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Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic
Stanley Levine
Nov. 28, 1938.

THE FINNS IN MINNESOTA

Signey Santabacka, 313 W. 4th Street, Duluth. Born at Lawler, Minnesota. She is 23 years old. Her mother came from Helsingfors, father from Kalijoki, Finland.

Had high school education at Lawler, Minnesota.

Signey Santabacka is a Workers Education teacher.

"The Finnish people excel in devotion to any cause they espouse or any institution that they feel deserves their allegiance. Observe the way in which they support so many newspapers in this territory alone. They would never think of complaining about subscription expenses.

"The Finnish people are always devoted to the organizations that have their respect. They make reliable and dependable members of trade unions at all times. Not very often do you find a Finnish worker in the disgusting position of a 'Company Stooge'.

"The devotion towards their social environment that the Finnish people feel is naturally carried over into the family field. Although they often have large families, many times when daughters or sons marry, they stay with their families for a few years until they get a secure job someplace."

Miss Santabacka is a member of American Federation of Teachers,

Duluth, Minnesota.

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Duluth Youth Council, and Farmer-Labor Youth Federation.

She came directly to Duluth from Lawler, in 1931.

Duluth, Minnesota
 Socio Ethnic
 Harold Rajala
 November 17, 1939

Report of Interview with Mrs. Seraphine

Sarvela, widow of The Reverend Henrik

Sarvela, 31 S. 67th Avenue West, Duluth.

Henrik Sarvela was born at Jurva, Vaasanlääni, Finland, Oct. 30, 1859.

After hearing of the need for Finnish missionaries in America he came here in 1888. He came to Ely, Minnesota. He remained at Ely for a short time then went to Fredrick, South Dakota. He stayed there for about a year then went to Red Wing, Minnesota, then coming to live in West Duluth in 1891.

His wife was born at Jurva, Vaasanlääni, Finland, Aug. 2, 1862. They were married in Finland in 1882. She came to America in 1890.

Mrs. Sarvela arrived in West Duluth in 1890. She came to the home at what is now 65th Avenue West and Polk Street which the Reverend Sarvela had already built. Their home was only a short distance from the church [at 65th Avenue West and Nicollet Street].

The Rev. Sarvela remained here until 1906, and then with his wife went to Waukegan Illinois. He performed missionary work among the Finns around Waukegan and Dekalb, Illinois, returning to West Duluth on Feb. 18th, 1912, where he lived until his death on Feb. 25th, 1931.

While he was in West Duluth which was at that time in the Superior parish, he was a very busy man, on the go practically night and day, taking care of not only his own church in West Duluth but travelling to many other towns which had no minister. He made many trips to the range cities especially Eveleth and Virginia, Minnesota,

Report of interview with Mrs. Seraphine Sarvela, Duluth.

to Michigan cities, to Minneapolis and Red Wing in southern Minnesota, to the Dakotas and to Midway [Esko], Superior and Big Duluth. Travel during these early years was difficult, there being no automobiles, nor many roads. He travelled by train and horse. Travel time was then determined in days and not in hours as it is now. Mrs. Sarvela said "I wonder sometimes how he ever lasted as long as he did".

Mr. Sarvela had no definite ministerial training being self educated in the Gospel. In Finland he was minister at Sunday Church services.

He was ordained into the Hauges Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Synod of America at Red Wing, Minnesota on Oct. 28, 1890. He was ordained into the Suomi Synod on Aug. 3, 1891 at Ironwood, Michigan. He accepted a call from the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran congregation at West Duluth, Minnesota then.

The Suomi Synod church was already established in West Duluth when they arrived to live there. There was no church up-town then; services were held at the Swedish church [Swedish Lutheran Church, then at 2nd St. and 2nd Ave. West].

Services held at the West Duluth church then were held in Finnish.

[Mrs. Sarvela coming direct to Duluth does not know of any of the Finnish settlements in other parts of Minnesota, nor did the Reverend speak much about it to her. She usually remained home when the minister attended services which were out of town. She is not acquainted with details on the church but suggests an interview with the Reverend Lepisto for such information.]

Mr. Sarvela, like the other older Finns did not keep a record of his accomplishments, he probably was too busy to even think of it.

The widow lives alone at the same location that she came to in 1890.

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Alfred Backman
Jan. 3, 1939.

FINNS IN MINNESOTA

Carl Siren (Sireen) born in the city of Tampere, Hameen Province, Finland in 1885, arrived in Boston at the age of 21. His ancestors for several generations, were common agriculture laborers and peasants. From early boyhood young Carl worked as a herdsman and later as a farm worker and carpenter's helper. Work being scarce and wages small during those troublesome years in Finland under the oppressive Czarist rule at the turn of the century, Siren made every effort to save enough money for a ticket to northern Wisconsin where some of his friends had emigrated. It was at Maple, Wisconsin where Mr. Siren earned his first American dollars clearing stump-land. This was in 1906 when the entire northern Wisconsin was still a dense forest. And what a grand harvest it was for the lumber companies, says Mr. Siren, they slashed the forests ruthlessly leaving the stumps and rocks to the homesteaders who were arriving from Northern Europe by the thousands weekly.

In 1907 Carl Siren, lumberjack, farmhand, and carpenter came to Floodwood, Minnesota, and here it may be said that Mr. Siren has never left the state since. He worked at every trade a locality such as Floodwood chose to offer a willing worker. Working hard, saving all he possibly could, he homesteaded on a 160 acre tract of cut-over land near Brookston in 1911. After a few years of earnest effort he improved the land, built built all necessary buildings, married Senia Saari and became an honest-to-goodness northern Minnesota "stump farmer." Dairying and cutting pulp and cordwood brought the main income to operate the farm. The future looked

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very hopeful to the young couple. Prices were continuously rising on all farm produce through the years from 1912 to 1918, so that all debts were paid, with small savings in the bank. However, disaster came, a disaster caused by carelessness of man. One of the most destructive forest fires ever to ravage northern Minnesota swept relentlessly over the Siren homestead. It was the same fire that destroyed the city of Cloquet in the fall of 1918 taking hundreds of lives and causing untold property losses. The fire was seen approaching the Siren farm, located on a lake shore, the buildings of which were only a few yards from the lake making it easy to carry water with which the Sirens heroically attempted to wet the lawn surrounding the house and other buildings to keep them from catching fire from the flying embers carried by the terrific wind. It was indeed fortunate that nature placed the small lake in the middle of the Siren farm for in the cool waters the Sirens saved themselves from the terrific heat and the glowing embers shooting like rockets from the burning farm buildings. All farm buildings, representing years of hard labor were wiped out completely in a few moments including 900 cords of fuel wood ready to be hauled to market. A few moments before a prosperous farmer, now penniless except for a small bank account and a small fire insurance policy which was hard to collect because of the huge number of farms consumed by the fire in the ravaged district. Having no place to go, Mr. and Mrs. Siren proceeded to start all over again. Lumber, food, clothing and other necessary supplies were distributed by the Red Cross and other agencies. The fire occurred in the fall of the year so every nerve was strained to get enough fuel, food and shelter to stand the rigors of the northern winter. This, however, was gotten and next spring Mr. Siren began farming again as

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a pioneer--from scratch. He lived on the farm until 1923 when he received a small sum from the Federal government as compensation for his loss in the fire. Up to this time Mr. Siren had stocked his farm again so that in the fall of 1923 an auction sale was held bringing enough to be able to move out of the locality and settle elsewhere.

Mr. Siren, his wife and baby boy, Carl came to Minneapolis where they bought a grocery store which he operated successfully for a number of years. Mr. Siren sold the store and is now proprietor of a cafe in the same neighborhood, having a thriving business. His son now 22 years old, a high school graduate, is his constant companion and advisor in all his business dealings. They live in their own four family flat three of which they rent out to tenants. Mr. Siren says he fought for twenty years actively in St. Louis County for the freedom of Tom Mooney and helped organize scores of meetings in his behalf and helped collect hundred of dollars for the Mooney's Freedom Fund. A member of the Socialist Party from 1906 until 1927 and a great admirer of Eugene V. Debs, Mr. Siren said that the moment the Mooney incident happened in San Francisco he was convinced it was a frame-up for the reason that he knew that labor leaders do not commit crimes and that bombing have always been acts of cowards and criminals.

He says the freeing of Tom Mooney was one of the greatest moments in his life which can be checked on the positive side of his life's ledger.

L
Duluth, Minnesota.

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Nov. 17, 1938.

FINNS

Charles Stark, 320 West 3rd St. Parents came from Tornio, Finland, in the year 1881. Born in Atlantic Mine, Michigan, 1885. Has been a miner, timber worker, steamfitter, etc. Common school education (8th grade).

"When I was young times were very hard. My father was working in an underground copper mine, at contract mining, and he was making around 26 dollars per month. It was always a ten hour day, a six day week.

"We lived on a 40 acre farm right close to the town. We kept cows and chickens and raised garden produce. Between the work in the mine, the farm, and the work my mother got at dress-making, we managed to get along with enough at least for the 13 children and parents.

"All of us kids went to work at a very early age. I left home at the age of 12. Cruelty on the part of my father was the actual reason for my leaving the farm. The cruelty was caused by the hard work and terrible economic conditions our family was continuously faced with at the time. A big family such as ours was hard to sustain at any level of living.

"I went to work in the woods in Northern Minnesota at the age of 13. I used to make 26 dollars per month and board. We worked an average of 13 hours per day. This is in contrast to the hours worked in camps today under union conditions. Today the timber workers work only 8 hours per day and receive time and one half for overtime.

"When I went into the Calumet mine at the age of 17, times were very much better than during the times my father worked there, I received

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two dollars per day which was twice the amount my father made when he worked in the mines.


"I went over to the Phillipine Islands with the U.S. Army in 1905-1908.

"The Finnish people are very sociable in their social life. This is a strong characteristic of Finnish people.

"The Finnish people, though it might not seem that way, are very sensitive people. They tend to harbor grudges very intimately.

"The Finnish people are very industrious. The women have worked besides the men, tirelessly in the fields. They are potent and capable in agriculture. They have contributed tremendously to the economic life of the state and nation.

"One great-grandfather of mine had a big farm on the Delaware River in the Finnish settlement there. An uncle of his was Captain Stark, who served with the American Revolutionary Army.



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Stanley Levine
Dec. 8, 1938.

THE FINNS IN MINNESOTA

Norman Steel, 528 W. 4th Street, Duluth. Born at Viiborg, Finland, 1896. He has two brothers.

Mr. Steel had elementary and high school education in Finland.

He is a painter, and is a member of the Painter's Union.

Mr. Steel left Viiborg in 1906 and went to Helsingfors until 1912, when he returned to Viiborg. He left Finland in 1915 to join the Russian army, as a private. He came to Norfolk, West Virginia, after the war, in 1919. He went to New York City in 1920, then came to Duluth in 1924.

"I think a Finnish-speaking person has a harder time learning English, than many other foreign-language-speaking people. I know, because I speak a number of languages besides Finnish. The Finnish alphabet is minus the Z, B, C, Q, W, and X. That makes it tougher to pronounce words because they have to learn sounds they never needed before. This results often in the sentences becoming just the opposite of what the person intends to say.

"We are always told in Finland that in the United States there was great economic and social opportunity, and above everything else, there were no racial hatreds as were known in Czarist Russia and Central Europe. But, believe it or not, I found more racial hatreds, of Jews, Catholics, and Negroes especially, than ever I saw in Finland. In fact, Finland was comparatively free of racial prejudice, here many nationalities, Russians, Germans, Jews, Swedes, live side by side."

Proverb

~~"A Finn doesn't believe unless he sees it"~~

~~"Whatever nation you're in, you'll always be like the people in that nation."~~

~~"Our own country to us is always raspberry; the foreign country is blackberry"~~

~~"Enough human strength can move anything"~~

~~"One dog always knows another dog"~~

Gilbert, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic
Walter Kykyri
Dec. 27, 1938.

TUBERCULOSIS AMONG FINNS

INFORMANT: Dr. M. L. Strathern

Interview took place in his office at Gilbert, 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Dr. Strathern stated that there is more tuberculosis among Finns than any other national groups in Gilbert because of natural lack of resistance to the disease. Steam bath houses were a factor in that it lowered the resistance to the disease, in each individual. The sudden change from a hot steam room to a relatively cold dressing room seriously affected heart action which weakened resistance. The Finnish people are clean, but their houses are poorly ventilated in the winter months which was a factor in transmitting the disease.

He claimed that silicosis could be mistaken for tuberculosis and cited a case (giving no name) in which a man had all the symptoms of tuberculosis but that he couldn't get a positive sputum test. Sent the man to the Nopeming Sanatorium where he died of silicosis.

Dr. Strathern has been practicing medicine in Gilbert since 1911 as in connection with the More Hospital of Eveleth. The More Hospital is the official hospital for the Oliver Iron Mining Company on the east end of the Mesaba Range.

*Dr. Henry Rokalo---surgeon at the Bray Hospital in Biwabik. Is a fairly recent graduate from medical school. Finnish by birth.

*Dr. Kiesling, Nashwauk, physician connected with the Reed Hospital in Nashwauk, the official hospital for Butler Bros. and the Oliver Iron Mining Company.

*Dr. G. N. Butchart---staff physician at the Reed Hospital in Hibbing, official hospital for Butler Bros. and the Oliver Mining Company.

FINNISH

Duluth, Minnesota

Socio Ethnic

Stanley Levine and William Liukkonen

October 11, 1938

Arvo Suomela, 316 W. 1st St., Duluth, Minn. He was born in Finland--Vaasa Laami--
1887. Parents were born in same place.

Came to America, 1910, to Quincy, Mass.

Then came to Duluth, Minn., 1911.

Lived in Duluth for 3 years, then moved to Brookston, Minn., where he lived until
1921, then moving back to Duluth.

Trade--carpenter.

A cure for rheumatism he knew from childhood was to boil flowers with pine tar.
Drink, then go to sauna.

A superstition: if a neighbor exchanges wool with another neighbor on New Year's
Eve, good luck will follow for the coming year.

II

Duluth, Minnesota
Socio Ethnic
William Liukkonen and
Runar Gustafson

FINNISH

Andrew Tan, Cloquet, Minnesota. Born in Pudasjärvellä, Finland, 1861. His wife was born at Tyrnävällä, Finland, in 1870.

Mr. Tan was educated in confirmation school.

He came to Duluth in 1882. He lived here for five years, while working in the woods. In 1888 he bought a small piece of land, on which he built a one room cabin out of white birch. He is still living on this original piece of land.

His wife came to the Thomson Country in 1877. They were married October 30, 1888, and are the oldest married couple in Carlton County. They have just celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary.

They had to suffer many hardships during their life in the country. There were no roads when they first arrived there.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic
William Liukkonen and Runar Gustafson
Nov. 22, 1938.

FINNS IN MINNESOTA

Henry J. Tehunen, Tacoma Hotel, Duluth. Born in Kuopionlääni, Finland, May 9, 1875.

His education included two years of grade school and two years at the Finnish College in Hancock, Michigan.

His occupation in Finland was farming.

Mr. Tehunen came to this country, to New York Mills, Minnesota, in 1898. He lived at New York Mills for six years. While there he worked for a newspaper, the "Uusikotimaa" (New Homeland). Next, he went to Hancock, Michigan, in the copper country. While in Hancock he worked three years in a grocery store and taught summer school for children for one year. He moved to Soudan, and worked in the iron mine there for two years. From Soudan, he moved to Hibbing, where he worked in the mines for the next two years. In 1905 he moved to Superior, where he worked on the Great Northern ore docks as an ore puncher in the summer, and in the car shops during the winter. He worked there for twenty-five years.

Mr. Tehunen is married, and has three boys. His wife died in 1925. In 1926 he moved over to Duluth, where, during the last few years, he has been working in the woods, and in different shops.

He left Finland to see the world, but in later years has regretted very much his foolishness.

Mr. Tehunen was a member of the first Finnish Temperance Society in Hancock, Michigan.

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Social Ethnic

William Liukkonen and Runar Gustafson
Dec. 1, 1938.

FINNS

Otto Tenhunen, 272 South 1st. Avenue East, Duluth, Minnesota.

Born in Mikkiliniääni, Finland, in 1880.

He had no education except four years as an apprentice shoemaker.

He started in the shoemaker work at the age of nine. His parents were farmers. There were four children in the family.

He came to the United States, to Boston, Massachusetts, in 1910.

He spent three months there and then went to Calumet, Michigan. He worked in Calumet for eleven years, of which two years he worked in the mines, and the rest in a shoemaker shop. He went from Calumet to Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he worked as a shoemaker for a year. He lived at St. Cloud for fourteen months, then he went to Brainerd, where he worked for a year and a half. From Brainerd he came to Duluth, where he has lived since.

He came to this country for that great opportunity which he failed to find, but it was better here than in Finland.

He was at one time a member of the Finnish Lutheran Church and a member of the Finnish Workers' Club.

Mr. Tenhunen is a shoemaker.

Liukkonen, Mrs. Helen
Duluth, Minnesota
Topic: Social Ethnic
Submitted by: William Liukkonen
and Stanley Levine
Date: Oct. 6, 1938

FINNS IN MINNESOTA

No physician ever consulted by her family or neighbors in Finland. Herb doctors provided medicines instead.

Pine Tar was one medicine used for colds and stomach disorders.

A sweet wine was made out of black currants and used in flu conditions and for children's illnesses.

To cure tuberculosis, bark off new branches of white pine trees were chewed for the sap by the patient. This cure is now a common patent medicine in present-day Finland.

To cure rheumatism, the patient covered his body with pine tar, and brushed himself with a cedar switch in the Sauna, or Bath House.

Old Finnish Proverb

The complete confidence the Finnish folk of rural territory had in their natural medicines is expressed in the proverb she quoted:

"If Wine and Sauna, doesn't help you, then it's sure death."

Superstitions

To foretell the future, it was an old custom to place two mirrors opposite one another, and then place a Bible in the middle flat down. Then the prognosticator looked into the mirror facing him and foretold the future.

If a girl sees a falling star seven nights in succession, on the seventh night she will see her future husband in her sleep.

If a girl eats nine silakka fish in succession, tail-end first, on the ninth night the girl will dream that her husband of the future brings her a glass of cold water.

Mill Work

This woman worked in the paper mill at Little Falls from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

for \$1.00 per day.

Holiday

The 1st of May in Finland, or May Day, called "Vappu," is a traditional National holiday. It is considered a sacred day of rest by workers and farmers. It was originally developed about 1889 by Finnish working class organizations as specifically their day of rest and recreation. It became so wide-spread that it was soon declared a legal holiday by the government.

The celebration of the Holiday is very colorful. In many cities and towns parades are held in which the workers and their families parade into the public squares, where speeches are given by recognized community leaders.

There is feasting throughout the day in a spirit of joy and conviviality. At night dances are held into the wee hours of the morning, although everybody must return to work the day after May Day.

Informant: Mrs. Helen Toivonen, 416 $\frac{1}{2}$ W. 4th St., Duluth, Minn.

Both parents were Finnish, were children of farmers who lived in the vicinity of Haamelinla, Finland. Had one sister. Had one child, a daughter, now dead.

Came to Little Falls, Minnesota in 1888, from Haamelinla. Lived at Little Falls for eight years until 1896, when she and husband moved to Ely. Lived there one year, moving to Hibbing in 1897. Lived eight years in Hibbing, then moved to Kinney, where she now lives except for winters, which she spends in Finland or U.S.

Occupation always was housework in Finland, but worked at unskilled wage labor in Little Falls paper mills. She has ordinary domestic skill--cooking, needlework, etc.

Attends Finnish Lutheran Church.

She is tall, but now bent with age. Very sharp to pick up questions put to her in Finnish but cannot understand a word of English.

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FINNS

Ernest Tomberg, 17 Winthrop Block, Duluth, Minnesota. Born at Astoria, Oregon, 1914.

He has two sisters and no brothers.

He has been a timber worker. He is a member and officer of the Minnesota Timber Workers' Union.

He moved to Duluth in 1935.

"I sincerely believe that all nationalities, the Finnish included, will benefit their nationality by marrying persons of other nationalities. Combining characteristics is good for a race, a nationality or group. It puts together the best of both groups.

"I have nothing but contempt for racial theories of 'superiority.' The Hitler 'Aryan' ballyhoo is a lot of hot air. How can there be a so-called 'superior race' now defined by physical boundaries, when these boundaries have only been marked and finished in the last 100 years, or so. I refer to Germany for instance. Germany has been nothing but a group of provinces in the past. Some of the provinces even spoke French, others Swedish. Then these provinces and states were brought together under a central control, called 'Germany' and presto! Hitler brings out a superior race.

"As to foods, I still like the Finnish cooking best, although I've tasted the cooking of practically every kind. The Finns don't use much spice in their cookery and that's why I prefer it. I understand that there is a low rate of cancer amongst Finns compared to other nationalities like the Italian, for instance, that use lots of spices.

"The steam bath--we call it 'sauna' is better than ordinary bathing or showers because the steam really gets 'under your skin' and takes out the dirt. It certainly makes a person feel clean."

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William Liukkonen and Runar Gustafson
Nov. 29, 1938.

FINNS

John Tolberg, 246 So. Lake Avenue, Duluth, Minnesota. Born at Tuurinlääni, Finland, 1876.

His parents were fisher-folk, so he carried on the trade.

Mr. Tolberg came to the United States, to Eveleth, Minnesota, in 1903. He worked in an open pit mine there for seven years. He moved to Duluth in 1910. Since then, he has made his home in Duluth while working in the woods.

The work was hard in the mines, and in the woods. The wages were \$20 a month and room and board. The working day was ten hours.

Mr. Tolberg came to this country to find something better than in Finland, but he didn't find it.

He is a member of the Timber Workers' Union.

Gilbert, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic

Toivo Torma

Dec. 28, 1938.

IN FINLAND

Arthur Torma was born in 1894 at Parkano, Finland. He was one of many sons, living during his youth, on a farm containing approximately 100 acres of land. They had one of the largest farms in the community, with 5 horses, and approximately 10 cows. Of the crops raised, rye, oats, barley, flax, and hay were of the most important and essential to their mode of livelihood.

In the community church services were held regularly, and the distance to it from his farm was about 10 miles. There were quite a few stores, on the average, being 4 miles apart. These stores were mostly, or all, general, and sold goods such as sugar, coffee, salt, buttons, cloth, hardware, etc. There was at the time, no canned goods in use.

The chief mode of traveling, of course, was the horse and buggy, but a few persons bought themselves a bicycle. Usually every community contained 2 or 3 of them, yet they were comparatively expensive. The average wage or salary in a year consisted of 160 marks a year, and the purchaser of a bicycle would have to work a whole year to pay for one, with the exception of food and clothing which usually were given to a worker by the employer.

The main roads in Finland, especially around his home were good, sturdy, gravel roads, but the roads in the outskirts, were fit for travel only with a horse. Every farmer had to maintain a certain stretch of road in condition and 3 times each year, the farmers placed gravel, sand, etc. on the road. The next day an inspector came around examining the results; he also had the power of making the farmer better the road by having him

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Toivo Torma
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work longer than the allotted period.

Everything in the way of clothing was made at home, except for thread and buttons. From the flax they made linen cloth and in such fashion managed to keep at a minimum their purchases.

Periodically a shoemaker went about the community, staying at each farm until every person had been made and fitted into a new pair of shoes. The farmers supplied the leather, which they received from their cattle. Shoe making was considered an art in those days, and many a lad became apprentices to shoemakers for a shoemaker had the advantage of meeting different people in their trade, and act also in the capacity of a much respected unofficial newspaper. During the evenings, the family would gather about him and listen to the stories of people who lived in other parts of Finland, stories of new developments, accidents, deaths, marriages, etc.

Finland had no unified system of education, but most of the communities had small school, either made specifically for educational purposes, or they were held at certain farms with classes the teachers supplied and paid for by the state. Every year the priest went around to every farm house and gave the children an examination in reading. Those who read well were given a book as a gift, but the unfortunate pupils were often sent under the table to repent their stupidity or laziness. About 50% of the children went to school, and the maximum number of years of free education given to a boy or girl was four.

Finland during this period belonged to Russia, voting was allowed to both men and women exceeding a certain age. Compulsory military service was required and usually lasted 3 years. Many young men came to America in order that he may evade the service, and quite a few of the youth came

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Toivo Torma
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at the early ages of 16 and 17.

Also during this period the first mowers were being introduced to Finland. They were sold by the McCormick Co. of United States. A large number of farmers who had the money to purchase a mower did not do so, but relied upon hand labor to cut the forage. In Finland it is a common sight to see 20 or more workers in a field cutting the crop. The workers began early in the morning and worked until the dew left, then they continued harvesting in other phases until later into the night.

Torma:
Born in 1894
Parkano, Finland

1.

Gilbert, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic
Toivo Torma
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FINNS

The Voyage

Two of Arthur Torma's brothers lived in America, so in 1913, he decided to come also, for he had heard of the opportunities in America from the letters he received. He came aboard the "Gunnard Line," upon which the food was given free. However, he did not need it for with him he had enough food to last until he got to Gilbert, Minnesota. Bread, meat, and cheese were his favorite foods, and of these, his largest portion consisted of bread. This was Arthur Torma's first ocean or sea voyage, and as he traveled across the North Sea he was surprised to see the huge quantities of fish through the mirror like clearness of the water. On the ship a carcass of a horse was tied to the tip of the mast. The purpose for that, he believed, was to keep the sea gulls away.

On July 4, 1913, he arrived at New York, but the train was going to leave immediately, so he did not have to the opportunity to view the city.

Mr. Torma came straight to Gilbert, Minnesota, where he immediately received a job in the mine.

He had as his working partner, his elder brother, Anselm, who attempted to test the mettle of this upstart from Finland. During the first morning they succeeded in doing such a large quantity of work that at noon the captain of the mine told them that they may have the afternoon off. Mr. Torma admitted that he was tired, for he slept throughout the afternoon and on until the next morning.

He worked with the Oliver Iron Mining Company for six years. The

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Social Ethnic

Toivo Torma

Ded. 28, 1938.

place where he worked next belonged to another company. He worked there also for six years. This place where he worked had a wet base. He got so used to the wet atmosphere that he quit when he was compelled to work in a dry spot. He went back to the Oliver Iron Mining Co. for five to six years after which he was fired.

This was in 1929, and in the same year he and his family moved to a farm about 10 miles from Gilbert. From there he went to various villages and worked in the mines. In 1935 he became sick, could no longer work in the wet atmosphere of the mines so he had to quit. He did attempt to work on the WPA project of the community, but he finally had to stop there also for his health became too poor.



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Toivo Torma
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FINNS

Makinen

This is only a general view of the Makinen community as it may appear to a casual observer. Makinen has as its nucleus the Makinen General Store, built by Mr. John Kovaniemi and John Makinen in the year 1912.

Now Mr. Kovaniemi operates a garage in Eveleth, Minnesota; John Makinen is deceased.

To this store most of Makinen's populace go to buy their daily purchases, although in 1936, a co-operative store was constructed directly opposite. Within the Makinen store a postal service is maintained with Mrs. Henry Perala, the postmistress. The store is also the local headquarters of forest fire service of which Mr. Henry Perala is the forest fire warden.

Throughout the years, 26 of them, the Makinen store has served the needs of the people. In the store, candy, groceries, dry goods, fruit, stationery, household supplies, gasoline, and field implements are sold.

In the immediate vicinity of the store is a school, community hall, and a church.

To the school the first seven grades attend; the upper grades attend the school at Cotton, Minnesota. In the evenings the local school building is used for St. Louis County Rural Recreational purposes, with the headquarters at Virginia, Minnesota. To these classes go both the old and young. The parents are given opportunities to use the manual training room, sew, knit, etc. The youth of Makinen, learn to dance, play indoor games, and

Gilbert, Minnesota.

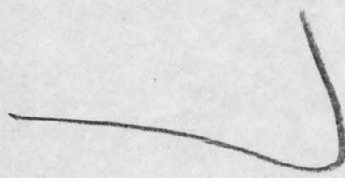
Social Ethnic
Toivo Torma
Dec. 28, 1938.

practice dramatics. Night school classes are also held there during the winter months.

The community hall is an old structure, but it is in a good location, and of a good sturdy structure. Dances are held there once a month on the average. Plays are often given also, employing inclusively the people of Makinen. Dance music is given often times by local accordian players, the only instrument which can satisfactorily adapt itself to the structure of the hall.

Makinen's church came into being in the fall of 1938. It was constructed out of an old store, and is situated directly opposite the hall. To this church the people of Makinen flock every Sunday morning. They also maintain the expenses of a minister, who lives with his wife in another portion of the church.

Makinen also has a graveyard, not used to any large extent anymore, but it was used much before the better methods of transportation were adopted. It is situated approximately three and a half miles from the Makinen store.



Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic
Stanley Levine

FINNS

Mrs. Matilda Tornio, 1 W. 6th Street, Duluth, Minnesota. Born at Tornio, Finland, 1904.

She graduated from the Finnish High School. In addition she had four years of school at Trimountain, Michigan.

From Tornio, Finland, she came directly to Trimountain, Michigan, in 1917. She came to Duluth in 1922.

Mrs. Tornio is married and has three children. She is a former member of the S. T. Y. (Finnish Workers' Club), and the First Lutheran Church.

"The funniest thing I remember about my trip was that everybody else was seasick except me. I wasn't seasick at all.

"I didn't care much about coming over to America even though people in Finland always told of the wonderful times in America. They used to say something like this: 'All you've got to do in America is lay down under a tree and the gold balls will fall down right into your lap.'

"I tell you I was really disappointed the first day I came to Trimountain. I was at my father's place, you know, and when I looked out the back window at all the ash cans and garbage thrown around the back alley, I tell you I was so disappointed I would have gone back to Finland that very day if they would have let me.

"It took me a long time to get used to life in America. Of course, I had a hard time learning English, and many of the boys at school in Trimountain used to make fun of me because I had this hard time in speaking. It took me about two years so that I could really speak and read English

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic
Stanley Levine

well enough to get along in life.

"There were many nationalities, not only Finns, at Trimountain. There were many Italians, Hungarians, Rumanians and other Eastern Europeans.

"The Finnish people have a great deal of ability at anything they do. They stick to something once they start it and don't leave it in one minute in disgust. Lots of Finns that came over from Finland are too backward in life here, you know, they don't push themselves forward enough when they really got the ability."

Finnish Study
Mrs. Anna L. Lantto
Dec. 15, 1939

Cokato History

Interview with August Tryke [Tryki.]

The first Finnish people came to Cokato in the early fall of 1865. There was a Finnish girl working for a Minneapolis family who overheard, during a conversation, that there was some good government land for homesteads about 50 miles west of Minneapolis.

This girl visited some Finnish family and told them about the news she had previously heard about the land. John Viinikka, Elias Peltopera, Isak Barberg [Parpa], and Mattias Karjenaho [Abrahamson] were also visiting this home at the time and also heard about the land. They immediately set out in search for the land.

Interview with Isaac Arvid Barberg.

The only road from Minneapolis was a trail marked through the woods where men carried mail on horseback from Minneapolis to Carver where the land office was. The post office was at Howard Lake and Mooers Prairie.

They came to Howard Lake that evening and built a bonfire at the lake shore, intending to stay overnight but Mattias Karjenaho [Abrahamson] said he was going to walk to Mooers Prairie that night and he did. The other three men stayed by the bonfire at Howard Lake because they were tired from walking but started out for Mooers Prairie the next morning and arrived there about 9 o'clock.

Interview with Thorwal Rustad.

There they obtained some information about the land. They were told that a man named Rustad, at the north end of Cokato Lake, would show them some land around there but when they arrived at Rustad's place he was busy with honey bees who were gathering honey. The woods around Cokato Lake were full of honey bees.

Rustad told these men where there was some homestead land and they went by themselves and marked out their homestead in section 10 in Cokato. They then went back to the land office at Carver and listed their land as costing 25¢ per acre. The cost for filing of the land was \$1.50 per acre and they thought it too much for they were not sure of coming back. Later in the fall they came back and filed their land, cleared it, built a log house and lived there that winter.

Interview with Isaac Arvid Barberg.

The next spring they planted some potatoes but went back to Minneapolis where they stayed the summer and worked in brick yards in order to earn some money. They then came back to their homesteads in the fall and cleared more land and built more houses.

Interview with John E. Mattson.

The next group of Finnish settlers to come from Finland to Red Wing in the summer of 1865, was Nels Selvala, Isak Barberg and Adam Ongamo. They had also heard about the homesteads west of Cokato, and in the summer of 1866 started walking to Minneapolis where the homesteads were. At Cokato they picked out their land in section 18, and marked trees according to the Engineer's mark.

They walked back to Minneapolis where they worked the rest of that summer, but returned to their homesteads in the fall. Nels Selvala, and Isak Barberg, with their wives, and Adam Ongamo [Sachariason], a single man, built a log cabin on Ongamo's homestead where they all lived together that winter. They called it Union House and it was called that name long afterwards.

The next house was built for Nels Selvala. In 1867 a first baby girl was born to Mrs. Nels Selvala.

Interview with Isaac Arvid Barberg.

In the summer of 1867 they walked to Minneapolis for work. When they came to visit their families they carried groceries and flour on their back. For meat they had plenty of wild deer, birds and fish. Later they learned from older settlers, that there was a little mill where the settlers got their flour. The mill was about 15 miles north of Kingston, called North Kingston Mill. There was also a little store where they could obtain their groceries.

One time when Nels Selvala and Isak Barberg went to North Kingston to get some flour, they built a raft out of logs. This they used for carrying the flour so they bought flour with all the money they had with them. They ran down the raft the Crow River not far from their homestead. They had flour for a long time.

Finnish Study
Mrs. Anna L. Lantto
Dec. 30, 1939.

Cokato History

Interview with J. E. Mattson [Tiberg.]

During the next two years, not many Finns came to Cokato.

In 1864 a man by the name of Tiberg [Triperi] came from Finland by way of Norway, to Red Wing with his family. At that time cholera was the terrible disease spreading in Red Wing. It was said that that disease was brought in by immigrants from European countries and many people died from it, especially children. One of Tiberg's boys died from it shortly after the family had come to Red Wing, and about twenty-five other Finns also died. The sick children were taken care of at Swedish Hospital, but John E. Mattson was taken care of at an orphan home until 1867, ~~when he died~~. Mrs. Tiberg remarried to Matt Maata and the same year came to Cokato with a man by the name of Piippo. They came on a steamboat along the Mississippi River to St. Anthony and from there walked to Cokato. At that time Cokato was not named as yet, but received its name after the railroad was built in 1869.

Interview with William Abrahamson.

The next newcomers were John Marttala, Antti Sepponen and Carl Pyrrö["] and also a few others from Calumet, Michigan. By the latter part of 1869 there were twelve Finnish families and two other young men in Cokato. They all got some land. Some on homesteads and others bought company land at \$5.00 per acre, with easy terms to pay on.

Interview with Thorval Rustad.

These new settlers had to dig up their land with grub hoes and shovels in order to plant their potatoes and little corn. Later they used cows and oxen for digging up the lands. These were bought from some old Swedish and Norwegian settlers who had come a few years earlier.

Finnish Study
Mrs. Anna L. Lantto

Cokato History

Interview with John Ojampera.

The Apostolic Lutheran Church in Cokato was built in 1874, and made larger in 1886. It was rebuilt in 1913; a new solid brick building with a basement for use as a kitchen and dining hall. The same congregation built another church in 1888 in the town of French Lake. The first Cokato Church and the French Lake Church was built through the help of everyone. The last church in Cokato was built by a contractor, John Salo, from Minneapolis. Land for the Cokato Church was donated by the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Manitoba Railroad Companies, but the congregation was not organized by the law until 1892. This Cokato church was the second Finnish Apostolic Lutheran church built in the United States.

The first minister was Antti ^{Vitikkokunta} ~~Whitikonuhta~~. Following him was Isak Barberg, Sr. who died in 1883. His successors were Jacob Wuolet and Caleb Wuolet, brothers.

Interview with William A. Nelson [Barba.]

The Evangelist Congregation was organized in 1892 and in 1907 they bought the St. Ignatius Catholic Church and moved it to French Lake. Their minister was F. W. Kova. The Evangelical Independent Lutheran Church was built in French Lake in 1923 by the congregation. The land for the church was donated by Jacob Lantto.

Interview with Jacob Hoikka.

The Finns and the Swedish people were together in the Creamery Co-operative business. The first creamery in Cokato was built in 1894. It's first structure was a frame building but in 1916 was rebuilt a solid brick building.

The first co-operative creamery was built in Kingston in 1890. The old frame building was later replaced by a new brick building.

The Knapp Co-operative Creamery was built in 1901. In 1914 the old frame building was replaced by a new solid brick building.

The French Lake co-operative creamery was bought from L. C. Thompson in 1915. The West Albion co-operative creamery was built in 1903. The frame building burned down in 1913 and the solid brick building was built in its place.

In 1932 The French Lake and West Albion Creameries consolidated. Now the French Lake Creamery takes cream to West Albion to be churned into butter.

Interview with Mrs. Swan Carlson.

In 1886 one of the first settlers in the woods around Lake Sylvia was Andrew Aslakka. He dug a cellar in a hillside to use as a house, and the roof was level with the ground. One of his old friends came to visit him and brought along a pair of skis. When the ground was covered with snow he went to where he thought the house was located but to his surprise saw no house. He stopped and hollered and to his amazement he later learned he was standing on the roof of the house.

Interview with Mrs. Marie Nidka.

In the olden times many of the new settlers had to live in one room with two or three families.

In one instance two young couples lived in one room. They had only one bed so therefore they slept crossways on the bed. They put an old country box under their feet to make the bed longer in order to make room for their feet. One night one of the women became ill. She got up and went next door to a neighbors house and asked for her help. Later she gave birth to a baby and wrapped the baby in some clothing and returned home again. She called the men and told them what had happened. This lady, being an old timer, did not want to awaken the men because they had been working hard all day.

Finnish Study
Mrs. Anna L. Lantto
Jan. 2, 1940

Cokato History

Interview with August Tryke & William Abrahamson.

After the railroad was built in 1869, more newcomers started to come from Michigan, Finland, and Norway. The majority came from Michigan. The price of wild land was from \$3 to \$5 per acre.

Interview with Isaac Arvid Barberg.

Many of the new settlers worked in Minneapolis during the summer in order to help build their homes and provide for their families because they did not have much money when they came. In 1880 there were about 80 Finnish families in Cokato and about 50 single men.

Interview with Erick Karjalahti.

In 1867 or 1868 Mr. John Marttala came to Cokato and filed a homestead in section 10. He built a little log house over a flat rock. They used the flat rock for a fireplace, and had their sleeping bunks on the side of the wall. One night they woke up due to some unfamiliar noises. Lighting a match, Mr. Marttala saw the floor covered with rattlesnakes. Their bed covers were made of deer skins and were of some protection against the rattlesnakes. Because they had only one door, they could not get out of the house, but were rescued by a hunter who came around and sawed an opening in the side of the wall. They ^{snakes had been} ~~were~~ soon forced out of their den, by the heat of the fire.

Interview with Jacob Kotilla. Sauna Stories.

There once was a bachelor who lived by himself in a shanty in the woods. He had never been in a Finnish Sauna [bathhouse] before and while visiting a Finnish family was urged to go to the Sauna to wash with them. After he washed himself he found he had a union suit on that he hadn't known he had on before.

Interview with Willie Witing [the strong Finn]

Otto Laine lived in Rice Lake Minnesota in 1914 at a lumbercamp. He was 6 ft. 6 inches tall, weighed about 230 lbs. and wore a size number 16 shoe. He was not handsome and his thinking capacity was not at all bright.

Once while ^{he was} working at a railroad logging camp taking 600 lb rails off the tracks and putting 900 lb rails on, one of the 900 lb rails was set aside not intended for further use. Otto thought that everything set aside was to be of no more use to them, so on his way home he stopped and picked up that 900 lb rail and carried it on his shoulder to his homestead about 3 miles away.

Another amusing incident occurred sometime later. While working for Isaac Whiting (Willie Whiting's father) Mr. Whiting gave Otto a gallon kerosene can and told him to go to a warehouse a short distance away and get some kerosene and potatoes. Otto's brother also accompanied him on his trip. When they reached their destination they thought it no use to bring a can of kerosene and a few potatoes, so instead they got a pole and some wire and tied a barrel of kerosene and three 100 lb sacks together on the pole. With one on each side of the pole they returned to the camp.

On their return, Mr. Whiting was much surprised to see what they had brought back with them and explained it was too much for them. Otto Laine had a horse which he fed bran. He also used ^{the bran} ~~it~~ for making bread. While at his camp in the summer he ate very little. When he returned to the logging camp he was watched intensely by others who were afraid he would kill himself eating. Due to his immense appetite he could not control himself. He never did buy any clothes. The clothes other men discarded he gathered up and wore. One time he picked up a wheeled scraper and took it to his home. The logging Company was going to arrest him and send the sheriff after him. He was brought to the judge and the story of the rail and wheel scraper was related to him. The Judge didn't believe that a man could carry such things and was determined to find out for himself if it was true or not. The three men went back to Otto's camp, and as everything was there the judge told Otto to lift the rail. Otto obeyed and treated the rail as though it were a bar. He stuck one end in the ground and left it standing there. The judge, much surprised, suggested leaving the man alone and returning home.

Finnish Study
Mrs. Anna L. Lantto
January 11, 1940

Cokato History

Interview with August Tryke and Charles Snabb.

After the railroad was built in Cokato in 1869, many Finnish families came and bought land. By the end of 1872 there were about 80 Finnish families in Cokato.

Following are names of some of the people who came:

John Ulinikka
Abraham Karjenaho
Elias Peltopera
Olof Westerberg
Isak Barberg, Sr.
Nels Selvala
Adam Ongamo
Antti Sepponeu
Salomon Torgren
Peter Alanenpaa
John Alanenpaa
Nels Lahti
Abraham Rautio
Peter Luukkonen
Carl Pyrro
Abraham Poppana
Peter Saariniemi
Jacob & Caleb Wuollet
(brothers)
Peter Salmela
John Walimaa
Abraham Sarenpaa
Antti Maata
Oscar Kalanter
Erick Pajari
Isaac Pajala
Isaac Christopher ?
Matti Tulkki
Nels P. Parpa
Jacob Rovainen
Elias Alatalo
Victor Forari
Abraham Kyro

Antti Tervo
Oscar Snabb
Antti Snabb
Salomon Pudas
Ollie Jaakkola
Peter Wanhala
Isaac Stein
Abraham Jakala
Isaac Alamaa
Henry Alatalo
Jacob Keranen
Abraham Tryki
Peter Gunnari
Oscar Ingman
Jacob Tiiperi
John Juntti
Christian Kuoppala
John Puranen
John Nurmi
Antti Kurtti
Eliam Ohlgren
Matti Pohaldka
Henry Maikko
Antti Lanki
Henry Sakko
Sakari Taavo
Erick Laakso
Sachari Krikka
Olli Sippola
Henry Pekkala
Abraham Constenius
(and some others)

Some of the Finnish families came from Finland and some from Norway. Many of the men went fishing in Finland and that way secured money to come to America. From 1870 to 1875 a good many people came to Cokato from Michigan, called the copper mining country, and bought land.

Interview with Erick Karjalahti.

In 1871 a big timber fire north of Cokato did a lot of damage to the farmers. Some farm houses were burned and also a lot of hay and grain was burned. Mrs. Peter Wanha was ill in bed with her baby. The fire was advancing towards her home. She thought she and the baby would be burned, but they were saved by some men.

Interview with Isaac Arvid Barberg.

In 1877 the farmers again suffered a great loss. This time it was grasshoppers. They bothered them for about two years. The farmers tried to kill them by making a large pan from sheet iron, about 6 ft long and filling it with coal tar and dragging it along the field. Some of the grasshoppers were killed that way but to no avail due to the abundancy of them. In the summer of 1879 the grasshoppers all went up in the air like a dark cloud and went away.

One day in 1877 Isak Barberg's little girl was fixing a fire in the fireplace. Suddenly her dress caught afire. Her little brother tried desperately to put out the flames with hay, but to no avail. The little girl died six hours later. In the meantime the hay also caught afire and spread to the barn. All the cattle burned except one heifer which happened to be outside at the time.

Interview with Jacob Lantto.

Finnish

In the spring of 1884 a ^{Finnish} man named John Haataja bought an 80 acre farm north of French Lake from an Irish man, who was an old settler in French Lake. John Haataja did the seeding on this farm that spring but when he left he never returned. He said the woods was no place for people to live.

Later the same summer Mattias Lantto came in there and bought some land near Haataja's place. Lantto built a house there and later Haataja returned to his home, lived and died there.

Finnish Study
Mrs. Anna L. Lantto
January 18, 1940

Cokato History

Interview with Peter Saarenpää.

Finnish settlers in earlier times threshed their grain by drying it thoroughly in the sun. They then made a platform from boards, spread the grain on the platforms and then led the oxen on the platforms to tramp the grain fine. When ~~they thought~~ the grain was loose they separated the grain from the straw and put it in big pans made out of sheet iron.

Nels Selvala, Adam Ongamo, and Isak Barberg, Sr. put the first threshing machine together. Peter Wanhala had the first steam threshing rig, and Nels Selvala the first grain binder; Isaac Christopher the first team of horses.

Interview with Mrs. Frank ^Pajari.

The remedy the earlier Finn settlers used in curing the milk fever on the cows was to slit part of the tail open and let it bleed. They then put some salt and pine tar on it and wrapped it up. This was the cure for it. At times a man would use a horse and oxen as a team.

The Finns as a whole are church people. In Finland there is only one Lutheran Church but in this country there are three different groups of religion; Apostolic Lutheran, Evangelical Lutheran, and Evangelist Independent Church. There is one meeting place all Finns agree to go, and that is to the sauna or Finnish bathhouse. It is a hot steam bathhouse where they usually go in the summer time three times a week. They go once a week in the winter time to get clean washing. Generally a few neighbor

families go together especially on Saturday night. Several men together and several women together, according to how large the bathhouse is.

After the women have finished washing they prepare a little lunch; cake and coffee, and set around and talk besides telling stories.

[Tumberg, Julia]

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
OF MINNESOTA

HISTORICAL RECORDS SURVEY
1ST FLOOR, NEW POST OFFICE BLDG
SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA.


Linus C. Glotzbach
Administrator

March 27, 1939

Mr. Lee Grove
Federal Writers Project
415 Harvard Street, SE
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear Lee:

Enclosed find a copy of the Julia Tumberg manuscript together with a copy of the letter received from Mr. Barnard, secretary of the Otter Tail County Historical Society.

Hope it will be of some value to you.

Sincerely yours,

Historical Records Survey

By

Sackett

Richard R. Sackett
Project Supervisor

RRS/ej
encl.

C O P Y

Organized July 31, 1927

OTTER TAIL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Incorporated

Office of the Secretary

Fergus Falls, Minnesota

March 25, 1939.

Mr. Richard R. Sackett,
Project Supervisor,
13th Floor New Post Office Bldg.,
St. Paul, Minn.,

Dear Mr. Sackett:

Agreeable to your request of the 23rd I am enclosing herewith copy of the paper "Pioneer Finnish Peole of New York Mills" as written by Miss Julia Tumberg.

I regret that the young man who made the copy did not put on the date when it was written or received. My recollection is that it was written when we were having contests. If the date is important or the occasion which called for it I can furnish it if desired. Kindly advise.

Yours respectfully,

(signed) E. T. Barnard

(E. T. Barnard, Secretary.)

PIONEER LIFE IN NEWTON TOWNSHIP.

Julia Tumberg, New York Mills, Minn. R #1, c/o Peter Hoyhtya.

(My grandmother, Mrs. Peter Hoyhtya) Source.

In the early spring of 1873, my great grandparents, Elsa and Andrew Puupera and their only child, Anna (my grandmother) then seven years old, left their home in northern Finland and sailed for America to found a home here. With them came my grandmother's aunt Maria Autio (Puupera's sister) and her husband Thomas Autio.

They were first attracted to America by the reports sent by people who had preceded them to the State of Michigan. What they sought here was a chance to lay up enough of this world's goods for peace and comfort in their old age and to secure for their children better opportunities than they had ever enjoyed.

Eight weeks after leaving their Finland home, they landed in Duluth where they stayed several months. They next sought employment in Brainerd, Minnesota. In 1874, the two families came to New York Mills. Here a sawmill had been set up by some New Yorkers- hence the name "New York Mills."

Besides the sawmill, the settlement consisted of a store and a few log huts and unpainted frame houses in which lived the people employed at the sawmill. The store was an unpainted frame building and it also served as post office. The name of the storekeeper was Mr. Winslow. He also operated the sawmill.

Puupera and Autio lived here and worked at the sawmill, and also at a lumber mill in Detroit and earned money for building their homes on the homesteads they had taken, and to which they moved the following year. Their homesteads, eighty acres each, were side by side in the wilderness four miles south of New York Mills. The timber on the

land closer to the railroad was claimed by lumber companies.

The Autios were the first to move to their new home in the spring of 1875, and Mrs. Autio was the first Finnish housewife and mother to kindle a fire and cook a meal in the farming country near New York Mills. Two daughters, Emma and Mary, had been born to her since their arrival in America.

A few weeks later my grandmother and her parents moved to their new home. The household possessions were hauled by oxen in a borrowed wagon along a road opened by the two men and which was full of stumps. They brought with them one cow.

The house was only partly finished. It was made of logs hewn on four sides, fitted together without nails and "chinked" with moss. The boards for the floor and roof were bought from the sawmill and hewn by hand and even the windows, all but the panes, were made at home. The windows were fastened with hinges and opened like doors one part on either side. The house had two rooms. They made all of the furniture including tables, chairs, beds also pails, churns, spoons, ladles, shovels and other articles, many of them completely of wood using no nails. Great grandfather made his first wooden wagon and also the sleigh. The wagon had discs of wood for wheels. The loom was also made by hand. With this the women wove cloth and carpets. Certain parts of it had been brought from Finland. Great grandmother brought a spinning wheel and cards for combing wool from Finland. And when after several years, people coming from Alexandria, Minn., brought sheep, the women sheared them, combed the wool and spun the yarn from which they wove cloth, knitted stockings, mittens, sweaters, caps and other articles of clothing. The men also made the fish nets and later tanned leather and made it into shoes, mittens, parts of harness and

what other articles they needed from leather.

Prior to their moving, the men had cleared and prepared a small patch of land on which they planted potatoes. Their first potato crop was poor.

Clearing the land was hard work as the trees were mostly of hard wood and some very big. The stumps were removed with the axe and Mattock.

Hay for the cattle was made from the wild meadows along Leaf River two miles south of the homestead.

There were no fenced pastures except later for the horses, and the cattle roamed miles away from home and often were not even found for days and the people themselves sometimes got lost searching for their cattle.

The oxen were the only beasts of burden for a number of years. Great grandmother earned the first yoke of oxen which cost one hundred dollars by doing housework at the home of a railroad conductor in Brainerd. He worked on the railroad going through New York Mills.

Sometimes when her mother was gone, grandmother, then a mere child, kept house for her father. At times even the father was away and she spent the night alone in the house in the dense forest. She could have spent the night with her aunt, but she was not afraid. She recalls one lonely night alone when an owl flew into a tree by the house and hooted the greater part of the night.

She did not always stay at home but went along with her mother when she went to work. One summer she took care of children at a certain home in Brainerd. She had an exciting train ride home from there for she brought with her a dog, a kitten and a little pig. The dog was in her lap, the kitten in a box on the seat beside her and the pig in

a box in the wash room. The conductor let the four ride free.

When great grandfather was clearing land for the potato patch, grandmother begged to go along with him and made her very first trip to the farm. She remembers that her father with his oxen left working at the clearing and sent her to see his house-only a rough shelter from the rain. She went along the path but did not go far when she saw what she thought was an Indian asleep. She was frightened and ran back to tell her father and when they went to look, the sleeping Indian proved to be only long curls of birch bark inside out and a black iron kettle at one end which she thought was the Indian's head. The brown birch bark looked like the Indian's leather clothing. This birch bark was used for making a roof for the barn.

Indians who were numerous were the only neighbors of these people and often called at their homes. The women were at first frightened at their peculiar habits but they soon learned to know one another and became fast friends. The Indians lived in wigwams and owned many dogs. They only lived here during the winter and moved away in the spring, presumably nearer lakes or blueberry patches. In the fall they returned..A few years after the coming of the white people, the Indians left and went northward and did not return.

As soon as possible, these Finnish settlers also built a bath house. This was a hut a little distance from the dwelling. In the bath house there was a pile of stones in one corner surrounding a small oven where a fire was built. When the stones were heated and the smoke and gas cleared away it was ready for a bath.

Later on when grain was grown it was threshed inside this hut. Shelves were built close to the roof and the grain was dried on them. When thoroughly dry it was taken down and threshed with the flail.

The straw was picked up and carried away and the seeds swept up in a pile on one side of the hut. The threshers now seated themselves beside this pile and threw handfuls from it to the opposite side of the hut. The chaff dropped near the threshers while the seeds and heavier bits of straw went further. When through with this, the chaff was cleared away and the pile now left was cleaned in a sort of an oblong box they made themselves. The bottom of this box was higher at one end and had a handle at either end for holding. When this was shaken up and down, the seed in it left on the bottom and the bits of straw rose to the surface and was picked away. The grain was cut with the cradle, an implement for reaping grain by hand.

A Norwegian by the name of Nils Oppegaard and his wife and family moved on their homestead from New York Mills the same year as Autio and Puupera. His land bordered Autio's and Puupera's lands. Other Finnish settlers who came here soon after were Aleksi Nykanen and Matt Ronkainen. The last mentioned acting as preacher up to year 1877, when Rev. Israel Hagel settled here. Hagel's homestead adjoined Oppegaard's.

He held his first preaching services in the home of Andrew Puupera in 1877. The people present were Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Autio, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Puupera, Mr. and Mrs. Aleksi Nykanen, Mr. and Mrs. Matt. Ronkainen and Mr. Isak Westola. All of them except Mr. and Mrs. Nykanen belonged to the Apostolic Lutheran Congregation. Until a church was erected many years later, the preaching services were conducted in the settlers homes.

From 1880 until his death in 1911, Rev. John Mursu of Otto township was the actual minister of this congregation. At the present time Rev. Hagel preaches in this church to a congregation numbering

over a thousand.

The first graves were dug in what is now the "Woodland" cemetery. It comprises forty acres and is located near the farm of the first settlers.

The first schoolhouse was built in District No. 105. It was a log building. Miss Maggie Watson was the name of the first teacher and the pupils enrolled were: Leslie, Victor and Otto Pikkarainen, Gunda, Lizzie and Olaf Oppegaard, Eddie, George and William Peters, Nina and Andrew Hustetler, William Douglas, Mary Rogers and Anna Puupera.

Grandmother had attended school in Duluth and Brainerd and some in New York Mills, so she spoke the English language quite well, and as the older people could not understand much English, she had to do all the interpreting the first years.

The first confirmation school with an enrollment of seven was conducted in the home of Aleksi Nykanen.

The roads were bad, so the people preferred to walk even long distances whenever it was possible. They followed blazed trails through the forests to many of their neighbors and friends living at a greater distance. They made skis and in the winter used them for travel. The men often made trips as far as Brainerd and Fergus Falls on skis.

Amusements were few and simple and of leisure there was none worth mentioning. People all were hospitable and it was a pleasure to call at their homes.

The pioneers were given money only for wheat. For the railroad ties, cordwood, butter, eggs and potatoes that they sold, they received a form of money good only in the store from which it was given.

There were many wild animals: deer, bears, wolves and smaller animals;

but they never harmed anyone.

My grandfather Peter Hoyhtya came here from Finland in 1880.

Mr. and Mrs. John Bardin, my teacher's parents settled in Deer Creek township in 1877.

Grandmother was married when young to Peter Hoyhtya and they have reared a large family-including myself from my seventh year. They live on the original Puupera homestead and also own the Autio homestead, ~~and also own the Auto homestead.~~ With the passing of the years, grandmother has had an opportunity to watch the wilderness develop into a great farming country- the largest Finnish farming country in America. She is the only member surviving of the first two Finnish families and she often speaks of the pioneer days.

New York Mills ----- Summaries

Julia Tumberg Paper: Julia Tumberg a great-granddaughter of Antti Puuperä

Came to America in early spring of 1873, Andrew and Elsa Puuperä and their only child, Anna, then seven years old; and Thomas and Maria Autio (Puuperä's sister).

Eight weeks after leaving Finland landed in Duluth. Stayed several months, went to Brainerd. In 1874 both families came to New York Mills. Puuperä and Autio lived in New York Mills and worked at sawmill, and also at a lumber mill at Detroit.

Moved to their claims the following year. Homesteads were 80 acres each, side by side in wilderness four miles south of N. Y. Mills.

Autios moved to their land in spring of 1875. At that time had two ~~more~~ daughters, Emma and Mary, born since arrival in America. A few weeks later Puuperäs moved to their new home. (Description of home and living conditions, furniture, clothes, etc.)

First clearing, made by both men before moving, was planted with potatoes. First crop poor.

Finns threshed in bathhouse.

A Norwegian, Nils Oppegard, with his wife and family, moved onto claim the same year as Autio and Puupera. His land bordered that of Autio and Puupera. Other Finnish settlers who came soon after were Aleksi Nykänen and Matt Ronkainen. The last mentioned acted as preacher up to 1877, when the Reverend Israel Hagel settled there. Hagel's homestead adjoined Oppegaard's.

Hagel's first services held in home of Puuperä in 1877. People present were Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Autio, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Puupera,

Mr. and Mrs. Matt Ronkainen and Mr. Isak Westola. All of them except Nykänens belonged to Apostolic Lutheran church. For many years, until a church was built, preaching services were conducted in homes. From 1880 until death in 1911, Reverend John Mursu of Otto Township was the actual minister. Afterward Hagel again preached; congregation now over a thousand. The first confirmation school, with an enrollment of seven, was conducted in home of Aleksi Nykänen.

First schoolhouse built in District No. 105. Miss Maggie Watson the first teacher; pupils enrolled were: Leslie, Victor and Otto Pikkarainen, Gunda, Lizzie and Olaf Oppegaard, Eddie, George and William Peters, Nina and Andrew Hustetler, Wm. Douglas, Mary Rogers, and Anna Puuperä.

Pioneers given money for wheat only. For railroad ties, cordwood, butter, eggs and potatoes, they received a ~~scrip~~ scrip money good only at store where they sold the produce.

Amusements few and simple.

Wild animals: deer, bears, wolves, and smaller animals.

Roads bad, people usually walked. Used skis in winter.

Uusi Kotimaa, "Exerpts from History of Wadena County....."

First Finns to arrive in N. Y. Mills and homestead were Tuomas Autio and his brother-in-law Antti Puuperä.

Israel Hagel came to N.Y. Mills in 1877. Jaako Partanen came with Hagel, and both took homesteads.

After Hagel and Partanen came Ivar Telin and Matti Ronkainen, who also took up homestead land in 1877. Iisakki Westola and Aleksi Pikkarainen also came in 1877 ~~and took homesteads~~ ~~xxxx Iisakki~~ and ~~I~~ took homesteads. In 1878 Kustaa Hyry came. Iisakki Piippo, Juho Ollikainen and Iisakki Halgrona were the only men to take up homesteads in 1878. In 1879 Jaako Pernula, Juho Fraki, Juho Kauppi, Juho Anttila, Olli Wiokila, Kalle Peltoniemi, Kustaa Koskela, Juho Keto and Matti Bimberg.

Plenty of game in early days: deer, bear, squirrels, rabbits. Abundant fish.

A new wave of Finnish immigration began to arrive in 1881. Prior to this they had all lived on south side of railroad; in 1882 they began to drift north to Grass River, Paddock, and even farther.

Olaf Pary [Olli Pajari] came to New York Mills July 14, 1881, and on the first day began to sell merchandise. In 1884 the Uusi Kotimaa came "and through it the message was broadcast that herewas a paradise on earth." Resulting from this, the flood of land seekers increased in numbers. Most of them, after stopping here, continued their journey north, to Menahga, Wolf Lake and even farther."

From Uusi Kötimaa, by J. W. Lahde:

Finnish founders of ~~Newton~~ Newton Township were Thomas Ottio (Tuomas Autio), Andrew Poopert (Antti Puupera), Alex Pekeine (Aleksi Pikkarainen) and Matti Ronkainen.

Village of New York Mills founded in 1884. Among founders were Charles J. Johnson, O. Pary, O. A. Austin, August Sitz, Fred Reynolds, and others.

".....first Finns, Tuomas Autio, Antti Puupera and Matti Ronkainen came in 1875...." (Israel Hagel came on June 19, 1877)."

The Uusi Kotimaa¹, owned by August Nyland Sr. moved from Minneapolis to N.Y. Mills in 1884. In 1888 it was moved to Astoria Oregon, and in the fall of that same year J. W. Lahde established another weekly paper called the Amerikan Suometar. When Uusi Kotimaa was moved back from Astoria, the two were combined, and for a time published three times weekly, but support insufficient to continue it as ~~thi~~-weekly.

Largest merchandise establishment in early days was store of Olli Pajari, who also carried on extensive timber operations. His store was the third one established in N. Y. Mills, and the first by a Finn.

"The prosperous period for the ~~Finn~~ N.Y. Mills community begins when the Finns start diversification, when the creameries begin to grow in the community." The N. Y. Mills Creamery Co. Established March 1, 1901. First officers: Israel Hagel, Pres., Jacob Ojala, Vice Pres., S. J. Haarala, Secy., Jacob Pelto, Treas., and Matti Niemela and John P. Aarni board members.

Since N. Y. Mills was the only railroad station in the area, and settlers starting out for the Paddock region some twenty miles northeast of N. Y. Mills¹ where later the towns of Menahga and Sebeka, in

Wadena County. The early settlers in that region were forced to walk the entire way, carrying their provisions.

(Story of John Tolppi, who lived halfway between N. Y. Mills and Paddock)

In fall of 1887 the writer (Lahde) was called to preach at Paddock. Worship was held in home of Johan Bangord. Many places on trip there were only corduroy roads.

Great Northern Ry. built from Wadena to Park Rapids, and Sebeka and Menahga established along this road.

First Finnish church in the region was the Apostolic Lutheran Church. Evangelical Lutheran Church founded in 1892, the independent Evangelical congregation. A group later separated from this church and formed the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran congregation of St. Peter in 1896. This church is known as the Finnish Synod. The Leaflake Evangelical Lutheran congregation established in 1889, Topelius Evangelical Lutheran church in 1911.

(Story of Kittijarvi of Paddock who ~~made~~ bought a grindstone in N. Y. Mills; made a wheelbarrow using it as a wheel, and wheeled his load some 20 miles home.

Agricultural History;

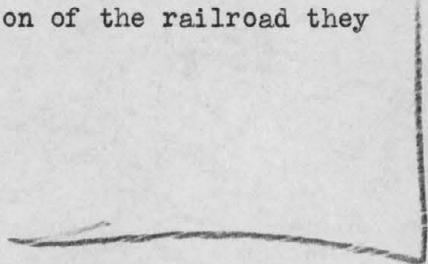
"In 1889 the largest settlement of Finns to be found in the United States was at New York Mills, Minnesota. In the little colony of Finns..... were two or three men of superior intelligence who wrote letters to Finland describing the advantages of the country, got into relations with an emigrating agency in New York, and thus drew a steady stream of their countrymen.....to this section of Northern Minn. In the course of time a small newspaper in the Finnish language was established, and the copies that were mailed to Finland were the most effective kind of emigration literature."

"It [the Amerikan Suometar] was a well-printed little sheet of six columns, and its editor was J. W. Lahde. He, however, was not the founder of the newspaper. For five years it was published by August Nilund, under the name of Uusi Kotimaa. In 1884 Mr. Nilund moved to Astoria, Oregon, and took the name of his newspaper with him. The plant and equipment he sold to Mr. Lahde. "

"[Olaf Pary] was the most influential merchant in the settlement, and his big brick store was the meeting place. At one time four hundred men were in his employ." (More)

Paul Lekatz (Source of statements not given, although a bibliography appended):

"It is an established fact that as early as 1873 there were Finns residing in Brainerd, the county seat, [Crow Wing County] and in Deerwood. Both Deerwood and Brainerd were born with the construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad from Duluth to Brainerd in 1871. These early Finns were lured into Crow Wing County by the railroad company since there was a shortage of labor at the time and because the Finns were reputed to be good workers. Upon completion of the railroad they occupied themselves otherwise.....



Duluth, Minnesota
Socio Ethnic
Harold Rajala
November 15, 1939

Result of Interview with the Reverend

Eino M. Tuori, pastor of the Duluth

Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Interviewed on November 9th, 1939.

The Rev. Eino M. Tuori was born in Newberry, Michigan in February, 1912.

He is a graduate of the Suomi-Opisto (Suomi College and Theological Seminary), Hancock, Michigan, being ordained there three years ago (1936). [The Suomi Synod was organized Mar. 25, 1890 at Calumet, Michigan.]

He attended special assignments in different towns while attending the college, mainly in the vicinity of Phelps and Eagle River in Wisconsin [northwestern Wis.]. Upon graduation and before coming to Duluth he served the church at Butte Montana. The Rev. Tamminen was the former minister at the church. [The Rev. Tuori came to Duluth in August, 1936. An article in the Duluth Herald of August 24th, 1936 mentions that instalation services were held for the new minister at the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church at 7:30 P. M. Sunday. Another article in the Duluth Herald of November 5, 1935 mentioned that the former minister of the church, Carl T. Tamminen, who had served the church from Sept. 1, 1930, was resigning to accept pastorate in Minneapolis. He had formerly come to Duluth from Lead S. D.]

The congregation was established in 1897, a church was erected on S. 1st Ave. E. in 1898. The present church at 3rd Ave. E. and 2nd St. was bought in 1923, where services have been held since. This church is 70 years old. First it was the Old Presbyterian Church, then the German Catholic and finally the Duluth Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church. An article concerning this church appeared in the Duluth paper last spring. [I have been unable to find that article, but in other articles

Result of interview with the Rev. Eino M. Touri, Duluth

that the writer has found concerning the church it seems that in 1868, when there were only 500 residents in Duluth, a public subscription drive was put on to raise money to build the church. At a cost of \$16,000 the Old Presbyterian Church was built at Third Avenue East and Second Street, "in the woods, surrounded by pine forest". Later when the new Presbyterian church was erected opposite, the older building was taken over by the German Catholic congregation. Then in 1923 it was bought by the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran congregation.]

There is only one church in his parish.

There are about 400 members in his church.

When the church was established services were held only in Finnish, and up to recent years, then English services were added and held once monthly- gradually more frequent - twice monthly - until last September 1st when the pastor inaugurated holding of services in both English and Finnish every Sunday.

Church Societies are the Ladies Aid, Ester Guild and the Choir.

Young peoples groups are the Luther League and the Amicus Society.

Church officers are elected at annual meetings held in January of each year, taking office immediatly. Officers elected and terms: six trustees for a term of three years each and seven deacons for one year term each.

There are no temperance societies within the church. When the Finnish church was established on South First Avenue East the temperance society occupied the downstairs and the church occupied the upper floor.

He suggests that we contact the Rev. E. V. Niemi at Town of Thomson relative to information on the Finnish National Synod, and mentions that it would be possible to get information on the Finnish Apostolic church at Esko at the same time, but because

Results of interview with the Rev. Eino M. Touri, Duluth.

the Finnish Apostolic church ministers are travelling missionaries it will be difficult to obtain the necessary information. [The Rev. E. V. Niemi has served the Evangelical Lutheran congregation in the town of Thomson since its inception there in 1900.] [Incidentally, consolidation of the Suomi Synod and the Finnish National Church was considered in 1938.]

When questioned about his observations in general on the Finns as a religious people, the Rev. Tuori says the condition here is deplorable - Duluth and Superior being as it is, the seat of communistic and socialist activities. Fortunately during recent years these activities have been on the decline.

Only the younger Finns are going over to other churches because of marriage to others of other faiths.

Non-religious activities among the Finns are on the decline and has been dying for the past ten years. The Reverend says many old members have rejoined, new ones have joined and many more would but are ashamed to do so.

The Reverend says that Duluth is a sort of stopping place for the Finns and Because they stay here for only short periods of time, then move to other places is the reason why a better attendance is hard to get. The attendance, he says, is satisfactory but can be improved.

He says that an excellent booklet can be obtained from Adolph Lundgren of the "Minnesotan Uutiset", New York Mills, intitled "Esi-Raivaja", pertaining to the Finnish settlers of that region. [We have just received that booklet from you.]

Mr. Touri wrote an article relative to the history of his church for the "Paivalehti" which appeared in that newspaper last spring. Because he did not have a copy of the article he suggested that the writer consult the files of that newspaper for the article. The writer searched for it and found it. It contains pertinent information about the church and so the writer will translate it and forward also.

FINNISH

Duluth, Minnesota
Socio Ethnic
Runar Gustafson
October 7, 1938

Mrs. Aino Vartiainen. Finnish Daily Publishing Co., Duluth, Minn. Born in Pulkila Oulu ^{""}Laani. Came to U.S. 1903 Massachusetts. Sent to school 4 yrs. public school in Finland. Graduated $\frac{1}{2}$ semester 1st 8 grades in two yrs. in U.S. school. Finnish seminary 3 yrs. Normal school Fitchburg, Mass. 2 years. Then married. Some newspaper work assisting husband, an editor, in Ironwood. Went to Montana until 1930. Have been corresponding with Finnish Daily, called to this paper now. Three children.

Skills and Interests. Singing, funeral singing and leading of choirs. Piano lessons. Lodge work.

City editor of Finnish Daily. Political work in Finnish F.L. Committees. Sec. of Exec. Council of F.L. Board.

Knitting and needle work.

The Temperance societies were the first community centers. The Finns were heavy drinkers when they first came to Minnesota 50 yrs. ago. The people seeing that the men were drinking too hard, decided that they were ruining themselves, so the Temperance movement sprang up, and this was the first cultural movement in the state of any kind; the Socialist movement was the next--the I.W.W. split the movement. The Finnish people always seemed to be a very progressive people and a movement is now going on to unite all the various Finnish groups into one great movement. One of the greatest celebrations and one that has helped to unite the Finns in recent years, was the Centennial Celebration in Delaware. This did more to unite the groups than any one thing.

When a cow was going to have a calf there was a common belief that an unseen spirit would come and knock on the door and then the people would know that the cows were all right.

Meat was smoked in the sauna for the winter. Skiis were used instead of snowshoes in the country--in fact they were unknown. They were made by planing two boards smooth and turning the ends up by steaming them in a form made of two blocks of wood.

Sleighs were entirely made by hand out of wood hewed from trees growing on the farms.

Shoes were made entirely by hand in the form of pacs of moccasins.

All furniture was made by hand and odd formed branches and trees were used to make very pleasing and comfortable furniture. Cloth to cover the furniture was woven by hand as well as carpets and rugs. Dies made from berries, minerals, moss, and bark taken from trees were used to color all yarns. The Finns have always been very excellent in home industries, and things that they have made can still be seen in the country.

Gilbert, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic

Toivo Torma

Nov. 30, 1938.

FINNS

Name: Mr. Jack Vietanen

Address: Box 51, R.F.D., Gilbert, Minn.

Age: 64

Born: 1874, at Lankemaki, Finland.

Life in Good Old Finland (As called by Mr. Jack Vietanen)

While I still lived in Finland, my wife and I operated a flour mill, a mill in which various flours were made from grains such as oats, barley, rye, and wheat. Our mill was situated on the bank of the "Ala" river, and beneath the famous "Ulikoski," falls, with the source of power being the rapidly moving water of this river.

We operated this flour mill for approximately eight years during which time we encountered no serious trouble; the river did not freeze with the approach of winter, nor did it run dry in the summer due to lack of rain. The mill had two "stones," (grinding bases upon which the flour was crushed) with one set of shafts or pulleys to harness the power of the stream. The water-wheel had upon it, cup-like clogs which propelled the circular movement of the shaft. The stream had the most power in the fall and spring due to the great capacity of water which flowed past.

We received the most business in the fall, after the harvest was over. However, we operated the mill throughout the year, but with a variable amount of work. The average amount of grain brought to the mill by a farmer was ten sacks. In speaking of sacks, which were made of linen, every family had a

Gilbert, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic
Toivo Torma
Nov. 30, 1938.

field of flax from which the house wife would weave cloth. Every country side had a loom maker, who's duty was to repair and construct looms so that the cloth needed for clothes could be made at home. All the women of the vicinity knew the art of weaving; shirts, trousers, gowns, bed sheets, etc., were sewed out of the better woven linen, while sacks, coverings, and tent-like.

Finland, to my knowledge, had only two modes of travel, namely the horse and buggy, sometimes called in this country the one horse shay, and the boat method that was used chiefly in the northern portions of Finland, for there were a great number of lakes and streams upon which water travel would be the safest and cheapest. Of course I should include the use of the feet for with them the largest number of miles were traveled, but since in the country in which I were born the people did not consider walking a task as do the Americans, maybe I shouldn't over emphasize the point.

One day while working at the mill, I heard mention of the populous country beyond the ocean. I asked the person to stay over night with my wife and I, for we would be interested in hearing about the country from which he has just arrived. He pictured the United States as being so interesting that my wife and I immediately began considering the idea of coming to this country and selling the mill. I sold the mill at quite a small price since I believed that it would be more profitable to me to get to America as fast as possible instead of attempting to secure a few more dollars from my possessions in Finland. I decided to come to the Range for I knew some people here and since I had not heard from them I deduced that they are getting along alright.

Gilbert, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic
Toivo Torma
Nov. 30, 1938.

I, with my wife, started to America in the spring of 1896, on the Halifax-Quebec Line. The trip took us 14 days and I can easily say that I believe it was the most miserable time I had ever spent. The sleeping quarters were not of the best, for the beds were constructed in the lumber camp system of bunks. These bunks had none or very little springs, a minimum of sheeting, and dirty pillows. The food was not of the best either, and I ate as little of it as possible. I lost about ten pounds of weight on the trip but my dislike for the food was not the only thing which made me sick. The continual rocking of the ship made me sea-sick, with no desire to repeat my adventure again. But maybe I shouldn't complain for my wife and I rode in third class.

I landed in Quebec and contrary to my plans I did not go to the Iron Range immediately, but stayed there for eleven years, during which time I worked at the lumber camps of Canada. Since I was no richer in 1907 than when I started from Finland, I decided to go with my wife to Virginia. Virginia in 1907 had only a few business houses, with the laundry, hotel, and sawmill as the most important ones. I lived in Virginia until the year it burned, the date of which I can't remember, and then my wife and I moved to the farm at which I have lived ever since, but as far as I know, I am in no better predicament than when I left my home country. I have, of course, raised a family of no small size, but as far as wealth is concerned, I still have to see that accomplished.

Duluth, Minnesota
Topic: Social Ethnic
Submitted by: Runar Gustafson
and William Liukkonen

FINNS IN MINNESOTA

Mr. Vihomenen, 262 So. 1st. Ave. E., Duluth, Minn. Born Viipiuri, Finland 1873. Came to Duluth in 1905 and has lived here ever since at 262 So. 1st Ave. E. Has worked as a common laborer in Duluth 33 yrs. Had only a few years in grammar school in Finland because he was forced to go to work to help support the family. Came to America because they had heard that the living conditions were better in America than in Finland. First job was as a laborer on the Great Northern Railroad.

Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic
Alfred Backman
Jan. 9, 1939.

Finns in Minnesota

Carl Waldeen, son of a farm laborer was born in Hyvinkas, Uudenmaan Province, Finland and in that country made his own living from the time he was 12, working at odd jobs around the Hyvinkas paper mill where he finally became a steam engineer as he grew up to manhood. Although the wages were much better than that of common labor, young Waldeen became anxious to see the world and emigrated to America with his wife and young son at the age of 23. Waldeen says that in 1903 when he left for America political oppression in Finland was becoming unbearable under the Czarist regime. Thousands left the country even though, like himself, they might hold good jobs with fair wages. Waldeen was desiring freedom which could be found nowhere but in America. That was the feeling generally throughout Finland. Thousands, drafted into the Russian Army vanished over night with America as their destination. They "skipped" over the border to Sweden and took passage to America but those who were able to purchase their passage and leave legally did so. Waldeen, however, served a year in the Russian Army when eighteen years of age.

The family arrived in Boston in 1903. Mr. Waldeen worked as a lumber jack in New Hampshire and Maine nearly a year and later secured a job with the American Woolen Mill in Maynard, Mass. After serving his apprenticeship, he became an expert weaver in a short time. Getting top wages, Mr. Waldeen built his own home at the cost of \$4,000 in Maynard where he lived for 16 years. At that time several thousand Finns had arrived and settled in Maynard, Mass., where a movement was started to organize a cooperative store. This was in 1906-7. Mr. Waldeen served over ten years on the board of directors of this very successful cooperative

Minneapolis, Minnesota.

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which up to the present day ranks "tops" among American cooperatives.

After his wife's death in 1919, Mr. Waldeen with his son came West and settled in the village of Kinney in Northern Minnesota, near Buhl. For four years he was a carpenter and general construction worker. The firm he worked for took him all over the Iron Range wherever the mining industry was building new shaft houses and other buildings necessary to mining. Kinney at that time was a thriving mining village operating three mines full blast on three shifts.

The construction boom blew over in a few years and Mr. Waldeen was caught without a job so he moved to Marble (near Grand Rapids, Minn.) and opened up a boarding house feeding 125 miners, doing most of the cooking himself. Mr. Waldeen was able to save enough money out of the venture to buy an 80 acre farm at Embarrass near Ely, Minnesota. The investment totaled over \$3,000 which Mr. Waldeen was able to pay except for a \$400 mortgage in 1929 at which time farming for a living was a losing venture. The farm was sold for the mortgage in 1932 and Mr. Waldeen moved to Minneapolis where he has worked as paper hanger and painter since.

His son is married and lives in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Mr. Waldeen secured his final citizenship at the Virginia, Minnesota courthouse in 1924.

RM

FINNISH

Duluth, Minnesota
Socio Ethnic
William Liukkonen and Runar
Gustafson
November 17, 1938

Matt Walberg, 108 East First Street, Duluth. Born in Tuurikyla, Finland, 1880.

He was educated in grammar and trade school.

Upon finishing school he went to work on the Finnish Government Railroad.

Came to the United States in 1902 because the Russian Government was making it hard for the Finnish people, forcing them to learn the Russian language and customs, which he refused to do.

The first city in which he made his home in the United States was Eveleth, Minnesota. He worked in the iron mines there for seven years. In 1910 he moved to Duluth, Minnesota, where he has resided ever since.

He has worked as plasterer and painter, and now is employed by the Duluth Steam Bath Company.

FINNISH

Duluth, Minnesota
Socio Ethnic
William Liukkonen and Runar Gustafson
November 9, 1938

John Wallin. Born in 1877, Tuuri Pori Lääni, Finland. Came to Hibbing, Minnesota in 1910 where he worked in an open pit mine for one year. Then moved ^{to} Duluth where he lived for a few years, moved to Eveleth, Minnesota where he worked in the mines and in the woods for a few years. Then moved back to Duluth where he has worked ever since. Work in the mines and in the woods was very hard. The companies worked the men for all they could. The work was very dangerous because safety was an unknown factor. If a man got hurt, the company paid him what they thought he was worth.

Conditions were fair in Finland, but the wages were very poor. Hearing that conditions were very good and wishing to better himself is the reason why he came to this country.

Education consisted of confirmation and grammar school. It was compulsory in Finland at that time to attend confirmation school, otherwise a person could not marry or hold any position in public life.

At one time was a member of the Railroad Brotherhoods, but otherwise has taken no part in social or cultural activities.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic
William Liukkonen and Runar Gustafson
Dec. 1, 1938.

FINNS

Mrs. Olga Wanhala, 512 $\frac{1}{2}$ W. 3rd Street, Duluth, Minnesota. Born at Maple, Wisconsin, 1906. Her parents were farmers, born in Finland.

She was educated in the grade school at Maple, Wisconsin.

Mrs. Wanhala was married in 1923. She has two children. Her husband is a longshoreman. She came to Duluth in 1923, and has lived here ever since.

Mrs. Wanhala worked as a waitress in a restaurant, and as a laundress at the Spaulding Hotel.

She is a member of the Finnish Womens' Club, and a member of the Parent-Teacher Association.

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic
Stanley Levine
Dec. 6, 1938.

FINNS

John Wata, Superior, Wisconsin. Born at Vaasanlaani, Finland,
1888.

He had four years of public school education in Finland. In addition he had a night school education, and attended Business College, in Duluth.

He has been a timber worker, coal dock worker, and newspaper editor.

He has been living in Superior, Wisconsin for the last three years.

"I left Finland because I was young, only 17, and like all young people, I wanted to see the world.

"Most Finnish people left Finland because of economic reasons, I think. They all wanted to get better wages and a higher standard of living and also a freer democracy to enjoy those things under.

"The first few years for myself in America and I suppose most Finns, was harder because I didn't understand the English language well enough to speak or write it. All kinds of people took advantage of you because of that situation. It wasn't only the timber workers who got fleeced with small wages and long hours, but most all the immigrants until they knew enough to read contracts that they signed and other things like that. You can see that for yourself without much trouble, can't you?

"Yes, the difference between the Finnish and the American standard of living was very much. That wasn't hard to notice. In Finland we often

Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic
Stanley Levine
Dec. 6, 1938.


FINNS

went without meals. Here we ate enough at all times, even if we didn't all get rich, you know.

"Most of the Finnish people are satisfied that they left Finland when they did. They'd all do it again, too, I'll bet you.

"The Finns certainly make good Americans and especially good Minnesotans because they really worked their whole lives to physically build up this state of Minnesota. The timber fields, the iron mines, and the railroads were all built with the strength of the Finnish people.

"There used to be many more Finns in the Iron Range towns than there are today. Today the Finns are mostly out on the farms. They left the Range town back in 1908 after they were blacklisted when the strike on the Iron Ranges was lost in 1908."



Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic
Stanley Levine
Nov. 15, 1938.

FINNS

Mrs. Anna Willows, 122 East 1st St. Born at Limmi, Finland.

Parents from same place. Occupation: domestic laborer, housewife.

Had only two years of public school education in Finland, none at all in U.S. Came to New York from Limmi, Finland, 1907. Went directly to Moose Lake, Minnesota. After two years there she went to Kalavala Township, where she married. Went to Kettle River in 1919. Came to Duluth in 1936.

She left Finland at age of 13 because her father, who had been in America for some years previous, wrote to her and sent the money for her to come to Moose Lake. Economic and social conditions in Finland in her territory were practically feudal. Her forefathers had purchased a piece of land from a landlord, built a hut, and worked their own land for crops, and the landlord's land as well in payment for the rent of the land. Her father and family had to continue this arrangement.

The land around Moose Lake when she arrived was all heavy timber. There was very little land that had been cut over, and only a small part of that cut-over land had been ploughed.

Her father painstakingly cut the timber on his land with the help of wage workers, and then he ploughed it.

Her father made a business of renting lands from farmers, and then hiring a crew to cut the timber. He would sell the timber to big companies who bought up the timber in that territory.

The big timber companies paid but small prices for the timber and sold at high prices. The small timber-producers had no means of transporting the timber to market and the big operators had plenty of money for railroad

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cost, etc.

Conditions were only fairly good. Her family never had to go hungry but on the other hand they never had any luxuries whatsoever.

Her father produced potatoes, carrots, cabbage and such truck commodities for their own use. Later on he sold to produce companies. Butter was sold to storekeepers for 17 and 18¢ per pound.

The Barnum Creamery began buying cream in that territory of Moose Lake when the roads were opened up around 1911.

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Submitted by: Stanley Levine
Date: Oct. 30, 1938.

The Finns in Minnesota

Nestor Willows, Kettle River, Minn. He is 52 years of age. Born in Honkajaki, Finland, 1888. Parents came from same territory.

He has been a farmer, timber worker, and small businessman at various times in life.

"I was born on a farm in Finland. My parents died within a period of five months before I was three years old. I was taken first to an auntie for upkeep, then to other farmers until I was 7 years old. I was then placed on 'auction' and sold to the lowest bidder for a period of 8 years. The people who 'bought' me bid 40 marks. The community government paid the money.

"These custodians treated me terribly. I would get up early, around 4 or 5 in the morning and work until 11 at night. It was all hard labor 6 days a week and sometimes even on Sunday.

"I never had to milk cows, though. The women on the farm always did that. The food was very, very bad. The main food was silakka and rye bread. Sometimes they didn't even give me silakka fish but the water from the silakka brine instead.

"I always got the leftovers. There was one girl on the farm who was 'bought at auction' just like I was and she was treated just as bad.

"I was given no education but two weeks of confirmation school at the age of 15.

"All the boys who were leased out like I was were supposed to get $\frac{1}{4}$ year of education every year, but my boss wouldn't even let me go to school. I couldn't tell anybody about my condition. The boss threatened to harm me

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if I did.

"I was free to go at the age of fifteen and hired out at free labor, 60 marks per year and board and room which was much better, of course, than at the boss's place. I also got shoes, mittens, and a suit of clothing for nothing at the new place.

"I had heard a lot about the country called America every since I was a little kid. There was an old saying at that time that 'you could cut gold with a wooden knife' in America.

"At the age of 19 I had some money saved up in the bank, and then I loaned another 200 marks. Three farmers went bond for that 200 marks which I paid back later.

"I came first to Monessin, Penn. I was there until 1908, arriving there in 1905. In the fall of 1908 I went back to Finland to visit for a while, because I had a little money saved up and I wanted to see all my old friends.

"I came back to America in 1910, and went to Ashtabula Harbor, Ohio. I did various kinds of work there. I went to Valpariazo, Indiana University, for 3 months to learn English, in 1911. Then I went to Chicago Barber's School for 3 months.

"I went to Waukegan and had my own barber shop for a while. Then I came to Minnesota in 1918, to Kettle River. I opened a barber shop and pool hall there. I stayed there until 1936, when I came to Duluth.

"Economic conditions are much worse today than even when I came here. Machines are taking the place of men."

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FINNS

Matt Wilminko. Born Oulu Laani, Finland, 1864.

He can't recall the date on which he came to this country. He came directly to Floodwood, Minnesota. He has worked on farms and lumber camps around Floodwood for many years. He is a timber worker and farmer.

Confirmation school was only education he had in either Finland or America.

He left Finland because his two brothers at Floodwood sent him enough money with which to come to America.

Times, in his opinion, were comparatively good when he left Finland. There was plenty work when he arrived in the U.S. but wages were pitifully small.

He does not belong to temperance societies or church organizations.

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Sub. by: William Liukkonen
Runar Gustafson
Date: Oct. 20, 1938.

The Finns in Minnesota

Andrew Wirta, Hill Hotel. Born in Vaasa Laani, Finland, Jan. 7, 1887. Left Finland in 1902, came to Kent, Michigan, to a lumber camp where he worked as a swamper. Worked there for a while and then went to Crystal Falls, Mich. where he worked in the iron mines for eight months. Wages were from \$2 to \$2.15 a ten hour day. Room and board and laundry for \$15 per month. Left there to go to work at Berglund, Mich. in the lumber camps in 1903. Salary was \$30 per month and board. Worked from dark to dark. Came to Duluth in the spring of 1904. Worked out in the woods for Johnson Wentworth Lumber Co. \$30 per month and board. Food fair but hours were long.

Have been working in lumber camps and railroads, and mines and harvest fields ever since. When he came to Minnesota most of the men working in the camps were Finns.

One of the camps in which I worked (the Alger Smith) had three decker bunks in which to sleep, the houses were so narrow that a person couldn't stand in the aisle. He had to sit on his bunk. Had to get up at 4 o'clock and didn't get in for supper until 8 or 9 o'clock. Pay was only thirty dollars a month, if a man worked until the spring breakup, otherwise it was a dollar a day for the days worked.

There was no sugar on the table, Red horse (corned beef). No coffee, just tea, hot cakes and syrup (so tough that they called it the Walking Boss). The labor turnover was terrific in these camps.

There were no floors in the camps, no spittoons, so the men just spit on the floors. These camps that stood for three or four years were not fit

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for hogs. The smell was terrific, so that was one of the reasons for the great labor turnover. These conditions went on until the lumberjacks went on strike.

In the mines he worked 10 hours a day underground at piece work. So much per ft. depending on how much the captain of the mine liked you. The average was \$2 a day on the monthly average. The room and board was \$18. The check system was used so no worker received actual cash. The Finnish people could not stand these wages and working conditions so they went on strike. The Oliver Mining Co. blacklisted all the Finns, so they were forced to either leave town or starve, so they homesteaded in the rural districts. This is why the Finnish people predominate in the rural districts of St. Louis County.

There was a governor in Minnesota who said that the Finns were Mongolians and therefore they had no right to become citizens. The Finns in this country always have had to fight against great odds in order to obtain their rightful place as citizens of Minnesota. The reason why he came to this country was to obtain a higher standard of living.

Worked for the Minnesota Power and Light Co. when they dug the Thomson Channel. Wages were \$1.75 a day for 10 hours. Had to pay \$3.50 a week for board.

~~Pine tar and turpentine was used for colds.~~

Salve

~~Tallow and pitch from Norway pine, boiled in a stone crock. This was mixed with whiskey. This was used for cuts and bruises, also for rheumatism.~~

~~Three fellows made a bet with the witch doctor that he couldn't open the church doors, and the doctor said that he could open the church doors just~~

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by blowing on them. The bet was that if the witch doctor could get one of the fellow's Bible out of the church he would buy him a bottle of whiskey.

That night the doctor, knowing that he couldn't open the doors by blowing on them, tried to get in by the window, but the better, knowing he would do this, concealed himself in a newly dug grave by the window that the doctor tried to enter. When the witch doctor tried to enter the window, he started to strike matches in the grave. The doctor seeing the flashes of light from the grave, thought the devil was coming from hell, and ran away, screaming and crossing himself as he ran.

RM

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Social Ethnic
Stanley Levine
Oct. 19, 1938.

FINNS

Mrs. Oscar Woolo, 418 North 2nd Avenue West, Duluth, Minnesota.

Born near Kotka, Finland. Moved to Kotka, at age of 15.

Came to America in 1910, at age of 22. Came to Calumet, Michigan, then to Eveleth for 9 years and then to Duluth.

Conditions were very bad in Finland when she came over with her brothers, her father having come over a few years before. The reason she and family left Finland was because the living conditions in Kotka and throughout Finland were so low. Many times their family went entirely without one or more meals during the day.

She was very much surprised to see the low prices of foods and commodities in this country when she arrived at Calumet in 1910.

Her first job was in a restaurant where she worked ten hours per day and received \$12 per month pay. She claims she could do as much with the \$12 then as she could buy with \$50 now.

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Duluth, Minnesota.

Social Ethnic

William Liukkonen and Runar Gustafson

Nov. 15, 1938.

FINNS

Axel Ylanen, Mikkeli Lääni, Finland. Born in 1877 (city born).

Came to Boston, Mass. in 1905. Left Boston to go to Gardner, Mass. where he worked in a chair factory for one year as a laborer. The pay was \$1.20 to \$1.25 per day. Went to Negaunee, Michigan in 1906 where he worked in the iron ore mines for three years as a laborer. Wages were from \$2 to \$2.25. From Negaunee he went to Duluth, from there to Aurora where he worked in the mines for two years. He then filed a Homestead at Zim, Minnesota. Lived there seven years, then moved to Hibbing where he lived 19 years. Worked in the mines.

Came to America because his friends wrote him that conditions in America were much better in America than in Finland and that he could better himself much quicker. It was impossible in Finland to get land for himself which has always been his greatest desire. That was the main reason why he came to America.

Education consisted of three years grammar school, and confirmation school, and six years as a tailor's apprentice.

Was a member of the Finnish Temperance Society. This society was organized to combat drinking among the Finns, which was ruining the Finns in the country. The Finns worked hard and drank hard.