

WILLIAM SIPPOLA  
INTERVIEWED BY SUSAN HARDWICK  
SEPTEMBER 17, 1983  
ROCKLIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

"THIS IS SUSAN HARWICK OF THE SACRAMENTO HISTORY CENTER. I AM INTERVIEWING MR. WILLIAM SIPPOLA, WHO WAS ONE OF THE EARLY FINN RESIDENTS OF THE ROCKLIN-LOOMIS AREA. MR. SIPPOLA WAS BORN IN THIS REGION AND HIS FATHER AND GRANDFATHER WERE AMONG THE EARLIEST FINNISH PEOPLE TO SETTLE HERE. THE DATE TODAY IS SEPTEMBER 17, 1983. I AM AT THE SIPPOLA HOME JUST OUTSIDE OF LOOMIS."

"MR. SIPPOLA, WE HAVE BEEN SITTING HERE TALKING ABOUT YOUR MEMORIES OF LIFE IN THE LOOMIS AREA. LET'S START BY SPEAKING ABOUT YOUR GRANDPARENTS. TELL ME, WHEN DID YOUR GRANDFATHER, THOMAS SIPPOLA, COME TO THE UNITED STATES? WHERE DID HE LIVE BEFORE HE CAME HERE? YOU MIGHT WANT TO TELL ME ALSO SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR GRANDMOTHER, ELIZABETH SIPPOLA."

MY GRANDFATHER, THOMAS SIPPOLA, LEFT FINLAND IN MAY, 1884. HE LEFT BEHIND HIS WIFE AND TWO CHILDREN. MY FATHER WAS UNDER TWO YEARS OF AGE AND MY SISTER, ONLY TWO WEEKS. HE FIRST WENT TO WORK ON THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILROAD. UPON COMPLETION OF THAT JOB HE AND A FRIEND HAD HEARD OF WORK IN THE PANAMA AREA WHERE THE FRENCH WERE ATTEMPTING TO BUILD A CANAL. HEADING TOWARD THE CANAL ZONE HALFWAY TO MEXICO, A RAILROAD CONDUCTOR TOLD THEM THEY WERE HEADING INTO HELL, AS WORKERS WERE DYING LIKE RATS FROM YELLOW FEVER. HE TRANSFERRED THEIR TICKETS TO SAN FRANCISCO. FROM THERE HE FOUND HIS WAY TO ROCKLIN IN 1887 AND WORKED IN THE QUARRIES. MY GRANDMOTHER CAME WITH HER TWO DAUGHTERS TO THIS COUNTRY IN 1908 AFTER MY FATHER AND GRANDFATHER HAD PURCHASED THE PROPERTY WHICH THEY TURNED INTO A FARM.

MY FATHER, JOHN AUGUST SIPPOLA, CAME ACROSS THE ATLANTIC IN 1904. HE WENT TO ASTORIA, OREGON, WHERE HE FISHED FOR TWO YEARS FOR SALMON WITH HIS UNCLE, HERMAN SIPPOLA. MY FATHER'S AND GRANDFATHER'S PATHS DID NOT CROSS UNTIL THE PORTLAND FAIR AND EXPOSITION IN 1906. THERE, A MUTUAL FRIEND HAD TO INTRODUCE THEM TO EACH OTHER AFTER THEY HAD ARRANGED TO MEET. LATER THEY WERE WORKING IN SAN FRANCISCO WHERE MY GRANDFATHER HAD A PREMONITION AND SAID, "WE HAVE TO LEAVE." TWO WEEKS LATER IN THE SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS THE GREAT SAN FRANCISCO EARTHQUAKE HIT. THEY WENT BACK TO SEE THE DAMAGE. THE MULTI-STORIED, WOODEN BOARDING HOUSE WHERE THEY HAD LIVED, WAS COMPLETELY GONE. A BORDERING BRICK BUILDING WAS FALLEN OVER AND THE BOARDING HOME HAD BURNED.

"TELL ME ABOUT YOUR MOTHER, ANNA JOHANNA SIPPOLA. WHAT WERE THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT BROUGHT HER TO LOOMIS FROM FINLAND AND WHERE DID SHE COME FROM IN FINLAND?"

MY MOTHER, ANNA JOHANNA RYTKONEN, AND MY HALF-SISTER, ANNA LIISA, LEFT FINLAND ON JULY 4, 1920, AND ARRIVED AT ELLIS ISLAND ON THE OCEANLINER, S.S. OSCAR II. SHE HAD WANTED TO COME TO AMERICA FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS. SHE WAS A GOOD FRIEND OF THE AXEL FREDRIKSSON FAMILY AND WAS A LIVE-IN MAID. THE FREDRIKSSONS, WITH THEIR FIVE CHILDREN, HAD LEFT THEIR HOME COUNTRY IN 1917 DURING WORLD WAR I. I CAN REMEMBER MY MOTHER TELLING HOW MR. FREDRIKSSON, WHEN ALONE WITH HER, HAD PROMISED HER THAT THEY WILL SEND FOR HER, THAT SHE AND HER DAUGHTER WOULD GET TO COME TO AMERICA.

THE TITANIC HAD SUNK LESS THAN TEN YEARS EARLIER BUT MY MOTHER HAD WANTED TO COME HERE SO BAD SHE WASN'T AFRAID. MANY PEOPLE HAD PLANS TO CROSS THE ATLANTIC BUT NEVER DID. HERE IN AMERICA THE FREDRIKSSONS LIVED ACROSS THE ROAD FROM THE PROPERTY MY DAD AND GRANDDAD HAD STARTED TO FARM IN 1908. MR. FREDRIKSSON'S

BROTHER, ALLEN FREDRIKSON, WAS A SEA CAPTAIN. HE RETURNED TO FINLAND AND TOLD MY MOTHER THAT THERE WAS A BACHELOR, MY FATHER, OR MY FATHER-TO-BE, ACROSS THE ROAD FROM HIS BROTHER'S PLACE.

MR. AXEL FREDRIKSSON PAID MY MOTHER AND HALF-SISTER'S FARE. MY MOTHER WORKED FOR THE FREDRIKSSON'S FOR TEN MONTHS TO PAY FOR THEIR PASSAGE. ON JUNE 4, 1921, MY MOTHER AND MY FATHER WERE MARRIED. MY MOTHER WAS BORN IN A SMALL HAMLET NEAR SONKAJARVI, NEAR IISALMI IN THE INTERIOR OF FINLAND. MY DAD AND HIS FOLKS CAME FROM LAPUA. IT WAS A FINNISH CUSTOM THAT THE BRIDE PURCHASE A SHIRT FOR A MAN OR A DRESS FOR A WOMAN IF THEY HAD HELPED TWO PEOPLE GET TOGETHER AND IT WAS FOLLOWED BY MARRIAGE. BUT MY MOTHER BOUGHT A SHIRT FOR CAPTAIN FREDRIKSSON.

"DID YOUR RELATIVES EVER TALK ABOUT THEIR LIFE IN FINLAND? DID THEY EVER SHARE MEMORIES OF THAT LIFE WITH YOU, THAT YOU REMEMBERED AS YOU WERE GROWING UP? DID THEY SEEM TO FEEL REALLY A PART OF FINLAND ONCE THEY LEFT?"

YES, BOTH MY MOTHER AND MY FATHER SPOKE MUCH ABOUT FINLAND. MY FATHER RECOUNTED HOW LOGGING WAS DONE. HE TALKED ABOUT HOW HE RODE LOGS DOWN THE LAPUA RIVER TO BREAK UP THE LOG JAMS. ALSO, NEAR HIS HOME IN THE LAPUA RIVER VALLEY THE SOIL WAS PEAT. MUCH OF THE TIME, DUE TO RAIN, THE DITCHES HAD TO BE KEPT CLEAR TO CARRY THE WATER AWAY. OCCASIONALLY, DURING SEVERE FLOODING, SOME FARMERS FOUND THEIR LAND, BEING PEAT AND BUOYANT, HAD FLOATED AWAY AND CAME TO REST ON SOMEONE ELSE'S PROPERTY. THE RYE WAS HAND-PLANTED, CUT AND THRESHED. THE REASON FOR THE HOLE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE RYE BREAD WAS SO IT COULD BE PUT ON A ROD TO DRY ON THE JOISTS IN THE OPEN RAFTER HOMES IN FINLAND.



IN FINNISH, A HOME WAS CALLED A HUONET. MY MOTHER LIVED IN A LOG CABIN AND THE CRACKS BETWEEN THE LOGS WERE SEALED WITH MOSS. IN ONE CORNER OF THIS ONE-ROOM HOME, WAS A FIREPLACE, NO ORDINARY, EVERYDAY FIREPLACE. THE CORNER WAS FACED WITH ROCK, WITH A HOLE IN THE ROOF TO LET THE SMOKE OUT. THIS NOT ONLY PROVIDED THE HEAT FOR WARMTH, BUT ALSO FOR THE COOKING.

IF YOU WERE BORN IN FINLAND IN THIS INTERIOR AREA AT THAT POINT IN TIME, YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN BORN IN A STEAM BATH. WHERE ELSE WOULD THERE BE PLENTY OF HOT WATER AVAILABLE? WHEN MY MOTHER WAS BORN IN A SAUNA, HER FATHER HAD COME HOME WITH A BIG CATCH OF FISH IN THE LATE AFTERNOON AND FOUND THAT A DAUGHTER HAD BEEN BORN. MY MOTHER, AS SHE WAS OLD ENOUGH, PROBABLY FROM ABOUT THE AGE OF SIX, HELPED ROW THE BOAT WHILE HER FATHER FISHED ON THE LAKES.

MY MOTHER OFTEN TALKED ABOUT THE JUHANNES, WHICH WAS A BIG HOLIDAY, CELEBRATED ON JUNE 24, WITH BONFIRES, BY A LAKE, WITH SINGING, DANCING, FOOD AND FUN, AND MAYBE A LITTLE DRINK TOO.

"SO THEY DID TALK TO YOU ABOUT THE MEMORIES OF THEIR LIFE THERE. LET'S TALK ABOUT YOU NOW AND, FIRST OF ALL, TELL ME WHAT PART OF PLACER COUNTY YOU WERE BORN IN. TELL US WHETHER YOU WERE BORN IN A HOSPITAL OR AT HOME AND MAYBE SOMETHING ABOUT THE FIRST HOUSE YOU CAN REMEMBER LIVING IN."

WHEN I WAS BORN, OUR FAMILY HOME IS HERE WHERE IT IS STILL STANDING BUT I WAS THE ONLY CHILD OF MY MOTHER WHO WAS BORN IN A HOSPITAL. THERE HAVE BEEN MANY JOKES MADE THAT IT WAS BECAUSE I WAS TOO BIG. I WEIGHED ELEVEN POUNDS AND TEN OUNCES! BUT THE REAL REASON WAS THAT MY MOTHER WASN'T ABLE TO FIND A MIDWIFE. I WAS BORN IN THE AUBURN-PLACER COUNTY HOSPITAL. THIS WAS IN THE FALL



OF 1924, OCTOBER 4TH. THAT NIGHT IT RAINED A LOT. IT STILL STANDS AS THE GREATEST AMOUNT OF RAIN FOR AN OCTOBER 4 IN SACRAMENTO WEATHER RECORDS.

A SPANISH NURSE SANG IN SPANISH TO ME. A WARD BOY FILLED AN ALREADY HOT STOVE WITH AS MUCH DRY WOOD AS IT COULD HOLD AND LEFT. MY MOTHER SAID, WHEN THE WOOD IGNITED, IT BURNED SO HARD THE CHIMNEY JUST ROARED. SHE SAID IT WAS A WONDER THE OLD WOODEN BUILDING DIDN'T BURN UP. IN THOSE DAYS, IT WAS NORMAL TO KEEP THE MOTHER AND BABY IN THE HOSPITAL FOR TWO WEEKS. THE FIELDS WERE GREEN WHEN WE CAME HOME.

"DID YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS THAT WERE BORN AT HOME, HOW MANY OF THEM DID YOU HAVE? CAN YOU TELL ME THEIR NAMES?"

MY HALF-SISTER, ANNA, CAME FROM FINLAND WITH MY MOTHER, AND WAS BORN ON JANUARY 25, 1912. SISTER ONNIE, JANUARY 29, 1922; BROTHER JOHN, MAY 28, 1923. HE DIED IN WORLD WAR II IN EUROPE. THEN MYSELF ON OCTOBER 4, 1924. NEXT, SISTER JOHANNA, JANUARY 6, 1926 AND LAST, BROTHER TOM, JANUARY 20, 1927.

"WHY DID YOUR FAMILY CHOOSE TO LIVE HERE IN LOOMIS? WHAT MADE THEM STAY IN THIS HOUSE?"

DURING MY GRANDFATHER'S EARLY YEARS IN ROCKLIN, WORKING IN THE QUARRIES, ON SUNDAYS HE WOULD MAKE THE TREK TO THE AMERICAN RIVER, WHICH IS ABOUT TEN MILES. HE HAD MADE FRIENDS WITH AN EARLY HOMESTEADER, MIKE BOLTON, WHO WAS HERE SINCE 1852. HE NOTICED THAT THE SOIL WAS DEEP AND LOAMY. LATER, WITH MY FATHER, THEY PURCHASED THEIR FUTURE FARM IN 1908. THEY BEGAN TO CLEAR THE LAND AND PLANTED HAY AND SOON THEY CLEARED MORE LAND AND BEGAN TO PLANT THE FRUIT; PLUMS, PEACHES, PEARS, GRAPES AND OTHERS.

"DID YOU LIVE IN THE SAME HOUSE ALL THROUGH YOUR CHILDHOOD?"

YES, WE LIVED IN THE SAME HOUSE THROUGHOUT ALL MY CHILDHOOD, WHICH IS STILL HERE ON THE PROPERTY.

"WHERE DID YOU GO TO SCHOOL?"

WE ATTENDED GRAMMAR SCHOOL IN LOOMIS. THIS SCHOOL WAS A UNION OF FIVE OUTLYING, SMALL SCHOOLS. THE CORNERSTONE WAS LAID IN 1924, MY BIRTH YEAR.

AN AGRICULTURAL BOON FOLLOWING WORLD WAR I AND WITH THE FRUIT GROWERS BEING PROSPEROUS, THEY VOTED TO CONSOLIDATE INTO ONE, BIG, AND THEN, I GUESS, EXPENSIVE SCHOOL. I WENT TO THIS SCHOOL FOR EIGHT YEARS, THEN THROUGH FOUR YEARS OF HIGH SCHOOL IN AUBURN. UP TO ABOUT THE TIME I BEGAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL, WE KIDS AT HOME SPOKE IN FINNISH, NOT ONLY TO OUR PARENTS, BUT AMONG OURSELVES.

AS MY OLDER BROTHER AND SISTER BEGAN SCHOOL, THEY KNEW VERY LITTLE ENGLISH AND HAD A TOUGH TIME. OUR PARENTS TRADED VISITS WITH FINNISH FAMILIES, ESPECIALLY FROM ROCKLIN. WE HAD VERY FEW FINNISH SCHOOL MATES IN LOOMIS. WE TALKED TO THEM IN ENGLISH, AT LEAST FROM ME ON DOWN. THERE WERE MANY ETHNIC GROUPS IN SCHOOL. THE MAJORITY OF THEM, FIRST GENERATION BORN AMERICANS LIKE MYSELF. WHETHER WE WERE MAD OR NOT MAD AT THEM,, WE WOULD CALL EACH OTHER BY BAD, ETHNIC NAMES. I CAN HEAR THEM STILL.

"TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FAMILY HOLIDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS. DID YOU HAVE ANY ESPECIALLY FINNISH ONES THAT YOU CELEBRATED AT HOME WITH YOUR FAMILY?"

ONLY THREE MAJOR HOLIDAYS ARE COMMON TO BOTH THE UNITED STATES AND FINLAND THAT I CAN THINK OF. THEY ARE EASTER, CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S. THE CUSTOM OF LIPPEA KALA, IN SWEDEN, WAS THE MOST NOTEWORTHY AND COMMON. WE WOULD HAVE IT AT CHRISTMAS, NEW YEAR'S AND AT OTHER TIMES. ON THE FOURTH OF JULY, MY DAD WOULD ALWAYS PUT UP THE AMERICAN FLAG. ONE BIRTHDAY, MY-SIXTH, WILL NEVER ESCAPE MY MEMORY. SISTER, ANNA LIISA, HAD BEEN AWAY FOR SOMETIME AND WAS COMING HOME FOR THE WEEKEND.

WE KIDS WERE IN THE STEAM BATH. AFTER DARK OUR FATHER PULLED UP IN THE YARD WITH ANNA IN THE OLD MODEL-T TRUCK. WE WERE IN THE STEAM BATH AND WE WENT WILD, DUMPED ALL THE COLD WATER WE HAD ON THE DECK ON THE HOT ROCKS. I CAN REMEMBER SISTER, ANNA, COMING IN AND SWITCHING US WITH A CLUSTER OF SMALL, COFFEE BERRY BRANCHES WHICH WE USE HERE IN PLACE OF BIRCHTWIGS THAT THEY USED IN FINLAND.

THIS SWITCHING WAS NOT DONE WITH ANY MALICE. IT WAS A METHOD OF MESSAGE. AFTER ALL THE COLD WATER HAD HIT THE HOT ROCKS, JUST MOMENTS EARLIER, THAT WAS THE HOTTEST MASSAGE THAT I HAVE EVER HAD IN MY LIFE. I CAN REMEMBER VERY CLEARLY MY MOTHER SINGING "SILENT NIGHT" IN FINNISH. SHE HAD A BEAUTIFUL, SPRANO VOICE. I SO WISH WE HAD HAD A TAPE RECORDER TO CAPTURE THE SOUND. I, MYSELF, INHERITED MY DAD'S LACK OF MUSIC ABILITY BUT NONE OF MY MOTHER'S MUSICAL PROFICIENCY RUBBED ON ME.

MY GRANDFATHER, MY DAD'S FATHER, HAD MUCH MUSICAL TALENT AND PLAYED THE TRUMPET AND ACCORDIAN. ONE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY SEASON, 1924, WHEN I WAS A SMALL BABY, MY DAD SPENT TWO WEEKS IN THE HOSPITAL, THROUGH BOTH CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S. AMONG THE MANY OTHER TASKS MY MOTHER HAD TO FULFILL, WAS TO GET THE



FAMILY CHRISTMAS TREE. SHE HAD TREKKED ALL AROUND THE HILLS BETWEEN HERE AND THE AMERICAN RIVER AND FINALLY, VERY CLOSE TO THE SAUNA, SHE FOUND THE PERFECT TREE.

FROM THE YEARS BEFORE MY MEMORY AND TO THE LATE 1940'S OUR CHRISTMAS TREES WERE ALWAYS THE NATIVE DIGGER PINES. WE ALWAYS TIED THE AMERICAN FLAG TO THE TOP OF THE TREE AND MOST OF THE ORNAMENTS WERE HOMEMADE. WE HAD SMALL CANDLES ON CLIP STANDS THAT WE WOULD ATTACH TO THE TREE. DUE TO FIRE DANGER, ONLY ONE TIME EVER, MY DAD LET THEM BE LIT AND WE ALL GATHERED AROUND THE TREE AND HELD OUR BREATHS. THESE CANDLES, ALONG WITH THE AMERICAN FLAG, LASTED THROUGH PROSPERITY.

"TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FATHER AND THE KIND OF WORK HE WAS DOING IN THOSE DAYS."

IN FINLAND MY FATHER WORKED IN LOGGING AND FARMING. HERE IN AMERICA HE SALMON FISHED WITH HIS UNCLE WHEN HE FIRST CAME TO HIS COUNTRY, IN ASTORIA, AS I SAID BEFORE. HE DID DOCK WORK AND OTHER WORK AND THEN BEGAN FARMING THE RANCH WHICH IS NOW MY PRESENT-DAY FARM.

"DID HE WORK IN FARMING ALL THE TIME YOU WERE GROWING UP?"

YES, HE DID.

"HOW OLD WERE YOU WHEN YOU HAD YOUR FIRST JOB? WHAT DID YOU THINK YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE WHEN YOU GREW UP, WHEN YOU WERE A KID?"

I WAS THIRTEEN YEARS OLD WHEN I REALLY HAD WHAT YOU CALL MY FIRST REAL JOB, ALTHOUGH, PRIOR TO THAT I WORKED AT HOME FOR MY DAD EVER SINCE I WAS JUST SO HIGH. IN 1938, IN WHAT WOULD BE MY

FOURTEENTH YEAR, I WORKED FOR THE FREDRIKSSON'S FOR A NUMBER OF WEEKS PICKING FRUIT AND WAGES WERE 25 CENTS AN HOUR AND I CAN REMEMBER I EARNED \$63.00, WHICH I THOUGHT WAS JUST A WHOLE AMOUNT OF MONEY.

AT THAT TIME I REALLY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I WANTED TO BE. MY DAD HAD UPS AND DOWNS. HE WOULD SAY HE WOULD SEND ME TO COLLEGE, AND THEN, HE SAID I SHOULD GO TO WORK.

"SO WHAT KINDS OF JOBS HAVE YOU HAD AS AN ADULT?"

ALL OF MY LIFE I HAVE BEEN A FARMER. AFTER SERVING A SHORT TIME IN THE ARMY IN THE LATE FORTIES, 1945 UNTIL JULY, 1946, I WAS DISCHARGED AFTER MY DAD'S DEATH TO RUN THE RANCH. MY BROTHER, TOM AND I RAN THE RANCH TOGETHER AFTER HE RETURNED HOME FROM A THREE YEAR STINT IN THE ARMY IN THE OCCUPATION OF GERMANY. WE FARMED THE FRUIT ORCHARD UNTIL 1956. WE HAD BEGUN OUR EGG BUSINESS IN 1949, WHICH I TOOK OVER FOR MYSELF IN 1966.

"DID YOU EVER EXPERIENCE ANY PREJUDICE AS FAR AS BEING A FINN, AROUND THIS AREA IF YOU TRIED TO GET A JOB, OR DO YOU KNOW ANY FINNS THAT EVER HAD THAT EXPERIENCE?"

NO, I DON'T BELIEVE THERE WAS ANY PREJUDICE.

"I WAS JUST WONDERING ABOUT THAT. MAYBE WE CAN TALK NOW ABOUT MEETING YOUR WIFE AND KIND OF MOVE YOU INTO THE PRESENT A LITTLE BIT. HOW DID YOU MEET YOUR WIFE? IS SHE A FINN?"

I MET THIS WONDERFUL GIRL, IRIS, WHO LATER BECAME MY WIFE, IN THE SPRING OF 1948, AT A DANCE IN SACRAMENTO AT A VETERAN'S HALL. WE WERE MARRIED IN SEPTEMBER, 1950. HER DAD OPERATED A CAR

SALES AGENCY AND GARAGE IN FAIROAKS, ADJACENT TO THE FARM WHICH GOES BACK TO THE 1860'S IN HER MOTHER'S SIDE OF THE FAMILY. SHE LOOKS LIKE A FINN WITH HER BLOND HAIR AND BLUE-GREEN EYES, ALTHOUGH SHE IS A MIXTURE OF ENGLISH, GERMAN AND HALF SCOTCH.

"SINCE YOU HAVE BEEN MARRIED, WHO HANDLES THE FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES AT YOUR HOUSE? IS IT SOMETHING THAT YOU SHARED IN THE MARRIAGE OR IS ONE PERSON MORE OR LESS IN CHARGE OR HOW HAVE YOU WORKED IT OUT?"

I BELIEVE WE BOTH HAVE SHARED WITH THE SAME INPUT AND FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES.

"SO YOU FEEL LIKE YOU ARE EQUAL PARTNERS?"

YES.

"HOW MANY CHILDREN DO YOU HAVE AND HOW OLD ARE THEY?"

WE HAVE TWO BOYS, KALVIN, BORN JULY 12, 1960 AND KEITH, BORN OCTOBER 25, 1966.

"HAS YOUR WIFE MOSTLY BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR BRINGING THEM UP AROUND THE HOUSE? WHO IS THE DISCIPLINARIAN AROUND HERE, IS IT MOSTLY HER JOB, OR HOW HAVE YOU HANDLED THAT?"

MY WIFE HAS SEEN TO IT MORE THAN I HAVE BECAUSE I HAVE BEEN AT WORK AND THEY WEREN'T WITH ME BUT WE BOTH HAD SOME INPUT. SHE HAS TAKEN THE GREATEST SHARE. I THINK WE BOTH PUT THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF INPUT TO MAKE THE TWIGS GROW STRAIGHT.



"THEY LOOK GOOD TODAY. HAVE THEY HAD A LOT OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND WORK AROUND THE HOUSE? HAVE THEY DONE CHORES TO HELP YOU? WHAT KINDS OF THINGS HAVE YOU HAD THEM DO?"

YES, THEY GATHERED EGGS ON WEEKENDS FOR THEIR ALLOWANCE. THEY HAD OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES LIKE BURNING THE RUBBISH AND FEEDING THE DOGS AND SO FORTH. AT TIMES WHEN I NEED SOME HELP OR SOME JOB THAT I CAN'T DO BY MYSELF, THEY WOULD HELP ME LIKE RACKING UP THE HAY WITH THE OLD HAY RAKE.

"WHAT KIND OF EXPECTATIONS DO YOU HAVE FOR THE BOYS? DO YOU EXPECT THEM TO GO TO COLLEGE AND LEAVE THE FARM, OR DO YOU HOPE THAT THEY WILL GO INTO BUSINESS WITH YOU, OR WHAT KINDS OF EXPECTATIONS DO YOU HAVE?"

WELL, AS FAR AS GOING INTO BUSINESS WITH ME, THAT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY. IN MOST OF THE OTHER FARMING, LIKE IN THE FRUIT, THERE ARE VERY FEW, EVEN IN THE JAPANESE, WHO HAVE BEEN PROFICIENT IN THE FRUIT RAISING. THERE ARE VERY FEW OF THE NEWER GENERATION THAT WOULD WANT TO CARRY ON WITH THE SAME JOB AS THEIR FATHER.

KALVIN, OUR OLDER BOY, HAS GONE THROUGH SIERRA COLLEGE AND RECEIVED AN AS DEGREE IN ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING. WE WANT HIM TO GO AND GET HIS REGULAR ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING DEGREE. KALVIN IS A NATURAL IN ELECTRONICS, HE CAN BUILD HIS OWN AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE DIALING DEVICE.

THE YOUNGER BOY, KEITH, IS IN THIRD YEAR AT DEL ORO HIGH SCHOOL IN LOOMIS IN THE FALL OF 1983. HE HASN'T CHOSEN A FIELD. HE HAS BEEN IN THE DEL ORO MARCHING BAND FOR TWO YEARS.

"DO YOU AND YOUR WIFE AND CHILDREN STILL CELEBRATE ANY HOLIDAYS THAT HAVE TO DO WITH THE FINNISH HOLIDAYS THAT YOU GREW UP WITH? WHAT HOLIDAYS OR CELEBRATIONS DO YOU HAVE?"

I AM VERY PROUD AND GRATEFUL THAT MY MOTHER TAUGHT MY WIFE HOW TO PREPARE THE DINNER, LIPPEA KALA. THE SAUCE IS THE HARDEST TO MAKE. FOR MANY YEARS MY MOTHER CAME HERE EVERY CHRISTMAS FROM HER HOUSE, WHICH IS A SHORT WAY DOWN THE HILL, TO HELP FIX AND EAT LIPPEA KALA WITH US. SO NOW EVERY CHRISTMAS WE CAN ENJOY THIS CUSTOMARY FINNISH DISH.

"WHAT IS THE ROLE OF YOUR RELATIVES TODAY AS FAR AS YOUR FAMILY? DO YOU SEE YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS A LOT OR YOUR RELATIVES?"

YES, WE SEE MOST OF THEM QUITE FREQUENTLY, SOME OF THEM SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK, SOME ONCE A WEEK AND SOME FOR LONGER PERIODS.

"DO THEY LIVE CLOSE BY?"

YES, SOME OF OUR COUSINS WE SEE VERY RARELY, SADLY VERY RARELY EXCEPT AT FUNERALS. THE WORD SADLY, IN THE LAST SENTENCE, IS EXACTLY HOW I FEEL. I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THEM ON JUST A FRIENDLY VISIT.

"LET'S TALK ABOUT WHAT LIFE WAS LIKE IN THE EARLY DAYS IN LOOMIS. WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT, FOR EXAMPLE, SOME OF THE EARLY BUSINESSES THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN THERE IN LOOMIS."

"WELL, THERE WERE MANY BUSINESSES IN LOOMIS. SOME OF THE ONES THAT STAND OUT WERE IN THE SAME FAMILY FOR OVER A 100 YEARS.

THERE WERE THE LAW BROTHERS, MUTUAL SUPPLY, TAKAHASHI AND NELTHORPE. THERE WERE OTHERS THAT I CANNOT REMEMBER.

I DON'T KNOW TOO MUCH ABOUT THE SALOONS, HOTELS AND SO FORTH BUT K KNOW THEY HAD SOME. LOOMIS WAS MOST NOTED FOR THE FRUIT INDUSTRY. AT THE PEAK, NEARLY ONE HALF CENTURY AGO, THERE WERE SEVEN FRUIT SHEDS GOING FULL BLAST IN LOOMIS. THE TOTAL IN PLACER COUNTY AT THAT TIME WAS 22 FRUIT SHEDS. TODAY ONLY TWO FRUIT SHEDS ARE LEFT IN PLACER COUNTY AND THEY ARE BOTH IN LOOMIS.

"WERE THERE ANY BUILDINGS IN LOOMIS THAT WERE MADE OF GRANITE FROM ROCKLIN THAT YOU CAN REMEMBER SEEING?"

NO, I DON'T BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE ANY BUILDINGS MADE FROM ROCKLIN GRANITE IN LOOMIS.

"WAS THERE EVER A PROBLEM WITH LANGUAGE FOR FINNS IN ROCKLIN? DID YOU EVER HAVE TROUBLE GOING TO THE STORE, I MEAN IN LOOMIS, DID YOU EVER HAVE TROUBLE GOING TO LOOMIS STORES AND SPEAKING FINNISH, OR DID OTHER PEOPLE SEEM TO HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THE LANGUAGE?"

YES, AS I MENTIONED EARLIER, MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS KNEW VERY LITTLE ENGLISH WHEN THEY ENTERED FIRST GRADE. THERE WAS NO KINDERGARTEN. MY DAD DID HAVE TROUBLE SPEAKING ENGLISH. HE PROBABLY UNDERSTOOD MORE THAN HE COULD SPEAK. DURING THE TIME HE SPENT THE TWO WEEKS IN THE HOSPITAL WHEN HE HAD THE INFECTED TEETH, THEY HAD TO DRAIN AND HE FINALLY HAD TO HAVE ALL HIS TEETH PULLED OUT. HE GOT HIS FALSE TEETH, PUT THEM IN HIS MOUTH ONE TIME, AND FROM THEN ON, THEY STOOD IN A GLASS ON



TOP OF THE DRESSER. THAT WAS PROBABLY ONE OF THE REASONS IT WAS HARD FOR HIM TO SPEAK, ESPECIALLY ENGLISH.

"DID HE EVER LEARN ENGLISH?"

HE COULD SPEAK A LITTLE BIT BUT WITH QUITE A BAD ACCENT.

"IF I CAN GO ON WITH THIS QUESTION A LITTLE BIT MORE; WERE THERE ANY CLERKS IN THE STORES IN LOOMIS THAT SPOKE FINNISH, OR WAS IT POSSIBLE TO SHOP? WAS IT ALL ENGLISH PEOPLE?"

IN LOOMIS, I CAN'T REMEMBER ANY CLERKS THAT SPOKE FINNISH.

"I WAS JUST WONDERING. I KNOW IN ROCKLIN THERE WERE SOME, BUT NOT IN LOOMIS? WHEN PEOPLE WOULD SHOP IN THE STORES IN THE EARLY DAYS, DID THEY USE CASH WHEN THEY WERE BUYING GROCERIES AND SO FORTH?"

I THINK SO. I THINK MY DAD, I DON'T BELIEVE HE EVER WROTE A CHECK FOR ANYTHING IN ANY KIND OF STORE.

"THEY DEALT MOSTLY WITH CASH?"

YES.

"DO YOU REMEMBER ANY GROCERY STORES IN LOOMIS THAT HAD FOODS THAT WERE FINNISH TYPE FOODS, THAT WOULD MAYBE BE SPECIALTY ITEMS?"

YES, MUTUAL SUPPLY, RUN BY THE TAKAHASHI FAMILY, HAD A SALT SALMON AND I BELIEVE THERE WAS ALSO A JAPANESE DISH OR ONE OF THEIR FAVORITE FOODS. OUR PARENTS AND MYSELF ALSO LEARNED TO JUST LOVE SALT SALMON. IN THE SUMMERTIME WHEN IT WAS HOT,

ESPECIALLY, THEY WOULD GET SALT SALMON AND SOMETIMES MY UNCLE WOULD COME TO FISH AND COME WITH SALT SALMON. THEY WOULD PUT IT IN THE CROCK AND MAKE IT INTO SALT SALMON.

"WHO WERE SOME OF THE SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS LEADERS IN LOOMIS IN THOSE DAYS?"

WELL, NELTHORPE, LAW BROTHERS, TAKAHASHI AND OTHERS.

"WERE THERE OTHER BUILDINGS IN LOOMIS THAT YOU SHOULD MENTION LIKE WERE THERE ANY CHURCHES THAT WERE IMPORTANT?"

YES, CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH HAD BEEN THERE FOR A LONG TIME, WHICH THEY ABANDONED AND BUILT A NEW ONE. THIS WAS AN OLD BUILDING. IT WAS A STRUCTURE THAT WAS USED FOR MANY OCCASIONS, INCLUDING DINNER MEETINGS AND OTHER FUNCTIONS.

"DID FINNS ATTEND THAT CHURCH, OR WAS THAT THE ONE THEY USUALLY WENT TO, OR WERE THEY MUCH ON GOING TO CHURCH IN THOSE DAYS?"

WELL, NO, THERE WERE NO FINNISH CHURCHES IN LOOMIS. THE ONES THAT WENT TO CHURCH WENT TO ROCKLIN.

"WAS GOING TO CHURCH AN IMPORTANT PART OF GROWING UP FOR THE FINNS IN LOOMIS?"

BEING THERE WERE SO FEW FINNS IN LOOMIS, I', NOT SURE BUT WE DID GO TO THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AT THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH A FEW TIMES I CAN'T REMEMBER IF THERE WAS ANY OTHER PERSON WHO WAS OF FINNISH EXTRACTION LIKE OURSELVES.

"HOW DID YOU GET THERE? DID YOU HAVE TO WALK?"

SEVERAL TIMES WE DID. WE ACTUALLY WALKED. THEN MY DAD WOULD COME AND PICK US UP.

"HOW MANY MILES IS IT FROM HERE TO LOOMIS?"

OH, IT'S JUST SHORT OF SIX MILES.

"SO, IT WAS QUITE A DISTANCE TO GET TO SUNDAY SCHOOL."

BUT WE WERE YOUNG, IT WAS GOOD EXERCISE.

"WHAT ABOUT PEOPLE IN LOOMIS, FINNS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN PROFESSIONALS, OR INTELLECTUALS, WERE THERE MANY PEOPLE THERE THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN IN THAT CATEGORY?"

NOT IN LOOMIS. I DON'T KNOW OF ANYBODY REALLY IN LOOMIS. BUT THERE IS A KARL SEPPONEN, WHO NOW LIVES IN RURAL LINCOLN. HE WAS A VETERINARIAN

"WERE THE FINN WORKERS AROUND LOOMIS IN THE TRADE UNIONS OR MAYBE PERHAPS WHEN THE SOCIALIST CAUSE WAS KIND OF A BIG THING IN THE 20'S WERE THERE MANY FINNS AROUND HERE THAT WERE EVER INVOLVED IN THAT?"

NO, NOT AROUND LOOMIS. THERE WEREN'T ENOUGH FINN WORKERS AROUND LOOMIS. I BELIEVE IN THE ROCKLIN QUARRIES THERE WERE SOME. I'LL PASS ON ANY FURTHER COMMENT ON THIS TO ROY RUHKALA.



I THINK MOST OF THE WORKERS, MOST OF THE PEOPLE WERE.

"THE STONECUTTERS, YOU MEAN?"

I THINK EVEN MY PARENTS WERE TRENDING TOWARD THAT. I BELIEVE IN THE FINNISH NEWSPAPER THEY READ WAS MORE OR LESS, I'LL SHOW YOU A COPY, IN FACT, YOU CAN HAVE ONE.

"IT KIND OF EMPHASIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIALISM, OR JUST TRADE UNIONS?"

YOU MEAN MATT PAPERS? WELL, THEY HAD ALL WORLD NEWS AND THEN THEY HAD, I SUPPOSE . . . .

"SO YOUR PARENTS GOT A FINNISH NEWSPAPER REGULARLY WHERE IT WAS PUBLISHED?"

WELL, I CAN'T EXACTLY REMEMBER HOW THE WHOLE THING GOES, BUT AT ONE TIME I BELIEVE ONE PAPER WAS PUBLISHED BOTH IN SUPERIOR, WISCONSIN AND PORTLAND, OREGON, I THINK.

"THEN THEY WOULD HAVE IT MAILED TO THEM."

YES. LATER THEY COMBINED IT TO ONE PLACE AND THEN, YOU KNOW, HOW IT HAS BEEN GOING WITH SOME OF THE ENGLISH PAPERS. THEY ARE QUITTING OR CHANGING; THEY ARE CONSOLIDATING AND WHATNOT. AS YOU KNOW, IN THOSE EARLY DAYS THERE WASN'T MUCH READING. THERE WAS RADIO AND NOW TV. PEOPLE DON'T READ NEWSPAPERS LIKE THEY USED TO. THERE WERE VERY FEW FINNISH SPEAKING PEOPLE LEFT, YOU KNOW. IT CHANGED, I DON'T KNOW WHAT YEAR IT HAPPENED BUT THE TWO PAPERS GOT TOGETHER.

THERE WAS ONE PAPER THEY CALLED "TYOMIES," WHICH MEANS WORKING MAN. THE OTHER ONE IS "ODOTTAA," WHICH MEANS LOOK AHEAD. SO THE LAST PAPER MY MOTHER WAS GETTING WAS "TYOMIES ODOTTAA ILOLLA," WHICH WAS A COMBINATION

"A CONSOLIDATION. DID YOU READ THOSE PAPERS? CAN YOU STILL READ FINNISH?"

I CAN READ SOME BUT WHEN YOU READ A PAPER IT'S AWFUL DIFFICULT. IT'S A LOT EASIER FOR ME TO READ A FINNISH LETTER, ESPECIALLY FROM MY GRANDFATHER. MY GRANDFATHER HAD A BEAUTIFUL PENMANSHIP. HE NEVER WENT TO SCHOOL A DAY IN HIS LIFE, NOT EVEN IN FINLAND. HE TAUGHT HIMSELF TO READ AND WRITE.

"DID YOU EVER TEACH YOUR CHILDREN ANY FINNISH WORDS? DO THEY HAVE ANY CONNECTION WITH THAT LANGUAGE AT ALL OR ARE THEY PRETTY MUCH REMOVED FROM IT?"

WELL, MY OLDER BOY, WHEN WE WERE TAKING CARE OF MY MOTHER HERE AT HOME. SOMEBODY ALWAYS STAYED HERE, EITHER ME OR MY OLDER BOY, MY SISTER OR MY OTHER SISTER OR MY BROTHER. SOMETIMES MY NIECE AND SOMETIMES MY NEPHEW AND SOMETIMES, EVEN MY BROTHER'S EX-WIFE. SO WHEN THEY WERE HERE, GRANDMA WOULD TEACH KALVIN FINNISH, SO KALVIN KNEW A FEW WORDS.

"MR. SIPPOLA, DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER MEMORIES OF LIFE IN LOOMIS THAT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO RELATE TO US AT THIS TIME."

YES, I HAVE SOME MEMORIES THAT MY PARENTS TOLD FROM FINLAND I HAD NOT MENTIONED BEFORE. MY MOTHER SPOKE ABOUT KUPPARI AKKA, A BLOOD LETTER. THIS WAS DUE TO AN OLDER WOMAN WHO TRAVELED THROUGH THE COUNTRY. SHE WOULD USE A COW HORN TO SUCK OUT THE BAD BLOOD. AND LEECHES WERE ALSO USED. SOME PEOPLE WOULD GO INTO AN ENCLOSED SAUNA AND LET A WHOLE BEEHIVE LOOSE AND THEY NEVER HAD ARTHRITIS THE REST OF THEIR LIVES.

WAY OUT IN THE STICKS IN FINLAND WHERE MY MOTHER LIVED SHE HAD SEEN HOUSES WITH NO WINDOWS. FOR LIGHT THEY USED A DRY PITCHING KNOT FROM A FIR TREE STUCK IN THE WALL WITH A FLAME AT ONE END. IN FINLAND THE WOMEN AND GIRLS WERE MILKMAIDS AND MILKED THE COWS. THIS CUSTOM WAS CARRIED TO THIS COUNTRY BY MY PARENTS.

MY GRANDMOTHER MILKED THE COWS AND THEN WHEN MY MOTHER CAME TO THE RANCH, MARRIED TO MY DAD, THEN SHE MILKED THE COWS. I NEVER SAW MY DAD MILK A COW. WE HAD OUR OWN MILK AND MADE OUR OWN BUTTER. WE ALL, AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER, HAD OUR TURN TO CRANK THE BUTTER CHURN. WE ALSO HAD OUR OWN, HOMEMADE COTTAGE CHEESE AND YOGURT. ALL OF THESE HOMEMADE MILK PRODUCTS TASTED BETTER THAN THE STORE-BOUGHT ONES.

EARLIER I MENTIONED MY GRANDFATHER WORKING ON THE CANADIAN-PACIFIC RAILROAD. IN RECENT YEARS I HEARD FROM A NATIVE FROM MINNESOTA WHO SAID HIS ANCESTORS HAD TOLD HIM THAT THE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY BUILDING A RAILROAD WAS LOSING MEN TO DEFECTION. THEY HAD GIVEN ORDERS TO MERCHANTS ALONG THE RAIL LINE THAT IF ANYBODY WAS COMING BACK, NOT TO SELL THEM FOOD, AS THEY WOULD FILL UP THEIR PACKS AND THEN MAKE THE TRIP DOWN INTO THE UNITED STATES.

MY GRANDFATHER, IN THE EARLY YEARS, HAD GONE TO ALASKA TO SEEK HIS FORTUNE IN THAT TERRITORY'S GOLD RUSH. ALSO, HE WORKED IN MINES, MOSTLY COAL MINES IN THE ROCKIES. ONE DAY IN THE COAL MINE HE GOT JITTERY AND LEFT. IN LESS THAN A MONTH, THAT MINE BLEW UP. HE EITHER HAD A PREMONITION AS IN THE SAN FRANCISCO EARTHQUAKE, OR HE SMELLED THE OTHERWISE ODORLESS METHANE GAS.

OUR MOTHER WAS AS LENIENT AS OUR FATHER WAS STRICT, SO WE TWIGS



GREW UP STRAIGHT. BOTH MY FATHER AND GRANDFATHER BECAME NATURALIZED CITIZENS SOON AFTER ARRIVING FROM THEIR NATIVE LAND. THE IMMIGRATION LAWS WERE SUCH THAT IF A FOREIGN WOMAN MARRIED A NATIVE-BORN CITIZEN OR NATURALIZED CITIZEN, THEY AUTOMATICALLY BECAME CITIZENS. THE IMMIGRATION LAW CHANGED THE YEAR FOLLOWING MY PARENT'S MARRIAGE.

I CAN REMEMBER MY MOTHER AND DAD DOING THEIR DUTY AND VOTING AT ALL ELECTIONS, DURING MY GRAMMAR SCHOOL YEARS. THEY WERE HELD AT OUR SCHOOL. MY FATHER AND GRANDFATHER'S FIRST PROPERTY TAX BILL CAME ON A POSTCARD WITH A TEDDY ROOSEVELT STAMP, 1908. IT WAS FOR \$5.60 FOR ONE YEAR. IN THE EARLY DAYS MY FATHER AND GRANDFATHER, LIKE MANY OTHER OWNERS, HAULED WOOD TO FIRE THE QUARRIES, STEAM OPERATED DERRICKS. MANY TOOK GRANITE STONE POSTS BACK IN TRADE.

HERE WE HAD THE GATE POSTS OF STONE AND ALSO, STONE STEPS TO THE HOUSE. YES, IT'S TRUE THAT THEY BUILT THE STEAM BATH FIRST. FROM THEN ON IT WAS FIRED EVERY SATURDAY NIGHT. AT THE PEAK OF THE AGRICULTURAL BOON IN 1924, MY FATHER PURCHASED HIS FATHER'S SHARE OF THE FARM. MY GRANDFATHER HAD PUT A REAL HIGH VALUE BECAUSE HE THOUGHT THAT WAS WHAT IT WAS WORTH BECAUSE IT WAS DURING THE AGRICULTURAL BOON.

MY FATHER HAD TO AGREE, AND THEREFORE, THE TRANSACTION WAS CONSUMMATED. MY DAD'S FIRST FRUIT CROP YEAR WAS A DISASTER. IT WAS A DOUBLE DISASTER. IT WAS THE WORST DRAUGHT IN HALF A CENTURY AND ALSO, WORST FRUIT-FREEZING FROSTS, FROZE OUT MUCH OF THE CROP. THEN, AS I MENTIONED EARLIER, HE HAD SPENT TWO WEEKS DURING CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S IN THE HOSPITAL. THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT I HAD BEEN BORN, IN OCTOBER.

I AM SURE THAT THE WORD CAN'T, IS NOT IN MY DICTIONARY, WHICH MY DAD REPEATED SO OFTEN, HAS HELPED SHAPE MY LIFE. EACH YEAR MY DAD WENT TO SOME FARM WEST OF ROSEVILLE AND BROUGHT HOME FOUR, ONE HUNDRED-POUND SACKS OF WHEAT. WE CHILDREN ALL HAD OUR TURN, AT A CERTAIN AGE, TO TURN THE CRANK, TO GRIND THE GRAIN. WITH THIS FLOUR, MY MOTHER MADE BREAD, ADDING SOME STORE-BOUGHT FLOUR. WE ATE MUSH, MADE OF THIS WHOLE-WHEAT FLOUR.

MY FATHER, AND MYSELF LATER, WERE MEMBERS OF THE FINNISH LODGE OF ROCKLIN. THIS WAS, AND STILL IS, KNOWN AS THE UNITED FINNISH KALEVA BROTHERS AND SISTERS LODGE. THERE WERE FIVE LODGES IN CENTRAL AND NORTHERN CALIFORNIA, SO EVERY FIFTH YEAR IT WAS OUR TURN TO HOST THE FESTIVAL. WE HAD PICNICS, WITH ATHLETIC EVENTS FOR MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN. ALSO, PLAYS AND DANCES AT THE FINN HALL. IN FACT, THAT IS WHERE I FIRST LEARNED TO DANCE, AND IT WAS WITH MY MOTHER. EACH YEAR, WHETHER WE HOSTED A FESTIVAL OR NOT, WE STILL HAD A PICNIC IN THE EARLY SUMMER. WE LOOKED FORWARD TO THESE PICNICS. MY DAD WOULD BUY A HUGE BUNCH OF TICKETS FOR ICE CREAM CONES AND THEN HE WOULD DOLE THEM OUT TO US THROUGH THE COURSE OF THE AFTERNOON.

HE WOULD BUY UP TO THREE OR FOUR ICE CREAM CONES FOR EACH OF US KIDS AND THAT WAS THE ONLY TIME OF THE YEAR THAT WE WOULD GET ICE CREAM. IN LATE 1935 MY DAD HAD A HAIL DISASTER. HUGE HAIL COVERED THE GROUND FOUR INCHES DEEP AND PRACTICALLY WIPED OUT THE FRUIT. MY DAD HAD ONLY TEN PERCENT OF THE PLUMS LEFT AND MOST OF THEM WERE HAIL-GRADE AND BROUGHT A LOWER PRICE. I REMEMBER I REALLY FELT SORRY FOR MY DAD AND WAS SURPRISED AND PLEASED WHEN WE WENT TO THE PICNIC LESS THAN A WEEK LATER THAT HE STILL BOUGHT THE SAME AMOUNT OF TICKETS FOR ICE CREAM CONES.

I CAN REMEMBER A YEAR AROUND THE LATE 1920'S BEFORE I ENTERED GRAMMAR SCHOOL, MY DAD AND I WENT OUT TO THE WOODS. HE SEARCHED FOR A WHITE OAK TREE THAT HAD JUST THE PROPER CURVATURE TO MAKE A . . . . . WITH THE TREE STANDING, HE HEWED IT OUT JUST RIGHT, THEN FELLED IT, AND CUT THE OTHER END, PUT IT ON HIS SHOULDER AND WE CAME HOME. ONCE HE MADE SLED RUNNERS BY FELLING A WHITE OAK REAL CLOSE TO THE GROUND AND ALL BY HAND, SAWED IT IN HALF LENGTHWISE FOR THE RUNNERS.

MY GRANDFATHER READ A LOT. BEING IN HOSPITALS SEVERAL TIMES, SOMETIMES MONTHS ON END, HE HAD THE TIME. HE HAD TRANSLATING DICTIONARIES AND MASTERED THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE RATHER WELL. ON AN EARLIER QUESTION I FORGOT TO DESCRIBE OUR HOME. IT WAS SMALL BUT COZY. AROUND 540 SQUARE FEET. AT ONE TIME, EIGHT PEOPLE LIVED HAPPILY IN IT. WITH NO INSIDE PLUMBING, NOT EVEN WATER, WE MANAGED. WITH A 20 FOOT DUG WELL ABOUT 100 FEET AWAY, WE BAILED UP PURE, FRESH WATER.

AFTER THE YOUNGEST OF MY MOTHER'S CHILDREN WAS OLD ENOUGH TO NOT NEED SO MUCH CARE, MY MOTHER WENT, AFTER BEING ASKED BY THE FREDRIKSSON'S ON CHRISTMAS EVE, TO HELP WITH SERVING, DISHWASHING AND SO FORTH THROUGH THE 1930'S. THE FREDRIKSSONS HAD FIVE CHILDREN AND BY THEN, THEY ALL HAD CHILDREN. I THINK MY MOTHER STILL FELT INDEBTED TO THEM FOR HELPING HER TO COME TO THIS COUNTRY.

SOMETIMES NEAR THE EARLY MORNING HOURS, AFTER MIDNIGHT, I REMEMBER STAYING AWAKE. THE OLDEST SON OF THE FREDRIKSSON'S JOE, IN HIS THIRTIES AT THIS TIME, USUALLY BROUGHT MY MOTHER HOME FROM ACROSS THE ROAD. AND WITH HER, HE BROUGHT INTO THE KITCHEN AND SET DOWN ON THE BENCH NEXT TO THE LONG, HOME-MADE KITCHEN TABLE, AN APPLE BOX FULL OF FRUITS, NUTS AND CANDIES.



THERE WERE ALSO CANNED COCTAIL FRUIT, PINEAPPLE AND THINGS THAT WE USUALLY NEVER GOT TO EAT AT OTHER TIMES. AND DO YOU KNOW, FOR MANY YEARS, THIS MADE OUR CHRISTMAS. I FEEL QUITE EMOTIONAL ABOUT IT.

JOE PASSED AWAY IN AUGUST, 1982, ABOUT TWO MONTHS BEFORE MY MOTHER. I HAD ALWAYS WANTED TO THANK JOE BUT I HADN'T SEEN HIM FOR A LONG TIME AND HE'S GONE NOW, DEAD AT 81. IF I EVER SEE ANY OF HIS CHILDREN I WILL CERTAINLY TELL THEM ABOUT THIS.

THROUGH THE YEARS THERE WERE MANY FOREST FIRES, BURNED INTO OUR PASTURES. THERE WERE NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS. NO STATE FIREMEN OR EQUIPMENT, NOT TO MENTION BORATE PLANES. I CAN REMEMBER MY GRANDMOTHER BEATING AT THE FLAMING GRASS WITH A WET GUNNY SACK.

ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21, 1945, THE DAY AFTER THE TELEGRAM ARRIVED INFORMING OUR FAMILY OF THE LOSS OF OUR SON AND BROTHER, JOHN, DURING WORLD WAR II, OUR DAD BROUGHT OUT TWO, BEAUTIFUL ANTIQUE WATCHES. NOW HE HAD A WATCH FOR EACH OF HIS REMAINING SONS. PRIOR TO THAT TIME HE HAD THREE SONS AND ONLY TWO WATCHES. A DILEMMA HE HAD FACED HAD COME TO AN END WITH THE DEATH OF ONE OF HIS SONS.

DO YOU KNOW IT NEVER OCCURRED TO ME UNTIL A DECADE LATER WHAT MAY HAVE GONE THROUGH MY DAD'S MIND PRIOR TO AND AFTER MY OLDER BROTHER FELL IN BATTLE TO HELP KEEP THIS GREAT COUNTRY FREE.

NOW I AM MORE OR LESS IN THE SAME SHAPE. I HAVE TWO SONS AND ONLY ONE HEIRLOOM WATCH. I HOPE MY DILEMMA WILL NOT END IN THE SAME MANNER AS MY FATHER'S, NEARLY FORTY YEARS AGO. I SO MUCH

HOPE THAT THE WORLD POWERS HAVE ENOUGH SENSE NOT TO START ANOTHER SLAUGHTER.

ON SEPTEMBER 10, 1983, MY BROTHER FOUND A FINNISH COIN, A PENNY IN THE OLD, OLD HOUSE WHICH STILL STANDS AFTER 73 YEARS OF WINDS AND STORMS. THE MINT DATE OF THIS OXIDIZED COPPER COIN IS 1875.

BY THE WAY, WE CALL OUR MOTHER MAMMA AND OUR FATHER, PAPPA, AND GRANDDAD WAS ISOISA AND GRANDMOTHER, ISOAITI.

"LET'S TALK ABOUT THAT OLD HOMESTEAD A LITTLE BIT MORE. I UNDERSTAND FROM WHAT YOU SAID EARLIER THAT THEY BUILT THE SAUNA BEFORE THEY BUILT THE HOUSE AND THAT OLD STEAMBATH IS STILL BACK IN THE TREES THERE BY THE HOUSE? DID THE FINNS CALL THAT SAUNA A STEAMBATH?"

FINNS CALL IT A SAUNA.

"WHAT WAS IT USED FOR?"

THERE WAS A FIRE THAT WAS LIT UNDER BIG COBBLESTONES THAT WE HAD GOTTEN FROM THE RIVER AND THE IDEA WAS TO LIGHT A FIRE HOT ENOUGH, LONG ENOUGH, TILL THE ROCKS GOT HEATED PRETTY WELL. SO THEN, WHEN YOU GO IN TO TAKE YOUR SAUNA BATH, YOU POUR COLD WATER ON THOSE ROCKS AND STEAM WOULD COME UP. YOU WOULD SIT UP ON A BENCH, UP ON THE TOP DECK. IT WAS A REAL SOOTHING FEELING. THEN WE WOULD WASH UP WITH SOAP, AND AT THE END WE WOULD POUR PURE, COLD WATER OVER YOU, JUST KIND OF A RINSE, KIND OF COOL THE SURFACE OF YOUR SKIN, AND IT HELPED CLOSE THE SWEAT PORES.

"DID THE BOYS GO IN AT ONE TIME AND THEN THE GIRLS ANOTHER?"

YES, THAT'S THE WAY IT WAS DONE USUALLY.

I WANT TO TELL YOU OF AN INCIDENT. ONE OF MY BEST FRIENDS FROM CAMP BEAL WHEN I WAS IN THE ARMY, CAME TO VISIT ONE MARCH. HE WORKED FOR A DRUG COMPANY AND THEY HAD A CONVENTION IN SAN FRANCISCO. HE HAD TIME OFF FOR THE WEEKEND, AND THE REST OF THE GROUP WERE HEADED OFF TO RENO TO GAMBLE. THEY COULDN'T WAIT TO GET THERE. I FELT SO GRATIFIED THAT MY OLD FRIEND, DAN, INSTEAD OF GOING TO GAMBLE, WANTED TO COME AND LOOK ME UP AND SEE ME. HE HAD GOTTEN TO LOOMIS AND THERE WAS ONLY A LITTLE, OLD MOTEL. THIS WAS IN 1966. IT WAS A FRIDAY NIGHT AND I BELIEVE THERE WAS AN AMERICAN LEGION MEETING, AND HE HAD GONE INTO THE MEETING AND SPOKEN TO PEOPLE. MOST OF THE PEOPLE THERE KNEW ME AND I KNEW THEM.

THE NEXT MORNING DAN GILMORE CALLED US. HE DIDN'T CALL THAT PREVIOUS NIGHT. HE DIDN'T WANT TO BOTHER US. I WENT TO PICK HIM UP IN LOOMIS. IT WAS A SATURDAY MORNING. SATURDAY NIGHT, STEAM BATH! SO I TOOK MY FRIEND, DAN, INTO THE STEAM BATH AND I DON'T BELIEVE HE HAD EVER BEEN IN ONE BEFORE. WE GOT UP THERE, SAT UP ON THE TOP DECK ON A BENCH AND THREW SOME COLD WATER ON THE HOT ROCKS AND STEAM CAME UP. DAN GILMORE, HE TURNED TOWARD ME AND HE SAID, "YOU KNOW BILL, YOU GOT THE WORLD BY THE TAIL ON A DOWNHILL PULL." DO YOU KNOW, I NEVER ENJOYED THE STEAM BATH AS MUCH PRIOR TO THAT TIME AS I DID AFTER THAT TIME.

IN OTHER WORDS, HERE IT TOOK SOMEONE FROM BACK EAST, ALL THE WAY ACROSS THE CONTINENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO SHOW ME WHAT I HAD, WHAT A GOOD THING I HAD. I HAVE APPRECIATED A STEAM BATH MORE SINCE THAT TIME.

"IS IT TRUE ABOUT HITTING WITH THE STICKS, THE BIRCH STICKS, IN FINLAND? IS IT FOR CIRCULATION?"

YES, IT'S FOR MESSAGE, LIKE I SAID ABOUT MAMMA AND SISTER SWITCHED US. WE WOULD DO IT TO OURSELVES BUT WHEN WE WERE LITTLE KIDS IT WAS FUN TO HAVE OUR SISTER DO IT. BUT LIKE I SAID, IT WAS DONE WITH NO MALICE.

"WELL, IT IS REALLY QUITE FINE HERE. I WAS WONDERING ABOUT THE CHANGES THROUGH THE YEARS ON THE FARM. I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU'RE INTERESTED IN MAYBE GETTING OUT OF THE CHICKEN BUSINESS NOW AND MOVING ON TO SOMETHING ELSE. WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH THE FARM, THE CHICKENS, WHAT'S MAKING YOU THINK THAT YOU MAY WANT TO GET OUT OF IT?"

YES, IT'S PURE ECONOMICS. EGG BUSINESS HAS GOTTEN TO A POINT NOW WHERE THE ONLY WAY ONE CAN STAY IN BUSINESS IS IF HE CAN PRODUCE EGGS, PROCESS EGGS AND SELL THEM WHOLESAL OR SELL THEM RETAIL ON THE RANCH. YOU CAN MAKE MORE, WHERE YOU JUST GIVE UP THE MIDDLEMAN. IT'S FOTTEN TO A POINT WHERE THERE IS NO MONEY IN IT.

"THROUGH ALL THESE YEARS AND THESE MEMORIES OF BEING A FINN, HAS BEING A FINN MEANT ANYTHING SPECIAL TO YOU? CAN YOU TALK ABOUT THAT A LITTLE BIT AS WE CLOSE?"

YES, I AM VERY PROUD OF MY FINNISH HERITAGE. SISU IS WHAT WE ARE KNOWN TO POSSESS. THIS WORD CANNOT BE TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BUT ONLY ONE WORD. THESE ARE SOME, IF NOT ALL OF THE WORDS THAT CAN BE USED TO CONVERT TO ENGLISH; ENDURANCE, COURAGE, STAMINA, DETERMINATION AND GUTS. DURING THE WINTER OF THE RUSSIAN-FINNISH WAR OF 1939, 1940, THE FINNS ALL FOUGHT THE



MIGHTY RUSSIANS ON SKIIS IN THE SNOW. IN THEIR CAMOUFLAGE SUITS, THE RUSSIANS WERE NO MATCH. ALSO, FINLAND WAS THE ONLY COUNTRY FOLLOWING WORLD WAR I TO PAY THEIR DEBTS BACK TO THE UNITED STATES.

IN THE MIDDLE OF SUMMER, 1983, MY SISTER-IN-LAW, WAS OVER WITH A PROPOSED ITINERARY FOR A TRIP TO FINLAND FOR THE FOLLOWING SUMMER. SHE, MY BROTHER, MY SISTER AND I ARE PLANNING A TRIP THERE FOR JUNE, 1984. THAT NIGHT, WHEN I WENT TO SLEEP, I COULD THINK OF NOTHING BUT FINLAND. THE NEXT MORNING MY WIFE SAID I HAD SPOKEN IN FINNISH THREE TIMES IN MY SLEEP. THE THOUGHT THAT ONE DAY IN THE EARLY SUMMER OF 1984, I WILL BE SITTING IN A JET PLANE, LIFTING OFF FROM SEATTLE, HEADING OVER A POLAR CAP OFF TO A DISTANT LAND WILL BE OVERWHELMING. THIS WILL BE 100 YEARS SINCE MY GRANDFATHER LEFT FINLAND.

I MAY HAVE TO PINCH MYSELF TO BE SURE IT'S TRUE. TO REALIZE THAT THE DESTINATION OF FINLAND, THE BIRTHPLACE OF BOTH MY MOTHER AND FATHER, THIS WILL CERTAINLY PRODUCE A TEAR FROM A LITTLE CRY, A POSITIVE, JOYOUS KIND OF CRY, A DREAM COMING TRUE.

NOW, I BELIEVE I WANT TO VISIT FINLAND EVERY BIT AS MUCH AS MY MOTHER WANTED TO LEAVE IT OVER 60 YEARS AGO. MY TAPROOT IS FIRMLY ENTRENCHED HERE IN WONDERFUL AMERICA BUT I FEEL A FINN ROOT REACHING OUT ACROSS THE ATLANTIC. MY TRUNK AND MY BRANCHES ARE HERE AT MY BIRTHPLACE BUT MY TWIGS HAVE AN UNCONTROLLABLE URGE AND ARE BENDING EASTWARD. MY GENEALOGICAL ROOTS ARE IMBEDDED IN FINLAND, THE NATIVE HOMELAND OF ALL MY ANCESTORS. KIITOS, THANKS.