

ROY RUHKALA  
INTERVIEW BY SUSAN HARDWICK  
AUGUST 25, 1983  
ROCKLIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

"THIS IS SUSAN HARDWICK OF THE SACRAMENTO HISTORY CENTER. TODAY I WILL BE INTERVIEWING MR. ROY RUHKALA, ONE OF THE LAST FINNS TO OWN A GRANITE QUARRY IN ROCKLIN. MR. RUHKALA IS ALSO THE OWNER OF THE RUHKALA MONUMENT COMPANY IN SACRAMENTO.

"LET'S TALK ABOUT YOUR PARENTS FIRST. BOTH OF THEM WERE BORN IN FINLAND?"

BOTH MY PARENTS WERE BORN IN FINLAND. MY DAD WAS BORN IN KALAJOKI, ABOUT MIDWAY UP THE BAY OF BOTHNIA. IT IS RIGHT ON THE BAY. THE TOWN OF KALAJOKI IS RIGHT ON THE BAY AND HE WAS BORN INLAND ABOUT 5 OR 8 MILES, ABOUT WHERE HE WAS RAISED. HE WAS BORN IN 1869. HE LEFT THERE TO COME TO THE UNITED STATES IN ABOUT 1888.

IN THE OLD COUNTRY, MY DAD, ACTUALLY, HIS FOLKS PASSED AWAY WHEN HE WAS A LITTLE KID AND HE WAS ADOPTED FOR A FEW YEARS. RAISED. IN THOSE DAYS THEY DIDN'T HAVE ADOPTION. SOMEONE JUST RAISED THEM. SOME FAMILY TOOK THEM IN. THAT'S WHAT THEY USED TO DO IN THE EARLY DAYS.

MY MOTHER WAS BORN NORTH OF THE ARCTIC CIRCLE. ACTUALLY, HER DAD WAS A TRADER IN LAPLAND. THEY WERE NOT LAPS BUT THEY WERE ACTUALLY TRADERS AND THEY LIVED IN PALAJOENSU, WHICH IS ABOUT 150 MILES, 230-240 KILOMETERS NORTH OF THE ARCTIC CIRCLE. THEY WERE RAISED THERE. MY MOTHER CAME TO THIS COUNTRY ABOUT 1898. SHE CAME WITH HER SISTERS AND

AND SOME BROTHERS. THEY DIDN'T ALL COME AT ONE TIME BUT SHE HAD A COUPLE OF SISTERS AND THEY ALL WENT NORTH. SHE CAME SOUTH TO BERKELEY FROM NEW YORK. ONE OF THE BROTHERS CAME HERE FOR AWHILE AND WORKED IN THE QUARRIES. THE ONE THAT WORKED HERE ACTUALLY SETTLED IN POULSHO, WASHINGTON, UP OUT OF SEATTLE. THEN, SHE HAD A COUPLE OF OTHER BROTHERS THAT SETTLED DOWN THE COLUMBIA RIVER.

"WHAT BROUGHT YOUR PARENTS TO ROCKLIN?"

MY DAD CAME IN 1889 TO THE ROCKLIN AREA. HE WORKED IN A MINE IN, I THINK, WYOMING FOR AWHILE. THEN HE CAME TO BERKELEY. FROM BERKELEY, THERE WERE FINNS IN ROCKLIN, SO HE CAME TO ROCKLIN. QUARRIES WERE OPERATING, SO HE CAME HERE. HE MARRIED IN, I BELIEVE, 1896 OR 1897. HIS FIRST WIFE DIED. SHE WAS RELATED TO THE . . . . , THAT'S ANOTHER FAMILY HERE. THEY LIVED RIGHT DOWN THE STREET FROM MY HOUSE, THE HOUSE NEXT DOOR. HE DIDN'T MARRY ONE OF THE . . . . . THE GAL WAS RELATED TO THEM, I COULDN'T TELL YOU THE NAME RIGHT NOW. I DO HAVE IT.

SHE DIED IN CHILDBIRTH. SHE DIED A YEAR OR TWO LATER AND SHE IS BURIED IN THE ROCKLIN CEMETARY. THEN MY MOTHER AND DAD WERE MARRIED ABOUT 1900.

"DID YOUR FATHER WORK IN THE QUARRIES?"

HE WORKED IN THE QUARRIES ALL THE TIME. BY THEN, DAD WAS, HE LEARNED TO CUT STONE. HE SERVED AN APPRENTICESHIP. AFTER THAT, HE STARTED GETTING INVOLVED IN THE OWNERSHIP. MY DAD OPERATED FOUR DIFFERENT QUARRIES. AND ALSO, HE WAS AN OWNER OF THE TRAIL HEAD WHERE THE RAILS WENT ONLY SO FAR IN THE TOWN IN THE EARLY DAYS, BEFORE THEY SPREAD THEM OUT TO ALL THE

QUARRIES. HE AND ABOUT THREE OTHER PEOPLE BOUGHT THE LOT BY THE CREEK THERE AND THAT'S AS FAR AS THE TRAINS WENT. SO ALL THE QUARRIES HAULED THEIR GRANITE CURBING, LIKE YOU SEE IN SAN FRANCISCO. IT WAS ALL HAULED TO THIS RAILHEAD. SOME IN BUGGIES, SOME BY OXEN, SOME IN WAGONS, SOME OF THEM BY HORSES. THERE THEY LOADED THEM ONTO THE RAILROAD CARS,

MY DAD OPERATED THE LAST QUARRY. THE RUHKALA HOME QUARRY, IT WAS CALLED, WHICH IS ON RUHKALA ROAD. WE STILL OWN IT. THEN, BEFORE THAT, HE OPERATED THE ONE THAT WAS CALLED MYERS QUARRY IN LATER YEARS. ACTUALLY, MY DAD OPERATED THE ONE THAT IS RIGHT ACROSS THE STREET ON ROCKLIN ROAD, ACROSS FROM WHAT IS NOW A & W WAS THE QUARRY HOUSE. ACROSS ROCKLIN ROAD IS WHERE IT IS. IT'S HIDDEN IN THE TREES. I THINK OF THE NEW STREET THAT GOES BY IT, THE SAFEWAY, YOU'LL SEE IT. MY DAD OPERATED THAT FROM PROBABLY 1905 TO 1919.

"WHERE DID YOUR PARENTS LIVE IN ROCKLIN?"

WELL, MY PARENTS LIVED ON HIGH STREET AND THEY LIVED IN ONE HOUSE. I CAN'T TELL YOU THE EXACT DATE BUT PROBABLY AROUND 1907 OR SO, THOSE YEARS, HE HAD THE HOUSE BUILT RIGHT ON THE CORNER OF HIGH STREET AND CEDAR. THEY LIVED THERE UNTIL 1919. I WAS BORN IN 1919, OVER THERE IN THAT HOUSE. THEN WE MOVED AT THE END OF JULY AND BY OCTOBER, WE MOVED OVER TO THE HOME PLACE ON RUHKALA ROAD.

"WERE YOU BORN AT HOME OR IN A HOSPITAL?"

WE WERE ALL BORN AT HOME. AFTER DAD LEFT, WE MOVED. IT BECAME THE SUHONEN HOUSE. THE SUHONEN SON, AMEL, MARRIED SAMMY AND SAMMY STILL LIVES IN THAT HOUSE.

I TELL HER ALL THE TIME SHE HAS TO TAKE GOOD CARE OF IT,  
THAT'S WHERE I WAS BORN. SHE DOES A REAL GOOD JOB.

"HOW MANY BROTHERS AND SISTERS DID YOU HAVE AS YOU GREW UP?"

I HAVE FIVE BROTHERS AND FIVE SISTERS. WE ALL LEARNED TO  
TALK FINNISH.

"WAS THERE A BIG EMPHASIS ON BEING A FINN AT YOUR HOUSE?  
DID YOUR PARENTS HAVE SPECIAL CHRISTMAS FINN HOLIDAYS AND  
LANGUAGE . . . ?"

WELL YES, WE DIDN'T GREAT ONES. THE FINNS THAT CAME HERE,  
LIKE MY DAD, THEY CAME HERE AND THEY LEARNED TO TALK ENGLISH  
PRETTY SHORTLY. SOME OF THE FINNS CAME HERE AND THE KIDS  
DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO SPEAK ENGLISH WHEN THEY WENT TO SCHOOL.  
MAYBE MY OLDEST SISTER, WHO RIGHT NOW IS 80, SHE KNEW A  
LITTLE ENGLISH BUT AFTER THAT, ALL THE CHILDREN KNEW ENGLISH  
WHEN THEY WENT TO THE FIRST GRADE IN OUR FAMILY.

MY DAD SPOKE FINNISH. HE INSISTED THAT THE CHILDREN LEARN  
IT, ALTHOUGH, IN OUR HOUSE, IT WAS ALWAYS FINNISH AND ENGLISH.  
THEY CAME HERE TO LIVE. THEY ADOPTED THIS COUNTRY, THERE WAS  
NO QUESTION ABOUT IT. THEY HAD NO REAL TIES WITH FINLAND LIKE  
THE MODERN PEOPLE COME OVER. IT'S A DIFFERENT BALL GAME.  
IN THOSE DAYS, THEY DIDN'T HAVE THOSE TIES, OR WERE THAT CLOSE.  
HE HAD RELATIONS AND THEY WROTE AND SO FORTH BUT IT WASN'T  
A CLOSENESS. NOW YOU PICK UP THE TELEPHONE AND TALK TO THEM.

"SO, YOU DID LEARN TO SPEAK FINNISH AND SPOKE IT AT HOME?"

OH YEAH, WE COULD SPEAK FINNISH FROM THE TIME WE WERE RAISED.

"DO VERY MANY OF YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS STILL LIVE AROUND ROCKLIN ?"

YEAH, ALL THE BROTHERS DO, PRETTY MUCH. I HAVE ONE BROTHER THAT PASSED AWAY, THE ONLY DEATH WE HAVE HAD IN THE FAMILY. SO THERE ARE STILL TEN OF US ALIVE. THE FIVE BOYS, WE LIVE RIGHT HERE. I HAVE ONE BROTHER THAT GOES BACK AND FORTH TO LAKE TAHOE. SUMMERTIME HE IS UP THERE AND OTHER TIMES HE IS HERE. AND ANOTHER ONE THAT SPENDS MOST OF HIS TIME NOW IN ALTURAS. BUT THE REST OF US LIVE RIGHT HERE. AND SOME OF OUR NEPHEWS. WE HAVE A PRETTY GOOD POPULATION RIGHT HERE.

"HOW MANY OF YOUR BROTHERS WORK IN THE QUARRIES?"

ALL OF US, ALL OF THE BROTHERS LEARNED THE QUARRY BUSINESS. WE LEARNED THE QUARRY BUSINESS FROM THE BOTTOM UP. WE LEARNED TO TAKE THE STONE OUT OF THE GROUND. WE LEARNED TO BE BLACK-SMITHS. WE LEARNED TO REPAIR EQUIPMENT. WE LEARNED TO USE EXPLOSIVES. ALL PHASES OF IT BECAUSE WE HAD TO HIRE PEOPLE. SOMEONE HAD TO KNOW HOW TO SHOW THEM, SO WE LEARNED ALL PHASES OF IT.

"HAVE YOU ALWAYS WORKED WITH GRANITE, THAT'S BEEN YOUR MAIN OCCUPATION?"

ME?

"YES."

WELL, YEAH. I HAVE WORKED WITH GRANITE JUST ABOUT ALL MY LIFE, I GUESS. EVEN WHEN I WENT TO COLLEGE IN OREGON, SUMMER VACATIONS I WORKED WITH GRANITE. ACTUALLY, I EVEN WENT UP TO ECHO

SUMMIT BECAUSE THEY WERE BUILDING A ROAD THERE IN 1938. SO THEY CAME TO ROCKLIN. THEY WERE GOING BROKE BY NOT HAVING NOBODY TO TAKE THE STONE OUT IN SQUARE PIECES TO MAKE THEIR WALL SO THEY CAME TO ROCKLIN. MY BROTHER TOLD ME I SHOULD GO UP THERE AND MAKE A LOT OF MONEY SO I AND BILL ANDERSON, ANOTHER FINN GUY FROM HERE, WE WENT UP THERE AND STARTED WORKING. I WORKED THERE AND MADE GOOD MONEY ALL SUMMER AND STAYED OUT OF SCHOOL THAT ONE YEAR BECAUSE I WAS MAKING GOOD MONEY.

THAT WAS THE TAIL END OF THE DEPRESSION SO IT WORKED OUT GOOD. AND THAT WAS WORKING WITH GRANITE, JUST LIKE I WOULD HERE. ONCE IN A WHILE I WOULD GO UP AND HELP MY BROTHER AT TAHOE IF HE WAS HITTING THE JACKPOT AS A STONE MASON. MOST OF THE TIME WE WORKED EXCEPT THEN WE WENT TO WAR. I SPENT FOUR YEARS IN THE WAR. THEN, AFTER THE WAR, I LEARNED THE CARPENTRY TRADE IN KLAMATH FALLS, OREGON. MY WIFE'S FATHER WAS A BUILDING CONTRACTOR. I SERVED AN APPRENTICESHIP FOR A COUPLE OF YEARS. BY THEN SO MUCH OF IT I HAD LEARNED AND ALL THE TOOLS I HAD LEARNED BEFORE IN THE GRANITE BUSINESS. THEY WERE QUITE SIMILAR IN THE ENGINEERING END AND SO FORTH. BECAUSE WE LEARNED TO BUILD TOO.

SO AFTER TWO OR THREE YEARS I WAS LEARNING JOBS IN KLAMATH FALLS, OREGON, SO THEY MADE ME UNION. I HAD TO BELONG TO THE UNION SO THEY MADE ME TAKE THE TEST AND GET OUT OF THE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM. SO I DID THAT AND I WORKED THERE UNTIL WE HIT COLD WEATHER AND THEN I SAID WELL, WE'RE GOING BACK TO ROCKLIN. I GOT A JOB DOWN HERE AND THE WEATHER IS NOT SO COLD. SO WE MOVED BACK DOWN HERE IN ABOUT 1948.

I GOT OUT OF THE ARMY IN 1946 SO IT WAS ABOUT 1949, I THINK WE CAME BACK DOWN HERE. I WORKED IN THE GRANITE BUSINESS,

WORKED IN THE QUARRY. TOOK OVER THE BUSINESS IN SACRAMENTO. THERE WAS A MONUMENT SHOP EXISTING. ONE OF THE MEN HAD DIED AND A LADY WAS RUNNING IT AND SHE DECIDED SHE THOUGHT SHE WOULD RETIRE EVENTUALLY SO SHE SAID "ROY, WHY DON'T YOU COME DOWN AND TAKE IT?" SO I WENT DOWN THERE AND TOOK OVER THE OLD McCAFFERY MONUMENT COMPANY. I HAVE OPERATED IT SINCE 1953.

"WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT ROCKLIN GRANITE? WHAT KIND OF GRANITE IS IT, AS FAR AS THE COLOR . . .?"

WELL, ROCKLIN GRANITE IS A WHITE-GREY, VERY DURABLE, VERY EVEN-GRAINED, VERY HARD. IT'S A GOOD MONUMENT TYPE GRANITE. THERE ARE SO MANY DIFFERENT TYPES OF GRANITE. THIS ONE IS A GOOD, EVEN COLOR. THAT'S THE MAIN COLOR WE HAVE IN ROCKLIN. WE HAVE ALWAYS HAD A BLACK GRANITE QUARRY. WE OPENED IT IN THE EARLY 1940'S. WE OPENED THAT OVER AT HORSESHOE BAR OFF AUBURN-FOLSOM ROAD, THE BLACK GRANITE QUARRY. WE'VE ALWAYS HAD THAT IN OPERATION FOR OUR OWN USE FOR GRANITE FOR MONUMENTS AND SO FORTH.

"DID MOST OF THE FINNS THAT CAME TO ROCKLIN IN THE EARLY DAYS WORK IN THE QUARRIES, IS THAT WHAT BROUGHT THEM HERE, DO YOU THINK?"

I THINK THEY CAME TO ROCKLIN BECAUSE THEY KNEW THERE WERE OTHER FINNS HERE AND THAT THERE WAS WORK HERE. WE HAD THE RAILROAD AND THERE WERE SOME FINNS THAT WORKED ON THE RAILROAD. RAILROAD WAS A BIG THING IN ROCKLIN TOO, UNTIL 1908 AND THEN EVERYTHING MOVED TO ROSEVILLE. BUT, MOSTLY THE FINNS SEEMED TO WORK IN THE QUARRIES MORE THAN THEY DID ON THE RAILROAD. THERE WERE SOME THAT WORKED ALL THEIR LIFE IN THE RAILROAD TOO. THEN PFE CAME INTO BEING IN THE LATER

YEARS AND A LOT OF FINNS RETIRED. BUT THEY WERE THE YOUNGER GENERATION ACTUALLY, IF YOU WANT TO SAY THE ONES BORN AROUND 1900 IN THIS AREA.

"SO FINNS WORKED IN A LOT OF DIFFERENT OCCUPATIONS HERE IN ROCKLIN? WERE THERE ANY FARMERS?"

THERE WERE SOME FARMERS. THERE WEREN'T A REAL LOT OF FARMERS. THE AREA WASN'T REALLY THAT MUCH TOWARD FARMING. SURE, WE HAD A LOT OF FRUIT ORCHARDS. THE FINNS, WHEN THE GRANITE BUSINESS WAS DOWN, QUITE A FEW FINNS RAISED CHICKENS, LIKE THEY SEEM TO HAVE DONE IN ALL THE OTHER AREAS WHERE THE FINNS CONGREGATED. WE HAD FINN RANCHERS, A FEW OF THEM BUT THE MAJORITY OF THEM WORKED IN THE QUARRIES . . . . A LOT OF THEM WERE BLACKSMITHS. I SUPPOSE I COULD NAME SEVERAL OF THEM. SOME OF THEM WERE RIGGERS . . . . THEY PRETTY MUCH DID ROUNDABOUT WORK.

THE ONLY ONE THAT WAS REALLY SPECIALIZED WAS A STONECUTTER. TO GET A GOOD STONECUTTER, YOU REALLY HAD TO SERVE AN APPRENTICESHIP TO LEARN IT. YOU DIDN'T LEARN IT IN THREE OR FOUR YEARS. IT TOOK MANY YEARS TO LEARN TO BE A REAL STONECUTTER.

"YOU MENTIONED GOING TO COLLEGE, BUT COMING BACK TO THE GRANITE BUSINESS AFTER THAT. DO YOU THINK MANY FINNS WENT TO COLLEGE? WAS THAT A REAL ACCEPTABLE THING, OR WAS IT UNUSAL?"

IT WAS A LITTLE BIT UNUSUAL. I STUDIED FORESTRY IN COLLEGE. EVERYBODY USED TO KIND OF RAZZ ME ABOUT IT, WONDERED WHY I MADE THE BIG SWITCH. WE ALWAYS DID A LOT OF HUNTING AND FISHING, SO AFTER I DECIDED TO GO INTO IT, BUT THEN UNCLE



SAM CAME IN WHEN THE WAR BROKE OUT AND THAT CHANGED ALL THE PLANS.

"WHAT I AM GETTING AT, WERE THERE ANY INTELLECTUALS IN ROCKLIN THAT WERE FINNS, OR WAS IT MOSTLY PEOPLE WHO WORKED IN THE QUARRIES, WORKING CLASS PEOPLE?"

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE DESCRIPTION OF AN INTELLECTUAL WOULD BE, BUT THE MAJORITY OF THEM WERE WORKING CLASS FINNS. THEY WERE STORE OWNERS AND SO FORTH, SEVERAL OF THEM, LIKE PEKURIS, THAT GOES WAY BACK THE LAST FEW YEARS. THEY OWNED STORES. SOME WORKED IN A BAKERY, ALL THE DIFFERENT THINGS.

"FINNS WERE ALL OVER TOWN AS FAR AS OCCUPATIONS?"

OH, YEAH, PRETTY MUCH, I THINK. THE THING IS, THE OCCUPATIONS IN THAT DAY AND NOW IN THIS DAY ARE NOT COMPARABLE. LIKE NOW, HOW MANY OWN GARAGES? WELL, IN THOSE DAYS, THEY DIDN'T HAVE GARAGES. BECAUSE BACK FAR ENOUGH, YOU KNOW. I CAN'T SAY HOW IT WORKED OUT.

"AS YOU WERE GROWING UP IN ROCKLIN, GOING TO SCHOOL HERE, YOU TOLD ME THAT OVER HALF OF ROCKLIN WAS FINNISH."

THAT'S BEFORE I WAS GOING TO SCHOOL. BEFORE I GREW UP THAT THE FINNISH POPULATION WAS HERE. THERE WERE A LOT OF FINNS HERE AROUND 1910, 1915.

"WHEN YOU WERE IN SCHOOL, WHAT WAS IT LIKE HERE, HOW MANY SCHOOLS WERE THERE?"

THERE WAS ONE GRAMMAR SCHOOL, NO HIGH SCHOOL. THAT'S ALL WE

HAD WAS A GRAMMAR SCHOOL. WE HAD NO AUDITORIUMS. EVERYTHING WE DID TOOK PLACE IN THE FINNISH HALL. FINN HALL WAS WHERE WE PUT ON CHRISTMAS PLAYS, THE GRADUATION EXERCISES. EVERYTHING WAS DONE IN THE FINNISH HALL.

"WHERE DID YOU GO TO HIGH SCHOOL?"

ROSEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL. WHEN I STARTED HIGH SCHOOL WE HAD A BUS THAT TOOK US. THEY STARTED WITH A BUS. BEFORE THAT YOU WERE ON YOUR OWN TO GET TO ROSEVILLE.

"DID THERE USED TO BE A TRAIN THAT TOOK YOU . . .?"

OH YEAH, THERE WAS A TRAIN THAT TOOK THEM IN THOSE YEARS. THEY CALLED IT THE SKUNK. I THINK IT STARTED IN COLFAX AND WENT TO ROSEVILLE AND SACRAMENTO. A LOT OF THE KIDS USED TO CATCH THE SKUNK AND GO TO SCHOOL.

"YOU MENTIONED FINN HALL, TELL ME ABOUT THAT, WHAT IS FINN HALL?"

THE FINNISH TEMPERANCE SOCIETY, I THINK IT WAS PROBABLY THE SECOND ONE THAT WAS ORGANIZED. I THINK THE FIRST WAS ORGANIZED HERE IN ROCKLIN BY WHO, I DON'T KNOW. I THINK IT WAS A MIXTURE OF THE POPULATION ABOUT 1880, IF MY HISTORY RECOLLECTION IS CORRECT. THEN THE SECOND TEMPERANCE SOCIETY THAT GOT VERY STRONG CAME ABOUT IN ROCKLIN RIGHT AROUND 1900, AFTER THE CITY WAS INCORPORATED. ROCKLIN WAS INCORPORATED IN AUGUST, 1893, MAYBE IT WAS FEBRUARY. MAYBE I GOT MY DATES WRONG. I CAN LOOK IT UP AND TELL YOU. 1893, SO ROCKLIN WAS A CITY IN ALL THOSE TIMES. TEMPERANCE SOCIETY DECIDED TO BUILD A HALL AND THERE MOSTLY FINNS IN THE TEMPERANCE SOCIETY AT THAT TIME. SO IT WAS CALLED THE FINNISH TEMPERANCE HALL, BUILT ABOUT 1905.

BIG WOODEN BUILDING. IT STILL STANDS TO THIS DAY AND IS USED QUITE OFTEN, ALL THE TIME. IT IS IN MUCH DEMAND.

"WHO OWNS FINN HALL NOW?"

THE CITY OWNS IT NOW. ACTUALLY, THE TEMPERANCE SOCIETY OWNED IT AND THEN IT WENT TO THE FINNISH BROTHERHOOD SOCIETY. THEN THEY GOT RID OF IT AND THEN THE ODDFELLOWS OWNED IT. THEY TURNED IT OVER TO THE AMERICAN LEGION. I DON'T REMEMBER WHAT YEAR, I HAPPENED TO BE ON THE CITY COUNCIL AND WE BOUGHT IT IN ABOUT THE EARLY 1960'S, 1965. WE BOUGHT THE FINNISH HALL FROM THEM. NOW THE CITY STILL OWNS IT. SO IT WILL ALWAYS REMAIN, NOW, IN SAFE HANDS.

"WHAT'S THE FINNISH BROTHERHOOD SOCIETY YOU MENTIONED?"

THE FINNISH BROTHERHOOD WAS A GROUP THAT WAS FORMED NATION-WIDE. ACTUALLY, IT'S NATIONWIDE I GUESS. IT'S KIND OF LIKE A CLUB. I NEVER BELONGED TO IT. MY OLDER BROTHER DID. THEY CARRY INSURANCE. YOU GET SICK, THEY PAY YOU A LITTLE BIT OF MONEY TO KEEP YOU ALIVE. IT'S JUST A BROTHERHOOD, REALLY.

"IT STILL EXISTS? ARE THERE STILL MEMBERS IN ROCKLIN?"

I THINK ALL OF THEM HAVE QUIT. THE CLUB IS DECEASED IN ROCKLIN. I THINK IN OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY IT STILL OPERATES.

"SPEAKING OF FINN ACTIVITIES IN ROCKLIN, LET'S TALK A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THE CHURCHES THAT WERE HERE. WHAT CHURCHES DID FINNS MAINLY ATTEND THAT LIVED HERE?"

WELL, THERE WERE OFFSHOOTS OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH. MY DAD WAS A MINISTER IN THE APOSTOLIC LUTHERAN CHURCH AND THERE WERE A COUPLE OF OTHER LUTHERAN CHURCHES HERE IN TOWN THAT OPERATED. I WOULDN'T SAY THEY CARRIED A MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE, OF THE FINNISH PEOPLE. THEY DID HAVE FAIRLY GOOD ATTENDANCE IN THE EARLY YEARS AND AS THE OLDER PEOPLE DROPPED OUT, A LOT OF THE YOUNGER ONES HAD BEEN INDOCTRINATED TO ENGLISH, SO A LOT OF THEM WENT TO THE OTHER CHURCHES ACROSS TOWN.

SO MANY OF THEM SWITCHED OVER TO THE DIFFERENT AMERICAN CHURCHES.

"HOW DID YOUR FATHER BECOME AN APOSTOLIC LUTHERAN MINISTER, DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN HE DID THAT? DID HE DO IT AS A YOUNG MAN?"

I REALLY CAN'T TELL YOU ANY DATES ON THAT. ALL MY LIFE HE WAS PRETTY MUCH IN THE MINISTRY BUT IT WAS ONLY A PART-TIME THING WITH HIM. HE WAS AN ORDAINED MINISTER BUT HE STILL OPERATED THE QUARRY. I SUSPECT THAT HE STARTED THAT IN IN THE 1915 ERA, THOSE YEARS, I THINK. HE USED TO TRAVEL TO THE CONVENTIONS. LIKE THE BOOKS YOU READ, CENTERVILLE, PENDLETON, OREGON, CLATSKANIE, OREGON. THEN HE USED TO GO TO MICHIGAN IN THE SUMMERTIME ONCE-IN-A-WHILE. A TRIP TO SOME BIG CHURCH CONVENTION.

"AND THESE CHURCH CONVENTIONS WERE ALL IN FINNISH?"

YES. LATER YEARS I GUESS THEY DID START TO HAVE SOME ENGLISH SPOKEN IN SOME OF THEM. THEY WOULD HAVE BOTH BUT MOST OF THEM IN THE EARLY DAYS WERE IN FINNISH. AS KIDS, I CAN REMEMBER WE USED TO HAVE A BALL GOING TO THESE CHURCH CONVENTIONS.

"WHERE WAS THE APOSTOLIC LUTHERN CHURCH LOCATED IN ROCKLIN?"

WELL, THE CHURCH THAT MY DAD HAD WAS ACTUALLY LOCATED RIGHT HERE ON LOT THAT IS WHERE MY HOUSE IS. FROM HERE, IN 1919, IT WAS MOVED TO THE CORNER OF OAK AND HIGH STREET, I THINK IT'S OAK STREET IN ROCKLIN. SO WE HAVE OWNED THE PROPERTY HERE SINCE 1919. IT'S THE LOT RIGHT HERE. AND THE REASON MY DAD BOUGHT THE LOT WASN'T SO MUCH, IT WAS ALSO FOR THE CHURCH, BUT PEOPLE USED TO, EVEN IN THOSE DAYS, THEY WOULD GRIPE, THE TRACKS WERE HERE, WHEN THE GATE WAS LEFT OPEN BY THE RAILROAD PEOPLE. THEY WOULDN'T SHUT THE GATE. SO HE BOUGHT THE LOT. THAT'S HOW COME WE OWN THE PROPERTY.

BECAUSE OUR QUARRY WAS ON THE END, SO HE BOUGHT THE LOT AND IF SOMEONE WANTED TO CLOSE THE GATE ON THE OTHER SIDE TO KEEP THEM OFF THE STREET, THAT WAS UP TO THEM.

"LET'S TALK ABOUT YOUR OWN FAMILY NOW AND WHEN THIS HOUSE WAS BUILT AND SO FORTH. WHEN DID YOU MEET YOUR WIFE, AND I GUESS THE MAIN QUESTION HERE IS, IS SHE ALSO A FINN?"

NO, I MET MY WIFE AT OREGON STATE COLLEGE, ABOUT 1940. I GRADUATED IN 1942, JUNE, AND WE WERE MARRIED IN AUGUST OF 1942. SHE WAS A SWEDE. SHE WAS BORN IN PORTLAND, RAISED IN KLAMATH FALLS, OREGON. WE HAVE FIVE KIDS, FIVE CHILDREN. BUT WE WERE MARRIED DURING THE WAR. SHE WAS BACK IN OKLAHOMA AT FORT SILL WITH ME. BECAUSE I TAUGHT SCHOOL BACK THERE, IN THE ARMY FOR A COUPLE OF YEARS, IN THE ARTILLARY SCHOOL. SO OUR OLDEST BOY WAS BORN IN 1947, I'M GOING TO GET IN TROUBLE TRYING TO TELL YOU THE DATES. I QUIT.

"THAT'S GOOD. THE OLDEST ONE WOULD GIVE US AN IDEA. HOW AWARE WERE YOUR CHILDREN OF BEING SCANDINAVIAN PEOPLE?"

IS THERE AN AWARENESS OF THAT IN YOUR FAMILY? AS THEY GREW UP, WAS THERE MUCH EMPHASIS ON THAT?"

OH, I GUESS THERE WAS. THE KIDS I GREW UP WITH WERE FINNISH, WE ASSOCIATED WITH THESE PEOPLE BUT WE ASSOCIATED WITH EVERYBODY. BUT THEY KNEW THEY WERE FINN AND SWEDISH. THEY WOULD GET IT THROWN AT THEM EVERY ONCE-IN-A-WHILE, I IMAGINE. ESPECIALLY WITH THE NAME OF RUHKALA, SOMEONE'S GOT TO KNOW IT.

"DID THEY KNOW ANY FINNISH OR SWEDISH WORDS, KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT?"

THEY DID WHEN THEY WERE SMALLER. IF YOU DUG IT OUT OF THEM, THEY COULD STILL PROBABLY BUT WE NEVER DID REALLY TEACH THEM THE LANGUAGE. I GUESS IT'S TOO BAD WE DIDN'T. THERE WASN'T THAT MUCH FINNISH SPOKEN. SINCE PEG'S SWEDISH AND I'M FINNISH, I SPEAK FINNISH BUT SHE DOESN'T SPEAK SWEDISH, SO WHEN WE TRAVEL OVER THERE, WE GO AROUND BUT MY WIFE, PEGGY CAN UNDERSTAND SWEDISH BUT SHE WON'T SPEAK IT.

"HAVE YOU TRAVELED OVER THERE?"

OH YES, A COUPLE, THREE TIMES.

"HAVE YOU VISITED THE PLACES THAT YOUR PARENTS WERE BORN?"

YEAH. I'VE SEEN THE COUNTRY WHERE THEY WERE AND EVERYTHING.

"HOW DID YOU RELATE TO IT WHEN YOU WERE IN FINLAND, DID YOU FEEL PART OF IT ALL IN SOME WAY?"

THERE WAS HARDLY ANYONE LEFT WHERE MY DAD IS FROM BUT WHERE

MY MOTHER IS FROM, SHE HAD A BROTHER THAT WAS STILL ALIVE WHEN WE WENT THERE IN 1963, 1964. HE WAS 90 YEARS OLD. HE'S STILL RUNNING AROUND ON HIS BICYCLE. HE HAD BEEN A MERCHANT IN THAT AREA. HE BOUGHT SUPPLIES AND THEN HE SOLD THEM TO ALL THE LAPLANDERS IN THAT COUNTRY AND HE OPERATED AS A MERCHANT. IN THE EARLY DAYS THEY USED TO BRING IN SUPPLIES BY SHIP TO NORWAY AND DOWN THE RIVER THAT WAS BETWEEN FINLAND AND SWEDEN TO GET IN THEIR SUPPLIES. SO THEY WORKED PRETTY HARD TO DO IT.

HE WAS A GO-BETWEEN FOR SELLING THEIR REINDEER. IT MADE YOU FEEL AT HOME, REAL GOOD, BECAUSE WHEN I GOT THERE I COULD SPEAK THE LANGUAGE, RIGHT AWAY. HE HAD TWO SONS AND A DAUGHTER. THE SONS ALL LIVED AT HOME. THEY WEREN'T MARRIED. THEIR DAUGHTER WAS MARRIED AND SHE LIVED UP THE STREET. THEY HAD A COMPARITIVELY, I THINK, IN THIS DAY AND AGE, A PRETTY EASY LIFE.

"YOUR MOTHER'S BROTHER THAT WAS STILL ALIVE AND HIS LIFE THERE?"

IT WAS INTERESTING. MY WIFE AND I WERE BOTH THERE, TOGETHER THAT TRIP. EVERYTHING FIT RIGHT IN. THE ONLY THING THAT WAS LEFT WAS A STEAM BATH, FROM THE ERA THAT MY MOTHER WAS THERE. THE RUSSIANS AND THE GERMANS HAD BEEN THROUGH THAT AREA. THE GERMANS HAD BEEN THROUGH AND THEY HAD FLATTENED EVERYTHING. THEY HAD SAVED THE STOVE. WHEN THE GERMANS CAME IN, THE ONLY WAY THEY COULD SAVE THINGS THERE, WAS THEY DUG A HOLE AND BURIED THEM IN THE GROUND. THEY PRESERVED THEM AND BURIED EVERYTHING BECAUSE THE GERMANS WENT THROUGH AND FLATTENED EVERY BUILDING AND POISONED THE WELLS. THEY DID NOT DESTROY THE STEAM BATH. FOR SOME REASON, THAT BUILDING WAS ONE REMAINING. SO, I WAS TAKING A STEAM BATH IN THE SAME BUILDING