school; whatever he learned since then was from study. Age 56 years.

North and south could be told by splitting a tree in two and bending each split half. The south half would bend but the north half would break.

When making skis the south half of the split birch would bend naturally, but the north half wouldn't, therefore the south half of the tree was the only part used.

If in his sleep, any animal attacked him, that meant that a storm was coming up. One day while he was on his way to Winton from Silver Lake with another man, he told him of his dreams the night before, and said jokingly "I'll bet we're going to get a storm before we get to town. Before they reached Basswood Lake, one of the worst blizzards he has<sup>d</sup> even seen, hit them, so they were very close to being lost. Ever since then when he dreams those dreams a storm always arises.

If one could hear steam whistle a long way off it means clear weather, if not, bad weather.

It is believed that, in the early spring when the cattle are taken out for the first time, if the lady of the farm stands straddled on the roof and the bull let out backwards, the cattle will always come home in the evenings without anyone getting them; unless this is done the cattle will not come home without being driven.

If in the spring when the horse is lead to the pasture, oats are left on the ground near the third post from the gate, and the horse goes to the oats, it is believed that that horse will never try to jump out of that pasture, but always will keep his head toward the ground.

If, when a house is being built, money is not placed under the first cornerstone, that house will sag.

To get rid of a toothache all one had to do was to take a sliver off from the board that a dead person has lain on, and make the tooth bleed, from then on the tooth would never ache.

If when a child got sick from fright, that child in order to be cured, had to be taken to a road that led to a cemetery (no other road would do). The child had to fall, with outstretched arms and legs, three times across the road, and the third time got up and ran home without looking back, this would cure the child.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
Stanley Levine  
Dec. 12, 1938.

#### FINNS

Mrs. George Kuosisto, 22 E. 4th Street, Duluth, Minnesota.

Born at Trimountain, Michigan, 1910. Her parents were farmers in Finland. Mrs. Kuosisto had two sisters and six brothers.

She had a fifth grade education at Trimountain, Michigan.

Mrs. Kuosisto came directly to Duluth in 1927. She was married in 1932. She has one child, a boy.

She has done housework most of her life.

"Sure, I think inter-marriage between different nationalities is alright. Lots of Finns have inter-married and there is nothing wrong with it.

Economic conditions certainly were better here when I moved here in 1927. Wages were higher and jobs were pretty easy to get.

"My mother used to use many old Finnish sayings and proverbs and so forth, but I've forgotten them by now. It's easy to forget those things."

Mrs. Kuosisto is a member of The Finnish Womens' Club.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic  
Stanley Levine  
Dec. 14, 1938.

FINNS

Mr. George Kuuosisto, 22 E. 4th Street, Duluth, Minnesota. Born at Duluth, Minnesota in 1908.

He had a 5th grade education in Duluth.

He has been a timber worker, a cookee in timber camps and a dock worker.

He is a member of the Finnish Workers' Club.

He has a brother and a sister.

"I'm so used to reading Finnish papers in my national language that I can't understand how other nationalities can't have local papers in their own languages. Look how we support three daily papers that are published in this territory alone and carry much local news along with the national and international news. We've had Finnish papers around Duluth as long as I can remember.

~~"The influence of the Church on the younger generation is losing out fast. Very few of the younger people go to church and those that do go to church do it only because their mothers and fathers make them go. I don't know what is behind this change away from the church or this refusal to go, but maybe it's because the church deals only with sort of vague things that the young people aren't interested in. The younger people want to know how to get jobs so they can marry and settled down, etc. They want to know what's keeping them from getting these jobs when they know that there are plenty of factories and stores where they could go to work if there was work to do. The Church doesn't help them answer these things and so the younger people just sort of lose interest.~~

FINNS

Place: Gilbert Minn.  
Subject: Social Ethnic  
Submitted By: Walter Kykyri  
Date: Oct. 14, 1938

Interviewed Konstant Kykyri, Gilbert, Minnesota, October 11, 1938, at 3 P.M.

This informant was born December 9, 1871 in Halsuan pitaja (township), Vasaan Laani (county), Finland. His parents were farm laborers. Entered United States at New York in the summer of 1890, going directly to Negaunee, Michigan, where he stayed two months. He then went to Duluth, Minnesota, and only remained there two months before moving to Ely, Minnesota. He lived in Tower and Ely alternately for two years. In 1893 he went to Ironwood where he stayed four years. He next moved to Sparta, Minnesota in 1897. When the Village of Sparta was moved he went with most of the villagers to Gilbert, where he lived until 1928. He then moved to the farm in Biwabik township where he now resides.

This moving from place to place was a continual hunt for a better job.

The main purpose in his coming to this country was to earn the price of a farm in the old country, but he was never able to get far enough ahead financially.

Mr. Kykyri was married in Ironwood in 1896 and by this marriage had eight children, of whom one died.

He became a citizen of this country in 1903.

The informant first worked as a miner, then as a store clerk. He managed a boarding-house for miners for four years in Sparta. For several years he was a sub-contractor furnishing mining timber to the mines. When the mines closed in Gilbert he entered politics and so managed to eke out a living. He was elected street commissioner of Gilbert in 1919.

He has been a member of the Knights of Kaleva (a conservative, nationalist Finnish organization) since 1902, and a member of the Finnish

Temperance Society since 1895.

Vasaan Laani in Finland was similar to Northern Minnesota in climate. It was then a new farming community just being cleared of the forests. The closest town to Mr. Kykyri's home was 42 miles away. His biggest ambition is to go back to Finland for the Olympic games in 1949.

It is customary among the Finnish people when introduced to one another to ask from what part of Finland they come from. If one should answer "Halsua", the other will invariably recite several lines of a humorous poem, such as this:

"Halsua is a small chapel

Where the priest and sexton battled."

I am trying to get the complete poem but so far am unsuccessful. I obtained the story of the poem.

In 1889 the regular pastor of the Halsua church had died and an assistant pastor had charge of the parish. In Finland at that time it was customary that the income for one year of the parish should go to the family of the deceased pastor.

The assistant pastor was a bachelor of about forty years of age. Financially, he was slightly embarrassed. He began to court the sexton's young daughter and seemingly made fair progress. This of course was resented by the young men of the community, so the son of the deceased pastor also began to court the sexton's daughter. He was the successful suitor and became engaged to the girl.

Now this of course riled the assistant pastor who saw his wages and his girl going to the pastor's son. He felt that the sexton was to blame to a certain extent. One Sunday just after the sermon was concluded, the assistant pastor read off the names of those who were delinquent in taxes to the township, as was customary in Finland at that time. (Newspapers were not in usage at that time.) When the assistant pastor came to the

sexton's name, he shouted it with all his might.

It was the custom that if the sexton's taxes were unpaid, everybody forgot about it, so the sexton of course did not like this undue advertizing. So when the final hymn was being sung he slipped into the sacristy and while helping the minister remove his vestments, asked the assistant pastor, "Why did you shout my name so loud; the people know I owe money on my taxes."

The assistant pastor answered, "I do as I please; I am like a lion."

The sexton snorted with disdain into the assistant's ear. This was the last straw for the assistant. He whirled around and hit the sexton and the sexton, being slightly over six feet in height and over 200 lbs. in wieght, hit back and the fight was all over.

The crash as the assistant hit the floor brought the entire congregation into the vestry room. Andrew Korkianiemi and Kymnespaa Jonas\*, who was a rhymster, were among t e congregation. They thought the situation was funny enough to merit a poem commemorating the event so that night they wrote the poem which is quite a favorite among the Finnish people.

Mr. Kykyri was a member of the congregation at the time of the fight, and also a friend of the deceased pastor's son.

\*Kymnespaa (meaning elbow) Jonas is a nickname and so far I have been unable to get his real name.

Gust Kainula -- 100 Nebraska Ave., Gilbert, Minnesota

The informant was born on October 26, 1875 in Oulu Laani (county), Paavola Pitaja (township), Finland. Attended public school (Kansa-koulu) for four years, starting in the fall of 1884 and finishing in 1888. He has a wife and a son, aged 25, residing in Finland.

In March 1907, he started for America. He first went to Liverpool, England, where he stayed 11 days, going from there to London. He left for Elcor (Elba), Minnesota to join his brother. Here he worked as a contract miner at the Corsica Mine for the Pickands-Mather Company.

He came to this country with the thought that he could make a stake for himself and return to Finland. In 1911 he went back for a visit, coming back to the United States in the spring of 1914. This time he came to Gilbert, where he has resided ever since. He has always worked as a contract miner for the various mining companies. He is not a citizen, but he will be able to get his final papers and citizenship. Mr. Kainula is on direct-relief at the present time.

Shortly after arriving in Elcor in 1907, he joined the Western Federation of Miners. This union called a strike July 21, 1907, and he with all the other miners went on the picket line. The strike was broken Aug. 1907. Although never a member of the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.), he was again on the picket line in 1916 when the miners struck for the eight-hour day. He is very proud of the fact that he has never walked thru a picket line. Gust Kainula is at the present time a member of the Finnish Workers' Union (Suomalainen Tyovain Yhtistus), which is a progressive cultural group.

While in America, he was sent approximately \$4,000 to his family in Finland.

Mr. Kainula gave information concerning the school system in

Finland when he was there. First the children are taught to read usually by an instructor that travels from home to home. All children must be proficient at reading when they enter the public schools. No children are allowed in public schools until they are at least nine years old. The school year lasted from September through May, and four years attendance was required to get through. At this school similar subjects were taught as in the grade schools of United States, but in addition cartography, military drill and religious training were included. A graduate of the public schools could either attend a Yhteis (united or trade) school where training would be given to equip the student for such jobs as teaching, insurance collectors, pulice chiefs, etc., or they could attend the Lyseo (intermediate) school. The intermediate school required eight years attendance. It corresponds with our high school and junior college, and merely prepares the student for the university.

All the books in all of the schools had to be bought by the student, which kept many poor families from sending their children through the public schools. Another factor which kept the poor from receiving an education was that the schools were few and far between. Often the students would have to take a food supply sufficient to last several weeks. Education was not compulsory.

## FINNISH

Duluth, Minnesota  
 Socio Ethnic  
 Runar Gustafson  
 October 11, 1938

Axel Kyykhyinen, 419 N. 5th Ave. W. Born in Finland, Kemijarvi <sup>Oslo</sup> ~~Olson~~ Laani, July 28, 1888. Came to Duluth 1910. Duluth seemed the ideal place because of its location and also because there were a lot of Finns already here. I started in business with my fellow countrymen's assistance in 1913  $\frac{1}{2}$  block from where I am located now. I've been in business for the last 25 years. I have progressed as the city has progressed. It has been my good fortune to have picked as fine a location as I did.

Chief desire was to learn English and to attend night school when I had the opportunity to read and learn about history and civic affairs.

Finnish Knights of Kaleva--Grand Lodge

Masonic orders 32° shriner

Moose Lodge and Modern Woodmen of America Elks.

Finnish Lutheran Church 3rd Ave. E. and 2nd St. Chairman of the Board for several years.

Other Finnish Affairs.

Twice Chairman of Finnish Midsummer Festivals. Main hobby is to spread Finnish culture in the country as much as possible.

Marries and has 2 children.

Have three stores now. Two in Duluth and one in International Falls.