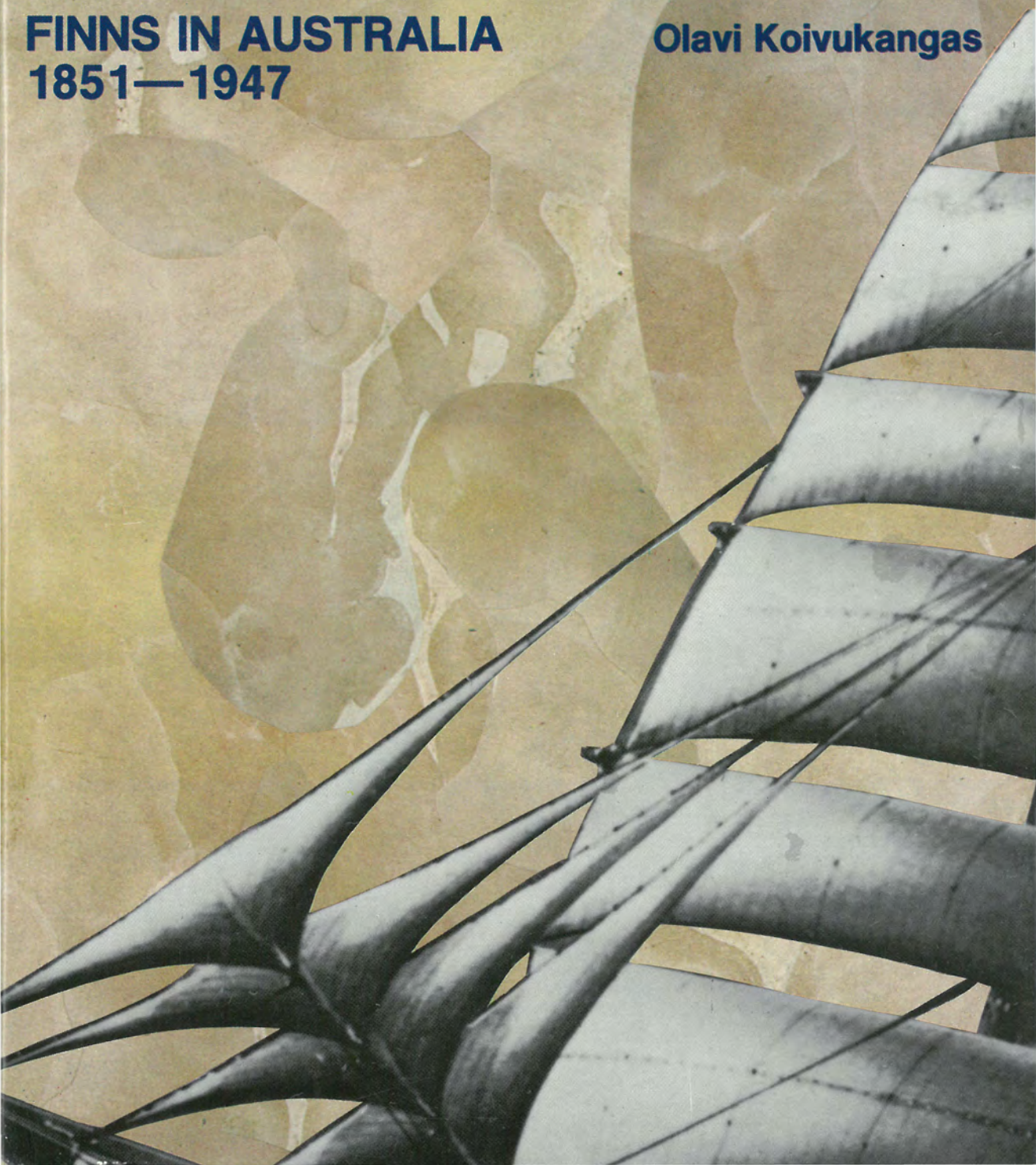


SEA, GOLD & SUGARCANE

**FINNS IN AUSTRALIA
1851—1947**

Olavi Koivukangas



The first comprehensive study of the early Finns in Australia, starting with H.D. Spöring's visit to Australia in the "Endeavour" with James Cook in 1770.

The first permanent settlers from Finland were seamen and argonauts on the New South Wales and Victorian Goldfields after 1851. The third magnet was sugarcane in North Queensland, especially in the 1920s. The

Finnish presence was most conspicuous in coastal seafaring, mining — especially Mt. Lyell and Mt. Isa — and in clearing land for farming.

This book is a Finnish contribution to the bicentenary of European Australia 1988.





Edward Suvanto, a seaman from Turku, who landed in Newcastle in 1913, photographed with a friend.



One of the major occupations among Finnish immigrants in Australia was mining. This photograph was taken in Mt. Isa in 1934.



OLAVI KOIVUKANGAS

born 12.11.1941, graduated from the University of Turku in 1967. In 1968 the Australian National University in Canberra granted him a Ph.D. scholarship on the study on Scandinavians in Australia. He received his Ph.D. in Demography in 1972 and returned to Finland. In 1974 Dr Koivukangas was appointed Director of the Institute of Migration in Turku. He is also the President of the Finnish-Australian Society, 1984—. The present study on Finns in Australia 1851—1947 is a history of first Finns in Australia, and has been submitted to the University of Turku for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History, in September 1986.

Other books by Olavi Koivukangas:

- Scandinavian Immigration and Settlement in Australia before World War II, Kokkola 1974, 333 pp.
- Finnish Migration to Australia after World War II (in Finnish with English Summary) Kokkola 1975, 262 pp.
- A Bibliography on Finnish Emigration and Internal Migration (with Simo Toivonen) Turku 1978, 226 pp.
- The Scandinavians in Australia (with John S. Martin) Melbourne 1986, 232 pp.

SEA, GOLD AND SUGARCANE

MIGRATION STUDIES C 8

SEA, GOLD AND SUGARCANE
ATTRACTION VERSUS DISTANCE

Finns in Australia
1851—1947

by
Olavi Koivukangas

Institute of Migration
Turku, Finland, 1986

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**Dedicated to the Bicentenary
of European Australia**

1988

**and to the Finnish Immigrants from the far North
of Europe who Contributed to Building a Nation
of the Southern Seas.**

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Since 1968, I have been gathering information and data concerning the Finnish immigrants in Australia. It was then that the Australian National University in Canberra granted me a postgraduate scholarship, which in January 1969 led me to Canberra and to the writing of a study on Scandinavian immigration and settlement in Australia. After completing the Ph.D. degree, and returning to Finland in August 1972, however, I continued to collect material relevant to the enquiry into Finns in Australia; and in 1981, I was fortunate enough to be able to make a three months' visit to Australia again, in conjunction with the Nordic project on migration to Australia and New Zealand.

The completion of the present investigation has been a slow task, owing to the inherent difficulties and the wide scale of the enquiry, but also to the fact that my present appointment as Director of the Institute of Migration (set up in Turku in 1974) has not only proved a fascinating post during regular working hours, but has also claimed much of my leisure time as well. Nonetheless, it has seemed to me to be my duty to bring this study, once started, to a conclusion; and the extra time has also been beneficial, in allowing more opportunity for reflection, and, I trust, a deeper understanding of the complexity of the process of human migration. As the task draws to a close, however, it is my great pleasure to be able to extend my thanks to all those individuals and organizations who have assisted in furthering the work of this investigation.

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In the Academy in Turku which flourished in the 18th century, the forerunner of the present university of Helsinki and of this city's two present-day universities (the University of Turku and Åbo Akademi), many doctoral dissertations opened with the words "An Attempt to . . ." and indeed every investigation is an attempt of some kind to explore and interpret some particular range of phenomena and the inter-relations between them. It remains for the reader to assess how well the present investigation may have achieved this goal. In the traditions of the old Academy, moreover, I wish to emphasize that however much many persons have contributed to the completion of this research, the responsibility for its faults and weaknesses remains mine alone.

In addition to the official dedication, I wish to dedicate this work in honour of my mother, Vieno Rakel KOIVUKANGAS, née Karvonen (1917—74), whose memory has helped me towards achieving this goal.

Finally, my thanks go to my wife Pirjo, and to my daughters Siru, born herself in Australia, and Sari, born here in Turku, for the kind understanding they have shown for a father whose thoughts were so often far away in Australia.

Turku, New Year's Eve 1985

Olavi Koivukangas

Abbreviations

AA	=	Australian Archives
ANU	=	Australian National University
AONSW	=	Archives Office of New South Wales
CA	=	Commonwealth Archives
C'th	=	Commonwealth
FN	=	Finlandia News
HBL	=	Huvudstadsbladet
HS	=	Helsingin Sanomat
KB	=	Kungliga Biblioteket
MY	=	Merimiehen Ystävä
NR	=	Naturalization Records
NSW	=	New South Wales
PRO	=	Public Records Office
QLD	=	Queensland
QSA	=	Queensland State Archives
SA	=	South Australia
SASA	=	State Archives of South Australia
SHO	=	Suomen Höyrylaivaosakeyhtiö
SI	=	Siirtolaisuusinstituutti
SK	=	Suomen Kuvalehti
SKA	=	Sydneyn konsulaatin arkisto
SMLA	=	Suomen Merimieslähetyseuran arkisto
SS	=	Suomen Silta
Tas.	=	Tasmania
TYYH	=	Turun yliopiston yleisen historian laitos
UM	=	Ulkoministeriö
VA	=	Valtionarkisto
VBL	=	Vasabladet
Vic.	=	Victoria
VMA	=	Vaasan Maakunta-arkisto
V & P	=	Votes and Proceedings (of a Legislative Assembly)
WA	=	Western Australia
ÅA	=	Åbo Akademi
ÅS	=	Ålands Sjöfart
ÖP	=	Österbottniska Posten

Translators' Notes

In the following text, quotations from documents written by Finns have been translated into English except where explicitly stated that the originals were written in or contained passages written in English.

In order to avoid any confusion between ethnic identity and place of birth, the term *Finland-born*, rather than *Finnish-born*, has been used to refer to persons born in Finland.

I Introduction

1. Earlier Investigations

Students of immigration in Australia had paid no attention to Finnish immigration until 1966, when C.A. PRICE pointed out that certain ethnic groups, such as the Finns, Russians, and Spanish, had been almost completely ignored.¹ The only earlier reference appears to be by the Danish-Australian Jens Sørensen LYNG (1868—1943), who alludes to the "daughters and sons of the land of thousands of lakes", and complains that very little is known about them before 1900.² One reason for this is that in Censuses prior to 1921, the Finns were usually counted as Russian.

The Finnish immigrants in Australia themselves, however, have long been interested in their own history. By 1927, Nestori Karhula, joined in 1931 by the Queensland Finnish Heimo Society (founded in 1914), had begun to collect information about "Finns living and dead".³ These efforts went no further than the collection of information, but Karhula's material has been preserved, and has been made use of in the present investigation.

Interest in the story of the Finns in Australia also awoke outside the country; and in 1949, a Finnish-American paper wrote: "The history of the Finnish-Australians must be saved for later generations, and our Finnish homeland ought to play her part in its writing."⁴

¹ *Australian Immigration: A Bibliography and Digest*, No 1, ed. Charles A. PRICE, Canberra 1966, viii-ix.

² LYNG, J., *Non-Britishers in Australia*, Melbourne 1935 (1st edition 1927) 139—141. In LYNG's magnum opus, *The Scandinavians in Australia, New Zealand and the Western Pacific*, Melbourne 1939, the Finns are not mentioned.

³ The Finnish-Australian paper *Suomi*, 1 Sep. 1927 and 27 Aug. 1931.

⁴ The Finnish-American paper *Keski-Lännen Sanomat*, Duluth, Minnesota, 7 Oct. 1949.

Within Finland, however, there seemed to be no interest in the Finnish-Australians, so few and so far away, apart from what was achieved by the Pastor of the Finnish Seamen's Missions Society (which had maintained a Mission in Australia since 1916), and of the Finnish Consulate (since 1918), or occasional journalists and others visiting the country.

The scholarly investigation of Finnish migration, as it has been pursued both in Finland and in the United States, has concentrated its attention on the movement to North America, and it was not until the 1960s, when Vilho NIITEMAA initiated a project on Finnish long-distance migration at the Department of General History, University of Turku, that any systematic attention was paid to Australia, Siberia, South America, and the other distant destinations of Finnish settlement.

This was the background to the situation when in 1967, before his return from Australia, where he had served as the last pastor at the Finnish Seamen's Mission there, the Revd Urpo Kokkonen reported to the University of Turku that the Department of Demography at the Australian National University in Canberra was prepared to award a postgraduate research scholarship to a Nordic student for the study of Nordic immigration in Australia. No doubt Charles A. PRICE (subsequently my research supervisor) recalled his previous observation about the gap in the research when in 1968 the Australian National University then awarded me a three years' scholarship. The choice of a Finn was presumably due to the need for a knowledge of the Finnish, Swedish, and English languages. In this way I became the first Finn to have taken the Ph.D. degree in Australia.⁵ I returned to Finland in 1972, having also visited the Finnish communities, and local universities, in both New Zealand and North America.

While this first study concerned Scandinavian immigration as a whole, it had always been the aim of the Finnish research project, and my hope, that I would be able to carry out a specific study of my fellow-Finns in Australia. During my time there, I was able in 1970 to distribute to the immigrants a questionnaire, through the columns of the Finnish paper *Suomi*, and following my appointment in 1973 to a Research Assistantship by the Academy of Finland, I wrote a monograph on Finnish immigration in Australia since the Second World War.⁶ On immigration in the period before the Second World War, however, I have published only a few articles.⁷

⁵ KOIVUKANGAS, Olavi, *Scandinavian Immigration and Settlement in Australia before World War II*, Kokkola 1974.

⁶ KOIVUKANGAS 1975.

⁷ KOIVUKANGAS, Olavi, Finnish Migration to Australia before World War II. Area of Origin and Migration Characteristics. *Publications of the Institute of General History*, University of

The Finns were included among the Scandinavians covered by my doctoral dissertation in 1972, but on a very general level. Following on from the present study, which is a report of research on the pre-War era, it is my intention to publish an illustrated history of the Finnish-Australian immigration in Finnish. Meanwhile, scheduled for publication in 1986 in the 'Ethnic Heritage' series published by the A E Press is a more general study, written in collaboration with John S. Martin, entitled *The Scandinavians in Australia*, and I have undertaken to provide for the same series at a later date separate overview of *The Finns in Australia*.

Other than the works listed above, there are only two other books of importance on Finnish-Australian immigration,⁸ together with one article which is of use owing to its early date.⁹ I have thus had the fortune to investigate a virtually uncharted area of history.

2. Problems for Investigation

The primary aim of this study is to investigate the migration to Australia by Finns from the mid-19th century up to the termination of the Second World War. The beginning is marked by the discovery of the rich gold deposits in Australia in 1851, and the influence of these on Finnish immigration. The study closes in 1947, the date of the first post-War Census, and 1946 was the latest date for which one of the most important sources of information for this investigation, the Naturalization Records, were available. 1947 was also the date of the Peace Treaty in Paris between Australia and Finland, i.e. the termination of the official state of hostilities of the Second World War. In practice, this means that the last year of Finnish immigration covered here was 1939.

New Zealand has been in general excluded from the scope of the present study, in spite of the fact that Finnish migration to the two countries is in many respects closely connected (e.g. they are sometimes

Turku, Finland, No 4, 1972; and KOIVUKANGAS, Olavi, *The Tyranny of Distance: Finns in Australia Before the Second World War*, in: *Finnish Diaspora I: Canada, South America, Africa, Australia and Sweden*, ed. Michael G. Karni, Toronto 1981. See also the Proceedings of 1982 Symposium of the *Scandinavian Emigration to Australia and New Zealand Project*, KOIVUKANGAS 1983.

⁸ NIITEMAA, Vilho, 'Australiansuomalainen Erakko-Seura 1902—1904'. *Siirtolaishistoriaa VII*, Eripainossarja N:o 14, *Turun Historiallisen Yhdistyksen Julkaisuja XXV [Migration History VII, Offprint Series No 14, Publications of the Turku Historical Society XXV]*, Turku 1971, 163—262; and KANSANAHO, Erkki, *Etelän ristin alla, Australian suomalaisten kirkollista elämää*, Pieksämäki 1975.

⁹ Nauklér, Kaarlo, 'Suomalainen asutus Australiassa', *Maapallo II*, Helsinki 1926, 188—190. The author was the first Consul for Finland in Australia.

grouped together in Finnish migration statistics). Reference is only made to New Zealand where this will serve the better understanding of the migration to Australia. Information pertaining to the Finns in New Zealand has, however, been constantly collected, with a view to a subsequent separate study. New Guinea, and other islands in the vicinity of Australia, are on the other hand included under the present investigation.

In relation to Australian history, the Second World War is in a number of respects a suitable dividing line in the investigation of Finnish immigration. The pre-War period was characterized by markedly different conditions, both in the Finland which the migrants set out from, and in the Australia they came to, from those of the post-War period. A crucial difference specific to Australia is also that in the post-War period the Government's assisted passages scheme was extended to include Finns on a regular basis, whereas before World War II they were eligible only occasionally. The whole situation of the modern migrants of the 1960s and 1970s — in their conditions prior to departure, in their journey itself (flying to Australia in a couple of days), and in the overall patterns of their lives — was in striking contrast to that of the earlier migrant generations, from the mid-19th to the early 20th centuries, whose journey to Australia (especially by sailing ship) could take weeks or even months. Despite the apparent historical continuity, these two periods belong to different epochs. It is the earlier group who form the object of the present investigation.

It is important that Finnish migration to Australia be seen in its broader context, as part of international migration. The background to this, on a worldwide plane, is the extension of the European colonial powers' hegemony and European culture into Oceania and the South Pacific region, from the middle of the 18th century. Initially, this took the form of voyages of exploration and of missionary work; but in time, it came to involve imperialism proper, i.e. the extension of military and economic power. (These aims had in fact also been behind the organization of exploration and the missions.) Not until the planned settlement of British colonists in Australia and New Zealand, together with the smaller islands of the south Pacific, however (part of the race for colonial hegemony in the region), was there a basis for immigrants of other nationalities to come and settle in these British colonies. Consequently, for an understanding of Finnish immigration in Australia, it is essential first to understand the colonial policies of the British Empire, which provided the context within which Australia's economic and political evolution could take place, and a distinct Australian immigration policy, with implications reaching as far away as Finland, could emerge. Similarly, the increase in Finnish migration to Australia which followed the controls imposed in the 1920s on immigration to the

United States is another indication of the worldwide dimensions of the entire question.

Set against this global framework, the second central factor in Finnish migration to Australia was the economic and social evolution of society in Finland itself, and the departure overseas of hundreds of thousands of emigrants, mainly for the United States and Canada, in the period 1867—1930. Finnish migration to Australia must be seen simultaneously both as a phenomenon parallel to the American migration, and as a phenomenon distinct in itself. It was dependent both on Australia's geographical location and specific appeal, and also on other factors, such as the availability or not of assisted passages. One consequence of the length and expense of the journey from Finland to Australia was the occurrence and indeed centrality of "seamen's migration", a phenomenon previously little studied. Another noticeable feature of the Finnish migration to Australia was the unusually high return migration rate; and one of the questions requiring investigation concerns why people returned from Australia so much more often than they did from North America.

In addition to examining the migration process itself, the second aim here is to study the Finnish-Australian community which emerged: its evolution, patterns and location of settlement, occupational structure, etc.; in particular, why the Finns tended to settle in particular States and particular localities, and how the Finnish community developed within the economy, especially during the 1920s and 1930s.

The third part of this study is concerned with the process of adaptation by the Finns to their new environment, taking into account the cultural traditions they brought with them from the old country; these are reflected, for instance, in their voluntary associations, in religious activity, and in the establishment of a Finnish-language paper. The main focus here falls on the growth of the small Finnish concentrations or clusters in various parts of Australia, and the gradual economic and social integration of these into Australian society. Attention is also paid in this part of the study to links with Finland, and to the maintenance of ethnic identity, although the scarcity of source material makes it impossible to do so other than at a general level.

The final section of the study builds on the material investigated and the findings to offer an examination of the patterns and models by means of which Finnish migration, settlement, and adaptation may be interpreted. Comparisons are made here both with the immigrant communities of other nationalities within Australia, and with the Finnish immigrant communities elsewhere, especially in the southern hemisphere, but also in the United States and Canada. The aim in the Conclusion of the study is to achieve a clearer picture of the Finnish patterns of migration, settlement, and adaptation to Australia. At the

same time, the models offered here are intended to be equally applicable to any immigrant communities of any national origins, and in any country of settlement.

3. Key Concepts

(1) Migration

In the research literature, *migration* is a somewhat ambiguous term.¹⁰ The essential elements in defining the concept are transit across an administrative boundary or frontier, and settlement on the other side, with the intention of earning one's living there. The term is therefore best re-defined in detail for the purposes of each specific investigation.

The persons who migrated from Finland to Australia in the period 1851—1947 belonged to two main groups: (1) seamen and other 'casual' immigrants; and (2) immigrants proper. Since in the present investigation the term *migration* is used to refer to **one or more persons moving from one country to another with the intention of acquiring work and residence there on a relatively permanent basis**, this (loose) definition encompasses both groups (1) and (2), while excluding, for example, students temporarily resident in the country, visiting businessmen, and persons with diplomatic status. Dependent children who were born in the country of origin are counted as first-generation migrants; those born in the receiving country, however, are second-generation migrants. Such distinctions, especially in the case of children arriving in the host country with their parents at a very early age, are naturally to some extent arbitrary, but they are of minor significance here since this study concentrates on the first generation of immigrants.

One of the key concepts used here is that of *chain migration*, which refers to migration by a group of persons, usually from the same locality in Finland, to the same locality in Australia. Chain migration also occurred within Australia, however, when individual immigrants who moved to a new location drew Finnish fellow-immigrants after them.

(2) Settlement

A crucial concept in the history of Finnish settlement in Australia is that of *chain settlement*, which refers to the way in which immigrants, whether arriving individually or in groups, tended to gravitate together, to areas where work was available, and in time, to form one of the major local ethnic groups. If the availability of work declined, they

¹⁰ See MANGALAM 1968; JACKSON 1969; LEWIS 1982.

would then move on to another locality. The emergence of chain settlement (alongside the phenomenon of internal chain migration within Australia) was further reinforced by the arrival of additional ethnic migrants from the same places of origin in Finland. Chain settlement is thus a similar concept to that of *etappe migration*,¹¹ the essential difference being that in chain settlement, a certain proportion of the migrants remain, either semi-permanently or permanently at each of the localities along the route, thus giving rise to the centres of Finnish settlement still traceable in Australia today. In *etappe migration*, the main emphasis is on a process of migration, whereas in chain settlement, the stress is on settlement, i.e. the way in which — possibly after many years of moving from place to place — Finnish migrants finally established new, small-scale local Finnish colonies, especially in the sugar plantations and mining towns of Queensland. Only once this had been achieved did the economic and social integration of the Finnish immigrants into Australian society really begin.

(3) Adaptation

There are many definitions of *adaptation*, for it is a highly complex phenomenon.¹² It may be approached in terms of many different academic disciplines, including those of History, Sociology, Psychology, Anthropology, Medicine, and Economics. In the research literature, there is a wide variety of terms used in the discussion of the adaptation of immigrants, such as *assimilation*, *integration*, and *acculturation*. Many of these terms describe different stages of the assimilation process, or different aspects of the same phenomenon. *Assimilation* is probably the most widely used term when dealing with immigrants. BORRIE describes *assimilation* as a process of mutual interaction, in which the environment comes to accept a certain degree of cultural divergence.¹³ TAFT also defines *assimilation* as the result of mutual interaction, in which the immigrants and the host population come to resemble each other as closely as possible. TAFT sees *integration* as a potential alternative to assimilation, when the immigrant succeeds in adopting the features of the new culture without losing the distinguishing of his or her own nationality¹⁴ and this is similar to the concept put forward by ANTTONEN.¹⁵

The relation between the terms *assimilation* and *acculturation* is particularly problematic. They are often treated as synonyms, but certain dis-

¹¹ See ENGMAN 1983, 258—259.

¹² See GORDON 1964.

¹³ BORRIE 1959, 93—94.

¹⁴ TAFT 1965, 4.

¹⁵ ANTTONEN 1984, 23.

tinctions have been noted. According to the theory put forward by TESKE & NELSON, *assimilation* is one-directional, whereas *acculturation* relies on two-way mutual interaction; in assimilation, values are altered, whereas in acculturation this does not necessarily occur. In assimilation, there is a shift of reference group, internal change occurs, and the approval of the external group is required; these conditions do not apply in acculturation.¹⁶ Acculturation must then be seen as an umbrella concept, and as a process which incorporates both assimilation and integration.¹⁷

Neither for adaptation, nor for migration in general, has any overall theory as yet been propounded. It is still impossible to say who is an "adapted" person. The lack of adequate source materials also makes it impossible to do more than outline major features of adaptation. On the whole, however, the Finnish immigrants in Australia represent the *integration* phase, i.e. they display varying degrees of adaptation to their environment, while still retaining features of Finnish culture.

In this investigation, *adaptation* refers to a **process by which an individual immigrant or group of immigrants gradually blend into their surrounding society in terms of their economic, social, and other activities.** This process begins with the first contacts with the host population, and culminates, in its extreme form, in the condition where an individual or group can no longer be distinguished in any manner at all from the rest of the society.¹⁸ It is rare for first-generation immigrants to reach this extreme; and due to the difficulty of obtaining adequate source materials, attention in this investigation has inevitably been concentrated on the *preservation* of national identity traits rather than on adaptation. In what ways, then, can the possible failure of Finnish immigrants to adapt be seen in their reactions to the conditions around them? Finnish culture and the Finnish language are crucial factors. The analysis also reveals the central background factors affecting adaptation, e.g. the forms of social contact among the Finnish immigrant community and the maintenance of Finnish identity and of links with home.

Adaptation depends on a number of factors, but above all on characteristics of the individual immigrant, such as age, level of education, and social background. The surroundings, religion, etc., also play a significant role. Adaptation also depends on the gender structure and size of the immigrant community, in as much as adaptation is slowed down to at least some extent where the immigrant joins a large and well-established homogeneous community of his fellow-ethnic immigrants. On the other hand, the existence of such a group can also contribute to adap-

¹⁶ TESKE & NELSON 1974, 365.

¹⁷ ANTONEN 1984, 21—24.

¹⁸ PRICE 1963, 200—203.

tation to the new conditions, especially in the early stages. The significance of the ethnic community to the individual immigrant is thus to be seen in terms of *adaptation*, not of *absorption*. The immigrant may adapt in certain ways to the new environment, and accept its norms and customs, without necessarily needing to adopt or internalize them.

Adaptation is also heavily dependent on the character of the host country's society, in terms of the prevailing employment policies, the availability of employment, and the opportunities open to immigrants to participate in social and political activity. Within the host society, the immigrant will encounter a range of attitudes and expectations, possibly including prejudice or discrimination.¹⁹ An important factor which may contribute to adaptation by the individual immigrant is prosperity; frequently an increased standard of living has an impact on decisions concerning return migration, or on increased social contact with other people. Family status is a further significant factor affecting speed of adaptation; immigrants with families experience faster integration, through the mediation of their children, than do single persons. It must nevertheless be always borne in mind that adaptation takes place at the level of individuals, and largely depends on personal characteristics, so that it is difficult to make valid generalizations.

4. Sources and Methods of Investigation

(1) Sources Originating within Australia

(a) Official Statistics

Generally speaking, there are only two forms of official statistics which provide information concerning immigrants: the **Census**, in which the population is analyzed by place of birth into those born within the country and those born elsewhere; and **Migration Statistics** of persons crossing the country's borders.²⁰

In the Australian Colonies, prior to Federation in 1901, the concept of 'immigration' was vague in the extreme. The Colonies were far away from each other, and their statistics were not compiled on standardized principles; at times, persons might be classified as immigrants who were in fact in transit to a port in a different Colony.²¹ Following Federation,

¹⁹ PRICE 1969, 185—189.

²⁰ See BARCLAY, *Techniques of Population Analysis*, New York 1966, 243.

²¹ APPLEBYARD, *British Emigration to Australia*, Canberra 1964, 28, note 1; and BORRIE, "Immigration to the Australian Colonies 1861—1901", unpublished manuscript, Department of Demography, Australian National University, Canberra.

the Commonwealth Government began in 1902 the publication of data giving the nationality of arrivals in Australia, and these were supplemented from 1914 by similar data concerning people departing. It was not until the middle of 1924 that Finnish nationals were listed separately, however, i.e. in the middle of the heaviest wave of Finnish immigration. Persons were classified as "immigrants" if at their time of arrival they stated their intention of remaining in the country for at least twelve months. These migration statistics are published in the annual *Demography Bulletin* series, which also contains other useful information for migration research, e.g. (from 1907 onwards) information on the place of birth of spouses. Owing to the small scale of Finnish migration, however, these data are of relatively little use here. Finns are not listed separately in these statistics until 1924.

Data for the population as a whole are provided in the Censuses, which supply information on place of birth and nationality. The earliest Census to be carried out in Australia took place in New South Wales in 1828. Thereafter Censuses were carried out in the several Colonies, but in different years, until 1881, when agreement was reached on using the same day throughout the Colonies. The first national Census to be carried out by the federal Commonwealth Government took place in 1911.²² The data in the Censuses on place of birth are a valuable source of information concerning immigration. For the other Nordic nations, these data are available in the Colonial Censuses from 1871; but Finns were classified as "Russian" up to the 1921 Census, with the exception of the Censuses in Queensland for 1886 and 1901, and in Victoria for 1901, which thus provide some information on the basis of which estimates can be made concerning the probable numbers of Finns prior to 1921.

Unfortunately, there are at times inaccuracies in the Census data, due to various factors, e.g. the use of interviews by the Census enumerators. For the immigrant population, there may be various forms of error. The enumerator may have heard, interpreted, or written down information incorrectly; the person interviewed may also have supplied false information. The most common errors in the case of the Finns could well be that Finns were classified as Russian, or that Swedish-speaking Finns, who might well refer to themselves as "Swedish", might be recorded as born in Sweden. It is also fairly clear that the figures for the immigrant population are not very reliable; for instance, a group of Finnish forest workers, far away in the bush, might easily be overlooked altogether. It is therefore probable that the numbers of Finnish

²² There is a detailed historical review of the development of the Censuses in Australia in the Statistician's Report, *Census 1911*. On the history and reliability of the Australian Censuses see also CHOI 1982, 559—560.

population recorded in the Censuses are an underestimate. Another source of distortion in the statistics concerns the numbers of persons of various nationalities who might be on board ships in harbour on the night of the Census,²³ since these persons are classified as "Migratory", even if they were in fact crewmen on ships plying along the coast, or people who merely happened to be on a journey or away from home for some other reason on Census night. An additional weakness of the Australian Censuses is the fact that they have not been carried out at regular intervals of five or ten years; in particular, for the present purposes, the most serious deficiency is the lack of any Census at all within the twelve years 1921—33. At the beginning of this period, Finnish migration to Australia was expanding rapidly; by the end, the Depression was causing a sharp rise in return migration back to Finland. Consequently, there are many Finns who were in Australia for over ten years, yet who were never recorded in any Census. Despite these problems, the three national Censuses carried out in 1921, in 1933, and in 1947 provide at least a general estimate of the numbers of Finnish population, and valuable information on place of birth and nationality.

(b) Naturalization Records

Another crucial source of information for the present investigation are the Naturalization Records. Before listing these, it is worth taking a look at their origins.

The first persons to be awarded rights as British subjects in Australia were two Americans, in 1826, by royal letters patent of denization *ex donatio regis*, under which they were permitted to own land, for example, but not to participate in the administration of the Colony of New South Wales.²⁴ From 1828, the Governor of New South Wales (followed from 1834 by the Governor of Van Diemen's Land, later Tasmania), the highest local royal officials, were authorized to issue denization documents to aliens (i.e. persons other than British subjects), and this practice continued until the various Colonies introduced naturalization acts around the middle of the century. These acts were in turn based on Parliament's 1847 Imperial Act, which authorized the Colonies to extend British nationality to approved aliens. The conditions imposed varied in detail from Colony to Colony. In New South Wales, five years' residence was required; in South Australia, six months. The other Colonies did not impose residence qualifications, except for Queensland, which required three years from Africans and Asiatics, who also were required to be married and living with their wives.

²³ KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 16; see also PYNE & PRICE 1976, 15—56.

²⁴ See TOMLINS 1835.

Special steps were taken in several Colonies to prevent the naturalization of Chinese. In 1870, a further Act of Parliament defined the nationality of a wife as being the same as that of her husband.

Naturalization Records are thus available for most of the Colonies from mid-century, for Queensland from 1858 and for Western Australia from 1871 (although naturalization had in fact been awarded in Western Australia prior to this date, under different legislation). The fullest information available from the Naturalization Records gives the applicant's name, place and date of birth, date of landing, address at the time of naturalization, occupation, and even reasons for changing nationality (e.g. in order to be able to purchase land, or in consequence of permanent settlement in the Colony).²⁵ The most deficient Records from the Colonial period are those for Queensland and Western Australia; in particular, they fail to record date of landing.

The Naturalization Records from the Colonial period are kept in the archives of their successor States, with the exception of those for Victoria and South Australia, which have been transferred to the Commonwealth Archives in Canberra. Notwithstanding their faults, they provide an extremely valuable source of information on migration in the 19th century; moreover, being official documents, they are relatively reliable. The first Finn recorded in these documents arrived in Australia in 1851, and the first Finn to take out naturalization did so in 1866. Especially in view of the fact that the Censuses do not list Finns separately until the 1920s, Naturalization Records thus constitute an extremely important source of information.

Following Federation in 1901, and the consequent transfer of responsibility for citizenship to the new Commonwealth Government, a new national Naturalization Act came into operation in 1904. This involved few changes from the earlier legislation of the Colonies, with the exception of a standardized requirement of two years' residence in Australia. Foreign women married to British subjects (by birth or by naturalization) continued to acquire citizenship automatically, as did the children of naturalized aliens.²⁶ In 1917, further legislation required the surrender of the applicant's previous nationality, and introduced tests of his knowledge of English. In 1920, a new Naturalization Act revised the residence requirements to at least five years' residence in any territory of the British Empire within the preceding eight years, and at least one year in Australia prior to the application. In addition, a certificate of good character, and evidence of his ability to speak English, were

²⁵ On the Naturalization Records for the most important Colony, New South Wales, see 'Guide to the State Archives of New South Wales, Record Group NCS-ND, Colonial Secretary: Records Having Legal Effect, Part I, Naturalization and Denization 1834—1904', Sydney 1967, 9—11.

²⁶ Naturalization Act No 11 of 1903; COGHLAN 1904, 174.

required. This 1920 Act remained in effect until the creation through a new Act in 1948 of a distinct category of *Australian citizenship*, Australians (whether by birth or by naturalization) having previously been classified simply as *British subjects*.

The Naturalization Records kept by the Commonwealth since 1904 normally record the applicant's name, place and date of birth, date of arrival in the country, current place of residence, occupation, and marital status, together with information concerning his family and his knowledge of English. Occasionally, there are also entries respecting distinguishing physical marks, e.g. colour of hair or eyes, tattoos, etc. Each naturalization application thus comprises a concise history of an immigrant's life up to that point.²⁷ This information is also extensive enough to permit statistical treatment.

Nonetheless, it would be misleading to assume that all of the Finns who took out naturalization have been traced. There are gaps in the pre-Federation data, especially for Queensland; for some of those naturalized in Western Australia before 1904, only the name is known. It is also possible that documents relating to some naturalized Finns may have been removed to some other Government department, e.g. during the First or Second World War, and never returned. The total number of Finns naturalized between 1866 and 1946 for whom information was traced amounted to 1774.²⁸ In order for a more complete picture to have been achieved of Finnish immigration prior to the Second World War, it would also have been desirable to obtain information concerning those who arrived in Australia before 1947, but did not apply for naturalization until later; this information, however, which would probably include persons still living, was not released by the Australian authorities.

Before World War II, there were few Finnish women in Australia. Those who married British subjects automatically acquired British nationality. Consequently, the analysis of the Naturalization Records concentrates on men, for the total of 25 self-supporting Finnish women

²⁷ See Selected Source Material for Genealogical Research, compiled by Ruth McDonald, manuscript, AA Canberra 1977, 26–32. During my time in Australia in 1969–72 I was given permission by the Australian authorities to collect information pertaining to persons naturalized prior to 1947. The documents for the period 1904–46 are stored in the Australian Archives in Canberra.

²⁸ The difference of 4 persons from the number of 1778 quoted in my earlier work (KOIVUKANGAS 1974) is due to the fact that one person had applied for naturalization twice, and that some Finns had referred to themselves as Swedish. In the earlier study, a correlation derived from the sampling ratio was employed, but the present study lists individuals. — Some applications for naturalization were rejected, for a variety of reasons. For the sake of convenience, however, all persons for whom there is an entry in the Naturalization Records are referred to hereafter as 'naturalized', since the information contained in their entries is what is important, rather than change of nationality as such. The abbreviation NR is used to refer to the Naturalization Records.

who were naturalized in their own right is too small for statistical analysis, although the information has been used at the individual level.

Naturalization of Finnish men at different periods:

Date of arrival: (where known)	I	1851—1892	610 persons
	II	1893—1920	659 "
	III	1921—1939	427 "

TOTAL	1696 persons
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(1) Plus 78 persons (mainly in Queensland) naturalized before 1904, whose date of arrival is unknown.

(2) Total number of Finnish women naturalized in their own right prior to 1947: 25.

Date of naturalization:	I	1866—1892	127 persons
	II	1893—1920	940 "
	III	1921—1946	707 "

TOTAL	1774 persons
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In terms of the use of the Naturalization Records, it would have been ideal to be able to divide the investigation at the transfer of responsibility for citizenship to the Commonwealth Government in 1904, when the quality of this source radically improved. To do so, however, would have hampered the analysis in terms of the overall evolution of Australian society and its economy, and their impact on immigration.

The Naturalization Records constitute a reliable source of information, on account of their first-hand and official nature. However, it has to be borne in mind that immigrants might change their nationality as much as fifty years after their arrival in the country, thus obviously allowing the possibility of their misremembering certain information. The orthography of the Australian clerks also sometimes makes it difficult to identify Finnish names of persons and places. Moreover, in the earlier years, many of those applying for naturalization were illiterate, so that the papers are signed with a mere "X his mark".

A further problem concerns the representativeness of this material. It has to be remembered that not all immigrants were naturalized. For the Finnish immigrants arriving during the period 1866—1904, it is estimated that about a quarter took out British nationality, and the equivalent figure for those arriving in 1904—46 is about half.²⁹ These figures

²⁹ KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 37—38.

roughly agree with the corresponding proportions for immigrants of other nationalities.³⁰ Before applying for naturalization, an immigrant must have settled or taken the decision to settle relatively permanently in the country. In other words, they belonged to the permanent immigrants, who constitute the main object of this investigation, and who altogether number around 5000—6000.

(c) Other Sources

Other important sources of information include the **Passenger Lists** and **Shipping Lists** stored in State and Commonwealth archives. The earlier such documents tend to list names alone, with no record of nationality, etc., which limits their usefulness. According to a comment in 1981 by the Australian Archives in Canberra, the Passenger Lists had up to that time not been systematically used by any scholar. The perusal of these lists, with their hundreds of thousands of names, is neither a practicable nor an economic use of time, especially in view of the availability of the overall statistics contained in the immigration statistics (even if these do not list the Finns separately until 1924). Moreover, not all passengers were migrants.³¹ A limited use has however been made of passenger lists, especially those in State archives.

A further useful source consists of the **Lists of Deserted Seamen**. The major weakness of these is the uncertainty whether these seamen actually remained in Australia, or signed on with some other ship. Many took work on coastal shipping, or on the docks.

The records of the **Finnish Embassy**, and of its predecessor, the **Finnish Consulate**, also provide a source of information concerning Finns from the end of the First World War onwards. The Consulate was established in 1918, and in 1975 its records for the period up to 1941 were transferred to the Foreign Ministry in Helsinki. These records are a plentiful source of information concerning the Finnish-Australians, especially the questionnaire used in relation with **citizenship records** from 1921 onwards.

The questionnaire form which was used by the Consulate for its citizenship records caused a certain amount of mistrust among some of the immigrants, who suspected its ulterior purposes.³² These suspicions were felt in particular by those who had been naturalized or were married to British subjects.³³ Those who had been in Australia for a long

³⁰ PRICE 1954, 294.

³¹ See "Guide to Shipping and Free Passenger Records", "Guide to the State Archives of New South Wales No. 17", Sydney 1977.

³² Letter from I. John Löfgren, Brisbane, 27 Dec. 1920, to the Finnish Consul (UM Canberra, 22, Li-Lo).

³³ Letter from W.A. Lönn, 27 Dec. 1920, to the Finnish Consul (UM Canberra, 22, Li-Lo).

time were probably not all registered, whereas in some extreme cases a seaman or other visitor who had merely called in at the Consulate appears to have been included as a precaution in case he or she might remain in the country.

A second valuable source among the Consular records is the **list of Finns who died** in Australia and New Zealand. The Consulate attempted to maintain accurate records of such deaths, both for the use of the population registers in Finland, and in order to ensure that the property of any Finns dying abroad could be delivered to their heirs in Finland. Altogether, the Consulate recorded the deaths of 594 Finns in Australia between 1919 and 1941; the figure for New Zealand is around a hundred. Despite the care taken, however, it is clear that many Finns' deaths never came to the Consulate's knowledge.³⁴

Despite repeated attempts, it has proved impossible to trace the pre-1918 records of the Russian Consulate, and it seems that the report dated 20 January 1920 by a Finnish-Australian does truly describe their fate:

. . . after the Russian Revolution, the Russian Consul in Sydney suddenly made off for Europe, destroying the Consulate's papers and taking with him the money of many Finns which had been deposited with him to be sent to their families back in Finland . . .³⁵

These papers do indeed seem to be lost beyond recovery; nor is there any information concerning Finns in Australia in the papers relating to the Russian Consulates which are stored among the Governor-General's papers from the Russian period in the Finnish State Archives in Helsinki.

The **Finnish Seamen's Missions Society** opened a Mission in Australia in 1916, and the Society's records proved an enormously valuable source of information, with a card-index of names, back numbers of the Australian Finnish-language paper *Suomi*, the correspondence of the pastors, etc. The card-index was essentially drawn up for practical purposes, since one of the duties of the warden of the Mission was to forward post from Finland to the immigrants scattered all round the country. The card-index is alphabetically arranged, starting during the First World War and continuing up to the 1950s, and it comprises altogether 1985 names. Not all of these are actually Finns resident in Australia, for about ten of the names are those of Finns who moved on to New Zealand, while there are also something like two hundred names of seamen whose ships had come to Australia and were in port for periods lasting from a day or so to several weeks. The card-index

³⁴ Archives of the Finnish Consulate in Sydney (SKA) 1919—41, UM Helsinki.

³⁵ Alfred (erroneously for Harald) Tanner, "Suomen edustus Australiassa [Finnish Representation in Australia]", SK, 20 March 1920, 282.

includes entries giving name, place of birth, current address, year of naturalization where relevant, possible criminal record, comments on state of health, etc. Unfortunately there are relatively few ideal cases where all of this information is given for the same person, so that no statistical analysis was possible,³⁶ but the data can nevertheless be used as examples.

With the exception of the Seamen's Mission, there was no Finnish parish organization in Australia before the Second World War, but there were a number of local **Finnish associations** — 'Suomi Societies' etc. — operating in many parts of the country from 1902 onwards, whose records have been examined and also microfilmed. Included with these papers there are also some immigrants' diaries and miscellaneous manuscripts. The microfilming of these documents was carried out at the Australian National Library mainly during my stay in Australia in 1969—72.³⁷

The oldest **Street Directories** for Australian cities are those from Sydney and Melbourne in the 1830s and 1840s. These were published for commercial purposes, and therefore the most reliable information which they contain concerns people residing permanently at a given address, and "established" citizens. Nevertheless, the Street Directories do also list ordinary workers, seamen, etc., indicating that an immigrant who had been living in the country for any length of time, particularly if he had been naturalized, should in principle be likely to be recorded. In searching for Finns, however, it must be borne in mind that many Finnish immigrants adopted English-style names, such as John Smith, Charles Roberts, etc., some of these taken during years at sea, which therefore make identification impossible.

Other important sources include the **press** and **published literature**. I have made use of the Australian-proper press only to a limited extent, but the papers published in Australia by the Scandinavians and Finns have been examined systematically. The most significant of these are: *Norden* (Victoria 1857; Melbourne 1896—1940); *Suomi* (Melbourne 1926—38, Brisbane 1938—78, Canberra 1978—85, Melbourne 1985—); and *Finlandia News* (Brisbane 1977—).

By "literature", I am in most cases referring to books written by the Finnish immigrants which describe immigrant life.³⁸ These provide a personal perspective on the information obtainable from the other sources, and thus serve to achieve a better understanding of the

³⁶ The card-index of the Finnish Seamen's Mission is now stored at the Institute of Migration in Turku.

³⁷ There is a second copy in the archives of the Institute of Migration.

³⁸ Kalle Hoipo, *Australian tähtien alla* [Under Australian Stars], Brisbane 1970; and Niilo Oja, *Koralliranta ja Spinifex* [Coral Shore and Spinifex], Brisbane 1972. The latter is based on the author's diary; he arrived in Australia in 1927.

immigrants' lives and experience.

Yet another valuable source of information for the study of immigration is provided by **personal interviews**. The main body of interviews used in the present investigation were carried out in Australia in 1969—72, and a further set were obtained during my second visit in 1981. The most valuable individual interviews were those with Nestori Karhula, a key figure in the Finnish-Australian community, and with Aino Hirmukallio, who had gone out to Australia as a child with Matti Kurikka's group in 1899—1900. In conjunction with the interviews, a collection was also made of various manuscripts, photographs, and other things which had belonged to the immigrants.³⁹ Some of the most valuable material of all that collected in this way was the information supplied by Nestori Karhula, who had gathered data on the lives of individual immigrants ever since the end of the 1920s, together with the collection of materials put together by the Revd Urpo Kokkonen during the 1960s.⁴⁰

(2) Source Materials in Finland

(a) Passport Records

It was in 1862 that an official Decree came into force requiring all Finnish persons travelling abroad to obtain a passport. These were issued by a variety of different authorities: the Governor's Office in the various Provinces, the Magistrates (city authorities) in the boroughs, on the Åland Islands the Crown Bailiff, in Lapland (for persons travelling to Sweden or Norway on commercial business) the Crown Office, and in St Petersburg (for Finns signing on Finnish or Russian ships) the Finnish Passport Board. Not all of the **Passport Registers** have survived. Some are available in copies, but not all of the copies are of the same quality as their originals.⁴¹ Many of those which do survive, moreover, are deficient, omissions including data such as destination, occupation, length of validity of the passport, etc. Furthermore, the value of the earliest registers is significantly diminished by the fact that by no means all of those travelling abroad did in fact obtain a passport, the largest number of such travellers originating in Oulu Province and Lapland and

³⁹ Collections of the Institute of Migration, Turku.

⁴⁰ Archives of Department of History (formerly Institute of General History), University of Turku. Karhula donated his papers to the University in 1967, through the mediation of the last pastor at the Finnish Seamen's Mission, the Revd Urpo Kokkonen.

⁴¹ VAINIO, Esa, "Vuosien 1865—1892 ulkomaanpassilueteloiden arvo valtamertentakaisen siirtolaisuuden tutkimuksessa [The Value of the Passport Registers for 1865—92 in Research on Overseas Migration]", *Siirtolaishistoriaa* XIII, Turku 1974, 53.

from along the western Finnish seaboard (especially from the Åland Islands and the coast in Turku & Pori Province).⁴² KERO estimates the margin of error in these migration statistics as 5—10 % overall, but as high as 20—30 % for the seaboard belt, possibly even higher for Åland.⁴³

The first passports for travel to Australia were issued in 1881 (see Table II.2. p. 72). The information included in the Passport Registers consists of the person's name, occupation, social status, date of birth, current place of residence, and intended destination (in the early registers, often entered simply as "Abroad"). The Passport Registers are stored both in the Finnish State Archives and in the Provincial Archives in Finland, while the most recent, including those relating to the inter-War period, are still in the Provincial Administration offices. Some of the passport register material has also disappeared from the archives, most noticeably so in Vaasa Province.⁴⁴

(b) Migration Statistics

In 1881, the Imperial Senate (i.e. the Government of Finland) issued instructions to the Governors of Vaasa and Oulu Provinces to maintain a record of the number of persons emigrating, and in 1893 this instruction was extended to all the Provincial Governors in Finland. In 1905, the Government started to publish annual Migration Statistics on the basis of this material. Unfortunately these statistics are not reliable. For example, the official statistics for 1920 report no more than 336 persons as being in Australia at that time,⁴⁵ whereas the Australian Census for 1921 records a total of 1358 Finland-born persons. This implies altogether more than a thousand persons who had reached Australia without being recorded in the official Finnish statistics — i.e., without a passport issued for Australia — either by having been in some other country first, mainly America, or as seamen. Not until the 1920s and 1930s does a comparison with the numbers of passengers recorded in passenger lists suggest that the official Finnish Migration Statistics begin to provide more reliable information on the true numbers travelling to various countries. Up to 1923, the Finnish Migration Statistics record persons being issued with a passport for the purpose of travelling in order to work in countries outside Europe. From 1924, persons travelling to European countries are also listed. Another change in 1924, which radically improved the reliability of the registers, is that only those who did actually leave the country were entered.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 59—60.

⁴³ KERO 1971, 112.

⁴⁴ See VAINIO 1974, 54—55; Olavi KOIVUKANGAS & Simo TOIVONEN, *Suomen siirtolaisuuden ja maassamuuton bibliografia* [Bibliography on Finnish Emigration and Internal Migration], Turku 1978, 14—15.

⁴⁵ *Siirtolaisuuskomitean mietintö* [Migration Committee Report] 1924, 7.

(c) Passenger Lists

From 1892, the Central Bureau of Statistics collected from shipping companies information on migrants leaving or entering the country, although not all shipping companies which transported migrants actually provided this information. The main lists extant are those of the Finnish Steamship Company.⁴⁶ These lists record each passenger's name, age, the name and address of the agent from whom the ticket was purchased, the passenger's destination town, and information concerning any accompanying passengers. They also include information about the ships travelled on for the various parts of the journey, and the routes used. In most cases, the route was from Hanko on the southern Finnish coast to England, and on from there to the ultimate overseas destination.

Altogether the passenger lists of the Finnish Steamship Company extend from 1892 to 1960, comprising 137 handwritten catalogues and other material. Unfortunately the lists are not completely extant, and for example those for 12 June 1921 to 24 April 1925, i.e. at the height of the 1920s wave of Finnish migration to Australia, are missing, as are those for 1899, another year when there were many emigrants to Australia from Finland.

All in all, therefore, the Finnish material consisting of Passport Registers and Passenger Lists is regrettably deficient. Consequently, it is impossible to carry out a reliable statistical analysis concerning individuals, since the lists of those issued with passports and the persons who actually emigrated are not identical. Overall numbers may be compared, but their reliability is not certain. The inadequacy of these Finnish sources makes the Australian-based sources all the more important.

(d) Other sources

Information is in some cases available from parish records in Finland, both the main **parish registers**, and in many cases separate lists of emigrants. A comprehensive investigation of the parish records would however be prohibitively laborious, and it has therefore been possible only to study the records of certain parishes known to have been significant for the emigration.

In addition, miscellaneous other information is available in the records of a number of societies, public institutions, etc., such as the Finnish Seamen's Missions Society, in Helsinki, and the collections of

⁴⁶ See the Records of the Finnish Steamship Company (hereafter: SHO), which have been deposited in the Library of Åbo Akademi, Turku, and also *Suomen Höyrylaivaosakeyhtiö 1883—1933*, Helsinki 1933, the history of the Company's first fifty years; see also the 100 years history of the Company by MALMBERG 1983.

the Department of History at the University of Turku and the Institute of Migration, also in Turku.

The statistical and original material outlined above is complemented by **written sources**. There are a number of **travellers' journals** containing references to the Finns in Australia, sometimes providing useful information.⁴⁷ Similarly, there have been **articles** in various journals and newspapers, some of which, e.g. those by the former pastors at the Seamen's Mission, are valuable sources, to which reference is made in the course of this investigation. All of these secondary sources must, however, be treated critically.

An important oral source of information about the earlier migrants consists of the **interviews** carried out in Finland, both with returned migrants, and with the relatives of those in Australia. It has even been possible in this way to gather information concerning migrants from the last century. Parallel to this class of source material are the migrants' **diaries and correspondence**. The documentation obtained from these sources is mainly now stored at the Institute of Migration.

So far Finnish students of migration have made relatively little use of **photographs** as a research resource. In collecting the materials for this investigation, I have paid particular attention to photographs and other pictorial material, which can often vividly reveal the lives of the immigrants. In the archives of the Institute of Migration we now have approximately a thousand photographs relating to the Finns in Australia, and it is intended to make use of these in a proposed publication recording their history.

(3) Materials from Other Countries

The records in other Nordic countries have provided a certain amount of information on the Finnish migration to Australia. The most important sources have been the **passenger lists** maintained in the police departments in Gothenburg, Stockholm, Malmö, and Trondheim.⁴⁸ In the main these are relevant for the period before 1893, when the Finnish

⁴⁷ Aino Malmberg, *Suomi Australiassa*, Helsinki 1929; Jorma Pohjanpalo, *Australiaa kynällä ja kameralla*, Porvoo 1931; Josef Kaartinen, *Saksofoni kainalossu maailman ääriin*, Vammala 1942; Arthur Löflund, *Mot Fjärran Horisont*, Tammerfors 1955; Heikki Castrén, *Siirtolaispastorina kenguruitten maassa*, Helsinki 1960; Veikko Pajunen, *Australian kahdet kasvot: Suomalaisia siirtolaisia tapaamassa*, Helsinki 1961; Rauno Pankola, *Australian safari*, Jyväskylä 1965; Juhani Lompola, *Maa, johon mahtuu: Australia suomalaisten silmin*, Jyväskylä 1975. The titles of these works are translated in the Bibliography at the end of this study.

⁴⁸ KOIVUKANGAS & TOIVONEN 1978, 15–16. On the reliability of the shipping companies' passenger lists, see BRATTNE 1973, 70–92.

Steamship Company began carrying migrants directly from Finland to England. Similar use has been made up to 1893 of the passenger lists maintained by the Port of Hamburg; information on Scandinavian travellers, including Finns, passing through Hamburg, has been collected by Consul Sten Aminoff, and is stored at the Emigrantinstitutet (The House of Emigrants) in Växjö.⁴⁹

No use has been made of any passenger lists in Britain. These have been inspected by two other scholars, Ulf BEIJBOM and Eero KUPARINEN, who report that they are mere lists of the passengers' names, and provide no useful information.⁵⁰ Assistance has been obtained from the British Museum, and some important material has even been traced in Canada.

(4) Evaluation of the Source Material

This survey of the sources used gives some idea of the wealth and wide distribution of the source material available. In general (especially where the migration to North America is concerned) the amount of material is overwhelming.⁵¹ The experience of migration created the need to write it down, both for the migrants' own better recall, and in maintaining contact with relatives and friends both back at home and elsewhere. The immigrant press, too, played an important role here. Comparatively speaking, however, the destination areas with relatively low levels of Finnish migration, such as Australia or South America, have not produced much source material, and even official sources are not always extant (e.g. the Australian Naturalization Records or the Finnish Passport Registers). The sources used in this investigation have not been evaluated in detail here, apart from some references to source criticism, e.g. on the Naturalization Records. Source criticism will however be applied constantly throughout the investigation, beginning with the selection of source materials used, although limitations of space make detailed evaluations impracticable.

(5) Research Methods

It follows from the distinctive nature of each problem in research and of

⁴⁹ Emigrantinstitutet, Växjö, Sweden. For the Hamburg passenger lists see AMINOFF 1985, 106—108.

⁵⁰ Public Record Office, London, Passenger Lists 1890—1914.

⁵¹ HANSEN 1948, 213.

each body of research material used that the choice of methods must be such as to best serve the purpose of finding answers to the questions being investigated. It is essential to bear in mind that neither migration nor the migrants' adaptation to their new environment can be investigated as such, but only in the context of a complex of economic, social, political and ideological and intellectual factors.

An alphabetically arranged card-index was drawn up of all the Finnish immigrants in Australia studied, to which the information obtained from the various sources was transferred. In addition, however, each of the sources of information has been investigated and subjected to analysis separately, since in many cases they contain serious lacunae, and if the information were merely simply collated, the gaps and errors in each separate source could lead to distortions in the whole.

The discipline to which an investigation such as the present one belongs is that of social history, with the attendant historiographical definition of problems for investigation and of methods of research. A central feature here is the critical approach to sources. A second closely relevant discipline is that of demography, with its own methodology. The quantitative core of this investigation consists of official statistics and of statistics derived from official sources (i.e. the Naturalization Records), and the results have been obtained by computerized cross-tabulation or, where available, from already published data. Neither Census nor Migration Statistics data are such as to permit analysis other than on a societal level. A problem in the methodology arises from the fact that migration research consists largely either of statistical analyses or of case studies, but rarely of a combination of the two.⁵² Since the intention here, however, is to investigate Finnish migration to Australia from its earliest beginnings, there is no alternative to working on the level of individuals, especially in periods for which statistical data are not available.

The individual perspective derives here from the Naturalization Records and other personal-specific sources, and has been used to fill out in a qualitative manner the statistical picture obtained from demographic sources. A special problem is raised by the question of the representativeness and reliability of these individual sources, which have to be assessed separately in each case. The demographic records tell their own story, but behind this there is always the experience of individual people.⁵³ In the present investigation the aim has been to keep a balance between these two perspectives, of the migration movement as

⁵² MANGALAM 1968, 2. — An example of a combination of theoretical research and case studies is provided in Max ENGMAN's (1983) dissertation on the Finns in St Petersburg.

⁵³ SUTTON 1984, 1.

a whole and of the individuals involved. The individual perspective is all the more important in view of the distances involved and of the small size of the Finnish-Australian community, and this fact justifies the important role which oral history plays in this study, in the extensive use of personal interviews.

5. Finnish Emigration in the Context of the Wider European Overseas Migration

According to the traditional view, the Finnish tribes migrated in prehistoric times to the area where they now live from eastern Europe.⁵⁴ More recent research suggests that this view may be erroneous, although it cannot be totally rejected.⁵⁵ Nowadays there is widespread acceptance of the continuous settlement theory that there was a Finnish-speaking population living in Finland before the colonization by the South-Western Finns around the beginning of the Christian era.⁵⁶ In historical times, i.e. from the beginning of the present millennium, the main direction of expansion of Finnish settlement has been northwards, but there has also been expansion towards both the east and the west.

Relatively early on, Finns began to move into what is now Sweden, and during the Middle Ages this migration increased in the wake of links of government and trade.⁵⁷ Around the end of the 16th and beginning of the 17th centuries, there was large-scale Finnish migration into the Swedish province of Vermland (Värmland), which then provided a base for further expansion into Norway.⁵⁸ Finnish settlers spread throughout northern Sweden, reaching up into Lapland, where there already was some established Finnish population.⁵⁹

At the same time, Finns were also expanding eastwards and southwards. Following the Peace of Stolbova in 1617, in which Sweden-Finland, now a major northern European power, gained possession of eastern Karelia and Ingermanland, some of the local Karelian population (i.e. ethnic Finnish, but Orthodox in religion and heavily Russian-oriented) moved away south, to the regions of Novgorod and Tver.⁶⁰ The areas evacuated by the Karelians, especially Ingermanland

⁵⁴ HACKMAN 1905, 320—323.

⁵⁵ SALO 1981 A; 1981 B, 9.

⁵⁶ HILTUNEN 1986, 56—57, 67.

⁵⁷ BERGH 1961, 185—200; Johan NIKULA 1971, 16; Gunvor KERKKONEN 1980, 17—26.

⁵⁸ HÄMÄLÄINEN 1947, 9—10; BROBERG 1968, 321—339.

⁵⁹ See GOTHE 1939 and 1948; see also TENERZ 1962.

⁶⁰ VIRTARANTA 1961, 32—34.

and the area around the future site of St Petersburg, were then settled by Finns from further west, mainly from Savo (eastern south-central Finland). Following the incorporation of Estonia into the Swedish empire, Finnish settlers arrived there too in the course of the 17th century. The transfer of Finland from the Swedish to the Russian Empire, in 1809, led to a marked expansion of migration eastwards, mainly directed towards St Petersburg, where a considerable Finnish colony grew up by the end of the century. NIITEMAA estimates that a total of something like 150 000 Finns may have moved into Russia over the course of the centuries.⁶¹

This migration eastwards during the 18th and 19th centuries was however matched by movements during the same period to the west and the north. There had long been a well-established Finnish population in the Swedish region of Västerbotten (the western seaboard of the Gulf of Bothnia), and despite the end of the political union with Sweden in 1809, migration continued, especially from Ostrobothnia (the eastern Bothnian seaboard, in Finland, which includes a significant Swedish-speaking belt).⁶² There was also migration by Finns up to the Finnmark coast of the Arctic Ocean, in northern Norway;⁶³ and from about 1864, some of these Finns in northern Norway then moved on to North America, when agents for American mining companies began to recruit workers for the copper mines in Michigan,⁶⁴ while other Finns moved south again from the Norwegian settlement into southern Lapland and the Tornio River valley.

The beginnings of Finnish overseas migration go back to the 17th century, and the early white settlement of the eastern seaboard of North America. In 1638, Sweden established a colony on the Delaware River, alongside the English and Dutch settlements elsewhere on the coast. Several hundred Finns moved to this colony, both from the Finnish settlements in central Sweden, and also direct from Finland. Following the collapse of the Swedish colony in 1655, the supply of new Swedish and Finnish immigrants dried up, and those already present were gradually assimilated to the surrounding anglophone population.⁶⁵

The first Finns in Alaska are known to have arrived there in the 1790s, but no permanent Finnish settlement began until after 1809. At the time of the Alaska Purchase by the United States from Russia in

⁶¹ NIITEMAA 1975, 6–7; see also JUNGAR 1972 and 1974; ENGMAN 1976, 103–121, and 1978, 155–177, and 1983, *passim*.

⁶² WESTER 1977, *passim*.

⁶³ NIEMI 1977, 21–31. There is a good overview of this settlement in Finnish and Norwegian in a publication of the Institute of Migration: *Suomalaiset Jäämeren rannoilla/Finnene ved Nordshavets strender* [Finns on the Shores of the Arctic Ocean], ed. M-L. Kälhama, Turku 1982.

⁶⁴ KOLEHMAINEN 1946, 20.

⁶⁵ ILMONEN 1938; Martti KERKKONEN 1976, 13–33

1867, there were several hundred Finns living there, and Finnish settlement also spread via this route down to the west coast of North America.⁶⁶

The beginnings of Finnish overseas migration were essentially a phenomenon of the west coast and Gulf of Bothnia regions in Finland. Ostrobothnia in the 17th and 18th centuries was considerably ahead of the rest of Finland in economic and social development, according to KAILA.⁶⁷ The wealth of the region was based on the tar and ship-building industries, both of which were further stimulated by the American War of Independence; nor did the annexation of Finland to Russia in 1809 significantly affect this situation. Not until later in the 19th century, following the Industrial Revolution, did the economic base of Ostrobothnian tar production, ship-building, and sailing ships collapse, at the same moment as the timber industry in southern Finland began rapidly to expand, with its harnessing of hydro-electric power, sawmills, and paper and pulp mills. The worldwide shift in the shipping industry from wooden-built sail to iron-built steam meant the virtually total collapse of the tar industry, the shipyards, and the shipping lines in Ostrobothnia in the 1870s. This led to the retrogression of a region formerly dominated by industry and overseas trade into a backward rural economy.⁶⁸ Yet at the same time, KILPI points out that throughout the 19th century, natural population growth in Ostrobothnia outstripped that for the whole of the rest of Finland.⁶⁹ The rapid increase in population, coupled with the collapse of the region's industry, soon led to an acute shortage of land along the river hinterlands for clearance as farmland. One of the consequences of these developments in the economy at the end of the 19th century was the heavy overseas emigration from Ostrobothnia, continuing up to around 1930. No new industrial centres emerged in the region to provide work for the expanding population, as happened elsewhere in Finland; and the majority of emigrants were consequently rural population aged 16—40, in the prime of their lives.⁷⁰

This brief overview of the economic history of Ostrobothnia is essential as a basis for the understanding of the phenomenon of Finnish emigration. Almost immediately after the Peace of 1809, Ostrobothnian carpenters and ship-builders began to appear in various parts of Russia, from St Petersburg to Murmansk, while others were moving west over the Gulf of Bothnia to take advantage of the opportunities for work for

⁶⁶ ILMONEN I 1919, 63—69; MÄKINEN 1980, 8—15.

⁶⁷ KAILA 1931, 365.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 365—368.

⁶⁹ KILPI 1917, 137.

⁷⁰ TOIVONEN 1963, 286—287; KERO 1974, 57—58.

Finns in the expanding Swedish timber industry around Sundsvall, and others again were moving south within Finland, to Helsinki and other expanding urban centres.

At the same period, however, i.e. the early and mid-19th century, the pioneer overseas emigrants were gathering their experiences far away on the gold fields of California and Victoria. Many of these were seamen, who later returned home — sometimes wealthy, sometimes not, in material terms, but always richer in experience — to sow the seed of emigration fever in a fertile soil. As communications improved, a swelling stream of Finnish emigrants began to cross the oceans in their thousands, primarily for the United States.

Table I.1: Passports Issued in Finland 1901—40 to Emigrants, by Country of Destination

Destination	1901-10	1911-20	1921-23	1924-30	1931-40	TOTAL
United States	} 158 401	} 67 197	} 23 037	3 212	1 538	} 283 006
Canada				28 090	681	
Rest of America				565	285	
Australia & New Zealand	46	87	55	1 066	181	1 435
Asia & Africa	314	62	15	102	155	648
Sweden	—	—	—	1 103	3 691	4 794
Russia/USSR	—	—	—	536	1 355	1 891
Other Europe	—	—	—	772	882	1 654
Unknown	71	—	—	6	76	153
TOTAL	158 832	67 346	23 107	35 452	8 844	293 581

Source: STV, Helsinki 1948, 81, Table 77.

The number of Finnish overseas emigrants during the period 1870—1900 is estimated by KERO at around 111 000.⁷² The patterns of emigration for the beginning of the 20th century, with their various destinations, are shown in Table I.1, where the dominance of America is clearly apparent. During the final three decades of the 19th century and first three decades of the 20th century, a total of almost 400 000 Finlanders emigrated for North America, mainly for the United States.⁷³ Of these, approximately one fifth subsequently returned to Finland.⁷⁴

From 1924, the statistics only record those who have actually left the country; nevertheless, even after this date the data derived from the Passport Registers do not always provide an accurate picture of the scale

⁷² KERO 1982, 29—30.

⁷³ TOIVONEN 1963, 287; KERO 1982, 38. See also HOG LUND 1980, 362—370.

⁷⁴ VIRTANEN 1979, 221.

of the emigration; for example, those who have left the country as seamen are not included, and the further the destination, the greater the proportion of migrants who have travelled in this manner. This point is thus especially relevant for Australia and other distant countries of settlement. Similarly, the Norwegian statistics record only 150 emigrants to Australia for the period 1880—89, whereas the Australian Naturalization Records indicate at least 800 Norwegian men who had arrived in the country during that same period, and in general only approximately a quarter or a third of the Norwegian immigrants took out naturalization. The overall total of Norwegians coming into Australia during the 1890s is thus in the region of two to three thousand, almost all of them, however, as seamen.⁷⁵

Following the restrictions on immigration introduced by the United States in the 1920s, the movement of emigration from Finland switched primarily to Canada, but also to Australia, before contracting drastically in the 1930s under the impact of the Depression.

Other destinations for Finnish emigrants besides the United States and Canada included South America (especially Argentina and Paraguay,⁷⁶ but also Cuba⁷⁷). There have been a few Finns emigrating to Africa, e.g. to work on the river-boats on the Congo and in the mines in South Africa.⁷⁸

In the period after the Second World War, the major factors affecting Finnish migration have been the demand for labour, and high wages, in Swedish industry, and the relatively high level of unemployment in Finland. Altogether something like half a million Finns have moved to Sweden since the end of the Second World War; around a third of these, however, have subsequently moved back to Finland,⁷⁹ and in the beginning of the 1970s and 1980s, the return migrants outnumbered the new emigrants.⁸⁰

Within the population in Finland, the emigration has recruited most heavily from among the Swedish-speakers ('Finland Swedes'). Swedish-speakers comprised around 20 per cent of the emigrants to America, but in 1880 (at the beginning of the emigration) only 14 per cent of the total population in Finland. This proportion has now fallen to about 6 % of the Finnish population.⁸¹ The heavy involvement of the Finland Swedes from the beginnings of large-scale emigration may be explained by reference to their concentration along the coast, and familiarity gained

⁷⁵ KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 61; SEMMINGSEN 1950, 314.

⁷⁶ LÄHTEENMÄKI 1975.

⁷⁷ JARVA 1971.

⁷⁸ UOLA 1974, 1977 and 1979; KUPARINEN 1978.

⁷⁹ KORKIASAARI 1983, 39.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁸¹ MYHRMAN 1972, 18; SUNDBERG 1985, 3; FINNÄS 1986, 14.

over centuries with seafaring and with other countries. The relative over-representation of the Swedish-speakers in relation to their (declining) share of the home population has continued to be a feature of post-War emigration from Finland.⁸²

Finland, with a present-day population of just under five million, has now for a long time been one of the areas of the world with heavy out-migration, having lost 300 000 persons to North America, about the same amount to Sweden since the Second World War, and since 1809 altogether maybe 200 000 to Russia and elsewhere. The total outflow of population thus amounts to around 750 000. Of these, around five to six thousand had made their way to Australia by the time of the Second World War; the overall migration to Australia since the mid-19th century amounting to around 24 000.

An examination of the main features of the Finnish migration to Australia reveals its long traditions and wide extent. A crucial factor is the global nature of migration, which must always be borne in mind when attention is being concentrated on some specific country of settlement.

The Finnish overseas migration, then, is one aspect of a broad movement of European population into other parts of the world. This movement began to expand at the end of the Napoleonic Wars, but with the exception of Great Britain and Ireland, it remained on a small scale until the middle of the century. Travel was at that time still slow and expensive, and telecommunications non-existent. Some European Governments also attempted to hinder emigration. From the middle of the century, however, the situation began to change. The coming of steamships, the construction of the Suez Canal (in 1869) and the Panama Canal (in 1914), and the construction of the railways both in Europe and in the countries of settlement brought the opportunity of travelling to other parts of the world within the reach of ordinary people, especially where the ticket or the fare was sent by some relative or acquaintance who had migrated earlier. The reports received from the pioneer migrants enticed others to follow in their steps.

Altogether, over sixty million people emigrated from Europe overseas during the period 1820—1932.⁸³ For the period 1846—1932, THOMAS estimates a total outflow of 52 million emigrants from Europe, consisting of 25 per cent from the British Isles; 10 per cent each from Italy, Germany, and Spain; and 4.8 per cent from Denmark, Norway, and Sweden combined. The number given by THOMAS for overseas emigration from Finland during the period 1871—1932 amounts to

⁸² Svenska emigrationskommitténs betänkande (Swedish Emigration Committee Report) 1980, 24.

⁸³ ISAAC 1947, 60; cf. the figure of 62 million given for worldwide migration in the same period in ASHWORTH 1967, 187.

371 000.⁸⁴ Estimating the total Finnish emigration for the longer period at 380 000, this would represent 0.7 per cent of the overall overseas movement.

In relation to its population base, however, Finland emerges as one of the areas with the highest emigration rates in Europe. In the period 1901—05, when Finnish emigration reached a peak, ISAACS estimates that the highest net emigration rate was in Sweden, with seven emigrants per thousand population, followed by Italy with 6.3 and Finland with 5.5 per thousand.⁸⁵ Over a longer period, the heavy emigration rates for Ireland and Norway must also be taken into consideration.

According to ASHWORTH's calculations, out of a total overseas migration between 1820 and 1930 amounting to 62 million persons, over 61 per cent went to the United States, and approximately 11 per cent to Canada, 10 per cent to Argentina, 7 per cent to Brazil, 4 per cent to Australia, 3 per cent to New Zealand, and 2 per cent to South Africa. He suggests that the figures for Australia and South Africa are probably under-estimates, due to incomplete statistical records,⁸⁶ and this is borne out by the fact that 4.5 per cent of the overall world migration going to Australia would give an immigration total for that country of 2.3 million, whereas PRICE reports that by 1939 Australia, with a then population of seven million, had received altogether 2.5 million settlers.⁸⁷

The Nordic countries diverged from the overall pattern of European emigration in the relative importance of the various countries of settlement, with migration to the United States being noticeably more dominant: in the period 1871—1925, 88 per cent of the Danish emigrants, 95 per cent of the Norwegian, and 97 per cent of the Swedish stated that the United States was their destination.⁸⁸ Corresponding figures are not available for Finland, but taking into account the deficiencies of the statistics as regards other countries of settlement, the proportion directed to the United States is probably as high as that for Norway or Sweden, and certainly in excess of 90 per cent.

Finland accounts for less than one per cent of the total European overseas migration prior to the Second World War. In the total immigration into Australia before World War II, assuming the number of Finns to be 5000, Finland accounts for a mere 0.2 per cent.

The Finnish-Australian immigrants, with their special distinctive features, are thus one part of a much larger totality. It may be noted

⁸⁴ THOMAS 1968, 293—294; for the French, see STUER 1982.

⁸⁵ ISAAC 1947, 64—65.

⁸⁶ ASHWORTH 1967, 187—188.

⁸⁷ PRICE 1982, 48.

⁸⁸ JENSEN 1931, 299.

that the peak of emigration from Finland occurred later than in many other north-western European countries, i.e. after the turn of the century (whereas in Norway and Sweden the peak occurred around 1882).⁸⁹ In the Scandinavian, German, and (most of all) British ports, the Finnish travellers joined up with a mighty stream of migration bearing millions of people in the prime of their lives from the densely populated or economically under-developed regions of Europe to North America and the other continents in quest of a better future for themselves and their children than their mother countries could offer them; and on the edge of this mass migration movement stood Australia, far away from Europe, and still hardly more than on the brink of its own economic and social evolution.

6. Long-Distance Settlement: Europeans in Australia

(1) The Expansion of the European World: the Impact of the Great Explorations

The new movement of ideas and models of action which burst out in 14th-century Italy and spread in the following century all over Europe, the Renaissance, affected every sphere of human life. The European vision of the world was radically extended on the one hand by the invention of printing, and on the other by the great voyages of exploration. The explorations at the height of the Renaissance, in the 16th century, were linked in one direction to the establishment by the *conquistadores* of a Spanish Empire beyond the Atlantic, and in the other to the opening by the Portuguese sea-merchants of trade routes around Africa to the Spice Islands of the East Indies. Later on, the establishment of the Dutch, English, and French empires were similarly backed up by voyages of exploration. Gradually the outlines of the Americas and Africa were charted; and by the end of the 18th century, the main features even of the distant Pacific and Oceania were familiar, while the same period saw the extension of the power of the Russian Tsars over the vast spaces of Siberia.

Consequently, by the Age of Enlightenment and outbreak of the Napoleonic Wars, the Europeans had come to know the outer edges of the world's continents and islands. In the three hundred years from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment, European man's image of the world

⁸⁹ CARLSON 1976, 124; JENSEN 1931, 290—291.

had become a global one, and with the rise of Romanticism, people's imagination was fired by the thought of far-away places and the exotic-seeming natives living there. What underlay the voyages of exploration and the conquest of new territories, however, was the struggle between the European colonial powers for military and commercial supremacy, paralleled by the rivalry between different religious groupings and their competing missionary enterprises.

Up to middle of the 18th century the world's population (then probably about 750 million) was very unevenly distributed, with Asia and Europe containing the densest concentrations. Within the next hundred years, by the mid-19th century, the world's population had grown to approximately 1.2 billion. This explosion was fastest in Europe, due to falling mortality rates in the wake of improved health care. For this rapidly expanding population, two choices were available: either (1) to improve agricultural production or earn their living in the burgeoning industrial sector; or (2) to move to other continents in the hope of achieving a better living there.⁹⁰

(2) The Impingement of Australia on the European Consciousness

The first, vague allusions to the existence of Australia date back to the beginning of the Christian era. In the map of the known world drawn by the Egyptian geographer Ptolemy, around 150 AD, he included far in the south an imaginary *Terra Incognita*. The ancient Greeks, on the other hand, had imagined people on the other side of the world whose feet would be opposite their own (*antipodes*). There were legends in the Middle Ages, too, about an unknown land far to the south. On the globe drawn by Schöner in 1515, this *Terra Australis Incognita* appears as a broad strip encircling the south pole. Marco Polo, in the 13th century, had also spoken of a southern continent.

The route towards Australia was potentially opened once the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama had discovered a route from Europe to India around Africa, in 1497. The next step came with the voyage of the Portuguese explorer Magalhães (Magellan) via Tierra del Fuego and over the Pacific to the Philippines, in 1520—21. There is no certain record of the first European to set foot on the Australian continent; possibly some Portuguese, Spanish, or Dutch voyager or spice ship may have put in at the unknown coast.

In 1598 the Dutch established a colony on Java, and busy traffic

⁹⁰ ASHWORTH 1967, 1—2.

commenced between the East Indies and Europe. Willem Janssen, a servant of the Dutch East India Company, made his way along the northern coast of Australia while exploring the waters around New Guinea in 1605—06, while shortly afterwards the Spanish admiral Luis Vaez de Torres passed through the strait between Australia and New Guinea which now bears his name. By 1611, the Dutch captain Hendrik Brouwer had discovered that by sailing due east for about 3000 miles after rounding the Cape of Good Hope and then turning north, the route to the Dutch colonies on Java was significantly shortened.⁹¹ The expression the Roaring Forties has been a byword among sailors ever since, referring to the powerful prevailing winds in those latitudes, which at times could blow up into storms, thus carrying ships further east than was intended, and bringing them close to the western coast of Australia.

In 1616, the Dutchman Dirk van Hartog put in on the Australian coastline, leaving behind a metal plate with his name cut on it on the island now named after him.⁹² The coral reefs off the coast proved fatal to many spice ships, however, the most famous shipwreck being that of the *Batavia* in 1629, when only a few of the crew reached the Dutch colony on Java in safety.

On the commission of the Governor of the Dutch East Indies, van Diemen, the explorer Abel Tasman sailed round Australia in 1642—43, putting in at the island which he named Van Diemen's Land (subsequently renamed Tasmania) and on New Zealand. Following Tasman's voyage, the name New Holland gradually came to be used to refer to these still very vaguely-known lands.

In 1688, an English privateer and explorer called William Dampier made his first acquaintance with Australian waters, and the publication of his travel journal aroused considerable interest, leading to a commission from the Admiralty to lead a second voyage of exploration there in 1699. No significant further steps were taken in Australia for another seventy years, however, by either the British or the Dutch. The discovery of the continent had been a mere by-product of the trade between Europe and the East Indies. Since the Dutch had discovered neither spices, gold, nor opportunities for trade on the southern continent, they soon lost interest in it.⁹³ The focus of attention of the growing colonial powers, Britain and France, was concentrated on North America, but it was the struggle between these two states for imperial control of the sea, however disguised as scientific exploration, which led at the end of the 18th century to a decisive turn in events.

⁹¹ SCOTT 1964, 18—19.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 19.

⁹³ CLARK 1977, 1.

In 1766—69, the Frenchman Louis-Antoine de Bougainville sailed around the world, discovering a number of Polynesian islands, and sailing northwards along the Great Barrier Reef; but in 1770, Captain James Cook officially claimed New Zealand and the eastern coast of Australia for the British Crown.

Far away from Europe on the south side of the Equator, this was no small territory. The name it was now given derived from the Latin *australis*, 'south'. The combined land area of Australia and Tasmania amounts to 7.7 million square kilometres, and the mainland is almost 4000 kilometres from east to west and more than 3000 kilometres from north to south. Australia is 3/4 the area of Europe, and 23 times the size of Finland. A large part of the mainland is covered by a plateau. The climate is for the most part extremely dry. The northern coast lies within the tropics, and the vegetation falls into three main zones: temperate, dry, and tropical.

The aboriginal population of Australia, the *Australids*, are estimated to have arrived on the continent from Indonesia at least 38 000 years ago. At the beginning of European settlement, in 1788, the aboriginals probably numbered around 300 000. Their numbers had fallen by 1947 to no more than seventy to eighty thousand, but have since then doubled.⁹⁴

(3) From Penal Colony to Welfare State

In the aftermath of the Declaration of Independence of the United States in 1776, the British Government faced two serious problems: how to reward the American Loyalists, and what to do with the convicts who had previously been transported to the American colonies. For the Loyalists, the solution was settlement in what was to become Canada, or in other British territories, unless they moved back to the mother country; but no such easy solution offered itself for the disposal of the mother country's surplus criminals. English and Scottish law in this period were extremely harsh, and either minor theft or political offences easily led to sentences of transportation. During the 1780s alone there were something like 100 000 transportation sentences pronounced in the English courts.⁹⁵

Experiments with transportation to Africa were not encouraging, due mainly to the unhealthy climate. The siting of a new penal colony in New Holland (soon to be renamed Australia) was put to a committee,

⁹⁴ JONES 1982, 128—129.

⁹⁵ SCOTT 1964, 40.

set up by the House of Commons to examine the question in 1779, by Joseph Banks, who had been on Cook's first expedition.⁹⁶ It was not until the mid-1780s, however, that the Government finally took the decision to locate a new penal colony in the vicinity of Botany Bay on the eastern coast. The decision to set up an experimental colony here was taken in 1786; by May 1787 the First Fleet was ready, with eleven ships and over a thousand persons under the command of Arthur Phillip, first Governor of New South Wales, to set out for its distant destination. It was eight months later they made landfall in Botany Bay, in January 1788.⁹⁷ A suitable site was found nearby at Port Jackson and the settlement on its shores was named Sydney after the British statesman Lord Sydney.

The difficulties faced by the new colony were enormous, the most serious of them being to keep convicts, guards and officials alive;⁹⁸ but by 1792, when Phillip returned to London, the settlement was firmly established. Agriculture produced just enough in the early years to meet the needs of the colony of New South Wales, which at that time incorporated the whole of the Eastern half of the continent, including Van Diemen's Land. Sheep-farming (later to become a crucial branch of the economy) was started; whaling and sealing began to lay the foundations of prosperity. Grease, bones, and skins from the whales were shipped out of Sydney and Hobart to the markets of Europe and America.⁹⁹ Other activities besides whaling and sealing, including pearl-fishing and trade in copra (made from coconuts) and other products of the Pacific islands, began to attract sea-merchants to the region.

Whalers had been putting in to New Zealand since the beginning of the 19th century, and by the 1820s the first permanent whaling stations were being set up there; by 1840 there was a whaling community of some 300 men. Religion followed in the footsteps of trade, and in 1796 thirty missionaries set out from Britain for the Pacific.¹⁰⁰

It was under the Governorship of Macquarie (1809—21) that the basis was really laid for the future prosperity of Australia, with the construction of public buildings and roads, and the expansion of agriculture and sheep-farming. Macquarie, a talented administrator, encouraged the emancipists (convicts who had completed their sentences) to start farming smallholdings. Among the big land-owners, however, this provoked strong opposition, and their pressure eventually led to his recall.

⁹⁶ CLARK 1977, 61—63.

⁹⁷ This historical overview is largely based on the collection of essays by some of Australia's best-known historians, *A New History of Australia*, ed. Frank CROWLEY, Melbourne 1974.

⁹⁸ CROWLEY 1978, 1.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁰⁰ HORNBERG 1923, 385—386.

The arrival of the new Governor, Thomas Brisbane, in 1821, marks the beginning of the history of a Colony proper in Australia. From the first establishment of the settlement up to 1830, of the 77 000 persons conveyed to Australia, a mere 18 per cent were free settlers;¹⁰¹ but now opposition to the continued introduction of convicts began to grow, as both free settlers and emancipists began to aim at the creation of a free Colony. Economic expansion, especially the great success of sheep-farming and expanding exports of wool, provided employment for new arrivals. The new need for more colonists became particularly acute during the 1820s. Previously, the British Government had encouraged the transfer to Australia of capital rather than manpower, and more systematic economic assistance for settlers would be necessary before emigrants would turn to Australia instead of America.

The solution was found in 1830, when the theories developed by the English gentleman-settler Edward Gibbon Wakefield were put into practice. The proceeds of selling land to the settlers were to be used to finance the migration of further settlers.¹⁰² Wakefield's ideas, though in a modified form, were used as the basis for the settlement of colonies in the 1830s and 1840s not only in the settlement of South Australia and to a lesser extent in Western Australia, but also in New Zealand, Brazil, and Algeria.¹⁰³ Two systems of assistance grew up: one directly operated by the Government, and the other the 'bounty' system introduced in 1831, under which private employers were authorized to bring out settlers and were paid a 'bounty' for doing so by the Government.¹⁰⁴ Even though during the depression which affected Australia in the 1840s, assisted passages were not awarded, over half of all the settlers arriving between 1829 and 1850 had received some kind of subsidized travel. The combined effect of high birth rates and immigration led to the growth of the population within thirty years, by 1820, to 34 000, and to over 400 000 by 1850. The great majority of these settlers now arriving were free emigrants from the British Isles. It is true that there had been isolated individuals of other nationalities even in the early days, drawn by the opportunities in shipping, whaling, or skilled trades; but not until the end of the 1830s did non-British settlers begin to arrive in Australia on a larger scale. Amongst the first were a group of Old Lutherans from Prussia, who arrived in 1836 to settle in the new Colony of South Australia, recently founded on the principles worked out by Wakefield.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ Australia and Immigration 1788—1975, Department of Labor and Immigration, Canberra 1975, 1. This excludes members of the military and civil establishment who later stayed on as settlers; were they included the free proportion would be about 22 per cent.

¹⁰² BLOOMFIELD 1961, 83—95.

¹⁰³ ROBERTS 1969, 95.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 133—134.

¹⁰⁵ BORRIE 1954, 159—160; VONDRA 1981, 51—52.

Gradually, settlements grew up at various points on the immense coastlines, and from these, as times passed, a system of colonies was created. Van Diemen's Land, where the second settlement had been established in 1803, acquired its own Governor in 1825. Western Australia was established in 1829 (to fend off the threat of a French takeover), though its development stagnated for several decades. In the 1830s, settlement began to reach out from New South Wales to the south, leading to the beginnings of Melbourne on the south coast in 1831, around which the Colony of Victoria was established in 1851; but expansion had also begun northwards, towards the tropics, since the 1820s, and by 1859, when the Colony of Queensland was set up, the basis had been laid of the wealthy nation that was to come. The population had come almost entirely from the British Isles, and was mainly concentrated along the coast.¹⁰⁶

Table I.2: Australian Population: Annual Growth and Net Immigration

Period	Population at end of period (31 Dec)	Mean annual rate of growth (%)	Mean annual growthrate through net migration (%)
1788-1790	2 056		
1791-1800	5 217	9.76	7.76
1801-1810	11 566	8.29	6.29
1811-1820	33 543	11.24	9.24
1821-1830	70 039	7.64	5.64
1831-1840	190 408	10.52	8.52
1841-1850	405 356	7.85	5.85
1851-1860	1 145 585	10.95	8.95
1861-1870	1 647 756	3.70	1.37
1871-1880	2 231 531	3.08	1.11
1881-1890	3 151 355	3.51	1.60
1891-1900	3 756 339	1.80	0.08
1901-1910	4 425 083	1.63	0.11
1911-1920	5 411 297	2.03	0.46
1921-1930	6 500 751	1.85	0.56
1931-1940	7 077 586	0.85	0.05

Source: GREENWOOD 1978, 448.

Note: Aborigines are omitted.

The discovery of rich gold fields in Victoria and New South Wales from 1851 onwards raised the population from 400 thousand to 1.15 million within ten years, as Table I.2 shows, and three quarters of this increase was attributable to net migration. Approximately 40 per cent of these newcomers received assisted passages. In addition to the British arrivals, there were large numbers of Germans, Poles, Hungarians,

¹⁰⁶ McNAUGHTAN 1978, 99-100.

Scandinavians, Americans and Chinese who came to the gold fields. By 1850, the population was distributed as follows:¹⁰⁷

New South Wales (+ later Queensland)	189 000
Port Phillip (= Victoria)	76 000
Van Diemen's Land (= Tasmania)	69 000
South Australia	64 000
Western Australia	5 000
	403 000

The size of the population has to be derived in varying ways from different sources for different periods. BORRIE's calculations suggest that by 1851 the population had already reached 437 700.¹⁰⁸

Up to 1861, immigration continued to be a major factor in population growth in Australia, owing in part to the relative shortage of women. As the gender structure came into better balance, fertility became the major factor in population growth by the latter half of the 19th century. The arrival of increasing numbers of free settlers created stronger pressure for the ending of penal transportation; by 1867, when transportation to Western Australia (the last Colony where it was in operation) was terminated, a total of 160 000 convicts had been brought to Australia.

With the end of the first gold rush, in the early 1860s, unemployment rose, and political awakening led to opposition to the Colonies' assisted passages schemes. The rapid increase in Chinese numbers also provoked unrest on the gold fields. A further factor arousing discontent was the use of Pacific Islanders, *Kanakas*, on the cotton and sugar plantations in Queensland. Despite increasing opposition, however, this practice was to continue for over forty years.¹⁰⁹ The recruitment of settlers depended in general on the prevailing economic situation, which was in turn largely dependent on the climate, especially the long periods of drought. Mining and railway construction brought workers into the country, but even so, drought and depression combined in 1892—93 and 1898—1900 to occasion higher out-migration than new immigrants arriving.

The people arriving in Australia during the 19th century can be classified into four main categories:¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ HARTWELL 1978, 84.

¹⁰⁸ BORRIE 1982, 549.

¹⁰⁹ McNAUGHTAN 1978, 125—126; GREENWOOD 1978, 212; see also the chapter on 'Pacific Islanders 1878—89' in BOLTON 1972, 135—158.

¹¹⁰ PRICE 1974, 323.

- (1) *Convicts*.
- (2) *Independent settlers*, the majority of these being English, Scottish, Irish, German, or Scandinavian. The peak periods for this group occurred during the 1850s gold rush and the boom in the economy during the 1880s.
- (3) *Assisted-passage settlers*, largely consisting of skilled artisans, etc., from the British Isles, coming with the intention of improving their standard of living.
- (4) *Chinese*, who began to arrive on the gold fields in their thousands from the 1850s onwards. At the end of the century opposition to Chinese immigration became very strong (especially in the labour movement), and in 1901 the federal Parliament confirmed the 'White Australia' policy of the colonies.

In Australian history, the period 1851—92 is referred to by the term 'colonial liberalism',¹¹¹ following the enactment of Free Trade in Britain at mid-century, a reform which had many repercussions in the far-away colonies. In 1854 British coastal trade was opened to foreign shipping, customs tolls were reduced or abolished, and by 1860 the introduction of Free Trade was complete.¹¹² At the same time, the basis for British prosperity was being created by the development of British industry and commerce, in which overseas trade played an important role. Britain became an important exporter of investment to other parts of the world, for example, the railways and industry of Australia; and where capital led, migrant labour followed. Britain's needs for wool and for foodstuffs to provide for her industrialized population were growing, especially wheat and salted meat, and Australia was in a position to supply these.

Australia was however only one small portion of the British Empire, and her share of British overseas trade in the 1850s amounted to only 9 per cent.¹¹³ With the building of the railways, however, the economic prospects for the development of the interior improved, making it possible to transport wheat, wool, and minerals over long distances to the ports. The first railway to be constructed ran from Melbourne to Port Melbourne in 1854. The economy continued to boom up until 1873, followed by a period of slower growth. The essential feature was the domination by Britain in Australian economy and shipping. The economic rise of the United States and Germany had, by the 1870s, begun to threaten the position which Britain had achieved. French and German ships had long been familiar in the Australian ports, where they came for tramp trade, but in the 1880s regular shipping lines began to operate to Australia from France and Germany.¹¹⁴ In pursuit of Britain's imperialist aims and rivalry with other colonial nations, immigration was to be encouraged.

The Colonies were scattered far apart from each other in Australia, and the creation of some kind of administrative framework to combine

¹¹¹ McNAUGHTAN 1978, 98—144.

¹¹² BACH 1977, 133.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 135.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 143—144.

them had been under discussion from time to time ever since the 1850s. By mid-century they had acquired representative parliamentary government, and the trend was towards increasing autonomy. Only Western Australia, where convict transportation continued until 1867, was considered not yet ready to take charge of her own affairs. The great rural land-owners were mainly conservative in their thinking, whereas the urban population was liberal or even radical. Over 20 per cent of the Australian population lived in cities and towns, despite the fact that there were so few of these; the most important continued to be Sydney, with 54 000 inhabitants, i.e. over 28 per cent of the population of New South Wales.¹¹⁵ The question of political unification in some form became acute again in the 1880s, as fears increased in Australia about the Yellow Peril threatening the country from the north and the rise of German power in the region. In 1901, federation took effect, and thereafter responsibility for immigration was shared between the Colonies, now reconstituted as States, and the new federal Commonwealth Government. Up to the First World War, all the States were eager to receive more settlers, especially for agriculture, whether from the British Isles or from other parts of Europe; but the outbreak of war interrupted immigration.

This period was characterized by competition for immigrants with the United States, Canada, New Zealand, and other countries of new settlement. In the pursuit of economic and political superiority, the economic expansion in the United States and Germany from the 1870s, and the competition for overseas trade markets, placed Britain now in a vulnerable position. In Australia, special efforts were made to encourage specifically British settlers, and a total of 1.3 million immigrants from the British Isles arrived in the country between 1860 and 1919, 40 per cent of them on assisted passages.¹¹⁶ Nonetheless, the main stream of British emigration, like that from other countries, was directed towards North America.

Following the First World War, the British Government was concerned about the development of population in Australia. Pre-War policies were resumed, especially through the 1922 Empire Settlement Act, an additional objective being the relief of unemployment within the United Kingdom. Between 1921 and 1933, over 200 000 settlers received assisted passages from Britain to Australia,¹¹⁷ reinforced by about 100 000 who travelled out without assistance. The Depression in the 1930s put a stop to immigration, however, and even reversed the flow of population, nor had the new measures taken to promote immigration at the end of

¹¹⁵ HARTWELL 1978, 95.

¹¹⁶ APPELYARD 1972, 14.

¹¹⁷ KELLEY 1965, 333–354; APPELYARD 1972, 15; JAGGARD 1973, 13–22.

the decade had time to take much effect before Australia found herself in September 1939 alongside the United Kingdom at war with Germany.

A major factor affecting migration to Australia throughout its modern history is the impact of distance.¹¹⁸ As long as there was freedom of entry into the United States, European emigrants preferred America to Australia on simple grounds of the cheaper and safer journey by sea. It was the USA — not Australia — which embodied the poor emigrant's dream, even if Australia gained a reputation as the "workmen's paradise", where a good life was to be had for reasonable effort. For unmarried young men (who comprised the largest group among those who made their way to Australia unassisted), the country offered good wages, a mobile outdoor life, and adventure and freedom.¹¹⁹

The factors contributing to the significance of the assisted passages scheme were a combination of the distance from Europe, rivalry between the Great Powers, and domestic aspirations for expansion within Australia itself. Assistance was primarily intended for those coming from the British Isles, but when there was a shortage of these, the scheme could be extended to cover immigrants from the Continent and occasionally even from Finland. When the economy was booming, e.g. in the mid-19th century at the time of the Gold Rushes, Australia's own appeal was strong enough to attract settlers. The long distance of the journey, the expense of the fare, and the effective restriction of assisted passages in the period up to World War II to settlers from the British Isles, meant that non-British migration to Australia, like that to other continents, has rested very largely on ties of family and acquaintance. The typical pattern is one of pioneers, often seamen and footloose adventurers, who lead the way and attract other fellow-countrymen in their footsteps. This situation goes towards explaining the selective nature of migration movement, but also makes the drawing of generalizations extremely difficult.¹²⁰

A major turning point in Australian history comes with the Second World War. Agriculture was now balanced by large-scale, modern industry. The Japanese threat led to the rise of a myth "Populate or perish"; over-populated Asia came to seem a serious threat to the wealthy but thinly-populated continent with its mere 7.4 million people. Rapid population growth was called for, both through the birth rate and through immigration,¹²¹ and since the Second World War, almost four

¹¹⁸ BLAINEY 1968.

¹¹⁹ JUPP 1966, 4.

¹²⁰ PRICE 1954, 295, 297. Price is mainly referring to the immigration from southern Europe, but the same points also apply to the Scandinavian immigrants in Australia.

¹²¹ There is a good overview of post-War immigration in PRICE, "Immigration 1949—1970", in: *Immigration (1836—1970): Australia in World Affairs: 1966—70*, ed. G. GREENWOOD and N. HARPER, Melbourne 1974, 171—205.

million settlers, from over 60 different countries, have arrived in Australia. Within thirty years, Australia (following the patterns of her earlier history) had doubled her population; and now, in the 1980s, with her present population of approximately sixteen million, she is more than ever a country of immigrants and their descendants.¹²²

¹²² See *Population of Australia*, Vol 1., United Nations, New York 1982, especially PRICE'S article on pp. 46—70.

II The Attraction of Australia versus the Barrier of Distance: *Factors Regulating Finnish Migration to Australia, 1851—1947*

1. Finns in Australia Prior to the 1851 Gold Rush

(1) Early Visits of Seamen?

The Spanish, Dutch and English ships which put in along the Australian coast during the 16th and 17th centuries had in many cases crews of very international origins, and it is not impossible that some Finnish seamen may have sailed under one of these flags in Australian waters. Certainly there were sailors from other Nordic countries on board the early ships in the Pacific: e.g. when Abel Tasman sailed round Australia, in 1642—43, one of the crewmen was one Peter Petersen from Copenhagen,¹ while Swedish seamen are known to have been employed on Dutch ships in Australian waters in the early 18th century at least, and possibly earlier.² Dutch commercial vessels tended to recruit foreign sailors, especially Germans and Scandinavians. Dutch commercial navigation had reached its peak in the mid-17th century, after which time England began to strengthen her superiority at sea, reinforced, for example, by the 1651 Navigation Act, the purpose of which was to limit the right of trade with the English Colonies to English shipping, i.e., in practice, to exclude the Dutch.³ HORNBERG mentions a British tradition from those early years of registering all non-British northern Europeans,

¹ LYG 1939, 15; KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 66.

² BEIJBOM 1983, 11.

³ HORNBERG 1923, 274, 276—278.

including Germans, Scandinavians, Lettish, Estonian, and Finnish, as "Dutch".⁴

It was particularly common for seamen from the Ostrobothnian coastal belt in Finland to take service on foreign ships. In 1700, for instance, the Governor of the Province reported to the Crown that he had obtained information from the Corporations of the Ostrobothnian boroughs according to which there were seamen in both Gamlakarleby (Kokkola) and Jakobstad (Pietarsaari) who had sailed for years on Dutch and English ships plying to the East Indies; e.g. one Matz Wijkare, who had sailed for six years with the Dutch and twelve years with the English, or Andres Boij, who had spent many years on English East Indiamen.⁵ Somewhat later, there are records of one Henrik Jakob Wikar having been in the service of the Dutch East India Company at the Cape of Good Hope in the 1770s.⁶ In 1732, a Swedish East India Company was established in Gothenburg, but this concentrated on trade with China. Nevertheless, Swedish ships are also known to have sailed further south, for during 1784 five Swedish ships called at the Dutch port of Batavia on Java, one of which was the *Concordia*; out of Jakobstad (Pietarsaari) in Finland, which had reached Batavia via Mauritius. One of the Swedish East India Company's vessels, named the *Finland*, called at Canton in 1764—65, losing sixty of her crew on the voyage owing to an epidemic.⁷ Another Finnish seaman who had been to the Far East was one Peter Johan Bladh, from Vasa (Vaasa), who made his first journey east in 1766, and was later (1776—84) a senior official at the Swedish East India Company's Chinese trading post in Canton.⁸ Overall, it has been estimated that 6—9 per cent of the crews on the Swedish East India Company's vessels were recruited from Finland.⁹ There is a need for a more detailed investigation of the involvement of Finns in the long-distance trade voyages of the European Great Powers, but it is clear even from this cursory review of the evidence that there may well have been Finnish seamen in Australian waters as early as the 17th century.

(2) Herman Dietrich Spöring

The first Finland-born person documented as having set foot in Australia, however, was one of the shipmates of Captain James Cook in 1770: Herman Dietrich Spöring, son of the Professor of Medicine at the

⁴ *Ibid.*, 359.

⁵ KAILA 1931, 241.

⁶ SIVONEN 1982, 14—23.

⁷ HORNBORG 1923, 300, 369.

⁸ CARPELAN 1902, 206; HUOTARI 1982, 22—24.

⁹ HUOTARI 1982, 22.

Academy in Åbo (Turku), who is thought to have been born around 1733—35.¹⁰ In 1753, he went to Stockholm to continue his studies in medicine.¹¹ Instead of qualifying as a physician, however, he went to sea in 1755, and subsequently worked in London as a clocksmith for eleven years, and then as clerk to the Swedish scientist Daniel Solander.¹²

The 18th Century Enlightenment was an age of serious scientific enquiry. The Royal Society drew up plans to send a ship to Tahiti, in the southern Pacific, to study the transit of Venus in 1769. Its second, more confidential task was to investigate whether the suspected southern *terra australis incognita* could be discovered, the background behind this quest being concern at the increasing interest being shown in the Pacific region by France. Lieutenant James Cook was placed in command of the expedition, on board a refitted coal barque renamed the *Endeavour*.

HMS *Endeavour* set sail from Plymouth on 25 August 1768, carrying a crew of 94, of whom just over half were to return three years later. Also on board were two botanists: Joseph Banks, and Daniel Solander. Both were members of the Royal Society; Solander had also studied under Linnaeus.¹³ Their scientific assistant, and secretary, was Spöring, described as "a draughtsman of great ability".¹⁴

The *Endeavour* sailed across the Atlantic to Tierra del Fuego, where the flora and fauna were studied, and then continued her voyage commission, making observations of the transit of Venus across the Sun on 3 June 1769. It was intended to use the findings from these observations in attempting to calculate more accurately the distance of the Earth from the Sun. The expedition then set out to fulfil its second mission, to search for the Southern Continent, and reached the eastern coast of North Island, New Zealand, in October of the same year. Off the north-east coast lies an island, just under a kilometre in length and a few hundred metres wide, which Cook named Sporing Island.

During the voyage, Spöring had the opportunity amongst his other duties to make use of his artistic talents, particularly following the death of one of the expedition's artists on Tahiti. Many of Spöring's drawings are deposited in the British Museum in London.¹⁵ Only a portion of his drawings are identified by his signature, but recent research has

¹⁰ BÄCK 1749, 25; AALTO 1971, 20; LYSAGHT 1979, 22; Mantals längd öfwer St Catharina Församlings norra deel, [Parish Records] Pro Anno 1755, 45, Stockholms Stadsarkiv. The original church records relating to Spöring were destroyed in the Fire of Turku, 1827.

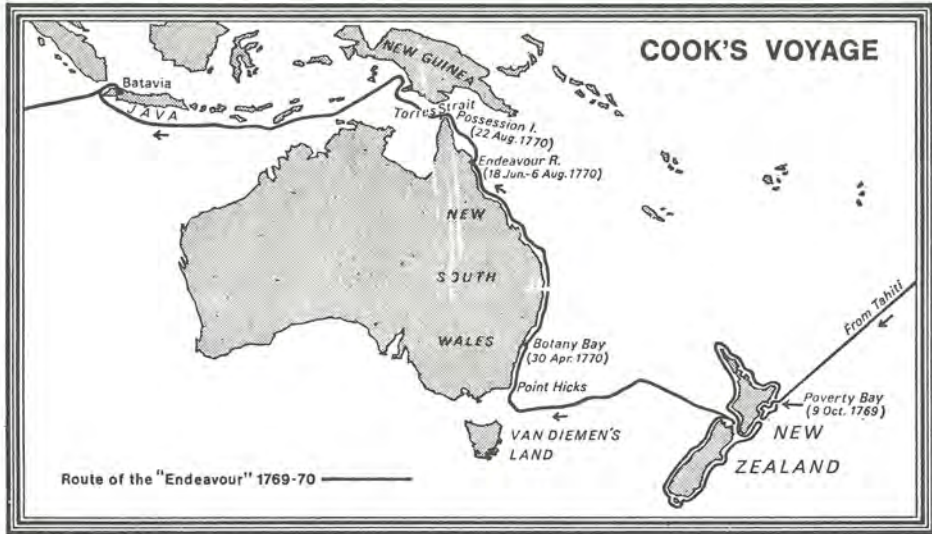
¹¹ LAGUS 1895, 31—32; Åbo Akademi Consistorii Protokoll [Records of the Academy in Åbo] 1746—1751, Åbo Akademi.

¹² UGGLA 1955, 64.

¹³ BEAGLEHOLE 1963, 1:26; FRIES 1940, 279—301; UGGLA 1955, 23—64; RYDÉN 1963, 62; BEIJBOM 1983, 12—13.

¹⁴ BEAGLEHOLE 1955, cclxvii; BEAGLEHOLE 1963, 191.

¹⁵ Drawings on Cook's First Voyage (1768—70), British Museum; also on microfilm roll 8, SI.



Map 1: The route sailed by H.D. Spöring in the *Endeavour* with James Cook in 1769—71. (*Sixteen Explorers of Australia*, Sydney 1973, 3)

indicated that many of the drawings previously believed to be the work of other artists are in fact Spöring's work.¹⁶

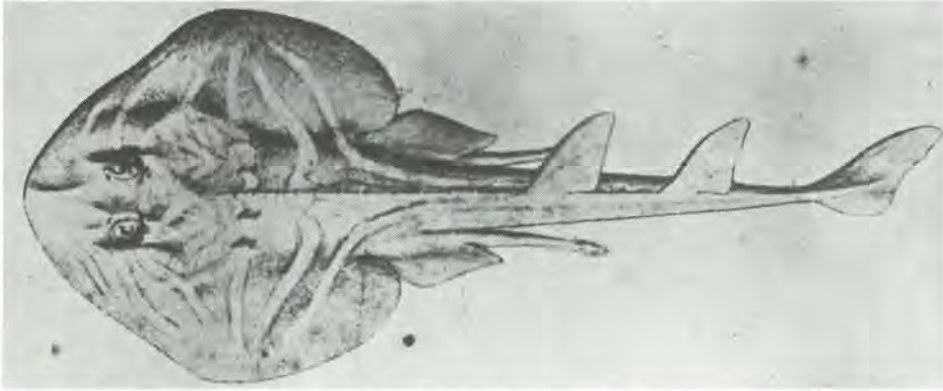
Cook's expedition landed in Australia on 29 April 1770, in a sheltered bay which they named Botany Bay. Slightly further to the north, they found the entrance to an inlet which they named Port Jackson, where in 1788 the settlers of the First Fleet were to lay out the foundations of the future city of Sydney.

On the voyage home, the crew of the *Endeavour* were plagued by disease, e.g. dysentery and cholera, the ship's physician being one of those to succumb; both Solander and Spöring also fell ill. On 25 January 1771, James Cook wrote in his diary: "Departed this life Mr Sporing, A Gentleman belonging to Mr Banks's retinue."¹⁷ The *Endeavour* returned to Britain in July 1771, and James Cook, Joseph Banks, and Daniel Solander had acquired a permanent place of fame in the annals of geographical and scientific exploration. Herman Dietrich Spöring, on the other hand, was forgotten for almost 200 years, and it is only within the last few years that he has been given in the British literature on Cook's voyages the recognition that is his due.¹⁸ In the present-day

¹⁶ LYSAGHT 1979, 22.

¹⁷ BEAGLEHOLE 1968, 447.

¹⁸ The most important of these is LYSAGHT 1979; see also AALTO 1971, 20. See further PERRET 1968, 147—157. The best brief biography is in *Svenskt Konstnär Lexikon V*, Malmö 1967, 233.



Illus. 1: Unsigned pencil drawing by Herman D. Spöring, among zoological drawings made on board the Endeavour. (BEAGLEHOLE 1955, ccliv)

Australian capital, Canberra, Spöring is now commemorated in the street named after him.

Spöring's life and work belongs in the context of the rise of scientific enquiry in the middle of the 18th century. Other distinguished scholars from the Academy in Åbo during the Age of Enlightenment included Peter Kalm (1716—79), who made an expedition to North America in 1748—51; the Arabic scholar Peter Forsskål (1732—63); and Erik Laxman (1738—96), the explorer of Siberia and the Far East.¹⁹ The fact of a Finland-born scientist's participation in Cook's expedition in 1768—71, however, is an event on the world plane, and evidence of the cosmopolitanism of Swedish-Finnish society as well as of the desire of an individual to explore the remote corners of the world, qualities central to the tradition which later contributed to Finnish migration to the southern hemisphere.

(3) Finnish Sailors in the Pacific

The early decades of the 19th century were a promising era for the British and Australian economies. The same forces which led to a breakthrough of economic liberalism also contributed to the expansion of navigation. In the Pacific, navigation expanded in the aftermath of the Opium War in 1831, which led to the opening of certain Chinese ports to foreign shipping. Later stimuli included the discovery of gold in California in 1849. By mid-century, then, the Pacific had been "conquered" and explored.²⁰ For the shipping lines, the combination of

¹⁹ LAGUS 1880; see also AALTO 1971, 22—24.

²⁰ HORNBERG 1923, 387—388.

a shipload of migrants from Europe to Australia and a shipload of wool from Australia to Europe was ideal. Thus the expansion of the Australian economy contributed to the expansion of navigation, and vice versa. Not only wool, but also other agricultural products, and metals, were exported to Europe, especially from South Australia. Whaling, however, went into recession. Up to mid-century, the sea routes to Australia were virtually exclusively in British hands.

In Finnish navigation, too, the period from the 1830s to the Crimean War of 1853—56 was one of rapid expansion, and ships from Finland began to ply their way all over the world in the tramp trade. Typically, these ships returned home every three years, to deposit their profits and fit out for a new voyage. In the 1840s, after the pioneering journey of a new ship, the *Åbo*, via Singapore, a voyage unhappily notable for the number of deaths from 'asiatic fever', they increasingly used this shorter route via the coasts of South-East Asia, the Indian Ocean and the Cape.²¹ In the 1840s, the ships of the Jakobstad shipping house of Petter Malm began to join in the cargo trade in the East Indies and to South America. The first Finnish ship to circumnavigate the globe was the *Herkules*, out of Jakobstad, in 1845—47.²² It was another Jakobstad vessel, the *Gouverneur Stirling*, which took the first load of Swedish migrants from Britain to Western Australia, in 1831,²³ while in 1849 a ship named the *Wappaus* (probably Finnish, to judge by the name; it has however proved impossible to trace her in Lloyd's Register of Shipping) brought a party of German migrants to the Colony of Victoria.²⁴

In addition, there were always Finnish seamen sailing under other flags, especially on British and American ships, often as boatswains or as ship's carpenters. RAMSAY comments that 19th-century descriptions of life on board ship on the seven seas often include the figure of someone known as the "Russian Finn". Many tales surround this taciturn, slow, but powerful and reliable figure, such as the belief that Finns had supernatural powers and could tame the wind.²⁵ The total number of Finnish seamen on the intercontinental routes in the first half of the 19th century appears to amount to several thousand, although no actual figures have been proposed by any scholar for the period prior to

²¹ FITZHARDINGE 1965, 145; ENGSTRÖM 1930, 242—243; Finlands skeppscalender för år 1839, 22.

²² Oskar NIKULA 1948, 155—156 and 182—186. The first Swedish ship to circumnavigate the globe did so in 1839—41, and the first Norwegian one in 1852.

²³ BEIJBOM 1983, 36.

²⁴ MEYER 1982, 19.

²⁵ RAMSAY 1950, 24—26. There are also references to the supernatural powers of Finnish seamen in fiction; e.g. Herman Melville, *Omoo, A Narrative of Adventure in the South Seas*. Boston 1951 (first published 1847).

1851. It is estimated by ILMONEN that in 1860 around 11 000 Finnish seamen were sailing on Finnish ships, and maybe the same number under other flags;²⁶ but this estimate for the later period seems over-high, nor does the author indicate his source.

The following story may serve to illustrate the careers of Finns at sea, and their links with Australia. When the first missionaries arrived in Tahiti, in 1797, they discovered a number of white men living with the Tahitians, among whom was one Peter Hägersten, a seamen from Helsingfors (Helsinki), who had jumped his ship in Tahiti,²⁷ and had become the commander of King Pomare's army. When the missionaries refused to marry Hägersten and his Tahitian consort, his relations with them became frosty. On the outbreak of a major war in 1807, however, he sent his son Joseph to Sydney with the missionaries to escape the fighting. No trace of this Joseph Hägersten has been found in the Australian sources; his father, 'General' Hägersten, died on Tahiti, around 1811.²⁸

Even before the beginnings of the major wave of migration from Finland, there were by the 1860s some pioneer emigrants who had already left the country (often as seamen) and settled overseas. In the United States, there were a number of such ex-seamen, as well as some 'conventional' immigrants from Finland, during the first half of the century.²⁹

An additional factor to be taken into consideration in studying early possible visits to Australia by Finns is the interest shown by Tsarist Russia in the southern hemisphere and the Australian continent. Russia had bases in Alaska and the Far East, and the sea routes to these places from the west ran past the Australian coast. The first Russian ships to circumnavigate the globe did so in 1804, and a frigate called the *Neva* called in at Sydney; she made a second visit to the port in 1807,³⁰ under the command of a Lithuanian German (or, according to VILDER,³¹ Estonian), Captain L.A. Hagemeister. After the end of the Napoleonic Wars, Russian ships continued to sail the Pacific: e.g. the sloop *Ladoga*, which called in at Hobart, Tasmania, in 1823.³² By the 1820s, the movements of the Russian Navy in the vicinity of Australia were causing

²⁶ ILMONEN 1919, 77.

²⁷ KOIVISTOINEN 1977, 81—82.

²⁸ KOSKINEN 1953, 128, note 4, KOIVISTOINEN 1977, 81—88. There is a novel in Finnish about Peter Hägersten, by Leena Lander: *Siipijumala* (The Winged God), Hämeenlinna 1984.

²⁹ There is very little information on this immigration before the 1849 California Gold Rush; see ILMONEN I 1919, passim; WALTARI 1925, 72; KERO 1974, 16—17 and 1982, 20.

³⁰ BARRATT 1981, 171 and 1979, 7—10, HOTIMSKY 1958, 526, and 1967, 82—95; FITZHARDINGE 1965, 118.

³¹ VILDER 1983, 47—48, CIGLER 1983, 1—2. See also FITZHARDINGE 1965.

³² BARRATT 1979, 79.

the authorities there some concern, and in 1841, some towns along the coast were fortified against the Russian threat. The outbreak of the Crimean War in 1853 provoked fears in Sydney and Melbourne of Russian landings, and similar scares relating to the Russian Navy recurred at times of crisis later. Since it was in particular ships of the Russian Navy's Baltic Fleet which were seen in Australian waters in the earlier half of the 19th century, it is clear that some of these may well have had Finnish members of their crews. References in articles by HOTIMSKY indicate an extensive literature and source material on Russian-Australian relations in Tsarist times.³³

(4) First Settlers

The records document the presence of at least one Finn in Australia prior to the discovery of gold in May 1851. This was Isak Herman Sandberg, aged 23, from Kaskinen (Ostrobothnia), who arrived from London on board the *Bombay* on 14 January 1851, i.e. half a year before the Gold Rush broke out. At the time of his application for naturalization fifty years later, in 1901, he then gave his address as a place called Narroghid in Victoria, and stated his occupation as labourer.³⁴

The first time that Finns were listed as a distinct grouping in the Australian Censuses, with some minor earlier exceptions, was in 1921, and the Census for that year records a Finland-born woman in South Australia who had been living in Australia for over 70 years.³⁵ If this is correct, she must have arrived during the 1840s (possibly as a child, see p. 215).

One of the sources for tracing early Finnish immigrants in Australia are the Street Directories. The 1847 Street Directory for Port Phillip (later Melbourne), for example, contains the names, occupations, and addresses of 5000 inhabitants of the colony.³⁶ Neither this, nor the pre-1850 Directories for Sydney, have been found to contain any recognizable Finnish names, although Scandinavian names, which could include some Finns, do occur.³⁷

There are also a few Scandinavian-sounding names which have been traced among the oldest surviving gravestone inscriptions in Sydney, e.g.

³³ HOTIMSKY 1967, 82—95, and 1958, 526—528; BARRATT 1981, 166—168.

³⁴ Vic NR 1901/8541/N532, CA. See Table II.1., p. 65.

³⁵ Census 1921, 258.

³⁶ MOURITZ J.J., ed., *The Port Phillip Almanac and Directory for 1847*, Melbourne 1847, reprint Sydney 1979.

³⁷ LOW, Francis, *The City of Sydney Directory for MDCCCXLIV-V*; Sydney 1844, reprint Sydney 1978; FORD, W. & F., *Sydney Commercial Directory for the Year 1851*, reprint Sydney 1978. The latter contains two directories: "Ford's Sydney Street Key or District Register for 1851", and "Ford's Sydney Commercial Directory for 1851".

Hannah and Thomas Hansen, who died in 1823 and 1837; later, more definitely Scandinavian inscriptions have been traced, such as Boström (1863) and Trenholm (1859). The former is probably the grave of the 33-year-old wife of a Swede or Finn named C.M. Boström; the latter was a four-month-old child.³⁸ The majority of the first Nordic immigrants in Australia, however, were seamen, who in most cases probably had no next of kin to put up any gravestone to record their deaths for posterity.

The evidence reviewed here from the Street Directories and gravestone inscriptions thus indicates a number of apparently Scandinavian names, especially in Sydney, prior to 1851. Sydney represents the oldest centre of European settlement in Australia, and it seems probable, as has been argued in earlier studies, that there were a few Scandinavian settlers even before the impact of the Gold Rush,³⁹ but it is impossible to state on the basis of the evidence available whether any Finns were included among them. According to SANDERSON, who has studied the early Scandinavian settlement in New South Wales, some of the Russians in the Naturalization Records may in fact have been Finnish, e.g. Heinrich Albert Harmsen, who was naturalized on 6 March 1851.⁴⁰ In the present study, however, I have only included those really "born in Finland".

The problem of the Finland-born woman recorded in the 1921 Census as having lived in Australia for over 70 years remains unsolved; it is also unknown whether there were any Finns among the convicts deported by the British authorities to the penal colonies. The earliest documented Finnish immigrant to arrive in Australia was Isak Sandberg in 1851, but on the basis of this evidence, it may be regarded as proven that there had in fact been some Finns in Australia prior to the 1851 Gold Rush. Since approximately a quarter of the 19th-century Finnish immigrants took out naturalization at some date or other, the evidence of Isak Sandberg suggests that there were other Finnish permanent settlers in Australia in the pre-Gold-Rush period. In addition to these pioneers, those Finns (largely seamen) should also be borne in mind who may have spent some time in the Australian Colonies before continuing on their travels, possibly to America, possibly elsewhere, or possibly then returning to Finland. In general, however, the Australian economy did not exert a powerful enough attraction in the first half of the 19th century to attract settlers from Finland other than a few isolated individuals.

³⁸ JOHNSON, Keith A., & SAINTY, Malcolm R., *Gravestone Inscriptions NSW, Volume I, Sydney Burial Ground*, Sydney 1973, 35, 142.

³⁹ LYNG 1939, 15—20, KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 66—79; BEIJOM 1983, 36—37.

⁴⁰ AONSW, Reel 128, NSW NR Vol. 1, p. 225; and J.L. Sanderson's letter to Olavi Koivukangas, 31 Jan. 1986.

2. The Pull of the Australian Gold Rush, 1851—69

In January 1851, a gold prospector called E.H. Hargreaves returned to Sydney from the Californian gold fields. Since there were great similarities between the Australian landscape and that in California, he concluded that there ought to be gold in Australia too, and he proceeded to find it, by the banks of the Macquarie River. When the *Sydney Morning Herald* published the news of the discovery, on 15 May 1851, the whole city was swept by gold fever. Then in August 1851, the rich deposits at Ballarat, in Victoria, were discovered, and Melbourne in turn became the focus of the rush to the gold fields. There was hardly a man capable of work left in either Melbourne or Geelong. Crews, and even captains, abandoned their ships in harbour.⁴¹ It was gold which laid a foundation of the economic expansion of Australia from the 1850s onwards.

News of the fabulous Australian gold discoveries rapidly spread all round the world, the first to respond to the challenge being seamen and prospectors coming across from California.

In the ten years 1851—61, the population of Australia grew from 405 000 to 1 145 000, three quarters of this increase being the result of immigration. Amongst the new arrivals, there were several thousand Scandinavians,⁴² and countless other nationalities.⁴³ By 1861, ten years after the Gold Rush had begun, there were some 83 000 non-British immigrant whites, i.e. 7.2 per cent of the total population. After this peak, the proportion of non-British persons in the population fell again, reaching five per cent by 1891.⁴⁴

The Gold Rush stimulated sea transport, and soon faster ships were introduced. Whereas in 1851 the number of ships visiting Australian ports was 1578, within three years this had risen to 3781.⁴⁵

The previous Gold Rush in California, starting in 1849, is estimated to have drawn over two hundred Finns to the gold fields there,⁴⁶ and the earliest Finnish prospector recorded in Australia arrived there from California: Isaac Mattson, originally from Åbo (Turku), who arrived in Sydney from San Francisco in 1852. (No more precise date is given in

⁴¹ On the history of the Australia Gold Rushes, see: BARLETT 1965; KEESING 1967; SERLE 1963; BLAINEY 1969; ANHOLM 1981; McDOUGALL 1981.

⁴² LYNNG 1939, 21; KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 81.

⁴³ In Poland, for example, the Australian gold discoveries caused a gold fever comparable to that triggered off shortly before by the finds in California; see WALASZEK 1977, 123—135.

⁴⁴ BORRIE 1954, 33.

⁴⁵ ANDERSSON 1922, 184.

⁴⁶ WARGELIN 1924, 52; SCHOFER 1975, 31.

Table II.1: Finnish Immigrants Landing in Australia 1851—59 and Subsequently Naturalized

Name	Date of Birth	Place of Origin	Name of Ship, Route Travelled	Date of Landing	Date of Naturalization	Place of Residence	Occupation
1. Isak Herman Sandberg	1828	Kaskinen	"Bombay" (London)	14.01.1851	1901	Narroghid, Vic.	labourer
2. Isaac Mattson	1824	Turku	San Francisco-Sydney	1852	1911	Fitzroy, Melb. Vic.	miner-carpenter
3. John Smith	1828	Raahe	—	08.10.1852	1895	Corindhap, Vic.	carpenter
4. Peter Johnson	1828	Pietar-saari	"Persian" (London)	28.12.1852	1882	Charlton, Vic.	shopkeeper
5. Christian Erlund	1831	Hamina	"Onne" (? "Onni") (Liverpool)	June 1853	1896	Inverleigh, Vic.	labourer
6. John William Justin	1837	Finland	To the Colony of Victoria	1853	1896	Shoalhaven Heads, N.S.W.	seaman
7. Charles Roberts	1827	Uusikau-punki	"Rebecca" (Mauritius)	March 1854	1902	Gembrook, West Vic.	carpenter
8. William Nordman	1827	Maksamaa	"Four Sisters" (London)	24.03.1854	1903	Enfield, Vic.	miner
9. Jacob Gustafson	1831	Munsala	—	1854	1885	Enfield, N.S.W.	seaman
10. Aaron Pasoin	1828	Oulu	London-Port Adelaide	1854	1905	Aberfeldy, Vic.	labourer
11. Isaac Hiort	1840	Finland	London-Sydney	1857	1909	Yea, Vic.	miner
12. Peter Francis	1830	Viipuri	"Horizon" (Vyborg)	20.12.1857	1902	—	miner
13. Stephen Hacklin	1831	Finland	—	1858	1894	Spalding, S.A.	farmer
14. John Johnson	1825	Finland	—	1859	1869	Shoalhaven Heads, N.S.W.	ship's carpenter

Source: NR (Colonial/State and C'th Archives)

his naturalization record, which is from 1911). Since the two following Finns to subsequently take out naturalization, John Smith⁴⁷ and Peter Johnson,⁴⁸ had landed in October-December 1852, it is probable that Isaac Mattson had arrived earlier. Mattson spent seven years on the Ballarat gold fields, and then moved to Tasmania for 30 years; he subsequently spent three years in New South Wales, and one and a half years in New Zealand, and finally spent the rest of his days in Melbourne. On his application for naturalization, sixty years after his arrival in the country, it was recorded that he was a widower, with four children, and a miner by trade.⁴⁹

In Table II.1. the details are given of fourteen subsequently naturalized Finns who arrived in Australia during the 1850s. The majority of these had come to the country as young men, their average age on arrival being 25; they had originally emigrated from the Finnish seaboard, and their route had in most cases, though not all, passed through London. Christian Erlund⁵⁰ landed in Australia in 1853, having sailed from Liverpool on board the "*Onne*" (apparently a Finnish ship: there was a sailing ship in the Turku fleet named the *Onni*, listed as away at sea from 1850 to 1860).⁵¹ Peter Francis had arrived aboard the *Horizon* from "Weaborg" (Vyborg), in 1857.⁵² There were also some Finns listed in the Naturalization Records as having arrived in the 1860s who had sailed on Finnish ships: e.g. Johan Gustaf Björkstén, from Gamlakarleby (Kokkola), who arrived in 1860 aboard the *Otto* sailing out of Kristinestad,⁵³ or Jacob Kondio in 1866 aboard the *Ukko*.⁵⁴

Altogether, there are 51 Finns listed in the Naturalization Records as having arrived in Australia between 1851 and 1869. Since only a quarter of the Finns in Australia in the 19th century chose naturalization, this would suggest a possible total Finnish population of approximately two hundred during the Gold Rush years. There were also other Finns in Australia, who stayed for a shorter time, mainly on the gold fields; though by no means all of the Finns were prospecting, for the records show seamen working on the coast, and labourers in the docks, and other trades as well, although since the Naturalization Records list the applicant's occupation at the time of naturalization, it is obvious that many who arrived as seamen had in the meantime taken up some other

⁴⁷ Vic NR 1895/6173/A2318.

⁴⁸ Vic NR 1882/1601/242.

⁴⁹ C'th NR 1911/19080, CA.

⁵⁰ Vic NR 1896/6327/C 1065.

⁵¹ Oscar NIKULA 1972, 304; KUJANEN 1984, 78.

⁵² C'th NR 1902/9182/P 1744.

⁵³ Vic NR 1899/7984.

⁵⁴ NSW NR 1881/7/8.

trade instead, such as miner, carpenter, labourer, etc., as they settled down in Australia.

Even where there were several Finns in the same locality, it seems clear that they did not form real communities; nonetheless, from the 1850s on they were beginning to lay a basis for Finnish settlement in Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, and Fremantle. In certain mining towns, such as Yea, Victoria, the Finnish settlement may have been on a more permanent basis. Table II.1. shows that two of the fourteen naturalized Finns in the town had come in 1857 and were still living there at the beginning of the 20th century. The information in the Records on route of immigration suggests that for those coming in the 1850s and 1860s the most common first destination in Australia was one of the mines, i.e. gold fields, in New South Wales or Victoria.

Since in most cases naturalization did not take place until many decades after arrival, obviously many of these persons would have lived in many different locations in the meantime. The Finns appear to have been as mobile in this regard as the other non-British immigrants arriving in this period. Their background as seamen could have encouraged this mobility; but in any case Australia in the Gold Rush days was still a pioneer society, caught up in the quest for sites across the great continent with the economic and other conditions necessary to sustain permanent settlement. Sydney, Melbourne and the other ports, at the same time as they were evolving their distinctively Australian urban way of life, were gateways both inwards to the interior and outwards to the ocean.

The entries reporting the immigrants' marital status are particularly incomplete in the earliest Naturalization Records. Many seem however to have remained unmarried throughout their lives; those who did marry, tended to take a wife who was *kielinen*, literally 'lingual', i.e. someone (usually of British-Isles origin) who could speak English, since at mid-century there were few, if indeed any, Finnish women in the whole of Australia. Not until the end of the century did the wives and girlfriends of those Finns who had settled down permanently in Australia begin to join their menfolk there. It is also difficult to make any estimate as to the numbers of Finns who may have spent shorter periods in the country, even possibly lasting several years.

The only other sources from which information is available concerning Finns in Australia at mid-century are the press and literature. In 1857 Swedish printer named Corfitz Cronquist published for a few months a paper called *Norden* for the Scandinavians on the gold fields. Cronquist then wrote a book about his experiences in Australia, which was published in 1859 in Sweden, in which he devotes one short chapter to two brothers from Finland, said to have been sea captains. They had by then been on the gold fields in Victoria and in New South Wales for



Illus. 2: Panning for gold on the Victorian gold field in the 1850's. (ANHOLM 1981)

four years, and on their departure for Finland in 1858, their Scandinavian friends arranged a party in their honour. Cronquist reports that McIvor (now the town of Heathcote) was the main centre for the Scandinavians on the gold fields, especially for the Swedes.⁵⁵ A fascinating detail in Cronquist's account of the week-long party for the homesick Finnish sea captains is that the new Finnish national song was sung, which had been performed in public for the first time in Helsinki only eight years earlier, in 1848.

Cronquist only gives the brothers' names as Wilhelm and Alfred H., concealing their surname behind the initial; but a letter written from the gold fields dated 20 May 1856 by P. Wideman, a minister of the Church of Sweden who had ended up as a gold prospector in Australia, reveals that their name was Häggblom. This letter was later published in the revived paper *Norden*, which had recommenced publication under the editorship of Jens Lyng in Melbourne in 1896. In his letter, Wideman recounts that at McIvor there were 25 Swedes, a few Danes, and two Finns called Häggblom. "They are all good men, and a credit to the name of Sweden."⁵⁶ At Pentecost in 1856, Wideman held what is

⁵⁵ Corfitz Cronquist, *Vandringar i Australien åren 1857—59* [Wanderings in Australia in 1857—59], Göteborg 1859, 88—90.

⁵⁶ Letter from Peter Wideman, 20 May 1857, *Norden* 22 Feb. 1902.

presumed to have been the first Swedish-language church service in Australia, which the Häggblom brothers also attended.⁵⁷

As mentioned above, in 1857 Cronquist published a small paper in Swedish intended for the Scandinavians, entitled *Norden*. Only two issues of this paper are known to have survived, and are stored in the Royal Library in Stockholm.⁵⁸ Both numbers contain references to the Häggbloms: an announcement in No 2 (30 July 1857) that a letter for the "Captains E.W. and C.A. Häggblom" had arrived for them in Melbourne, posted from Tavastehus (Hämeenlinna) on 8 April 1857; there is also another announcement on the same page to the effect that A. Häggblom was acting as the agent for *Norden* in Goulbourn. In the summer (winter in Australia) of 1857, the brothers were thus apparently living very close to the site of present-day Canberra. It also appears that they were in correspondence with Finland. Furthermore, the post of agent for the paper was no doubt an honorary one, which indicates the social respect the brothers commanded (a point further reinforced by their profession as sea captains).

These worthy brothers' origins in Finland have been traced. The Pupils' Registers of the Seamens' School in Vaasa show Erik Wilhelm Häggblom as having been born in 1822, and having entered the school on 16 February 1844. Carl Erik Häggblom was born in 1827, and entered the school at the same time as his brother. When they registered with the school, the brothers deposited seamen's certificates of recommendation from the authorities in Kristinestad, and from the parish minister in Lappfjärd. It also appears that Erik and Carl had been sailing since 1840 and 1839 respectively as 'constables' (i.e. next below the mates on a sailing ship). Both brothers took their mates' certificates on 19 April 1844, Erik Wilhelm Häggblom proceeding to his master's certificate on 24 February 1847, and Carl Alfred following on 15 December 1849.⁵⁹ The brothers would then seem to have been at sea until 1853—54, when they went ashore to the Australian gold diggings for a total of four years.

According to the *Genealogia Sursilliana*, these two seafaring brothers were born at Isojoki.⁶⁰ Their father was Erik Häggblom, a sea captain born on the Åland Islands in 1775, who died at Isojoki in 1837. The Parish Records in Isojoki show Erik Wilhelm Häggblom as having moved to Kristinestad on 29 August 1853, and Carl Alfred Häggblom

⁵⁷ BEIJBOM 1983, 82.

⁵⁸ *Norden*, Skandinavisk Tidning i Australien, No 2, and 3, 1857, Royal Library Stockholm. In my earlier study on Scandinavians in Australia, KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 270, I thought that no copies had survived.

⁵⁹ Records of the Navigation School in Vasa, Register of Students 1839—61, B 2, VMA, 135, 155, 175.

⁶⁰ Sursillin suku; *Genealogia Sursilliana*, ed. Eero Kojonen, Tapiola 1971, 133.

on 10 September 1849; and the Parish Records in Kristinestad show Captain Erik Wilhelm Häggblom, unmarried, born at Isojoki on 3 February 1822, as having died on 1 December 1862; and Captain Carl Alfred Häggblom, unmarried, born at Isojoki on 6 July 1827, as having died on 3 March 1867.

It needs to be asked what kind of picture of Australia was prevalent in Finland during the 1850s and 1860s. Interest was aroused in the Finnish press by the news of the gold discoveries. In 1854, the *Åbo Tidning* published a long article describing Melbourne and Sydney and the immigration; this article states that the population of Melbourne had more than doubled within a year (1851—52).⁶¹ Sometimes a Finnish sailor gave an account of his experiences in Australia.⁶² A Danish traveller has a note to the effect that the crew of the *Koh-I-Nor*, which sailed from Britain to Australia in 1854, had one Finnish crewman.⁶³ Some early 'tourist' who had visited all five continents may have been the author of an article in the *Helsingfors Tidningen*.⁶⁴ In 1861, there was a story in the *Åbo Underrättelser* about the *Norden*, a ship from the same town, which had been visiting Australia nine years earlier, in 1852, when altogether ten men had deserted from the crew. Two of these, Abel Reinhold Wahlroos and a man called Wallenius, were said still to be on the Australian gold diggings.⁶⁵ If the report of ten men deserting from a Finnish ship is true, this Finnish source offers further evidence of considerable numbers of Finns taking part in the Gold Rush in Australia.

Later on, during the major wave of migration, newspaper and magazine articles were one of the significant stimuli to migration, both in Finland and elsewhere. There appear to have been no more articles in the Finnish press in the 1860s about the Australian gold fields, however, and it would seem that the Australian Gold Rush remained a mere episode in the shadow of that in California.

All in all, the historical source material in Finland relating to the Australian Gold Rush of the 1850s and 1860s is very scarce. In Australia, the most reliable material for this period consists of the Naturalization Records, and these show the first Finnish arrivals virtually at the beginning of the Gold Rush. Extrapolating from the 51 Finnish immigrants arriving in this period who subsequently applied for naturalization, it is suggested that a total of around two hundred Finns may have moved to Australia in the Gold Rush era and settled there

⁶¹ *Åbo Tidning*, 24 Jan. 1854.

⁶² *Åbo Underrättelser*, 23 March 1858.

⁶³ *Norden*, 20 Dec. 1902.

⁶⁴ *Helsingfors Tidningen*, 19 June 1858.

⁶⁵ *Åbo Underrättelser*, 14 Dec. 1861.

permanently. This estimate is a surprisingly high figure, e.g. in comparison with the 200 Finns known to have taken part in the Californian 1849 Gold Rush, even allowing for the fact that the period in question in the Australian records is longer. The Finns were a tiny group among the thousands of Scandinavians and tens of thousands of other immigrants — seamen, gold diggers, and settlers. All of these were primarily attracted by Australian gold, and the hope of sudden riches. How many Finns may have succeeded in their aim, it is impossible to say.

One of the most distinguishing features of the wave of gold diggers who arrived in Australia at this time from Europe was the scale of the return migration. There were, for instance, thousands of Frenchmen on the Australian gold fields, but few of them made their fortune, and most of them returned home.⁶⁶ Many of the Germans, too, moved back to Germany once the diggings had been exhausted.⁶⁷ Nor did the Finns behave differently from their fellow-Europeans, the majority of them following the example of the Häggblom brothers. It is difficult to state the numbers of Finns returning, especially since no more than an estimate is possible of the numbers who had arrived. In view of the busy sea links with Australia, however, and the fact that so many of the Finns were deep-sea seamen, a cautious estimate suggests that the numbers leaving may have been approximately the same as those who settled in Australia, i.e. around 200. This would indicate a total of about 400 Finns in Australia, whether for a short term or long term, during the Gold Rush in 1851—69.

From the perspective of Finland, this number probably appears a high one, especially in view of the lack of reliable information concerning the numbers of Finns involved in the 1849 Gold Rush in California. In comparison with the figures known for the other Nordic immigrants in Australia, however, the finding seems a realistic one. Cronquist, who took part in the Gold Rush himself, estimated that in 1859 on the Victorian gold fields alone there were 1500 Swedes, 1000 Danes, and 300 Norwegians, i.e. a total of 2800 or at least 2500;⁶⁸ LYNG offers an estimate of 2000 Scandinavians on the gold fields in Victoria alone, and 5000 in the whole Australian Gold Rush.⁶⁹ Both of these are perhaps over-estimates; my own conclusion was an overall total of 5000 Scandinavians, including those not on the gold fields. In 1871, the Census recorded altogether 2300 Scandinavians in Victoria, almost half of whom were Danish.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ ROSENBERG 1978, 53.

⁶⁷ BORRIE 1954, 163.

⁶⁸ Cronquist 1859, 40.

⁶⁹ LYNG 1939, 21—22.

⁷⁰ KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 87—88.

3. Overall Finnish Migration to Australia, 1851—92

The Finns drawn by the lure of the gold fields comprised only a part of the Finnish migration to Australia in the period after mid-century, and the next task will be to attempt, with the aid of the incomplete sources of information at our disposal, to illuminate the overall Finnish migration to Australia from the middle of the century to the onset of the 1890s Depression. This migration is dominated for the travellers themselves, who had to pay their own fares, by what BLAINEY has called "the tyranny of distance".⁷¹

For this early phase, the sources in Finland are incomplete and unreliable. Only towards the end of the 19th century are there any mentions in the Passport Registers of Australian destinations, the first dating from 1881, when five young men from Närpes were issued with passports to travel via London to Melbourne (see Table II.2).

Table II.2: Earliest Passports Issued in Finland for Australia

No.	Date	Name	Age	Home	Other Information
1.	14.7.1881	Carl Gustaf Nyman	25	Närpes	To Melbourne
2.	14.7.1881	Matts Lars Fork	22	Närpes	To Melbourne
3.	14.7.1881	Karl Johan Svensson	23	Närpes	To Melbourne
4.	14.7.1881	Johan Buling	21	Närpes	To Melbourne
5.	14.7.1881	Josef Hertz	23	Närpes	To Melbourne
6.	11.5.1883	Isak Karlsson Till	42	Lappfjärd	Cottager, Wife remaining behind
7.	24.7.1883	Axel Wikblad	28	Jakobstad	Ship's mate
8.	20.5.1884	Axel Kaas	19	Lappfjärd	Farmer
9.	20.9.1884	Johan Mannfolk	32	Lappfjärd	Wife & 4 children remaining behind
10.	22.9.1884	Erik Hinders	47	Lappfjärd	Farmer, Wife remaining behind
11.	4.7.1887	Karl Älme	26	Lappfjärd	Farmer, Wife & child
12.	9.7.1887	Josef Andfolk	22	Lappfjärd	Unmarried
13.	1.6.1888	Samuel Wiklund	33	Munsala	Wife & 2 children remaining behind

Source: Passport Registers, VMA. Ten of the 13 passports listed here were issued by the authorities in Kristinestad.

The earliest passports issued for Australia were for travellers from the Ostrobothnian coast between Kristinestad and Lohtaja, a belt where most of the population are Swedish-speakers. There was a particularly heavy concentration of emigrants from Munsala, with 16 of the 41

⁷¹ BLAINEY 1968, 148—149.

passports issued for Australia up to 1893. This number does not include those issued with passports for New Zealand. Emigrants were recruited not only from the Swedish-speaking belt, however, but also from the Finnish-speaking township (parish) of Lohtaja at its northern tip, where two passports for Australia were issued in 1890 and 1892;⁷² and Lohtaja was later to become one of the most important areas from which the Australian immigrants were recruited.

There had been earlier travellers from the Ostrobothnian seaboard in Australia, however: the Naturalization Records list Gustaf Jakobson, a seaman from Munsala, who had arrived in 1854,⁷³ and Jakob Erkkilä, from Lohtaja, who came in 1878.⁷⁴ As can be seen from these examples, the Finnish Passports Registers do not give a true picture of the Finnish emigration to Australia; the difference between 1851, the first date in the Australian Records, and 1881, in the Finnish Passport Registers, is a serious one. It also brings out the importance of making use in migration research of sources from both the country of departure and that of destination.

The 41 persons issued with passports for Australia prior to 1893 include only four females, one of whom was still a child; and this female proportion of just under ten per cent corresponds with what is known of the gender structure of the Finnish population in Australia. The majority of emigrants were unmarried young men, but there were also some cases of men whose families remained behind in Finland; and in 1890, passports were applied for by Anna Anderson for herself and her daughter Hilda, from Finström, on Åland, who stated that her husband was already in Australia.⁷⁵

Passports for Australia were often issued in a group. The largest party consisted of twelve people from Munsala and Nykarleby, who were issued with passports for Australia on 23 August 1888.⁷⁶ No doubt one of the reasons for travelling in a group was anxiety about the length and dangers of the journey, and it is also possible that the leader of the group may have been someone who had visited Australia, or some other country of settlement, previously.

In view of the fact that there are hundreds of Finns (discussed in more detail below) listed in the colonial Naturalization Records from the period prior to 1893 whose names cannot be traced in the Finnish Passport Registers, it is clear that the passport lists do not provide a reliable picture of the Finnish emigration to Australia. It may be

⁷² Lohtaja: Passport Registers, Kokkola and Kaarlela Bailiff's Offices, VMA.

⁷³ NSW NR 1885/9/403.

⁷⁴ NSW NR 1895/12/374.

⁷⁵ Passport Registers, Kaarlela Bailiff's Office, VMA.

⁷⁶ Passport Registers, Vaasa Provincial Administration, VMA.

inferred that the early Finnish arrivals in Australia travelled without passports, i.e., presumably, as seamen.

Some additional information concerning the number of travellers from Finland to Australia can be obtained from the shipping lines' passenger lists, e.g. for the route through Hamburg. There is also an (unconfirmed) allusion by one Danish assisted-passage settler travelling to Queensland in 1871 to one of his fellow-passengers being from Finland.⁷⁷ The passenger lists for traffic through Hamburg for the period commencing in 1850 have been examined by the Swedish Consul, Sten AMINOFF, and the earliest Scandinavians traceable there date from 1852, presumably lured by the Gold Rush. The earliest mention of Finnish migrants travelling via Hamburg, however, is dated 24 October 1883, when the *Pracida* set sail for Adelaide with a party of ten people from Finland among her passengers. In the period 1883—93, AMINOFF has traced a total of 58 emigrants from Finland travelling via Hamburg to Australia or New Zealand.⁷⁸ Finnish emigrants ceased to use the Hamburg route in the early 1890s, when the Finnish Steamship Company introduced a direct service from Hanko to Britain; there had also been some travellers using the route via British ports before this service was introduced. On 5 July 1884, the *Catania* set sail from Britain with eight Finnish passengers on board, including Anders Holmström's family of five, arriving in Port Adelaide on 2 September of the same year.

Both of these groups, on the *Pracida* and the *Catania*, travelled under Colonial Assisted Passage Certificates. After each person's name in the lists there is an entry "Passage Money £15.10", but it is unclear whether this refers to the amount of the subsidy, the passenger's contribution to the fare, or indeed the total fare.⁷⁹ In any case, these were relatively large groups for the period, and possibly the first cases of Finnish emigrants receiving assisted passage subsidies. Presumably the emigrants' passages were paid for from the port of departure onwards (i.e., in this case, Hamburg); this was the usual practice with the assisted passages schemes.

The earliest Finnish emigrant to be traced as having travelled direct to Australia from Stockholm is recorded in the Stockholm passenger lists for 27 June 1885. Between 1884 and 1904, altogether 148 Finns sailed for Australia and New Zealand from Stockholm.⁸⁰ In Gothenburg, the

⁷⁷ 'A Danish Emigrant' (T.P.L. Weitemeyer), *Missing Friends*, London 1908, 19, 23; KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 101.

⁷⁸ Auswanderlisten, Hamburg City Records, copied by Ambassador (New Zealand) and scholar Sten Aminoff in 1982—83 and deposited at the Emigrantinstitutet, Växjö (9:5:17).

⁷⁹ List of Passengers to Port Adelaide, 84/6, SA.

⁸⁰ Emigrantlistor 1869—1904, Äldre Poliskammarens Arkiv, Stockholms Stadsarkiv [Lists of Emigrants, Stockholm Police Department Archives], nr 180:II:b:1 microfilm, TYYH/S/m/3/1.

passenger lists show the earliest Finnish departure for New Zealand on 19 August 1886, and for Australia on the 26th of the same month. There were 38 Finnish passengers from Gothenburg to New Zealand, and 16 to Australia — a total of 54 — during the years 1886—96.⁸¹

Altogether, the number of Finnish migrants travelling to Australia and New Zealand through the three ports of Hamburg, Stockholm, and Gothenburg during the last two decades of the 19th century amounts to around 300; and others left from other ports as well (e.g. Johan Rautio, who sailed on board the mail ship *Kaiser Wilhelm* from Bremen to Sydney in 1890).⁸²

From the turn of the century, travel by sea to Australia was dominated by the British ports; but as explained in the Introduction to this study, it has not been practicable to examine the British passenger lists.

There is thus a link between the opening up of passenger traffic from Finland to overseas countries in the 1880s and the fact that the earliest passport for Australia was made out in Närpes in 1881. A striking feature is the fact that the emigrants often travelled in groups, with the largest parties consisting of more than twenty persons. Where the emigrants' home towns are known, they tend to come from the Swedish-speaking belt in Ostrobothnia, especially from Munsala.

It is difficult to estimate the number of women involved. Even in 1921 the women still made up only about ten per cent of the Finnish population in Australia (131 females to 1227 males), and it seems probable that their proportion during the 19th century will have been even smaller. This suggests that the maximum number of Finnish women prior to 1893 would be around a hundred. Finnish women marrying British subjects automatically acquired British nationality. The only women to apply for naturalization, therefore, were those who were self-supporting. Up to 1947 there are 25 such cases, twelve of whom had landed in Australia before 1893. One of the earliest women to apply for naturalization, in New South Wales in 1904, was Selina Nyberg, a nurse from Oulu, who had arrived in Australia in 1882.⁸³

The Naturalization Records of the Australian colonies contain entries for a total of 610 male Finnish immigrants who are recorded as having landed in the period 1851—92. 127 of them were naturalized during this same period, the remainder at a later date. The evidence from this source shows a steadily increasing flow of immigration, reaching a peak in the early 1880s, but falling off again even before the onset of the Depression in 1893. Many of these were seamen on the move,

⁸¹ Gothenburg Police Department Archives 1869—1920 microfilm, TYYH/S/m/4/17.

⁸² *Hangö* (newspaper), 9 Oct. 1890.

⁸³ NSW NR 1904/9945.

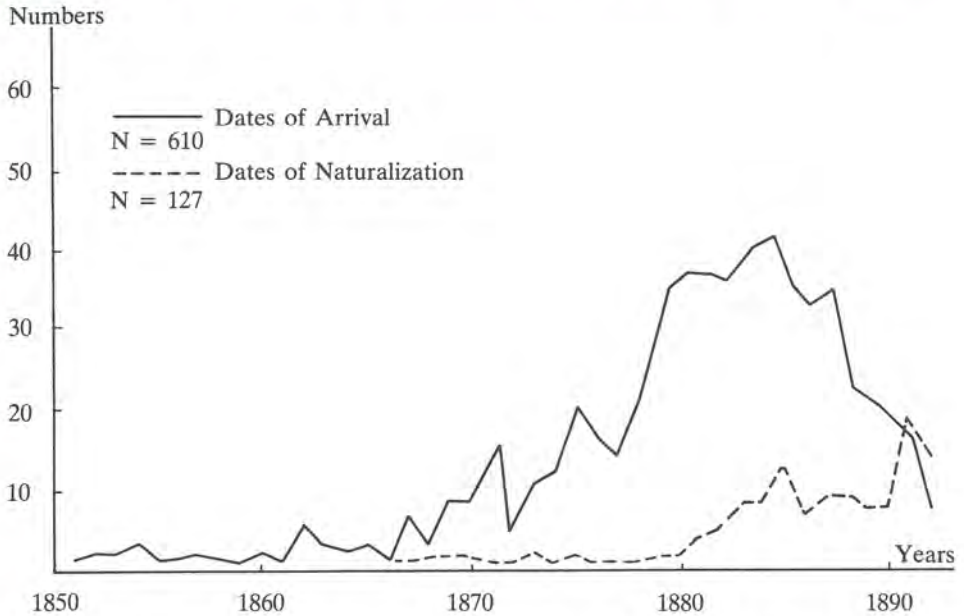


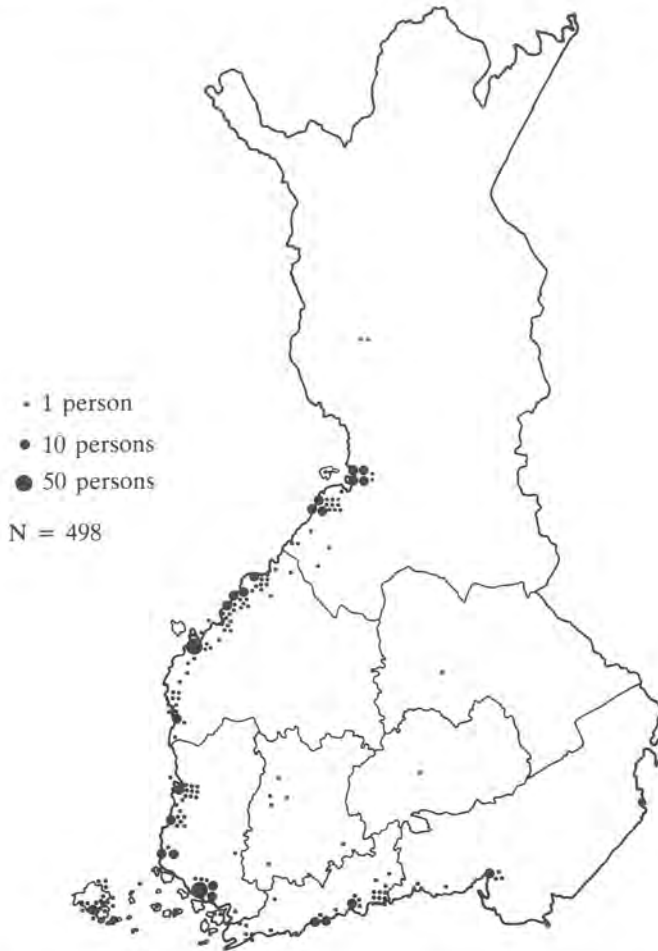
Fig. II.1: Finnish Male Immigrants Landing in Australia and Subsequently Naturalized: Dates of Arrival 1851—92 and Dates of Naturalization 1866—92 (NR)

approximately half of whom settled permanently on land.

Fig. II.1 illustrates how the beginnings of Finnish immigration reached back to the Gold Rush years in the 1850s. The peak in the 1880s was a reflection of the boom in the Australian economy. The period covered ends in 1893, with the onset of the Depression.

Table II.3: Finnish Male Immigrants Landing in Australia 1851—92 and Subsequently Naturalized: Places of Birth in Finland, by Administrative Province (NR)

Province	N	%
Uusimaa	56	9.2
Turku & Pori	141	23.1
Vaasa	150	24.6
Oulu including Lapland	93	15.2
Kuopio	1	0.2
Häme	7	1.1
Mikkeli	1	0.2
Viipuri	18	3.0
Åland	31	5.1
Born abroad	4	0.6
"Finland", locality unspecified or illegible	108	17.7
TOTAL	610	100.0



Map 2: Finnish Male Immigrants Landing in Australia prior to 1893, and Naturalized 1866—1946: Places of Birth in Finland (NR)

The Naturalization Records assist in tracing the geographical distribution of emigration within Finland, for place of birth is given in over 80 per cent of the entries. In most cases, this will also have been their place of residence up to emigration, and for the purposes of this investigation place of birth and of residence prior to emigration have therefore been assumed to be identical. The only exceptions consist of those persons born for instance on board ship, or born abroad (e.g. in America) and brought to Finland as children (usually to Ostrobothnia); in these cases, place of pre-emigration residence is taken, where this is known.

Over half of the Finnish men emigrating to Australia during the period 1851—92 were thus originally from the Provinces of Vaasa and Turku & Pori; and with the addition of Oulu Province, approximately three

quarters of the emigrants are identified as coming from the western Finnish seaboard. Moreover at least some of the 18 per cent whose place of birth is unspecified may also be presumed to have originated from the same region. This pattern is confirmed from Map 2. Many state their place of origin as Turku or one of the other coastal towns, although it should be borne in mind that they may merely be referring to the nearest town. This factor is however unlikely to cause any serious distortion even in the detailed pattern, and would in any case have no effect on the distribution by administrative Province.

Over half of the total number of overseas emigrants from Finland to all destinations during the period 1870—1914 originated from Vaasa Province.⁸⁴ The emigration to Australia, however, is not so dominated by Vaasa, for a significant proportion were also recruited from Turku & Pori. The explanation for this is probably to be found in the occupations followed by the emigrants before they moved to Australia. Although the entries for "Occupation" in the Australian Naturalization Records refer to the applicant's occupation at the time of application (on average, fifteen years after arrival), many of them state "Former seaman", thus confirming that very many of the Finnish immigrants had travelled to the country before the mast, possibly including a certain number who had deliberately signed on to work their passage to Australia, then either deserting or terminating their contracts on arrival.

The data on routes taken by the immigrants before reaching Australia are incomplete, and thus comprise no more than a sample, but may be used to obtain an overall view of the directions in which the migrants travelled. The majority came direct from Europe, the second largest group travelling by way of North America; those arriving via Oceania consisted in the main of persons coming through New Zealand. The following Table II.4 provides a more detailed analysis of the European routes.

Table II.4: Finnish Male Immigrants Landing in Australia 1851—92 and Subsequently Naturalized: Routes Travelled (NR)

Route	N	%
Direct from Europe	319	76.5
Via North America	47	11.3
Via Latin America	4	0.9
Via Asia	7	1.7
Via Africa	11	2.6
Via Oceania	29	7.0
TOTAL	417	100.0

⁸⁴ Nordisk Emigrationsatlas 1980; KERO 1982, 38.

Table II.5: Finnish Male Immigrants Landing in Australia 1851—92 and Subsequently Naturalized: Routes Travelled from Europe (NR)

Route	N	%
Direct from Finland	58	18.2
Via Scandinavia	17	5.3
Via Britain	217	68.0
Via other European countries (including Russia)	27	8.5
TOTAL	319	100.0

The fact that the majority travelled via the United Kingdom is presumably simply a consequence of the overall British domination of passenger and cargo navigation to Australia. Those travelling directly from Finland presumably did so on Finnish ships (or foreign ships calling at Finnish ports). These were the two shortest routes available. Data are however only available in 68 per cent of the cases. The route via "Russia" presumably includes Siberia. During the period 1826—1888 more than 3300 convicts were transported from Finland to Siberia.⁸⁵ Many of them tried to escape, a few finally ending up in America.⁸⁶ There is no evidence of these convicts in Australia, although the famous Russian Jack (J.F. Sjöroos, see p. 245) used to boast when drunk that he was the famous Finnish murderer Hallin Janne, transported to Siberia.⁸⁷ But it is not impossible that there may have been fugitive Finnish convicts from Siberia among the first Finns in Australia. Through China and Japan there were good sea routes to Australia, and later when the trans-Siberian railway was built at the turn of the century, some Finnish immigrants travelled via this route.

There is no reason to assume that the routes travelled by the other immigrants, for whom this information is not available from the Naturalization Records (approximately one third; cf. the data on date of arrival), would be divergent from those for which we do have information, nor is there any reason to suspect deliberate distortion of the data, since it could have no effect on the applications for naturalization.

The majority of the Finnish immigrants were young on arrival, two thirds of them being aged between twenty and thirty. The number of boys under the age of fifteen (who would presumably have arrived in the company of their parents) is very small. One example is James Andersen, who had arrived in 1861 at the age of four, and in 1896,

⁸⁵ JUNTUNEN 1983, 56.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 152.

⁸⁷ This oral tradition was told to me by old Finnish settlers in northern Queensland in 1970.

when he applied for naturalization, was working as a cook at Kiama, NSW.⁸⁸ The general conclusion is that there was relatively little migration by entire families. By the age of 15, however, a boy was at that time old enough to have gone to sea, and therefore capable of arriving in Australia on his own account. The great majority of the immigrants were however in the age range 20—34, and had moreover in many cases visited other countries and seen the world before settling in Australia. It is possible that many of those who were somewhat older on arrival may have earlier been living in North America or New Zealand. Overall, the migration to Australia is relatively more dominated by young adults than was the case for North America, where there were more children, and more older people. According to KERO's analysis of the passenger lists for emigrants from Finland to America in 1882, 59 per cent were aged 20—35,⁸⁹ compared with the considerably higher figure of 80 per cent obtained here for the Australian migration. The migrants to Australia were thus distinctly younger on average than those going to America. (It is possible that the 1882 figures for America include a certain number who were returning to America, having been there previously, although it would seem unlikely that this proportion would be very high yet by that date.)

Table II.6: Finnish Male Immigrants Landing in Australia 1851—92 and Subsequently Naturalized: Age on Arrival (NR)

Years	N	%
0—14	11	1.9
15—19	67	11.5
20—24	223	38.1
25—29	182	31.1
30—34	84	14.4
35—39	2	0.3
40—49	13	2.2
50—59	3	0.5
TOTAL	585	100.0

⁸⁸ NSW NR 1896/13/155.

⁸⁹ KERO 1974, 233—235.

Table II.7: Finnish Male Immigrants Landing in Australia 1851—92 and Subsequently Naturalized: Destination Area on Arrival by Colonies (NR)

Place of Landing	N	%
New South Wales	130	41.0
Victoria	116	36.6
Queensland	15	4.7
South Australia	46	14.6
Western Australia	3	0.9
Tasmania	7	2.2
TOTAL	317	100.0

In over half of the cases for these early arrivals, the location in Australia to which they first went is known. These data indicate that three quarters of the Finnish immigrants in the 19th century moved first into New South Wales or Victoria: in practice, Sydney or Melbourne; nor is this surprising, since these two Colonies were the longest-established European settlements in Australia, as well as being major seaports and the locations of the main 19th-century gold fields.

New South Wales was the Colony most favoured by the Finnish immigrants in the 19th century, with about a third of the total Finnish population in Australia, a fact largely due to the dominance of Sydney. The second most favoured Colony was Victoria, with its gold fields and also with the important city and port of Melbourne. Queensland, which in the next few decades was to become a major area of Finnish-Australian settlement, was at this time still relatively ignored. The Finns in South Australia, Tasmania, and Western Australia mainly consisted of ex-seamen who had settled where they came ashore, whereas there are no documented reports of Finns in Western Australia before the 1890s (it may be assumed that there were a few seamen or dock labourers in Fremantle and the other ports).⁹⁰

Table II.8: Finnish Male Immigrants Landing in Australia 1851—92 and Subsequently Naturalized: Area of Longest Residence by Colonies (NR)

Place of Residence	N	%
New South Wales	125	47.7
Victoria	70	26.7
Queensland	16	6.1
South Australia	18	6.9
Western Australia	24	9.2
Tasmania	9	3.4
TOTAL	262	100.0

⁹⁰ The Colonial period Naturalization Records for Western Australia are regrettably incomplete.

A comparison of the area of first settlement and the area of longest residence reveals, however, that Victoria and South Australia functioned to some extent as transit areas for new arrivals, who then moved on into Western Australia or Queensland, the Finnish internal migration rate within Australia being high, mainly due to the mobile labourers and ex-seamen.

The migration movement from Finland to Australia in the 19th century closely resembles that to North America in terms of the areas from which the emigrants were recruited, and movements into these two continents must be seen and examined as parallel and in many ways similar phenomena. Nonetheless, there are certain distinctive features of the Australian movement. Firstly, despite the fact that the first passports for Australia were issued in Vaasa Province, the Australian sources show that the geographical recruitment of the emigrants was less dominated by Vaasa than was the case in the American emigration. There were a significant proportion of emigrants to Australia who originated from the more southerly areas of the western Finnish seaboard, especially from Turku & Pori Province, reflecting the high proportion of seamen involved in the movement to Australia. Secondly, notwithstanding an early predominance of emigrants from the Swedish-speaking belt in central Ostrobothnia, there were also emigrants from Finnish-speaking areas to the north of this, e.g. several ship-builders from Raahe (Brahestad). Before 1893, altogether 39 emigrants from Raahe are known to have come to Australia; in the period 1893—1906, there were another seven: yet from 1906 to 1947, not one. Possibly Australia offered better opportunities for seamen and ship-builders than did America; moreover, it was relatively easy for men in these occupations to circumvent the expensive fare to Australia by working their passage, since while elsewhere sail was rapidly being completely replaced by steam, Australia survived as the last outpost of navigation by sail right up to the verge of the Second World War.

Notwithstanding the central role played by seamen in the early stages of Finnish immigration in Australia, there were also ordinary settlers who made their way from Finland to the far-off southern continent, whether by the direct route, or by way of America or some other part of the world. Although Australia offered opportunities for ordinary settlers parallel to those offered by other countries of settlement, the length and expense of the journey prevented it from seriously competing with the appeal of North America. Only the pull of the Gold Rush in the 1850s, and possibly the rapid expansion of the Australian economy in the 1880s, provided for a time the attraction needed to lure ordinary emigrants to try their fortune under the Southern Cross.

4. Matti Kurikka and 'Kalevan Kansa': the Utopian Project in Queensland, 1899—1900

(1) Introduction

The Depression which hit Australia in the 1890s affected Queensland less than it did the Colonies to the south. There was plenty of employment available for whites in Queensland at the end of the century, particularly in the mines, on the railways, on the opal fields, etc. By far the most important employment available, however, was the clearance of land for arable farming, especially for sugar cane.⁹¹ This crop had long been grown in Australia, but it was not until the end of the 19th century that its cultivation developed into an agricultural industry. Initially, starting in 1863, the necessary manpower for the sugar cane and cotton plantations had been supplied by bringing Pacific Islanders, *Kanakas*, to Queensland.⁹² It was still widely believed at that time that white men were unsuited to heavy manual labour in the tropics. The *Kanakas*, often virtually press-ganged from their islands, were offered to the willing plantation owners. Once their indentured years were complete, they were supposed to be returned to their islands, taking their savings with them. Although these agreements were sometimes broken, in time the authorities were able to alleviate the more serious injustices. Following Federation in 1901, the adoption of the White Australia policy was intended to prevent the further use of Kanaka labour in Queensland as well as to fend off the threat of a flood of immigration from Asia. Only in the period since World War I, however, has a fully white labour force been achieved in the Queensland sugar cane industry.⁹³

Schemes offering assistance to settlers were developed and introduced by the Government of Queensland from the middle of the 19th century onwards. As reported by KLEINSCHMIDT, any person resident in Queensland could effectively import immigrants into the Colony, by paying £4 per adult and £2 per child under the age of 12. In 1860, Queensland's first Legislative Assembly set aside £5000 for this purpose: part of this sum was to be used to pay subsidies to settlers, and part was

⁹¹ KLEINSCHMIDT 1951, 149—150.

⁹² EVANS, SAUNDERS & CRONIN 1975, 149; See also BOLTON 1963, 135—157.

⁹³ "Australia kehittää sokerinviljelystään, Suomalaisia runsaasti työntekijöinä ja myös itsenäisinä farmareina [Australia develops her sugar cultivation; Many Finns involved both as labourers and as independent farmers]", "Queenslandin suomalaiset [The Finns of Queensland]", Papers of Urpo Kokkonen TYYH/S/X/7/IV.

intended to cover the cost of travelling for domestic servants and farm labourers. An Immigration Agent was appointed in the United Kingdom to recruit the settlers. This Act of the Assembly was a temporary measure, but in fact a similar scheme had already been in operation since 1857.⁹⁴

As this indicates, Queensland did also attempt to attract immigration from Europe, especially of farm labour; and when it proved impossible to recruit enough immigrants from the British Isles, the scheme was extended to include people coming from the Continent. By 1871, when the first Scandinavian immigrants arrived in Brisbane from Hamburg, there had already been considerable immigration by Germans during the 1860s. (LYNG states that prior to 1871 there had in practice been no Scandinavians in Brisbane at all.)⁹⁵

The rapidly expansion of the Queensland economy in the 1890s led to a serious shortage of labour, especially in agriculture and in domestic service, leading to revival of the earlier schemes for recruiting immigrant labour from Europe. In August 1896, the Queensland Legislative Assembly passed a bill to promote the recruitment of immigrants, and especially of agricultural labourers. Earlier experience led to the Colonial Government proceeding with caution, especially in view of the objections raised by the opposition Labor Party.⁹⁶

Hardly had the scheme been set up, however, before the Colony's Agent in the UK informed the Government that owing to the booming condition of the British economy, there were few people interested in emigrating to Queensland. Emigration to the other Colonies in Australia, to New Zealand, and to America had also decreased; the most popular destination at that time, stated the Agent, was South Africa, thanks to its relative closeness and the cheapness of the journey. Another factor militating against emigration was attacks on emigration in the press, particularly in Ireland. As a consequence of the difficulties being experienced in the recruitment of immigrants, Queensland began in 1899 to offer passages to the Colony completely free of charge. Farm labourers and domestic servants were particularly encouraged to come. Difficulties continued to be faced in recruiting from the British Isles, however, since Canada presented a more attractive alternative, while the Irish preferred the United States. With the outbreak in 1899 of the Boer War, moreover, jobs were being made available within Britain by the young men recruited into the Army. Nor did it prove easy to attract immigrants from the Continent of Europe. With the exception of Italy, the Governments of the European countries were opposed to

⁹⁴ KLEINSCHMIDT 1951, 13.

⁹⁵ LYNG 1901, 174; JACKSON 1959, BORRIE 1954, 168—169.

⁹⁶ KLEINSCHMIDT 1951, 151.

emigration. It is thus hardly surprising that the Government of Queensland early turned its attention to the Nordic countries. Immigration from Germany was not favoured, for fear of further expansion of the already considerable German minority in the Colony. Germany under the Kaiser was following an active colonial policy, and had claimed a large part of New Guinea in 1884. It is however difficult to assess to what extent Queensland's immigration policy was affected by the perceived German threat, and to what extent by the rising might of Asia, especially of Japan. There can be no doubt, as NIITEMAA has emphasized, that along with the genuine local need for labour, these factors were of very considerable impact.⁹⁷ These external threats to Australia similarly played a crucial role, alongside the needs generated by the internal evolution of the country, in leading to Federation in 1901.

In addition to the German immigration, there had been a steady flow of Scandinavians into Queensland ever since the 1870s. The Scandinavians were well thought of as settlers in Australia, and there were emigrants from Denmark, Sweden, and Norway who chose to make their way there. Their Governments, however, regarded the Australian immigration schemes with suspicion, partly as a consequence of unfortunate experiences with earlier schemes for the recruitment of settlers for South America and Hawaii.⁹⁸

In Finland, the attempts to recruit new settlers aroused a more encouraging response. The repressive measures of the Russian Tsarist Government, which led in time to the February Manifesto of 1899, were driving many in Finland to look overseas for opportunities of political liberty and a better standard of living in the new countries. The peak in Finnish emigration occurred in 1902, when over 23 000 people left the country, mainly heading for America.⁹⁹

While most of the emigration took place spontaneously and at the individual level, the idea also arose of establishing an organized Finnish settlement overseas. The first choice seemed to be Canada, which was at that time actively soliciting settlers from Finland; both Newfoundland and British Columbia were mentioned as alternatives. In the summer of 1899, a special commission was sent from Finland for Canada to investigate the scheme. The backers of this "New Finland" project, however, were mainly middle-class and politically conservative, and thus failed to win the support of the socialists. For a variety of reasons, it never came to fruition.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ NIITEMAA 1971, 165.

⁹⁸ See KLEINSCHMIDT 1951, 155; BEIJBOM 1983, 154—156.

⁹⁹ TOIVONEN 1963, 125—126, Table 1; KERO 1974, 63.

¹⁰⁰ NIITEMAA 1971, 164—165.

Within the Finnish labour movement, attention turned instead to Australia, and in particular to Queensland. With an area three times the size of Finland, the Colony had a population at this time of only around half a million. In 1899, a Labor Government came to power in the Colony, even if only briefly; and in Finland the left-wing paper *Työmies*, one of the voices encouraging emigration to Australia, wrote warmly of the conditions of the working class in Queensland, emphasizing the short working hours and the arbitration system; it looked as if the emergent "United States of Australia" was going to fulfill the ideals borne by the European labour movement.¹⁰¹ Matti Kurikka's socialist utopian idealism found warm support, and so began the first moves towards the concrete realization of the dream in Australia.

(2) The Origins of Matti Kurikka's 'Kalevan Kansa' Colony

The considerations set out above were probably the same ones that were in the mind of Matti Kurikka (1863—1915), one of the leading figures of the Finnish socialist movement at that time. (He was the fifth-generation descendant of Niilo Kurikka, a smallholder who had moved into Ingermanland in 1694.)¹⁰² Matti Kurikka studied for a time at the University of Helsinki, and was attracted in his thinking to utopian socialism, a movement which attracted support in many parts of the world during the 19th century, and led to a number of attempts to set up communities operating on socialist and related principles. Kurikka became a journalist, working first for *Viipurin Sanomat* (a regional paper published in Vyborg), from 1888 to 1894, and then becoming Editor of the socialist paper *Työmies*. ('The Worker') in 1897. After some of his articles had aroused considerable contention, he resigned from this position in the spring of 1899, and in May of the same year placed an announcement in the press calling a meeting of people interested in establishing a Finnish colony in Australia.¹⁰³ About 800 people responded to the announcement, and a settlers' association under the name of Kalevan Kansa ("The People of Kaleva") was established, with Matti Kurikka elected as the first President.¹⁰⁴

The subsidies for immigrants offered by the Queensland Government were known about in Finland: e.g. free passages from London to Australia, etc. In return, the settlers, who had to be in good health and

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 166; see also KOIVUKANGAS 1972.

¹⁰² Interview with Osmo T. Linnoila, Helsinki, 12 Dec. 1985.

¹⁰³ *Työmies*, 12 May 1899; for Kurikka's biography; see also HAUTAMÄKI 1944, 9—54.

¹⁰⁴ *Työmies*, 19 May 1899; NIITEMAA 1971, 169.

aged between 17 and 35, were required to bind themselves to remain in the Colony for at least one year.¹⁰⁵ The journey from Helsinki to London would cost 52 marks, and the charge from London onwards would be no more than 25 marks (to cover food and bedding).

Despite the enormous initial interest in the Queensland project, only 180 people actually set out.¹⁰⁶ It is difficult to assess how many of these were genuine supporters of Kurikka's ideas; according to one source, there were 78 of these.¹⁰⁷ Kurikka arrived in Brisbane on 2 October 1899, and (in accordance with instructions from London) was well received.¹⁰⁸ He had been offered 3000 marks by the Queensland Government if he would write a book in Finnish about the Colony, which is clear evidence that the Government was placing hopes on future Finnish immigration.¹⁰⁹ There were other Finns as well travelling at the same time as Kurikka; he describes them as follows:

"Five of the Finns are unmarried boys, splendid lads, who think the same way I do; the sixth — a married man — a simple religious Lestadian pietist from Ostrobothnia . . ."¹¹⁰

From a postcard he sent later, it emerges that there were also three children, thus making a total of ten Finnish passengers.¹¹¹

Even before the year was out, however, the Finnish settlers ran into difficulties. Complaints had been made to the Queensland authorities; and according to the local Immigration Agent, they were discontented, lazy, and arrogant.¹¹² At this point the Queensland Government terminated assisted passages for Finns, in view of the difficulties experienced in dealing with the Finnish settlers.¹¹³ In the Immigration Agent's Report for the Year, the following account is given:

¹⁰⁵ *Työmies*, 3 June 1899.

¹⁰⁶ The immigration authorities give the number of Finns as 175. Immigration Agent's Report for the Year 1899, V&P QLD 1900, Vol. V, 676.

The passenger lists (Register of Migrants Arriving on Immigrant Ships entering Queensland, 5 Jan. 1899—30 March 1906, QA 46/16) show 174 persons of Finnish nationality and one possibly Finnish name (Carl Backman) with no entry for nationality. The figure of 175 is thus presumably correct. (Agent-General's Report for 1899, V&P QLD 1900, II, 572; *ibid.*, 1901, IV, 1056.

¹⁰⁷ Letter from Department of Immigration, Brisbane, 3 Oct 1899, to the Under Secretary, Chief Secretary's Department, "Emigration from Finland to Queensland", QA, (8344), in-letter 9063/1899, PRE/A 37.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ Letter from Matti Kurikka, London, 4 Aug 1899, to his daughter Aili Kurikka, Nurmes, papers of Osmo T. Linnoila, Helsinki.

¹¹⁰ Letter from Matti Kurikka, Kuopio, 14 Aug 1899, to Aili Kurikka, Nurmes, papers of Osmo T. Linnoila, Helsinki.

¹¹¹ Postcard from Kurikka, 18 Aug 1899, to Rob. Kajanus, Helsinki, papers of Osmo T. Linnoila, Helsinki.

¹¹² Letter from J. Brenan, Brisbane, 29 Dec 1899, to the Assistant Immigration Agent, Bundaberg, and reply by Mr H. St Geo. Caulfeild, 6 Jan 1900 (in-letter 2214/1900, QA, PRE/A 48).

¹¹³ Letter from J. Brenan, Brisbane, 8 Jan 1900, to the Under Secretary, Chief Secretary's Department; Letter from the Queensland Government Office, London, 15 Jan 1900, confirming telegram of same date, in-letter 2214/1900, QA, PRE/A 48.

The difficulty with Finns seems to be their slowness in adapting themselves to colonial conditions. In special circumstances their knowledge of farming, coupled with much steadiness of character and conduct, have earned them golden opinions with employers, but certain peculiarities of temperament and temper, added to a singular inability to acquire even the most rudimentary knowledge of English, have made many employers cautious about entering into engagement with them.¹¹⁴

What grounds there may have been for the termination of assistance to Finnish settlers other than those outlined above is difficult to determine. It should be mentioned that the Melbourne Scandinavian paper *Norden* commented that although it had representatives and agents all over Queensland, no complaints against the Finns had been reported anywhere. *Norden* suspected political pressures, and drew attention to the recent case of the British consuls in Finland, themselves Finns, who had been forbidden by the British Government to become involved with any anti-Russian demonstrations. There was more happening behind the scenes than was usually realized, commented *Norden*.¹¹⁵

At the Reception Dépôt for immigrants in Brisbane, the Finns were issued with railway tickets to various different parts of the Colony, in order to reconnoitre for land and jobs. Most of them found employment either inland, on the railway line being built to the mines, or in the cane plantations in the north. In Brisbane, Kurikka went to work in a mill, using the name Math. K. Club (the Finnish word *kurikka* means 'a club or cudgel'), wishing to avoid the Government's agents.¹¹⁶ His plan was to save up enough capital to be able to buy land on the coast for a community home. He was thrilled by the sense of liberty, after the restrictions suffered in Finland;¹¹⁷ for liberty was what he had come in quest of. He wrote with delight to his daughter:

"Here there is complete liberty. No one asks for anyone's papers; no one is asked where he comes from, only what he is capable of. There is complete freedom of religion, and no censorship at all."¹¹⁸

His objective was to create a new society, in which all would be mutual brothers, and where liberty and love would prevail. Work, food, studies and leisure activities would be done in common, and each member would subordinate his own interests to those of the community. The 'Kalevan Kansa' community was thus based on socialist ideology.

Kurikka was employed together with a gang of twenty other men on a gang making railway sleepers near Chillagoe. Karhula records that the

¹¹⁴ Immigration Agent's Report for the Year 1899, V&P QLD 1900, Vol. V, 676.

¹¹⁵ *Norden*, 7 April 1900.

¹¹⁶ Letter, from Matti Kurikka, Brisbane, 19 Nov. 1899, to his daughter Aili Kurikka, papers of Osmo T. Linnoila, Helsinki; See also NIITEMAA 1971, 180—181; and WILSON 1980, 9.

¹¹⁷ LINNOILA 1933, 121—122.

¹¹⁸ Letter from Matti Kurikka, Brisbane, Nov 1899 (day indecipherable), to his daughter Aili Kurikka, papers of Osmo T. Linnoila, Helsinki.

construction of the line from Mareeba to Chillagoe began at the end of December 1899, and Kurikka had gone there with about fifty other Finns. They sub-contracted for the work they did, but claimed to have been cheated on the payments.¹¹⁹

Kurikka's Queensland utopia, 'El Dorado', however, never got further than a group of ten tents pitched near the railway line in Chillagoe while they were employed making the railway sleepers. There is no trace in the records of the Queensland Land Department of any selection of land being made for the Finnish colony to settle on. The sources do not record how long the tent village at Chillagoe lasted, but by June 1900 the group had probably split up; this is implied by statements published in the *Sydney Bulletin*, where Kurikka stated that he had been in Australia for eight months, and complained that he had been let down by the Queensland Government's promises of land and subsidies, and disillusioned by the hostility encountered, by the coarse behaviour and the drinking.¹²⁰

The main purpose of the article in the *Bulletin* was to attack the Labor Government in Queensland, and the Melbourne Scandinavian paper *Norden* therefore wrote to the Government in Queensland on 23 July 1900, asking for further comments.¹²¹ In his reply, dated 24 September 1900, the Queensland Immigration Agent, Mr J. Brennan, offers a full account of the arrival of the Finns in Queensland, which goes far towards explaining the Government's attitude.

Brennan points out firstly that Kurikka had arrived at the end of 1899 either with the first Finnish parties or soon after them; thereafter other parties of Finns had continued to arrive, and Kurikka had been understood to be, or had presented himself as, their leader. Their intention had apparently been to establish one or more settlements on a communist or socialist basis — or maybe merely on the basis of Mr Kurikka's fantasies. Referring to the statements in the *Bulletin* article that the Finns had been shamefully treated, and left to fend for themselves, Brennan points out that they had been warmly received, and had been offered board and lodging at the Reception Dépôt for immigrants for as long as was needed. They had been provided with railway tickets to different parts of the Colony to investigate the possibilities of acquiring land, and once they had made a selection, they would have had full rights to take it up, for merely nominal payment.

¹¹⁹ "Nambourin suomalaiset [The Finns at Nambour]". TYYH/S/X/7/III.

¹²⁰ *The Bulletin*, 21 July 1900; see also *Elämä*, 30 Dec 1905, reprinting an article in which Kurikka describes the primitive conditions at the campsite; and a letter from Matti Kurikka, Brisbane, 24 March 1900, to his daughter Aili Kurikka, papers of Osmo T. Linnoila, Helsinki.

¹²¹ This article was republished in *Norden* in Danish, 11 Aug 1900. *Norden* also commented that one reason for the language and other difficulties encountered by the Finnish settlers was the lack of Finns in Queensland prior to this.

Only eleven of the Finns had taken up land, however, near Nambour; Mr Brenan considered their prospects encouraging. They were also keen to invite their relatives to join them through the "nominated immigrant" scheme. Many of the Finns had found work on the construction of the railway line, and others on the cane farms in the north. Replying to the statement in the *Bulletin* article that some of the Finns at Chillagoe had been making sleepers for a mere two shillings and sixpence a day, Brenan quotes a letter from a Swede there, in which it is said that no one was working for less than ten shillings' wages a day (although it is possible that Brenan had not realized that the Finns had been subcontracting).

Brenan also replies to the complaint in the *Bulletin* article that the Finns should have been given good land on favourable terms and close to the markets. He points out that seven or eight previous co-operatives in Queensland had failed. Kurikka's project was thus by no means a unique enterprise in the region. Brenan also makes a comparison with the "New Australia" project: in 1893, William Lane (1861—1917), a journalist and reformer, together with two hundred followers, had founded a utopian community named "New Australia", in Paraguay.¹²²

Brenan comments:

As for Mr Kurikka [sic] himself he seems, so far as I can gather, to be generally recognized amongst his co-immigrants from Finland in somewhat the same light as Mr William Lane came to be viewed after the Paraguayan fiasco, -viz.,- as an honest well-meaning theorist and enthusiast; in short, as far as the matter in hand goes, a hopelessly impractical faddist.

The attitude of the Queensland Government towards the Finnish settlers is summed up by Brenan by pointing out that there was plenty of land available in Queensland — as the *Bulletin* had also emphasized — but that this was not intended for socialist or other experiments at the nation's expense. The Immigration Agent closes by stating that only 175 Finns had come to Queensland, and that it was not the Government's intention at that time to bring any more members of that nationality.¹²³

Norden published Brenan's reply on 3 November 1900, without adding any comment. The views of the Queensland Government in this matter were therefore now known; it is much harder, however, to trace any further comment from the Finnish side. In 1904, Liinus R. Nyström wrote an article about the history of the "Kalevan Kansa" project in *Orpo* (the handwritten paper published by the Finnish community at Nambour). In this he claims that when the spokesman for Kalevan Kansa (i.e. Kurikka) put their case to the Queensland Government, he

¹²² See SCOTT 1964, 439; LARKINS 1980, 138.

¹²³ Letter from Department of Immigration, Brisbane, 24 Sep. 1900, to the Under Secretary, Chief Secretary's Department, QA, 10134, in-letter 11278/1900, PRE/A/73.

was given to understand that the Government had no land available for them. Nyström also suggests that part of the reason for the failure was that the spokesman for Kalevan Kansa, being reliant on an interpreter, was unable to present the project to the Government intelligibly.¹²⁴

There are conflicting accounts of Kurikka's language skills. In the issue of *Orpo* dated 16 December 1903, I.O. Peurala has an article in which he reminisces about the arrival of the Finns at Mareeba, where some of them spent the night in a brushwood shelter intended for pigs. Their leader had been a tall, bearded man, who was able to speak English. It appears that Kurikka must have acquired his knowledge of English during the voyage to Australia and the ten months he had spent there. He seems to have picked up the language quickly, since he states in November of 1899 that he could already read a newspaper with the aid of a dictionary.¹²⁵ On the other hand, language skills are a relative concept; in comparison with the other Finns, maybe Kurikka could indeed "speak English".

Despite the failure to realize their socialist ideals in Australia, the Finnish emigrants in other parts of the world did not give up hope. The Finnish immigrants in Canada were open to utopian ideas, which promised a better future for underpaid Finnish coal miners and their comrades. All that was needed was the leader who could guide them to the community of equality and co-operation,¹²⁶ and in Australia they found him, for on 8 April 1900 the Finns in Vancouver wrote inviting Matti Kurikka to join them, and subsequently sent the money for his fare.¹²⁷ In August, Kurikka started for Vancouver; in a letter to his daughter in Finland dated 13 September 1900, he writes that he is now leaving Australia, "this marvellous country governed by thieves".¹²⁸ He was followed to Canada by a few of the other Finns.¹²⁹ Eventually, Kurikka did succeed in founding a community, named *Sointula* ('Harmony'), on Malcolm Island; this survived only for a few years on the basis of his utopian socialist ideals, but has continued as a Finnish settlement to the present day.

There have been Finnish utopian colonies founded in other parts of

¹²⁴ *Orpo*, 30 April 1904.

¹²⁵ Letter from Matti Kurikka, Brisbane, Nov 1899 (day indecipherable), to his daughter Aili Kurikka, papers of Osmo T. Linnoila, Helsinki.

¹²⁶ KOLEHMAINEN 1941, 112; WILSON 1973, 3. See also RAIVIO 1975, I:373—377. The best survey, however, is Matti HALMINEN, *Sointula: Kalevan kansan ja Kanadan suomalaisten historiaa*, Mikkeli 1936.

¹²⁷ KOLEHMAINEN 1941, 113.

¹²⁸ Letter from Matti Kurikka, Brisbane, 13 Sep 1900, to his daughter Aili Kurikka, papers of Osmo T. Linnoila, Helsinki.

¹²⁹ HALMINEN 1936, 16—18.

the world, on a variety of grounds: e.g. the settlements by Finnish nationalists in Argentina and Cuba, and by vegetarians in the Dominican Republic and Brazil. Religion and climate have also played a role. Altogether, there have been about a dozen Finnish utopian colonies set up in different parts of the world, of which remnants survive in some places; only one, a Finnish *kibbutz* in Israel, is still in operation.¹³⁰

(3) The Reasons for the Failure of 'Kalevan Kansa'

As Brenan explained in the comprehensive statement referred to above, the Queensland Government saw 'Kalevan Kansa' simply as one more in a series of unsuccessful socialist or co-operative experiments, and Kurikka himself was seen as a well-intentioned, but incompetent dreamer. The Colonial Government was also unwilling to finance socialist experiments at the public expense.¹³¹

In fact, however, the Queensland Government had itself experimented with collective settlement in 1893—95. The 1893 Act had offered two ways in which a collective settlement might be set up: either as autonomous communities, or under the authority of the Governor. The latter form was intended for those with little means, rather than in order to establish strict control by the Government. In order to set up a community, there must be at least 30 members, each of which would be provided with 160 acres of land. The experiment in group settlement failed, however, owing to the faulty selection of land and irregular subsidies, etc.¹³²

It emerges in a letter by Kurikka in *Työmies* at the end of 1899 that the plans for setting up a 'colony' had not made any progress in negotiations with the Queensland immigration authorities.¹³³ Kurikka believed that one reason was the distraction caused by the Boer War. A more general reason, however, emphasized by NIITEMAA, would have been the prevailing depression then affecting Australia. Kurikka therefore found it wiser to abandon further attempts for the time being, and took work in a factory under the assumed name of "Math K. Club", as mentioned earlier (p. 88).¹³⁴

Although the underlying reasons for the failure may be the depression

¹³⁰ PELTONIEMI 1985, 195—203.

¹³¹ Letter from the Department of Immigration, Brisbane 24.9.1900, to the Under Secretary, Chief Secretary's Department, QA 10134, in-letter 11278/1900, PRE/A 73.

¹³² KLEINSCHMIDT 1951, 141—144.

¹³³ *Työmies*, 29 Dec. 1899.

¹³⁴ NIITEMAA 1971, 180—181; letter from Matti Kurikka, Brisbane, 19 Nov. 1899, to his daughter Aili Kurikka, papers of Osmo T. Linnoila, Helsinki.

or inadequate Government aid, the immediate causes are to be sought in Kurikka himself and his followers. In an account of Kurikka's second colony, in Canada, KOLEHMAINEN gives the following picture:

. . . he was a gifted leader, possessing remarkable powers of persuasion, and a keen intellect. But overbalancing these attributes were serious shortcomings. Kurikka was obstinate and headstrong, impatient and restless. He loved to write, speculate, and argue, but he was sadly lacking in practical ability to translate his ideas into action. He was inept and clumsy as an organizer and administrator. It was easy for Kurikka to make enemies, difficult for him to hold friends. Irreconcilable differences of opinion over questions of policy, the constitution of the colony, the status of private property, the position of women, the education of children, and other questions divided the leader from many in his flock.¹³⁵

One of the reasons for the failure quoted by Aino Hirmukallio (i.e. derived from oral tradition) was Kurikka's attitude towards women. Kurikka was divorced; he liked women, and women liked him. Their husbands, however, had other ideas, and his frequent affairs caused constant friction.¹³⁶

Quite apart from Kurikka's own personality, however, the single most significant reason for the failure was probably the fact that the members of his group were neither familiar with hard physical labour, nor had they the capital needed to start up a new way of life. The group was very mixed, with members drawn from all walks of life. Many of them were young men from the city, who came in a spirit of adventure and to escape political pressures, but whose attitude to life was too casual and who had no experience of manual labour. Their dreams soon faded in the tropical heat of northern Queensland. Since most of them knew no English, Australian employers were also unwilling to take them on. It would also appear that the Finnish group included some people whose mental health was unstable, since Brennan mentions in the Immigration Agent's Report that two of the Finns had had nervous breakdowns.¹³⁷

(4) The Finnish Settlement at Nambour

In 1926, the historian of the Scandinavian immigrants, LYNG, wrote that very little was known of Finns in Australia before the arrival in 1900 of several hundred Finnish communists, whose extreme opinions had got them into trouble with the Russian authorities; they had therefore fled to Queensland, and settled at a place called Bli Bli, near Nambour, three hours' journey by train to the north of Brisbane.

¹³⁵ KOLEHMAINEN 1941, 121.

¹³⁶ Interview with Aino Hirmukallio, Brisbane, 15 and 17 June 1970.

¹³⁷ Letter from the Immigration Agent, Brennan, Brisbane 25 June 1900, to the Under Secretary, Chief Secretary's Department, QA in-letter 6781/1900, QA, PRE/A 60.

Gradually their communist enthusiasm had waned, and their leader, one Kurikka, had been deported from the Colony. After some initial difficulties, the community of Finnish cane growers at Nambour had prospered, and gradually attracted increasing numbers of later Finnish immigrants.¹³⁸

LYNG's information was faulty with respect to Kurikka's deportation, who had left voluntarily following internal disagreements, and the "hundreds of communists" he quotes are an exaggeration; he is right, however, in his report that some of Kurikka's followers settled at Nambour, where they joined other Finns who had settled there immediately on their arrival from Finland.

By September 1900, there were eleven Finns clearing land for sugar cane cultivation, and some of them were speaking of bringing relatives to join them; and by 1902—04 the Finns at Nambour had set up their own local Finnish association and were publishing the handwritten paper *Orpo*, which will be discussed in greater detail below.

Despite the termination of assisted passages from London for Finnish settlers, those already in the Colony were entitled to make use of the "nominated settler" scheme, under which they could bring relatives or acquaintances to join them if they paid part of the fares, the Government paying the rest. The passenger lists of the immigrant ships entering Queensland show a number of Finns coming to Australia at the beginning of the century.¹³⁹ Furthermore, there were also those immigrants who paid their own fares, and the seamen who came ashore. For many of these new arrivals, Nambour was the first stop in the new country: a place where one could find a first job, and learn about conditions, before possibly moving on somewhere else.

Kurikka's 'Kalevan Kansa' ideology stayed alive for a long time among the Finns of Nambour. SARIOLA has drawn attention to a current of theosophy and *Kalevala*-based mysticism among the Finnish-American immigrants, the roots of which partly lie in Kurikka's thinking, and which has been little investigated.¹⁴⁰ It is also perhaps no coincidence that when a former Socialist member of the Finnish Diet called Basil Suosaari arrived in Australia in 1911, it was at Bli Bli, near Nambour, where he settled. Nambour gradually emerged as an important centre of Finnish settlement for both Queensland and Australia as a whole.

Moreover, chain migration continued to bring new blood into Nambour for several decades. Leo Hirmukallio stresses that Matti

¹³⁸ *Norden*, 25 Sep 1926; see also LYNG 1927, 139.

¹³⁹ Register of Migrants Arriving on Immigrant Ships entering Queensland 5 Jan 1899—30 Mar 1906, QA 46/16.

¹⁴⁰ SARIOLA 1982, 89.

Kurikka's scheme provided a vital stimulus to migration from Finland to Australia, and that during the decade 1910—1920 there was a large inflow of young men,¹⁴¹ of whom Hirmukallio himself was one (arriving in 1911 after graduating from high school in Orimattila). The descendants of Kurikka's fellow-colonists are still to be found in the region, including some old folk who were among the children who came with the Kalevan Kansa party.¹⁴² In the 1920s, there were former followers of Kurikka still living not only at Nambour, but also at Yandina and Cooroy.¹⁴³

Some of the members of the abandoned utopia moved on, to America, New Zealand, or elsewhere; others made their way back to Finland. Almost half of the Finnish immigrants arriving in Australia in 1899—1900 eventually moved on, the majority to North America. NIITEMAA had traced approximately 30 Finns who came to Nambour in 1899—1900, including both Kurikka's followers and others; of these, eight later went to America, two to New Zealand, and three returned to Finland.¹⁴⁴ Since the re-migration rate of the Nambour Finns overall was around half, it is likely that following Kurikka's departure for Canada an even higher proportion of his followers moved on.

Further evidence of a very high re-migration rate is provided by the fact that of the 92 Finnish men aged over fifteen (i.e. potential candidates for naturalization) recorded in the Queensland Immigrant Passenger Lists for 1899—1900, only 12 names have been subsequently traced in the Naturalization Records. At the time, on the other hand, Kurikka's party did swell the Finnish population in Australia very considerably. The Queensland Census for 1901 records 197 Finland-born persons, of whom 45 were women, whereas in 1886, the Finland-born population had been only 81 and had included only one woman.¹⁴⁵ The increase in women is particularly striking. It is however likely that not all the Finns were registered as such in the Census, some of them probably being classified as Russian and some as Swedish.

Since the 1886 Census recorded eighty Finns, the older Finnish community in Queensland (largely consisting of ex-seamen) must have numbered over one hundred. Kurikka and his fellow-immigrants, totalling just under two hundred, had arrived a year previously, and by 1901 only Kurikka himself and maybe some of his closest disciples had left Australia. The 1899—1900 arrivals must thus have comprised something like half the total Finnish population in Queensland at that time, which may be estimated at about three hundred in all. An

¹⁴¹ *SS*, 2/1945.

¹⁴² E.g. Mrs Hilma Weston, née Anderson, whom I met in Nambour on 24 Feb 1981.

¹⁴³ Letter from Katri Hoipo, Somersby, 3 Sep. 1970, to Olavi Koivukangas, Canberra, SI.

¹⁴⁴ NIITEMAA 1971, 254—260.

¹⁴⁵ Census of Queensland 1886, Part I, 366 and 1901, Part IV, 128.

additional significant factor was the arrival of young couples and of families, thus creating the basis for Finnish settlement on a more permanent basis.

5. The Impact of Australian Economic Expansion on Immigration, 1893—1920

The evolution of Australia during the period at the end of the 19th century leading up to Federation in 1901 may best be described by the two words 'unification' and 'prosperity'. Between 1880 and 1901, the population of the continent grew from 2.3 million to 3.8 million. A depression had affected Australia in the early 1890s, followed in the middle of the decade by one of its worst droughts; unemployment had been high, and net migration very low. By the end of the century, however, the employment situation had begun to improve. It was nevertheless difficult to find emigrants interested in setting out for Australia.

At the end of the century, the Queensland Government extended its assisted passages scheme to cover immigrants from continental Europe, including Scandinavia. As explained above, under this scheme Finns were also eligible in 1899—1900 for free passages from Britain to Queensland, thus creating a direct link between official Australian immigration policy and the actual emigration from Finland to Australia. The significance of a free passage from London to Queensland may be shown by a comparison of the prevailing commercial fares in 1902: from Hanko, Finland, to New York, a ticket cost 195 Finnmarks; to South Africa, 340 marks; to Australia, 505 marks; and to New Zealand (in 1901) 550 marks.¹⁴⁶ The high cost of the ticket was the single most powerful reason why migration to Australia and New Zealand was so much lower than that to North America. A second reason proposed by KERO was the failure to establish the "pre-paid ticket" system; he has not traced a single example of a pre-paid ticket for Australia, New Zealand, or South Africa in the records of the Finnish Steamship Company from the period before the First World War.¹⁴⁷ There were presumably few prospective emigrants who had relatives or friends already in Australia capable of paying prices such as these. Even for the later period 1921—39, only a very few pre-paid tickets have been traced

¹⁴⁶ KERO 1974, 173, based on Passenger Lists, SHO.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 174.

for Australia in the Passenger Lists of the Finnish Steamship Company.

It would appear that the Queensland Government was interested in encouraging extensive immigration from the Scandinavian countries, as can be seen from a book written in Swedish (by the Finland-born immigrant P. Olsson-Seffer) and published in Brisbane in 1902 with the purpose of attracting immigrants.¹⁴⁸ This account of life in Queensland had been commissioned by the State Government; in the Foreword, the author states that he had been requested to write it by the Premier. BEIJBOM points out that this was the first book published in Swedish in Australia.¹⁴⁹

In view of the length and expense of the journey, the British Colonies in Australia had initiated assisted passage schemes for suitable immigrants from a very early date. The high costs led to New South Wales abandoning the scheme in 1887, and not taking it up again until 1905, while Victoria had broken them off earlier, in 1873, and started again in 1900. South Australia granted no assistance in 1886—1911, while Tasmania abandoned assistance completely in 1891 and in no way contributed any subsidies to cover the cost of immigration throughout the period up to the Second World War. The exceptions to this pattern consist of Western Australia and Queensland, where the schemes were not officially abandoned; but no action was taken to implement them.

Not until 1906 or thereabouts, following the gradual recovery of the economy, did Australia begin actively to recruit settlers again. The scheme once again included assisted passages, as in the earlier programs under the Colonies. By the second decade of the 20th century, all of the States except Tasmania were once again actively encouraging settlers, and succeeded in attracting 224 046 immigrants during 1906—12.¹⁵⁰ The occupational categories most in demand were farmers, farm labourers, and artisans (skilled workers).

Although each State operated its own immigration scheme in the countries of emigration, the principles according to which they operated were similar: distribution of leaflets and advertisements in the press, and the use of local Immigration Agents. Every State printed booklets and brochures praising its own conditions. Articles were inserted into the press, in the UK and elsewhere; exhibitions were arranged. The use of local Immigration Agents was particularly important. The main area of

¹⁴⁸ P. OLSSON-SEFFER, *Queensland: Framtidslandet i Australien* [Queensland: The Land of the Future in Australia], Brisbane 1902. Per Olsson-Seffer was born in Finland, at Ekenäs (Tammisaari), of Swedish parents, in 1873. He studied for a time in Finland, but later moved to London. In 1900 the Olsson-Seffers emigrated to Queensland, probably recruited by the Immigration Agent.

¹⁴⁹ BEIJBOM 1983, 156.

¹⁵⁰ "The Immigration Problem", Report of Sub-Committee presented to the Liberal Speakers' Association on November 19th 1913. CA, A 1, 14/489

recruitment of immigrants was, naturally, the British Isles, and each State maintained its Immigration Agent in London; and in 1912 an agreement was reached under which the Agents were to be paid commission of £1 for each adult and 10s. for each child aged under 12 recruited for immigration.

Immigrants who received subsidies were able to travel under either of two established schemes: (1) the Australian immigration authorities in London could approve a personal application by a "selected immigrant"; or (2) an Australian resident could apply for an assisted passage for his wife, other relative, or acquaintance (a "nominated immigrant"). The extent of subsidy varied, until agreement was reached between the States in 1912 on a minimum fare for men of £6, for women of £3, and for children of £1.10s. The agreed maximum age was set at 45, except for unmarried women, for whom it was 35.¹⁵¹

Some use was made of these schemes by Finnish settlers, e.g. those who travelled on assisted passages to Queensland in 1899—1900; the nominated immigrant scheme was also used. Detailed data are not available, but several dozen Finns probably made use of assisted passages to Queensland in the period leading up to the First World War.¹⁵²

The immigrant recruitment schemes were extended to Scandinavia in the pre-World War I period, when Victoria sent Immigration Agents to Denmark and Sweden, though they were given a frosty welcome by the Swedish press.¹⁵³ Following the outbreak of the First World War, the Agent in Denmark remained there, while C.A. Hartsman, the Agent in Sweden, returned to Australia. All that was achieved by these efforts was a group of a few dozen Danish farmers who moved to Victoria.¹⁵⁴

In Finland, it is difficult to assess the impact of Australian immigrant recruitment prior to the First World War, although it is clear that this had a significant influence on Matti Kurikka's plans. There were reports in the Finnish press of the activities of the Australian Agents in Scandinavia: a report in the newspaper *Vaasa* in April 1914 mentions the arrival of Australian officials to recruit immigrants from Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, since the recruitment campaign in Britain had failed. The paper goes on to criticize working and farming conditions in Australia, and ends with a warning: "Should the

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² Register of Migrants Arriving on Immigrant Ships Entering Queensland, 14 (1899—1906 IMM), 127, 128, QSA.

¹⁵³ *StockholmsTidningen*, 15 April 1914; *Socialdemokraten*, 15 April 1914; *Småland-Posten*, 22 April 1914. — Sten ALMQVIST, En misslyckad emigrationskampanj till Australien [An Unsuccessful Emigration Campaign to Australia], *Värld och Vetande*, Nr 9, 1972, 279—288. BEIJBOM 1983, 145—147; See also KOIVUKANGAS & MARTIN 1986, Chapter 4.

¹⁵⁴ LYNQ 1939, 27—28.

aforementioned Agents find their way to Finland, therefore, the public would be well advised not to heed their enticements.”¹⁵⁵ There was a similar warning in *Dagens Press* not to be taken in by the Immigration Agents, aimed especially at credulous countryfolk, and an attack on the Finnish Steamship Company for placing itself at the disposal of the Government of Victoria. *Dagens Press* also warned its readers that many of the emigrants to Australia had been disappointed, finding that land, which had been promised free, in fact cost more than it did in Finland.¹⁵⁶

The Australian Agents do not appear to have yet visited Finland by the spring of 1914, but in July of that year there is a report in the newspaper *Hangö* that Hartsman, the Australian official in Sweden mentioned above (who had himself been born in Gävle) had recently arrived in Turku from Helsinki and was now on his way north. The paper stated that Hartsman had been touring in Sweden during the spring, and it reminded its readers of the warnings against emigration published in the Swedish press.¹⁵⁷

In the Scandinavian countries — Norway, Sweden, and Denmark — there was legislation governing emigration. In Finland, there were no such regulations, thus offering a special target for migration recruitment campaigns, and this situation was further reinforced by the impact of Russian repression at the turn of the century. In a report to the Australian Commonwealth Government by H.C. Smart, there is a comment to the effect that the Finns are excellent farmers, and stand up to variations in climate very well.¹⁵⁸ The Finnish Steamship Company’s offer of collaboration with the immigration authorities was also seen by the Australians as further improving the opportunities for emigration.¹⁵⁹

Smart believed that a combination of the right publicity and co-operation with local agents would lead to good results being achieved in Northern Europe. He had drawn up plans for newspaper announcements in the Norwegian, Danish, Finnish, and Dutch press,¹⁶⁰ but Australian intentions to recruit immigrants from Finland seem to have come to little, mainly because of the outbreak of the First World War; had there been a significant increase in emigration, this would moreover have been visible in the Migration Statistics derived from the passport registers, and the press would have reacted.

The Finnish sources of information concerning emigration, i.e.

¹⁵⁵ *Vaasa*, 16 April 1914.

¹⁵⁶ *Dagens Press*, 14 and 30 July 1914.

¹⁵⁷ *Hangö*, 7 July 1914; see also *Dagens-Press*, 3 and 21 July 1914.

¹⁵⁸ H.C. Smart, Report on Emigration from the North of Europe, London, 5 March 1914, CA, A 1, 14/489, 3—4; see also KOIVUKANGAS & MARTIN, 1986.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*; see also *Dagens Press*, 3 July 1914.

¹⁶⁰ Smart’s Report, p. 5.

Passport Registers and Passenger Lists, are regrettably both incomplete and unreliable for the period from the early 1890s through to the end of the First World War. The first statistics based on the issue of passports for Australia are only available from the turn of the century, and the majority of the migration clearly continued to take place outside the scope of the passport and passenger records, i.e. with emigrants working their passage as seamen. Between 1900 and 1920, there are 120 passports recorded as having been issued for Australia. (This figure does not include for example the 175 who travelled via London to Queensland on assisted passages at the same time as Kurikka, since they left Finland in 1899 and would therefore be covered by the previous set of statistics.) In the official Finnish statistics, there is no mention of travel to Australia during 1906—09, and this is puzzling, since by 1906 the Australian economy was beginning to expand rapidly. One crucial factor is the appeal of America, and the by this time long-established traditions of trans-Atlantic emigration. GYLLING refers to a boom on the American economy in 1905—07, and this is reflected in a surge in the emigration statistics in Finland, just as the downturn in the American economy in 1907 is reflected in lower emigration figures for 1908.¹⁶¹

However, the evidence from the Australian Naturalization Records does indicate increased immigration from Finland, beginning in 1906, which suggests that the Finnish statistics for this period must be regarded as unreliable. What the Passport Registers show is that the area with the heaviest out-migration during the first two decades of the 20th century was Vaasa Province, followed by the Provinces of Uusimaa and of Turku & Pori. The proportion of women issued with passports had risen to 14 per cent, but this shows that women were more likely to travel on a passport than men were, since the actual proportion of women in the Finnish population in Australia up to the Second World War is only 10 per cent.

Table II.9: Finnish Statistics on Emigration to Australia, 1901—20

Period	Migration Statistics (a)	Passanger Lists (b)
1901—1910	46	14
1911—1920	87	93
TOTAL	133	107

Sources: (a) STV (Finnish Statistical Yearbook), 42, Helsinki 1946, 82. Includes New Zealand.

(b) Statistics of SHO (Finnish Steamship Company), ÅA, also on mfr. TYYH/s/m/7/17. New Zealand not available.

¹⁶¹ GYLLING 1910, 100. He particularly emphasizes the impact of American working conditions on emigration.

Collation of the Passport Registers with the Passenger Lists of the Finnish Steamship Company shows that not all of the emigrants travelled with this line. The Finnish Passport Registers and Passenger Lists do not provide an authentic picture of the migration from Finland to Australia in this period, for they record no more than about one hundred emigrants in the period 1901—20.

In contrast with the figures quoted above from the Finnish statistics, a total of 658 Finnish male immigrants arriving in 1893—1920 have been traced in the Australian Naturalization Records, together with six Finnish women who were naturalized in their own right. (Women who married British subjects acquired British nationality automatically). During the same period, 1893—1920, altogether 940 applications for naturalization were submitted by Finnish men; this figure, however, includes many applicants who had arrived in the country during the preceding period, 1851—92. Since many immigrants (including some who had acquired British nationality) subsequently re-emigrated, a maximum estimate is obtained for the Finnish population in Australia prior to World War I of around two thousand.

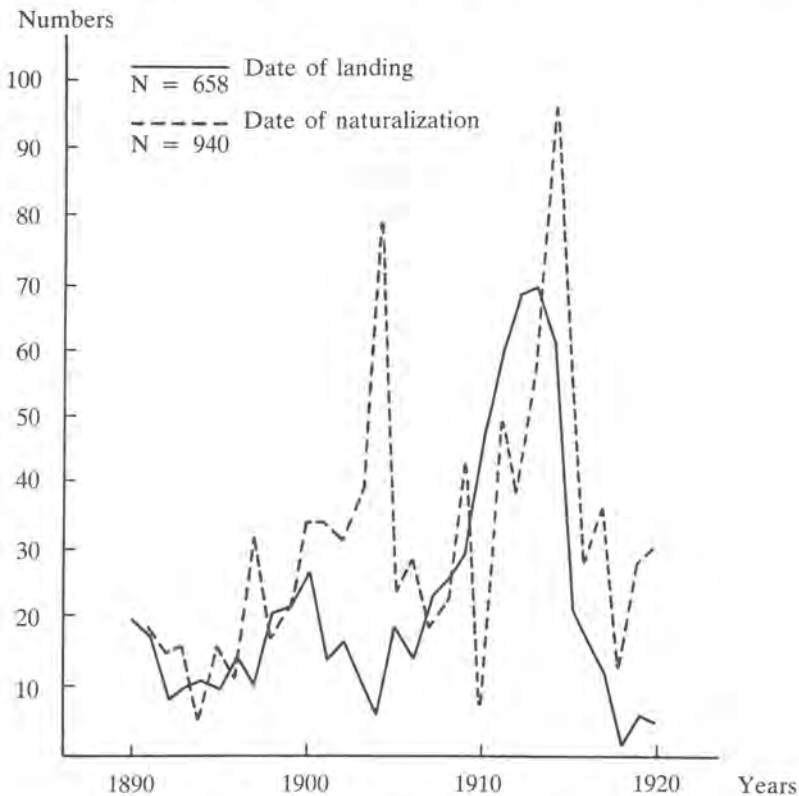


Fig. II.2: Finnish Male Immigrants Landing 1893—1920 and Subsequently Naturalized: Dates of Landing and Naturalization, 1893—1920 (NR)

Figure II.2 shows the relatively low number of arrivals in 1893—99, mainly a consequence of the depression in the Australian economy. The small peak at the turn of the century reflects the extension of assisted passages to Finnish immigrants by the Queensland Government. Thereafter, the migration steadily increases up to the outbreak of the First World War, which cuts it off; nor had it yet regained its pre-War level by 1920. In the second line, measuring the occurrence of naturalization, the first peak, in 1906, arises from the introduction of the pensions scheme, while the second occurs during the War and presumably reflects the sense of insecurity felt by many immigrants during hostilities.

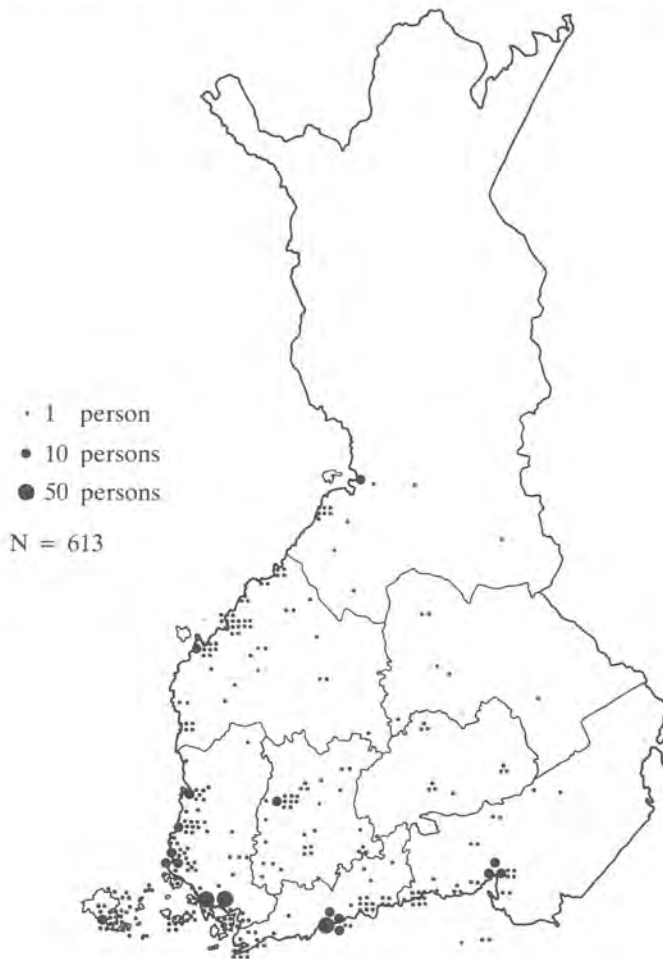
During this second period, across the turn of the century, the major area of emigration recruitment was Turku & Pori Province, now providing around one third of the emigrants from Finland (see Table II.10).

Table II.10: Finnish Male Immigrants Landing in Australia 1893—1920 and Subsequently Naturalized: Places of Birth in Finland, by Administrative Province (NR)

Administrative Province	N	%
Uusimaa	117	17.8
Turku & Pori	233	35.4
Vaasa	66	10.0
Oulu, including Lapland	24	3.6
Kuopio	6	1.0
Häme	45	6.8
Mikkeli	11	1.7
Viipuri	65	9.9
Åland	46	7.0
Born abroad	16	2.4
"Finland" (locality unspecified)	29	4.4
TOTAL	658	100.0

The relative proportion recruited from Vaasa Province, which prior to 1893 had provided approximately a quarter of the emigrants to Australia, now shrank to about one tenth; this is perhaps partly to be explained by the increased dominance of emigration to America, and partly by the fact that dominance in the Finnish shipping industry had already by this time shifted from the Ostrobothnian coast to southern Finland. Almost 84 per cent of those emigrating to Australia came from coastal Finland, a feature equally characteristic of the preceding period as well.

Almost three quarters of the subsequently naturalized male Finnish immigrants who arrived during 1893—1920 came straight from Europe, which represents a slight decrease from the previous period, matched by



Map 3: Finnish Male Immigrants Landing 1893—1920 and Subsequently Naturalized: Geographical Distribution of Places of Birth in Finland (NR)

a corresponding increase for other routes (especially via Africa). The changes point to an increased degree of mobility among the migrants in comparison with the first period. The routes direct from Europe, which dominate, will be looked at in more detail.

British ports of departure continued to dominate the choice of routes, due to overall British domination of the sea communications with Australia. The 36 per cent who had come direct from Finland had probably mainly sailed in Finnish ships, while those travelling via Scandinavia had in many cases come in sailing ships carrying timber from Swedish or Norwegian ports. Of those arriving via North America, approximately four fifths had come through the United States and one

fifth via Canada; this group probably includes both some re-migrating from North America, and others who had merely travelled that route (e.g. as seamen).

Table II.11: Finnish Male Immigrants Landing in Australia 1893—1920 and Subsequently Naturalized: Routes Travelled

Routes	N	%
Direct from Europe	454	72.6
Via North America	76	12.2
Via Latin America	34	5.4
Via Asia	6	1.0
Via Africa	39	6.2
Via Oceania	16	2.6
TOTAL	625	100.0

Table II.12: Finnish Male Immigrants Landing in Australia 1893—1920 and Subsequently Naturalized: Routes Travelled from Europe (NR)

Routes	N	%
Direct from Finland	163	35.9
Via Scandinavia	64	14.1
Via Britain	186	41.0
Via some other European country (including Russia)	41	9.0
TOTAL	454	100.0

During the First World War, communications between Australia and Finland were cut off; yet even during this period, some immigrants landed in the country. One route was through Siberia; the Trans-Siberian Railway had been completed in 1899, providing access to the Pacific and thus to Australia. The route across Russia was however essentially an emergency route, used only when other routes were not available.

Two thirds of the Finnish men arriving in Australia during the period 1893—1920 for whom data are available from the Naturalization Records were thus in their twenties on arrival. The low figure for arrivals as children reflects the low proportion of family migration, but it must also be borne in mind that children were automatically naturalized with their parents and are therefore not listed separately in the Naturalization Records. It may be assumed that those who were older on arrival, on the other hand, were re-migrants coming to Australia from third countries such as New Zealand, South Africa, America, etc.

During the War, the numbers of Finns in Australia fell, partly through some leaving the country for fear of being conscripted, partly

Table II.13: Finnish Male Immigrants Landing in Australia 1893—1920 and Subsequently Naturalized: Age on Arrival (NR)

Age on Arrival	N	%
0—14	7	1.1
15—19	78	11.9
20—24	281	42.6
25—29	155	23.5
30—34	65	9.9
35—39	35	5.3
40—49	30	4.6
50—60	7	1.1
TOTAL	658	100.0

through others joining the Army and leaving for the Front. Thus when the first Warden of the Finnish Seamen's Mission, J.O. Boijer, visited Queensland early in 1917, he was surprised to meet fewer Finns there than he had been led to expect. He estimated the Finnish population at that time as certainly no more than one thousand; he himself had collected around 500 names, but many of these were of persons who had already left the country.¹⁶² Following the end of the War, there was a further fall in the Finnish population in Australia, due this time on the one hand to the difficult wartime conditions in the country, and on the other to the repercussions of Finnish independence.

Altogether during the period 1893—1920 there were 278 000 emigrants who left Finland for overseas destinations.¹⁶³ The motives for this increased emigration at the turn of the century included hopes of a better standard of living, and resentment at Russian repression. Moreover, the major shipping lines had now acquired enormous passenger capacity, and competition brought the fares down. In many cases, the tickets were sent or pre-paid by some friend or relative who had emigrated earlier. The overall volume of Finnish migration to Australia was so small that the major world events, such as the Boer War in South Africa, or the Russo-Japanese War in Asia, had virtually no impact; only the worldwide scope of the First World War was an event powerful enough to cut off immigration (and thus creates a milestone in the historical flow of the Finnish migration).

Set in the context of total Finnish overseas migration in the period, the numbers of Finns landing in Australia between 1893 and 1920 are tiny, comprising around one per cent of the total Finnish movement;

¹⁶² Letter from Johan O. Boijer, Sydney, 19 May 1917, to Mr A. Wegelius, Fern Hill Corrimal, NSW, SMLA Brisbane.

¹⁶³ KERO 1982, 30—31.

those who travelled with a passport form a mere fraction of one per cent. Among the Finnish-Australians, the number of women was at the maximum 10 per cent of that of the men, i.e. 200—300 persons.

6. Finnish Migration to Australia, 1921—47

(1) Introduction

At the beginning of the century, at places such as Nambour and Long Pocket, where Finnish-Australians had been living since before the First World War, there had been established small Finnish 'colonies', still in contact with Finland; and these, together with the metropolitan cities, were to become the centres of future Finnish settlement in Australia.

The second basis for new Finnish immigration to Australia in the 1920s was the rapid expansion of the Australian economy after the First World War. Both the Federal and State Governments set out to promote the development of industry and agriculture, and this required the recruitment of new immigrants. In 1920, the Commonwealth Government officially assumed responsibility for the selection of immigrants, their medical examination, and their passages to Australia, while decisions on the volume of immigration and the care of the immigrants after their arrival in the country remained in the hands of the States. The payment of commissions to Agents per immigrant recruited was dropped, and the immigration agency was concentrated in Britain. The Commonwealth of Australia was particularly keen to obtain immigrants from Britain, and despite the First World War, there had been some resumption of migration from 1917.

The British Government also looked with favour on the settlement of the far-flung areas of the British Commonwealth of Nations (as the self-governing parts of the Empire were known after 1926). Former civil servants and their families were given special assistance to emigrate, and it was hoped that other groups would then follow. In 1922, the United Kingdom had implemented principles laid down the year before at an Imperial conference, by passing the Empire Settlement Act, under which the UK and the Dominions were to share the costs of the settlement scheme for the next fifteen years. The main focus of this Act was on settlement within the Dominions, and Western Australia, New South Wales, and Victoria therefore entered into agreements with the UK to increase British migration. These schemes were then incorporated into the even more ambitious system set up in 1925 under the "£34 Million Agreement" which the British and Australian Governments signed with a view to further expanding British

immigration. The idea was that the British Government should put up a loan of £34 million to help finance the migration of 450 000 British settlers on assisted passages within the following ten years.

This plan was actually never carried out. Nonetheless, the number of assisted passages was raised; during 1921—25, the average annual number of settlers arriving had been 23 100, but from 1926 to 1929 this rose to 24 200 a year.¹⁶⁴ Altogether over 300 000 immigrants moved to Australia during the 1920s, over half of these coming under arrangements set up under the 1922 Act.¹⁶⁵ The basic justification for this extensive settlement program was the belief that the rapid expansion of the Australian economy was dependent not only on the availability of capital but also of manpower. When it proved impossible to recruit enough immigrants from the British Isles to meet the need for labour, this opened the opportunity for self-financed immigrants from other countries to come to Australia in pursuit of high wages, especially in the arduous occupations in farming, forestry, and mining in the warm climate of northern Queensland. The essential point, however, was that this came at a time when the United States had shut its doors against immigration; nor could Canada and the other traditional countries of settlement offer equivalent opportunities to match those available in Australia.

By 1928, the population of Australia had grown to 6 200 000, of whom around 95 per cent were of British origin. The extent of the total land area of the country is about 7 700 000 km²; overall, therefore, the mean population density was very thin, but it was distributed very unevenly, the great majority being concentrated in and around the major cities: approximately 45 per cent of the total population was accounted for by the five largest metropolitan areas of Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane, and Perth, and altogether 65 per cent of the population lived in urban areas. Farming suffered from a shortage of labour, while in the cities there was a constant high level of unemployment. Wages in the cities were relatively good, and the cost of living lower than in the country. There was a shortage of women (there were 135 000 less women than men), and this was a further factor contributing to the concentration of the population.

The major problem in the promotion of immigration was still the expense of the journey. In 1921, when immigration had got under way again after the interruption caused by the War, the second-class fare from Britain to Australia was £44—£48, and the fare from Finland to

¹⁶⁴ BORRIE & PRICE 1983, 221—225, see also BORRIE 1982.

¹⁶⁵ Department of Labor and Immigration, *Australia and Immigration 1788—1975*, Canberra 1975, 4.

Britain came to about £10.¹⁶⁶ The Australian States were entitled to set their own conditions for immigration, and to decide what kind of immigrants they wanted; in general, they continued to follow the same principles as earlier, e.g. being willing to grant assistance to prospective immigrants with a relative already in Australia. Occasionally (especially in Victoria and Western Australia during the 1920s), when it was feared that the new immigrant might become a burden on the state, guarantees for nominated immigrants were required from their sponsors in Australia. The maximum age for assisted immigrants varied from 35 to 50.¹⁶⁷

According to LYNG, the £40 landing capital did not affect the volume of immigration so much as the quality: the kind of people of whom Australia was in most urgent need could not afford to come.¹⁶⁸ To some extent, this may also have applied to the Finns; but in most cases, they were able to raise a loan to cover their travelling expenses, either at home in Finland or from some friend in Australia. The ultimate means of making the journey was to sign on as a seaman and then desert in an Australian port, thus avoiding having to find the fare and landing capital.

The closing of its doors to mass immigration in the early 1920s by the United States raised the question whether Australia should permit large-scale immigration from areas other than Britain and north-western Europe. Asian, African and Pacific Island migration had been restricted since the turn of the century by the White Australian Policy,¹⁶⁹ but in the 1920s the issue of immigration from parts of southern and eastern Europe became difficult, the federal government imposing administrative quotas and passing a new immigration restriction Act in 1925. These particular restrictions were succeeded by general restrictions on all immigration during the Great Depression of the 1930s; even the British assisted passage scheme was abandoned, and for the decade of the 1930s Australia suffered a net loss on migration, amounting to 10 800 persons. The Empire Settlement Act was renewed in 1928, and plans were drawn up to resume the assisted passages system, but they were interrupted by the outbreak of the Second World War.¹⁷⁰

The source material available for the period between the two World Wars is considerably better than that for the earlier periods. The main sources are, as before, the Australian Censuses, demographic statistics

¹⁶⁶ Letter from the Consul, Nauklér, Sydney, 22 April 1921, to Mr Loimaranta, UM Canberra: 22, Li—Lo.

¹⁶⁷ Harald Tanner, Finnish Consul, Report to the Finnish Foreign Ministry, 8 Nov. 1921 UM: 53 F 51 f (Reports 1919—21).

¹⁶⁸ *Norden*, 8 June 1935, 2.

¹⁶⁹ PRICE 1974 A, 174.

¹⁷⁰ See BORRIE 1965, 70.

and Naturalization Records, but there was also a marked improvement in the Finnish statistics in the 1920s. Oral evidence also becomes of greater importance, for a number of those who immigrated in the 1920s have been interviewed, both in Australia and in Finland.

At the outset of this new phase in the Finnish migration to Australia, the 1921 Census recorded a total of 1358 Finland-born persons in the country, of whom 131, i.e. just under 10 per cent, were women. Not all the Finns will have been counted on Census Day, however; seamen, labourers at work far out in the bush, foreign workers travelling in search of work, or other people on the move, were all in danger of being overlooked by the Census enumerators. According to the records of the Finnish Consulate, on the other hand, the figure of 1358 Finland-born persons also includes a total from 150 ships' crews in harbour (of whom one was a woman).¹⁷¹ In July 1920, the Finnish Consul, Kaarlo J. Nauklér, had estimated the Finnish population in Australia at 2000—2500 persons, excluding seamen on coastal shipping,¹⁷² and he believed the figures obtained in the Census to be too small; but his own figure is probably an over-estimate. It is improbable that the recently-arrived Consul, resident in Sydney, would have been able to know a precise number for the Finns scattered all over the continent; and it is unlikely that their numbers in 1921 came to more than 1500, in view of the out-migration of the preceding years. No basis is available for a more precise estimate.

(2) The Context of Finnish Migration to Australia, 1921—24

The United States of America had been the traditional goal for Finnish emigration just as it had for emigrants from the other countries of Europe. North America was closer; the fare was cheaper; and in many cases some relative or friend already on the other side of the Atlantic was able to help by sending a pre-paid ticket. This situation began to change in 1921, when the new immigration controls in the USA came into effect. Under the 1924 Quota Act, the annual number of Finland-born immigrants admitted to the USA was fixed at 471.¹⁷³ This number was considerably lower than the number of those wishing to emigrate,

¹⁷¹ Harald Tanner, Finnish Consul, Report for the Year 1923 UM: 53 F 51 f.

¹⁷² Kaarlo J. Nauklér, Finnish Consul, Report for July 1920, 2 Aug. 1920 UM: 53 F 51 f, N:o 158/1498, K 1.10.1920, N:o 1.

¹⁷³ HANDLIN 1952, 292; MORRIS 1969, 73—74: The 1921 Act imposed a 3 % quota, derived from the 1910 Census, while the 1924 Act reduced this quota to 2 % in conformity with the Census of 1890; VÄÄNÄNEN 1926, 95.

however: in 1924 there were four to five thousand people in Finland queuing for immigration papers to the United States.

Within Finland, the Migration Committee appointed in 1918 completed its Report in 1924. The Committee guessed that, following the restrictions now imposed on movement into the United States, Canada and Australia, with their vast empty spaces, would begin to attract increasing numbers of immigrants from Finland.¹⁷⁴ Immigration into Canada also became more difficult at this point, however, with the introduction of requirements of a sponsor within Canada and of ready-agreed employment to go to, consequences of the deteriorating unemployment situation there. Nevertheless, emigration to Canada increased towards the end of the decade; by the time of the 1931 Canadian Census, there were recorded almost 44 000 Finland-born persons in the country, compared with a mere 21 500 ten years earlier. For Finnish emigrants, Canada was the first alternative after the United States, and Australia and other overseas countries came further down the list.

Table II.14: Passports Issued in 1924, by Country of Destination (Persons)

USA	327	Asia	2
Canada	4375	Africa	9
Central America	2	Russia	63
South America	71	Other European countries	252
Australia & New Zealand	322	Unstated	6
TOTAL			5429

Source: SVT, XXVIII, Migration Statistics 18, 1923 & 1924, Helsinki 1926, 23.

The year 1924 represented a turning-point in Finnish immigration in Australia. The difficulty of entering the United States led to a surge in the number of passports issued for emigration to Australia and New Zealand to 322, which in Finnish terms was very high.¹⁷⁵ A second factor influencing the increase in Australian migration, besides the barriers imposed by the USA, was the information which was carrying back to Finland about the high wages available on the cane fields in northern Queensland. There were of course other factors too (it could with perfect validity be said that there are as many reasons for emigrating as there are emigrants). By the 1920s and 1930s, however, there was little

¹⁷⁴ Report of the 1918 Migration Committee, Helsinki 1924.

¹⁷⁵ SVT XXVIII; Migration Statistics 18, Helsinki 1926, 24.

movement to Australia for political reasons.¹⁷⁶ The overwhelming reason on the personal level was the aim of building up capital in as short a time as practicable, in order to buy a farm back in Finland, in other words "goal-oriented migration".

There was a sudden surge in emigration in the first half of 1924, mainly from central Ostrobothnia, and a factor leading to a further increase in emigration from this region was the loss of the harvest that year.¹⁷⁷ The press also contributed to the "Australian fever" with its publication of letters from and articles about successful emigrants there; the visit that year of the prosperous New South Wales farmer W.A. Back to his native area in Munsala was widely reported in the regional press. N.I. Karhula also contributed articles both to the regional press in Ostrobothnia and also to the national Finnish papers, including the quality weekly journal *Suomen Kuvalehti*, describing the life of the Finnish-Australians in vivid terms (even including alligator hunts!).

For other emigrants, emotional reasons were decisive, such as affect a nation in the grip of societal change. The Finnish Civil War of 1918, and the fighting in Estonia and around Olon'etz (Aunus) in East Karelia, fomented anxiety and uncertainty, which for some was channelled into the decision to emigrate. These were among the reasons which influenced Eino Keskinen, for instance, to set out for Australia.¹⁷⁸ The experiences in the Finnish Civil War were also influential for many "Whites" (conservatives), e.g. some who had fought in the German-trained Jäger battalion, or had been members of the Civil Guard in the post-war aftermath, and Ostrobothnian civilians too. Some of these were less keen on emigrating to Canada, where many ex-Reds had gone. Matti Järvinen from Evijärvi alludes in his diary to the virtual "terror" practised by Finns in Canada against ex-Whites, and suggests that this was indeed one of the reasons for emigration to Australia.¹⁷⁹ Wages were also believed to be better in Australia than in North America. For that matter, there were probably many ex-Reds who would have liked to emigrate; but obstacles were put in the way of their obtaining passports, and many of them could not raise enough money to finance the journey.

¹⁷⁶ One of the exceptions was Jalmari Rasi, a former official in the (underground) Finnish Communist Party, who had agreed to collaborate with the Central Detective Department of the Finnish police; he was chief prosecution witness in the 1928 trials in Turku, and later that year left for Australia. LACKMAN 1982.

¹⁷⁷ *Samarbete*, 6 Dec. 1956; Interview with Emil Nivala, Tully 19 May 1970.

¹⁷⁸ Diary of Eino Keskinen for 1923—32; SI; interview with Eino Keskinen, Jämsä, 9 Sep. 1973. Other veterans of the fighting in Olon'etz and Estonia who moved to Australia included Ilmari Aalto in Sydney, Kaino Kanervo in Nambour, and Aleksi Tarvainen in Canberra.

¹⁷⁹ Papers of Matti Järvinen, TYYH/S/a/52/I, memorandum "Tositapahtumia 40 vuoden takaa [Real Events of 40 Years Ago]".

Of the ex-Jägers who emigrated in this period, the largest group did in fact move to Canada (49 of them); 36 went to the United States, and eleven to Australia. LAUERMA has traced altogether 117 ex-Jägers who emigrated between 1918 and 1940, half of these coming from southern and central Ostrobothnia;¹⁸⁰ but another source, the *Suomen Jääkärien Elämäkerrasto* ('Biographies of the Finnish Jägers'), which traces the lives of the 1896 Whites who fought in the regiment, states that 157 of them emigrated, twelve of them to Australia, between 1921 and 1931.¹⁸¹

The example of Nestori Karhula, former Lieutenant in the Jägers, was undoubtedly a significant influence for those of his ex-comrades in arms who were considering emigration. There were other ex-Jägers in Cairns, though: Anton Kunnari, from Alahärmä; Aarne Härmänen; Antti Isotalo from Alahärmä; Pekka Peltonen; Oskari Jalava from Vehmaa, and August Udd from Tampere. Einari Savimäki believed that there were ten ex-Jägers in northern Queensland;¹⁸² and another was the new pastor at the Seamen's Mission, Kalervo Groundstroem (Kurkiala).

The new immigrants were also lured on by the knowledge that some of their predecessors had prospered in Australia. The difficulty was the cost of the journey, together with the landing capital. In effect, anyone travelling to Australia needed to have at least 30 000 marks at their disposal, which was in those days about half the cost of a small farm. Consequently, it emerges that many of the emigrants who headed for Australia were already smallholders, or farmers' sons. Families were large in those days, and there was not enough land to supply viable farm holdings for everyone. This was the situation facing Jussi Kangas, for instance, one of a family of twelve children, who landed in Australia in 1925, and within four years had saved enough on lumbering and road building to have the price of a smallholding in his pocket.¹⁸³ An even more extreme case was that of Valfrid Palola, who was one of nineteen children.¹⁸⁴ Many smallholders were forced to move off their uneconomic farms, especially when the harvest failed;¹⁸⁵ often they left their families

¹⁸⁰ LAUERMA 1966, 996—997.

¹⁸¹ *Suomen Jääkärien Elämäkerrasto*, Porvoo 1938. The 12 ex-Jägers who went to Australia were: Nestori Karhula, Matti Ilmari Leinonen (both travelling in 1921), Juho Aarne Vilhelm Härmänen (in Australia 1924—28), Antti Isotalo (1924—27), Väinö Oskar Jalava, Antti Kustaa Kujala (1924—27), Petter Peltonen (travelling in 1924), Eigil Reims (banana farmer 1924—27), Axel Anton Backman, Anton Cederström (formerly Kunnari, travelling in 1925), Herman Edvard Sten (carpenter 1926—31), and August Edvard Udd (working in Australia as a labourer from 1931).

¹⁸² Interview with Einari Savimäki, Nambour, 24 Feb. 1981.

¹⁸³ Interview with Jussi Kangas, Lohtaja, 6 Sep. 1973.

¹⁸⁴ Interview with Hanna & Valfrid Palola, Kokkola, 3 Sep. 1973.

¹⁸⁵ Interview with Emil Nivala, Tully, 19 May 1970.



Illus. 3: Finnish Jägers who had trained in Germany during WW I tended to keep together in Australia. Pictured in Cairns in 1925: from the left, A. Isotalo, N. Karhula, then probably the Revd K. Groundstroem, A. Kunnari, A. Udd and A. Backman. (SI)

behind, hoping to bring these to join them in Australia later on. The fare would have to be borrowed from relatives, neighbours, or the bank if their own funds were not enough.

It was noted in central Ostrobothnia that there were many who would have left if they could have raised the money; but it was also commented that many Finnish emigrants had prospered in their new countries, and had succeeded in paying back their loans for the fare in a very short time.¹⁸⁶ The early 1920s were, in fact, a good time for immigrants in Australia. Many of them remitted money home to Finland regularly, through the Finnish Seamen's Mission, and the accounts of the Mission show that in 1925 there were altogether 165 remittances sent, totalling £4271 (the corresponding total for 1924 was £991, and for 1926 £1200). It would appear that many of the Finns who came in the surge of immigration in 1924 had been able to pay off their loans within a year or so of arrival.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁶ *Kokkola*, 20 May 1924.

¹⁸⁷ List of financial remittances to Finland, SMLA, microfilm roll 4, SI.

The reasons for the women who emigrated were probably not very different from those of the men. In many cases their husband or fiancé, or some other relative, was already in Australia. In 1927, Niilo Oja travelled to Australia in a party consisting of thirteen emigrants, which included two women, one of whom was joining her fiancé in Melbourne, and the other (a Swedish-speaker) her brother in Brisbane.¹⁸⁸ Many wives travelled with their husbands; but it was also quite common for the husband to go out a year or so in advance of the rest of his family.

Yet a further factor in the attraction of Australia was its very progressive labour legislation, which led to its being called "the workers' paradise". Wages, hours of work, and pensions, were all carefully regulated (notwithstanding variations in detail from one State to another): e.g. the minimum weekly wage for an adult manual labourer for a 44-hour week in New South Wales was £4.10s. On the other hand, the cost of living was also relatively high.¹⁸⁹

Even in the 19th century, there had been Finnish immigration into Australia not only direct from Finland but also as a re-migration from third countries, and this phenomenon continued in the period now under scrutiny. There were a number of Finns who moved to Australia from America in the 1920s, the best-known of whom was probably Otto Emil Hirvi, who was active on the Finnish-Australian paper *Suomi* and in the Finnish associations. He had set out in 1923 for Canada, in the company of six other men from the village of Marinkainen in Lohtaja. Within six months, however, Hirvi had signed on a Norwegian ship, and made his way to Australia.¹⁹⁰ Another example was Hannes Hyypä, who arrived in Australia in 1924 from Africa, where he had been working in the mines since 1912, and carried on as a miner in Australia.¹⁹¹

(3) The Role of Nestori Karhula

Nestori Karhula is an outstanding example of the enormous significance a pioneer settler could have for later immigrants, seen at its most concrete in the practical problems faced by new settlers immediately after their arrival. Not only did he sponsor many of his fellow-countrymen as nominated immigrants, but he was also able to offer many of them their first job in Australia on his farm.

¹⁸⁸ Diary of Niilo Oja, microfilm, SI. Oja's diary was the basis for his book *Koralliranta ja Spinifex*, Brisbane 1972.

¹⁸⁹ Jorma Pohjanpalo, "Australia siirtolaismaana", Sydney, April 1928, UM 37 K, f.

¹⁹⁰ *Keskipohtjanmaa*, 14 July 1973.

¹⁹¹ Letter from Hannes Hyypä, Westwood San. via Rockhampton, 22 Sep. 1952, to Pastor Toivo Kuusiola, SMLA Brisbane.

Nestori Ilmari Karhula was born at Lohtaja, on 9 January 1893. After high school, he enrolled at the University of Helsinki to study agriculture; but his plans changed, and in 1916 he left for Germany, where he enrolled in the Royal Prussian Jägers, and saw action both in Germany and in the Baltic countries. At the end of 1917 Karhula was posted to Finland and was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant taking part in a number of battles during the Finnish Civil War in 1918. After the Civil War was over, he was active in the paramilitary Civil Guard, in which he was eventually appointed District Commander for Central Ostrobothnia, although he subsequently returned to Lohtaja as commandant of the local Civil Guard unit.¹⁹²

Even while he was still in Germany, Karhula had been wondering about moving to America, presumably under the influence of his father (who had twice been there himself). The final push towards the decision to emigrate came from the conflicts he experienced as commandant in the Civil Guard.¹⁹³ Karhula spent about a year preparing for his journey, making contact with the Finnish Consul in Sydney, and carefully following all reports concerning Australia in the Finnish press. In 1921, together with his comrades Eino Karhula and Albert Walden, he boarded the *Arcturus* in Hanko and was on his way to his new home.¹⁹⁴

On his arrival he was unable at first to find work, and therefore set out northwards, on the advice of the then Consul, Tanner, while Eino Karhula headed inland, and Walden went to the "Kurikka colony" at Nambour.¹⁹⁵ First Karhula went to W.A. Back's farm at Mullumbimby, and then moved on to Long Pocket near Ingham, an area especially favoured by immigrants from Lohtaja, where he found work in Wilhelm Jukkola's cane cropping gang. One reason for this etappe movement through the country, and his heading for the company of other Finns, was that as yet he knew no English (although he could speak both German and Russian).

Karhula spent a year at Long Pocket, where more and more Finns were gradually arriving, especially from his own area in Ostrobothnia. The new arrivals needed jobs, which Karhula took it on himself to search for; and he was successful in obtaining work for some Finns at Redlynch, near Cairns, clearing the land for a new farm. The work went so well that the owner, a man called Walker, accepted Karhula's

¹⁹² Minutes of the Kokkola District of the Civil Guard; identity certificate for Nestori Karhula, issued by the Population Register on 8 April 1921; Interview with Nestori Karhula, Brisbane, 7 April 1969; *Suomen Jääkärien Elämäkerrasto*, 1983, 271.

¹⁹³ Interviews with Matti Hassinen, Kälviä, 6 Sept. 1973, and with Arvo Kerola, Halikko, 31 Oct. 1973.

¹⁹⁴ *Kokkola*, 17, 19, and 21 Jan., and 17 Dec. 1921.

¹⁹⁵ Interview with Karhula, Brisbane, 7 April 1969.



Illus. 4: When the Cairns district proved too hot for his wife, Karhula moved to Brisbane in 1926 and bought a farm at Runcorn, where they continued to live until the 1970s. (Jorma Pohjanpalo/SI)

suggestion that the farm should be called "Suomi Farm" ('Finland Farm'); and Karhula himself was appointed the farm manager.¹⁹⁶

As time went on, Suomi Farm became a Finnish base. New immigrants found their way there either on the advice of Tanner at the Consulate, or following hints from friends and relatives. By the end of 1923, there were twelve Finns working on the farm, eleven of whom came from Karhula's own home town of Lohtaja.¹⁹⁷

From Redlynch, Karhula started to write articles for the press in Finland describing the life in Australia. In one of these articles, he writes that there were at that time (1923) very few Finns in Australia, but that a few small 'colonies' had begun to emerge, e.g. at Ingham, Cairns, and Nambour. It was easy for Finns to get work, since they were respected as good workers. The wages were not as good as in America, but the cost of living out in the bush was low. The best pay was available in Queensland, although the trouble there was the tropical climate with its heat and torrential rain. But realism, and responsibility,

¹⁹⁶ Aarne Härmänen, "Suomalaishistoriikka siirtolaisuutemme alkuvaiheilta Pohj.-Queenslandissa [A History of the Finns in the Early Stages of Finnish Settlement in Northern Queensland]", Minutes of the Cairns Suomi Society, 31 Jan. 1926, TYYH/S/7/II. *Suomi*, 11/1963.

¹⁹⁷ *Kokkola*, 3 Nov. 1923; interview with Karhula, Brisbane, 7 April 1969.



Illus. 5: Kerttu and Nestori Karhula on the steps of their home in Brisbane in 1969. (Olavi Koivukangas/SI)

come out in Karhula's comments that success would not come without sacrifice and real effort.¹⁹⁸ This was the right kind of article to encourage others to follow, where the Australian names became familiar, and the new arrival would know where to turn and be sure of finding other Finns, so that the lack of English would no longer be an impossible obstacle.

Finnish immigrants began to gather in the Cairns area in Karhula's wake in such numbers that by 1925 it was possible to set up 11 Finnish gangs for the sugar cane cropping. This indicates that there were at least a hundred Finns, not counting those employed in other kinds of work. Karhula's own family — his wife Kerttu, and their daughter Toini — came to join him in 1923;¹⁹⁹ but the climate was too hot for Mrs Karhula, and in 1926 the family moved to Brisbane.²⁰⁰

At Runcorn, near Brisbane, the Karhulas bought a farm, and set up a market garden; and here Karhula spent most of the rest of his life until

¹⁹⁸ *Kokkola*, 3 Nov. 1923.

¹⁹⁹ Letter from Toini Wagner (née Karhula), Brisbane 6 Jan. 1984, to Olavi Koivukangas, SI. Interview with Kerttu Karhula, Brisbane, 27 Feb. 1981.

²⁰⁰ *Suomi*, 11/1963. *Uusi Suomi*, 31 Jan. 1971; Interview with Kerttu Karhula, Brisbane, 27 Feb. 1981.

his death in 1971, apart from the two years he spent in an internment camp in South Australia during the Second World War.²⁰¹

Karhula was more than the helper and guide of new arrivals; he was also actively involved in the Finnish associations and in other forms of social activity. He established valuable contacts with the Australians, serving as a Justice of the Peace and as Secretary of the local School Board.²⁰² One of his most distinctive achievements, however, arose from his interest in the history of the Finns in Australia; this was his extensive collection of papers and other materials relating to the Finnish-Australian community.

(4) The Ostrobothnian Migration to the Cane Fields of Northern Queensland

The peak year in the Finnish immigration to Australia was 1924, but the surge that caused this had in fact started the year before. The first change to occur affected Finnish shipping. Previously Finnish ships had concentrated on the eastern coast, and in particular the harbours for the coal mines of New South Wales. A typical run for the Finnish sailing clippers (which had almost entirely Finnish crews) had been to take a cargo of coal from Sydney or Newcastle for Chile or Peru; but now they began to switch to taking wheat to Europe from Melbourne or South Australia. This meant that the Finnish seamen were now in Melbourne, Adelaide, or one of the other southern ports; consequently it was natural that the Finnish Seamen's Mission was transferred from Sydney to Melbourne in September 1924.

Most of the Finnish immigrants travelled to Australia on large British passenger ships, which carried them from London to Sydney in 40 days. The total journey from Helsinki thus took approximately 50 days, and cost nigh on 12 000 Finnmarks. In addition, the travellers would need to pay their landing money of 8000 marks, usually in London before they were even issued with their tickets. The landing money was a necessary precaution for the initial weeks in the new country.²⁰³ Immigrants were given plenty of practical advice by Tanner, the Finnish Consul: e.g. about the price of land, where land could be got most easily, or shipping lines. The most common way of travelling was by the P & O or by the Orient Line, but the Finns were often dissatisfied with the quality of the

²⁰¹ Interview with Nestori Karhula, Brisbane, 7 April 1969.

²⁰² *Suomi* 15 July 1940. Letter from Toini Wagner (née Karhula), Brisbane 6 Jan. 1984, to Olavi Koivukangas, SI.

²⁰³ Manuscript by Harald Tanner, "Australian suomalaisten oloista [The Conditions of the Finns in Australia]", accompanying letter to the Finnish-Canadian newspaper *Kanadan Uutiset*, 25 Nov 1926, SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fi:1, 26.



Illus. 6: Often migrant's families did not follow them to Australia until several years later. Photographed here Mrs Ida Jukkola and her children on their way to join her husband at Long Pocket, Qld, on 10 May 1924 in Sydney. (SKA 1919—41, UM, Helsinki/SI)

food and accommodation and the high fares charged. Lines with only one single class of passenger accommodation had been found more satisfactory than those with three.

The second change that had occurred was within the pattern of migration itself. Kalervo Groundstroem, the pastor at that time at the Finnish Seamen's Mission (who later became the parish minister at Ör, in Sweden) has given the following description of this phase in the migration:

1923 began to bring a change in the conditions experienced by the Finns. The first immigrants from Finland arrived in February. By April and May, Ostrobothnians, from Lohtaja and Kälviä, were beginning to arrive; ten or so at first, but later in larger and larger parties — 40, 50, and even 70 at a time, something like one group per month, from southern Ostrobothnia and from other parts too. Antti Isotalo himself came, and pale wives with their broods of children. Meeting them and guiding them became part of the duties of the day. Most of them, however, carried on directly up to Brisbane . . . ²⁰⁴

²⁰⁴ *Suomi*, 30 Nov 1936; Sydneyn ja Melbournen Suomalaisen Merimieslähetykseseuran Päiväkirja; Pitänyt . . . [Diary of the Finnish Seamen's Mission in Sydney and Melbourne, Kept by . . .] Kalervo Groundstroem, 1922—1926, SMLA Helsinki.



Illus. 7: Ostrobothnian lads from Kannus on their way to Australia in Helsinki in 1927 (travelling in a group, as was typical in the 1920s). (Aili Puutio, Kannus/SI)

Since the arrival of Matti Kurikka's party in 1899—1900, the Finnish emigration to Australia had thus moved from the phase of isolated individuals and small groups into a phase of large-scale group migration, although the travellers were now having to pay their own passages, and to find the £10 landing money too. At the same time, a standard route began to emerge: from the Kokkola region in Ostrobothnia, via the port of Hanko on the Finnish southern coast to Britain and Sydney, and thence through Brisbane up to northern Queensland, often the first stop there being at the Karhulas' Suomi Farm near Cairns.

Both the Finnish Consulate and the pastor at the Seamen's Mission attempted to restrain the flow of migration. The pastor wrote in the seamen's magazine *Merimiehen Ystävä* advising people to think hard before emigrating to Australia, since virtually the only kind of work available on arrival was farm work, no better paid than in Finland, while food and accommodation were harder to obtain;²⁰⁵ and soon afterwards Jorma Pohjanpalo, Secretary at the Consulate and a prolific writer, had an article in *Suomen Kuvalehti* in which he emphasized the hard work the Finnish immigrants were doing on the sugar fields, and

²⁰⁵ MY, 3/1925, 43.

the intensity of the heat in which they worked. The average rate of pay was a pound a day, but the harvest did not last all the year round. The conditions for the immigrants were far from ideal; there was high unemployment, and Australian workers had priority; and the cost of living he estimated as two to three times more expensive than in Finland.²⁰⁶

The flow of Finnish immigration into Queensland in the 1920s was caused by the opportunities there of high earnings. The majority of the Finns were working on the sugar harvest; hard work, but at well paid piece rates; but the season lasted only about six months. The second reason drawing new immigrants into Queensland was the presence of friends and relatives who had emigrated earlier. Many had only meant to go for two or three years, while others spoke of a five year's stretch.

The composition and nature of the "pipeline migration" phenomenon are well illustrated in the composition and experiences of the following party of Finnish immigrants who travelled out to Australia in 1927, described in the pages of Niilo Oja's diary. They set out from Hanko, in May 1927, on board the *Arcturus*. Altogether there were thirteen in the party for Australia, including two women. On their arrival in Sydney, they met some men from Ostrobothnia, who were unemployed. Most of the party continued immediately northwards to Brisbane; they were met at the harbour there by Nestori Karhula, who advised the men who had no English to carry on further north. Oja took the train straight away for Cairns, the "Finnish capital", travelling with two other men, one of whom had previously been in America. They soon found some Finns in the bars, and these helped them to find their way out to the cane camps at Redlynch, where there were fifty to sixty Finns, split up into nine-man gangs. Oja joined a camp of men from his home area of Kannus (near Lohtaja). Two months had elapsed since his departure from Finland when he started work.²⁰⁷ Like Oja, one of the other Ostrobothnian men in the party — Janne Klemola from Toholampi — also made his way to Cairns and joined up with others from his home town.²⁰⁸

Emigration in groups like this was no special feature of the migration to Australia, for the same phenomenon can be seen among the emigrants who went to America. Emigrants from Isokyrö in Finland moved to Astabula, Ohio, while people from Kauhajoki went to Montana;²⁰⁹ and the same as to the emigration from other countries.²¹⁰

²⁰⁶ SK 5 May 1928.

²⁰⁷ Diary of Niilo Oja, microfilm, SI.

²⁰⁸ Diary of Janne Klemola, TYYH/S/a/84/I.

²⁰⁹ TOIVONEN 1955, 7—8.

²¹⁰ RUNBLUM & NORMAN 1976, 138—139. Emigrants from Sweden to the USA have similarly gathered in particular areas, as some well-known person was followed by relatives and acquaintances.

Niilo Oja's journey illustrates the operation of a "pipeline" stretching from Kannus on the western Finnish coast to a cane camp of Kannus men in northern Queensland; and this was quite deliberate, since Oja reported that there were many others who had headed for the camp "where they knew there would be blokes from Kannus²¹¹". The journey was carried out in a party; and the women in the party exemplify the second phase of migration, when the first "generation" attract others to follow in their wake. There was another similar "pipeline", stretching from Lohtaja to Long Pocket. For the Ostrobothnians, the "pipeline" meant that migration was a movement of friends and relatives. It has been noted by PRICE that non-British immigration in Australia has been heavily tied to bonds of family and acquaintance, the result of the combined effect of the expense of the journey and of the Governments' favouring of British immigrants.²¹² Yet in the Finnish migration, this takes on the added feature that the immigrants themselves recruited those who followed them; not infrequently someone who was about to set out back to Finland would write to a relative and inform him, so that as the first one left, there was a new arrival ready to take his place in the sugar harvest.²¹³

An excellent example of the role played by family and acquaintance in the migration from Finland to Australia is furnished by the township of Lohtaja, to the north of Kokkola (Gamlakarleby) on the Ostrobothnian coast. The "pipeline" from here stretched all the way to Long Pocket, near Ingham, which acquired the nickname "Australia's Lohtaja". There had been emigration from Lohtaja since the mid-19th century; there is an entry in the card-index of the Seamen's Mission stating that someone who died in Australia in 1917, Emmanuel Sjö, had been born in Lohtaja in 1853.²¹⁴ Sjö was thus possibly the pioneer settler from this township; however, it has proved impossible to trace him in either the Parish Records in Lohtaja or in the Migration records. The first confirmed record dates from 1889, when a party of emigrants were on their way to America, but having heard in Stockholm how bad the employment situation in the States was, they decided to head for Australia instead.²¹⁵

The earliest immigrants from Lohtaja listed in Karhula's papers were Jaakko and Antti Erkkilä. There is no further information on Antti after he had decided to leave New Zealand for America, but Karhula assumed in the 1930s that Jacob Erkkilä, who was still living in New

²¹¹ Diary of Niilo Oja for 18 July 1927, microfilm roll 4, SI.

²¹² PRICE 1954, 8.

²¹³ Interview with Eemeli Klemola, Veteli, 23 July 1973.

²¹⁴ *Luettelo Australiassa kuolleista suomalaisista* (Register of Finns Deceased in Australia) 1915—26, Finnish Seamen's Mission, microfilm roll 4, SI.

²¹⁵ *Keskipohjanmaa*, 3 Oct 1969.

Zealand, was in fact Jaakko.²¹⁶

It was "Russian Jack", i.e. J.F. Sjöroos, who was the magnet that began to attract Finns to Long Pocket. Sjöroos was one of the pioneer settlers in the area, and he used coloured workers from the Solomon Islands to clear his land. Under the pressure of public opinion, the Government of Queensland decided to ban the use of Kanaka labour, and the last Kanakas were repatriated to their islands in 1906,²¹⁷ and Sjöroos then decided to import labourers from Finland.

Russian Jack's foreman in charge of the Pacific Islander workers was a man called Antti Kluukeri, from Lohtaja. He had left Finland for Australia in 1889 at the age of 17 or 18, and had been also in New Zealand before coming to Long Pocket. His date of arrival there is reported as 1897, and this is probably correct, since in 1915, when Russian Jack's will was being contested in the courts, Kluukeri stated that he had known Russian Jack for 18 years.²¹⁸

Amongst the others in the party who came in 1889, Kalle Kluukeri eventually made his way back to Finland, via the mines in America, and bought the Kluukeri farm; Herman Penttilä returned to Lohtaja; and it is thought that Antti Rantala died in London on his homeward journey.²¹⁹ Janne Leskelä moved back earlier, in 1894, and was able to pay off the farm's debts with his Australian earnings. Kusti Roiko and Jaakko Jokisalo also returned to Finland, and Antti Kluukeri was in the end the only one to settle in Australia permanently.²²⁰

The next stage began in 1911, with the arrival in Australia of six new emigrants from Lohtaja: Johan Kluukeri (listed in the Lohtaja Parish Records as having left for America in 1898),²²¹ Nestori Pietilä, Otto Kauppila, Juho Nissilä, Janne Nissilä, and Juho Kero. Johan Kluukeri had been drawn there by a letter from his brother Antti suggesting that he should come and join in the cane harvest; Sjöroos would be willing to pay the fare and let him work it off, for there was a shortage of labour. The six men worked for Russian Jack for six weeks at Long Pocket, where they spent two weeks building a bridge for the railway; two weeks later the line was ready, and the first trainload of sugar cane set off for the sugar mill at Victoria. Next, some of the men decided to farm, and they rented land from Russian Jack: two of them together, and J. Kero on his own. They were also able to borrow two or three

²¹⁶ "Lohtajalaiset [The Immigrants from Lohtaja]", TYYH/S/X/7/III.

²¹⁷ See HS, 22 June 1960.

²¹⁸ "Lohtajalaiset (The Immigrants from Lohtaja)", TYYH/S/X/7/III. Nestori Karhula's notes (mainly based on information supplied by Matti Orjala); *Keskipohtanmaa*, 3 Oct 1969.

²¹⁹ Manuscript by Janne Leskelä about his journey to Australia, Lohtaja, 13 Jan 1938; "Lohtajalaiset [The Immigrants from Lohtaja]", TYYH/S/X/7/III.

²²⁰ *Keskipohtanmaa*, 3 Oct 1969.

²²¹ Lohtajan seurakunnan pääkirja [Lohtaja Parish Records] 1890—99, IV E A 22 a.

horses, and some tools.

The next year, there were more arrivals in Long Pocket from Lohtaja: Matti Orjala, Wilhelm Jukkola, and Matti Mäkelä. Kustaa Wilhelm and his wife Ida Maria Jukkola had originally emigrated to America, where they had met and married; they had later moved back to Finland before Wilhelm set out for Australia in 1912 but returned to Finland 1916; in 1921 he re-emigrated to Australia. In 1923, he and a relative, Johannes Junttila, bought a sugar farm in Long Pocket, and in 1924 he was joined by Ida and their five children. (See picture p. 119). Both the Junttila and the Jukkola families eventually moved back to Finland in the 1930s.

The next stage began in 1921, with the re-arrival of Finns who had been in Australia before. Life back in Finland had proved difficult for some of the return migrants, especially those who did not invest their savings in land, and they were haunted by their memories of Australia. Amongst those who returned to Long Pocket that year, there were Wilhelm Jukkola and Johan Kluukeri, accompanied by new arrivals, including Johannes Junttila and K. Hietala.²²² By this time there were enough Finns in the area for the first Finnish sugar gang to be set up, under the leadership of Wilhelm Jukkola, who could speak English.²²³

In 1923, Janne Nissilä returned to Long Pocket, accompanied by his wife and their 6-year-old daughter Martta, and Johan Kluukeri's wife Hilda: the first Finnish wives to arrive in the area.²²⁴ By the 1930s, the number of women had grown; in a letter from Tully dated 15 April 1931, Emil Hirvi mentions that in Long Pocket there were about a dozen women and a promising bunch of youngsters.²²⁵ But later in the 1930s, the number of Finns began to shrink again, as sugar cultivation went into recession; and by 1934, there were only four Finnish sugar cropping gangs left.

The purpose of this account of individual Finnish immigrants in Long Pocket is to provide an illustration of the significance of family and acquaintance in the migration to Australia, and Lohtaja-Long Pocket is perhaps the outstanding example of chain migration. The pipeline ran, so to speak, directly from Lohtaja, via the travel agency in Kokkola, to the Herbert River valley in Australia, where the company of friends and relatives provided a sense of security on the far side of the world. One knew before setting out, from the letters that had come home, that there would probably be work available, and that there would be people who spoke Finnish. From Long Pocket, many returned back home to

²²² *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936.

²²³ *Suomi*, 26 Aug. 1936; interview with Johannes Junttila, Lohtaja, 6 Sep. 1973.

²²⁴ *Keskipohjanmaa*, 28 June 1971.

²²⁵ *Suomen Viesti*, 11/1931, 144.

Finland; others moved on elsewhere in Australia in search of better earnings, to Mt Isa above all, but having made the first acquaintance with the new country within a familiar Finnish community. It was easier to try on one's own, once the country, its people, and its language were no longer utterly strange.

(5) The Depression, 1930—34

The Australian economy was largely built on the foundations of wool, wheat, and mining products. When the price of these commodities on the world market collapsed, she was therefore in an extremely tight situation. Simultaneously, production costs were too high: Queensland sugar, for example, cost three times the price of sugar elsewhere in the world. Tanner's reports from the Consulate begin to tell of increasing difficulties from 1928 onwards: rising unemployment, a tight money market, an instability in foreign trade. In immigration policy, increasing preference was being given to British applicants, to ensure that the British-origin proportion of the population (97 per cent) should be maintained. The restrictions on immigration already in force were now backed up by the application of quotas: with a few exceptions, the number of immigrants from each country was now limited to 300 a year;²²⁶ and at the end of 1930, non-British immigration was stopped. The number of immigrants landing in the country that year was a mere 63 000, and there were over 71 000 who left. These same trends continued for the following seven years; two thirds of the immigrants arriving were British, the next largest groups being Italians, Americans, and Frenchmen.²²⁷

Australia was also plagued by strikes. Late in 1929, a long-drawn-out strike began in the coal mines, which did not come to an end until the summer of 1930. Meanwhile the Australian economy was in difficulties, and it was impossible for coal production to be brought back to its previous level quickly. Nonetheless, thousands of coal miners did get their jobs back, and this was important at a time when the unemployed already numbered about 140 000.

Unemployment rose fast during 1930. One reason contributing to this was that the minimum wage levels were too high, so that it was impossible for the factories to market their products at a competitive price. The Australian Government appealed to the governments of

²²⁶ Harald Tanner, Report for the Year 1928 to the Finnish Foreign Ministry, Sydney, 12 Feb. 1929, UM 53, F 51, f.

²²⁷ SS 1/1938.

other countries to help restrain immigration, suggesting that emigrants might be prevented from setting out for Australia, e.g. by refusing to issue passports or some other means. Less than a hundred came from Finland that year, but there were many travelling in the opposite direction; and even this small trickle was stopped at the end of the year, after a telegram to the following effect had been received by the Foreign Ministry in Helsinki from its Consulate in Sydney:

IMMIGRATION INTO AUSTRALIA FROM NONBRITISH COUNTRIES
DISCONTINUED OWING TO HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT STOP ENTRY
PERMITS GRANTED BY HOME DEPARTMENT CANBERRA ONLY IN
SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES²²⁸

The "special circumstances" included cases where people already in the country wished to bring their wife or children aged under 18 to join them. Previously, immigration from Finland, as from other countries, had been free from legal restrictions. One reason for the introduction of the new restrictions was the fact that there was now a Labor Government, and in the face of rising unemployment the Labor Party turned even more sharply against further immigration.

Immigration from Finland thus virtually came to a total stop for the time being. Between January and June 1930, the number of Finns landing in the country amounted to 77 (of whom 25 were women), while 45 left (including eleven women). Nor were Finnish ships to be seen so often in the harbours of Australian ports any more; for their main task had been the transport of wheat to the markets of Europe, and this task was no longer required.²²⁹

In March 1930, a leading article about immigration appeared in the Finnish-Australian paper, *Suomi*, in which it was stated that the Consulate believed the number of Finns in the country to be about three thousand or slightly less. The article went on to give a realistic account of the labour conditions in Australia at the time, with many Finns having been out of work in many places: some for six months or longer, some even for a year. If, despite this, anyone was determined to set out for Australia, then at least a rudimentary command of English was essential; and it would be a great advantage if one had relatives already in Australia. Finnish women would be able to find jobs as domestic servants in the cities, at £1 or 30s. a week; but here too, English was a necessity.²³⁰

Not until the middle of 1932 did the unemployment situation begin to

²²⁸ Report from Harald Tanner to the Foreign Ministry, "Siirtolaisuuden rajoittaminen [The Controls on Immigration]", 31 Dec. 1930, and letter from the Department of Home Affairs, Canberra, 22 Dec. 1930, to the Consul for Finland, Sydney, UM 36 K, f.

²²⁹ Harald Tanner, Report for the Year 1930 to the Finnish Foreign Ministry, Sydney, UM 53, F 51, f.

²³⁰ *Suomi*, 20 March 1930.

ease; but Finnish immigration continued to be banned. That year, a total of four men and five women landed, while 35 left. For those who were already in the country, however, life was easier, and work was now to be had by good workers, provided they were content with lower wages than had used to be paid. The unemployed were taken on public works programs and were also entitled to public assistance. The Consulate knew of about 1900 Finns in the country that year, although Tanner guessed that the true number was probably slightly higher; the official figure was calculated on the basis of the figures from the 1921 Census and of data for arrivals, departures, and deaths since that date.²³¹

During 1934, the Australian economy began to improve. Confidence in the economic revival increased, business was beginning to run on a more profitable footing again, and the financial policy being pursued by the Government and the Reserve Bank was sound and stable. Finnish immigration remained at a low level, with ten arrivals as against 28 returning to Finland.²³²

(6) The Revival of Migration, 1935—39

In 1935, the strict immigration controls were still in force, and new immigration was not permitted. Nonetheless, there were 12 persons who landed from Finland that year, consisting both of some who had been in Australia previously, and of others who were close relatives of people in the country. Conditions had improved everywhere, and the new Consul, Paavo Simelius, believed that there were virtually no Finns unemployed. Finns had begun to find work in the silver and lead mines at Mt Isa, where their numbers had by now grown to over 200, making it the largest concentration of Finns in Australia.²³³

According to reports in *Suomi*, there were many young men, and even families, coming out from central Ostrobothnia, most of them moving up into northern Queensland to find work on the cattle ranches, tobacco farms, or on road construction.²³⁴ Another indication of increased interest in migration was a letter from the Finnish Steamship Company to Nestori Karhula, enquiring about the conditions for entry; Karhula replied, setting out the current regulations, and also offering

²³¹ Harald Tanner, Report for the Year 1932 to the Finnish Foreign Ministry, Sydney, 8 March 1933, UM 53, F 51, f; MY 6—7/1932.

²³² Harald Tanner, Report for the Year 1934 to the Finnish Foreign Ministry, Sydney, 11 Feb. 1935, UM 53, F 51, f.

²³³ Paavo Simelius, Finnish Consul, Report for the Year 1935 to the Finnish Foreign Ministry, Sydney 22 Jan. 1936, UM 53, F 51, f.

²³⁴ *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936.

advice as to whereabouts in Australia new arrivals should go.²³⁵ The sources do not show whether this interchange of correspondence led to any further collaboration between Karhula and the Steamship Company, but if there was, it appears not to have had very great significance; and Karhula carried on as before, assisting individual immigrants arriving in the country in a variety of different ways.

In 1936, there were three categories of persons eligible for admission to the country:

- (1) Next of kin or fiancées of persons already resident in Australia, who must show evidence that they would not be liable to become a burden on society;
- (2) Aliens without any next of kin in the country but with a sponsor willing to go bond on their behalf; new arrivals were to be required to have £50 landing capital, and to be engaged in occupations which would not be liable to cause unemployment for Australian workers;
- (3) Aliens without any sponsor were required to have £200 landing capital, and were subject to the same requirements concerning their occupations as in category (2).²³⁶

In his reply to the Finnish Steamship Company, however, Karhula reported that he had negotiated with the Australian authorities and had obtained an agreement that these regulations would not be applied to Finnish immigrants absolutely literally. He believed it might be possible to arrange for a lower landing capital for persons who had been in Australia before, and for a small remuneration he would be willing to try to obtain landing permits for Finnish immigrants.²³⁷

The size of the landing capital was in fact the most serious obstacle for would-be Finnish immigrants in the 1930s; hence the efforts by Karhula and others to have it reduced. In 1937, Karhula was interviewed by a local paper in Brisbane, and stated there that £200 was far too high a sum to impose on the Finns; he thought a maximum of £50 would be appropriate, and if this was done, Karhula believed it would be easy to recruit a hundred Finnish immigrants a year. He stressed the quality of the Finnish immigrants, and suggested that they adapted to Australian conditions far better than the southern Europeans did. It would also be possible to guarantee that the Finnish immigrants coming to Australia were not Communists.²³⁸

The immigration controls were eased from the beginning of 1937, according to a report by the Finnish Consulate, and this led to an immediate increase in the numbers arriving: 5500 landed that year,

²³⁵ Unsigned letter from Runcorn, 21 Dec. 1936, "Queenslandin suomalaiset [The Finns in Queensland]", TYYH/S/X/7/IV. (Apparently a copy given to Urpo Kokkonen of the original letter.)

²³⁶ *Suomi*, 23 May 1936.

²³⁷ Unsigned letter from Runcorn, 21 Dec. 1936, "Queenslandin suomalaiset [The Finns in Queensland]", TYYH/S/X/7/IV.

²³⁸ *Courier Mail*, 6 July 1937, "Queenslandin suomalaiset [The Finns in Queensland]", TYYH/S/X/7/IV.

including almost 100 from Finland. The southern European immigrants tended to concentrate in particular localities, e.g. on the sugar plantations in northern Queensland. One consequence of this had been that a number of farms had passed into their hands from British-Australian farmers, a fact which was not popular; the controls on immigration had therefore been tightened up again, and it was proposed to introduce regulations forbidding new immigrants from moving to the sugar-growing areas. The Government had announced its intention of continuing to require of new immigrants information about their previous life and a medical examination, and of ensuring that they really did settle in the location they had stated. These proposals would have affected Finnish immigrants too, since the cane fields of northern Queensland were a major Finnish concentration. At the end of his Consular report, Simelius mentions that the majority of immigrants arriving at that time were coming from central Ostrobothnia, from the region around Kokkola, which had supplied many emigrants in the years immediately after the First World War as well.²³⁹

In 1939, *Suomi* offered a retrospect over the preceding decade of Finnish immigration, noting that it had virtually been at a standstill from 1930, when 100 Finns had landed, and with even lower numbers in the years that followed, up to 1937. Of these, the great majority had gone up to northern Queensland; but many had needed to wait a long time before getting work, e.g. at Mt Isa, where they were unwilling to let persons who could not speak English go underground. By 1939, however, the writer (apparently Hytönen, the pastor) did not know of any unemployed, and even at Mt Isa the waiting time was much shorter than it had been a couple of years earlier. There was even talk of a shortage of labour in the sugar belt on the coast, especially during the season. But one of the biggest changes in Finnish immigration from previously was the fact that now men were often arriving accompanied by their families.²⁴⁰

(7) The Second World War

Following Hitler's rise to power in Germany in 1933, the international situation became increasingly tense towards the end of the decade. Simultaneously with German expansionism, conflict arose in the Far East between China and Japan over Manchuria. As the partners of the Berlin-Rome "Axis" began to implement their ambitious plans, with the

²³⁹ Paavo Simelius, Finnish Consul, Report No 6 to the Finnish Foreign Ministry, Sydney 12 April 1938, UM Canberra 36 D "Australia".

²⁴⁰ *Suomi*, 10 Aug. 1939.

occupation by Germany of Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland, and the invasion by Italy of Albania, war became inevitable. The Allies were at war with Germany from September 1939, and with Italy from June 1940. The outbreak of the Second World War, and Finland's slide into war with the Soviet Union in 1939, put a stop to all new immigration into Australia and also prevented any of those already in the country from returning home to Finland. The Winter War (1939—40) was followed by a new war with the Soviet Union in 1941—44.

As an inevitable consequence of her alliance with the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom declared war on Finland on 6 December 1941, with equally inevitable repercussions in Australia on the status and conditions of the Finns there. Australia took an active role in the Second World War, sending about 550 000 people to the front between 1939 and 1945.²⁵⁰ At home, foreign nationals were classified into two categories: enemy aliens and other aliens. 'Enemy aliens' included the citizens of Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Romania, and Siam (Thailand), as well as Finland.²⁵¹ Regulations were soon introduced requiring enemy aliens to report to the police, limiting their freedom of movement, requiring them to carry identification and registration papers with them at all times and present them if requested to do so, restricting their right to acquire or rent land, and making it illegal for them to change their names.²⁵²

According to the official Australian records, on 31 December 1942 there were 639 Finnish citizens registered in the country. Altogether, 22 314 enemy aliens had been registered, the Italians being overwhelmingly the largest single group, with over 12 000.²⁵³ However, not all the Finns may have been registered, since according to some accounts there were a dozen or so who claimed to be Swedish nationals. The prevailing mood was patriotic, and if anyone uttered even the slightest criticism of the British Empire or Commonwealth of Nations, they were liable to end up in an internment camp. Even after the War was over, it was some time before those who had falsely identified themselves as Swedish dared to admit to being from Finland.²⁵⁴

The period up to World War II had been marked by the re-emergence of Vaasa Province as the main region of origin for Finnish emigrants, and the consolidation of Queensland as the State for which they headed. In addition, there was a notable increase in the proportion of Finnish women landing in Australia, either to join their husbands or fiancés, or travelling in their own groups. Group migration, or indeed

²⁵⁰ CHAMBERLAIN 1983, 48.

²⁵¹ LAMIDEY 1974, 11.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 20—26.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 6.

²⁵⁴ Interview with Paavo Vennonen, Canberra, 12 March 1981.

"pipeline migration", had become an established feature of Finnish migration, i.e. the phenomenon of a steady flow of emigrants from a particular locality in Finland to a particular locality in Australia where they could be sure of finding friends and acquaintances from home. The goal behind the journey to Australia continued to be the intention of returning within a few years at the most in order to buy a farm back at home in Finland, and the journey home was also often made in a party.

One distinctive group among the immigrants from Finland were the sailors who came ashore from Gustaf Erikson's sailing ships, either to remain ashore or to sign on with ships plying the Australian coasts. Their main concentration was at Melbourne, and in the ports of South Australia, for the main attraction for Finnish seamen in Australia was the high wages to be had either on the coastal shipping or on the docks. For young men from agrarian communities in rural Finland, on the other hand, the high wages were to be found on the sugar fields of northern Queensland, or then down the mines at Mt Isa, which by the outbreak of the War had become a major Finnish colony in Australia. In brief, therefore, the pull factors attracting Finnish immigrants to Australia in the 1930s were, as before, the sea, gold, and sugar cane. The Second World War, however, was to mark a major dividing point in Finnish immigration.

(8) Finnish Migration to Australia, in Figures 1921—47

The 1921 Census recorded in Australia 1358 persons born in Finland; the true figure is probably slightly higher: possibly around 1500. Thereafter, the numbers began to increase, reaching a peak of immigration in 1924 but with the turning point occurring in the preceding year.

The first change to occur concerned Finnish shipping in Australian ports. Previously these had mainly traded with ports on the east coast, most notably the coal harbours in New South Wales, whereas they now switched to carrying wheat to Europe from Melbourne and the ports in South Australia; consequently, Finnish seamen coming ashore now did so in Melbourne, Adelaide, and other ports along the south coast.

For those emigrating legitimately, the Finnish statistics provide the following data, as given in Table II.15.

The number of persons recorded by the official Finnish Migration Statistics as having been issued with passports during 1921—39 in order to travel to Australia or New Zealand is 1302; there is no accurate information available on the proportion of these who went to New Zealand, but it is unlikely to have been very high. The number of Finns

Table II.15: Finnish Statistics on Emigration to Australia, 1921—39

Period	Migration Statistics (a)	Passenger Lists (b)
1921—1930	1121	912
1931—1939	181	206
TOTAL	1302	1118

Sources: (a) STV (Finnish Statistical Yearbook) 42, Helsinki 1946, 82. Includes New Zealand.

(b) Statistics of SHO (Finnish Steamship Company), ÅÅ, also on mfr. TYYH/s/m/7/17. New Zealand not available.

in New Zealand has on the whole been around two to three hundred throughout the present century.

For the inter-Wars period, data on Finnish migration to Australia are available from official statistics in both countries, since the Australian statistics list Finns regularly as a distinct group with effect from 1924. This change in the recording procedure came in the middle of the peak period of Finnish immigration; during the preceding period, April 1921 to June 1924, the number of Finnish immigrants landing is estimated at 250. Between that date and the end of 1930, when immigration controls were introduced, the number of Finns landing is 1139 (see Table II.16). When return movement is accounted for, the net migration increase amounted 846. Allowing for the Finnish seamen coming ashore (who are not recorded in the official statistics as landed immigrants), an estimated total is obtained of around 2000 Finns arriving in Australia during the 1920s, and this estimate is supported by information from other sources.

In his speech on 7 December 1929 at the opening of *Suomi-Koti*, the seamen's hostel in Sydney, Tanner guessed that the number of Finns who had moved to Australia during the preceding ten years was around 1500. The 1921 Census had listed 1358 people born in Finland; since then, 1404 were known to have landed, about 350 to have moved back to Finland, and about 250 had died. Thus the Consul obtained an estimate of slightly more than two thousand Finns in the country at that time, in 1929.²⁵⁵ This is a valuable estimate, and its accuracy is borne out by the next official count, at the 1933 Census, which recorded 1852 Finns in the country.

One of the means used to restrict immigration when the controls were imposed at the end of 1930 was the raising of the landing capital to £40. This was a sum paid back to the immigrant on landing to cover initial

²⁵⁵ *Suomi*, 19 Dec. 1929.

Table II.16: Finnish In- and Out-Migration in Australia, 1924—44

Year	In-migration			Out-migration			Net migration		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1924, 2nd half	269	9	278	13	3	16	256	6	262
1925	131	18	149	31	4	35	100	14	114
1926	95	31	126	40	7	47	55	24	79
1927	160	13	173	26	2	28	134	11	145
1928	152	20	172	32	12	44	120	8	128
1929	108	36	144	46	10	56	62	26	88
1930	69	28	97	58	9	67	11	19	30
1931	15	2	17	45	11	56	-30	-9	-39
1932	4	5	9	30	5	35	-26	-	-26
1933	6	2	8	31	3	34	-25	-1	-26
1934	6	4	10	23	5	28	-17	-1	-18
1935	13	10	23	32	2	34	-19	8	-11
1936	17	6	23	28	1	29	-11	5	-6
1937	76	16	92	27	4	31	49	12	61
1938	46	11	57	26	6	32	20	5	25
1939	24	13	37	30	12	42	-6	1	-5
1940	9	-	9	9	3	12	-	-3	-3
1941*	..	..	8	..	..	10	..	..	-2
1942*	..	..	6	..	..	-	..	..	6
1943	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1944	2	-	2	2	..	2	-	-	-
TOTAL	1202	224	1440	529	99	638	673	125	802

* No information on gender.

Source: Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, *Demography Bulletin*, annual statistics.

expenses, and it had previously been only £10.²⁵⁶ The cost of the ticket and landing capital together were so high that for many it was difficult to raise the sum in Finland, so that in many cases, some relative or friend in Australia was asked to pay it on behalf of a new arrival.

The Second World War brought migration to Australia from Finland virtually to a complete stop, and not until 1947 did movement gradually begin to get under way again, with the issue in that year of three passports. The rapid expansion of the migration in the 1920s can clearly be seen in Fig. II.3, whereas the combined impact of immigration controls and the Depression kept Finnish immigration at a low level throughout the 1930s, amounting to no more than two hundred or so legitimate immigrants in the entire decade. The rate of naturalization rose during the Depression to reach its maximum during the Second

²⁵⁶ Letter from the Secretary at the Consulate, Alpi Räisänen, 6 Feb. 1925, to Pastor Groundstroem, SMLA Brisbane.

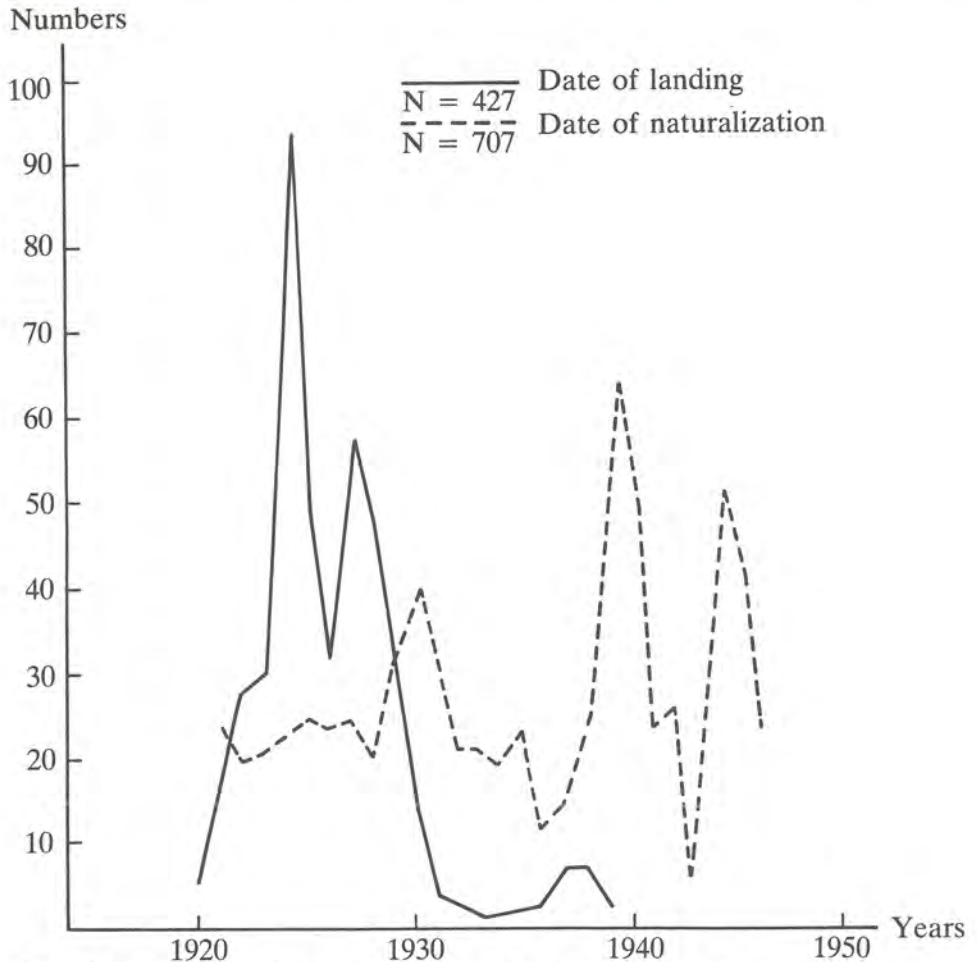


Fig. II.3: Finnish Male Immigrants Landing in Australia 1921—39 and Subsequently Naturalized before 1947. Dates of Landing and Naturalization 1921—46 (NR)

World War. The downturn in the curve representing new landings towards the end of the period, however, is partly a retrospective distortion resulting from the fact that the Figure does not incorporate data from the Naturalization Records for the period after 1946.

(9) Areas of Origin in Finland and Routes Used

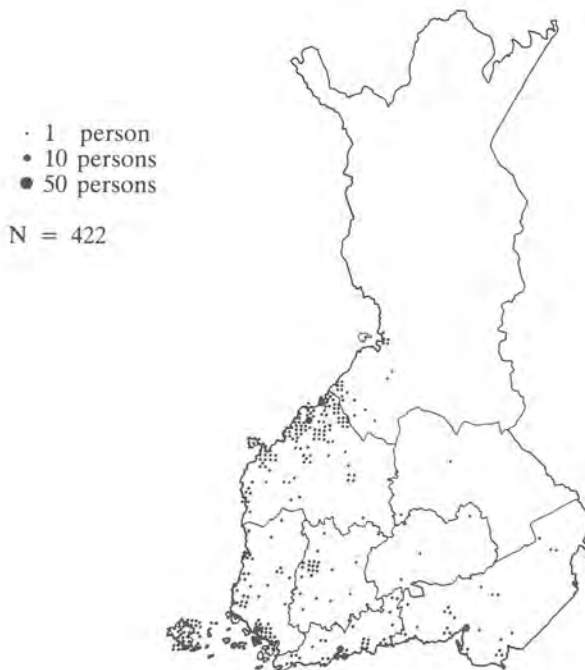
The majority of the emigrants came from Ostrobothnia, consisting largely of unmarried young men from the Kokkola (Gamlakarleby) region.²⁵⁷ Emigration from the seaboard region along the Gulf of

²⁵⁷ *Kokkola*, 13 Nov. 1924.

Bothnia to Australia and New Zealand was by this time a well-established phenomenon, though not as strong, nor reinforced by such strong contacts, as the emigration to America.

Table II.17: Finnish Immigrants Landing in Australia 1921—39: Areas of Origin by Administrative Province (NR)

Province	N	%
Uusimaa	59	13.8
Turku & Pori	77	18.1
Vaasa	147	34.5
Oulu including Lapland	21	4.9
Kuopio	2	0.5
Häme	23	5.4
Mikkeli	3	0.7
Viipuri	39	9.1
Åland	51	11.9
Born abroad	4	0.9
"Finland" (location unspecified)	1	0.2
TOTAL	427	100.0



Map 4: Finnish Male Immigrants Landing in Australia 1921—1939 and Subsequently Naturalized before 1947: Areas of Origin in Finland (NR)

The most notable feature that emerges from an examination of the emigrants' areas of origin is the increase in the proportion moving from Vaasa Province, from 10 per cent in the previous period, to just over a third. This is confirmed by the Finnish Migration Statistics, which show that of the 5429 emigrants recorded altogether in 1924, 39 per cent came from Vaasa Province,²⁵⁸ which had thus re-emerged as the main catchment area for overseas migration. Correspondingly, the Naturalization Records show the proportion originating from Turku & Pori Province falling in this period from 35 to 18 per cent, and a similar reduction in the proportion emigrating from Uusimaa Province, in comparison with the period prior to World War I. The relative emigration rate to Australia rose during the inter-Wars period not only in Vaasa Province, but also on the Åland Islands, to such an extent that the Finnish-Australian migration in the 1920s and 1930s could be said to have been dominated by recruitment from these two regions. One of the special factors causing this on Åland was the role of the Gustaf Erikson shipping line, whereas for Vaasa Province, there were a number of interacting factors. The most immediate cause for a rise in emigration to Australia was the introduction of immigration controls in the United States in the 1920s. This could be described as a *push* factor operating away from America towards Australia; and it was reinforced by the *pull* factor of news filtering back home of good wages in Australia, especially on the cane fields in northern Queensland, together with the encouragement and sense of security provided by the on-going *chain migration* operating between Ostrobothnia and Australia.

Table II.18: Routes Travelled, 1921—39 (NR)

Routes	N	%
Direct from Europe	390	89.5
Via North America	24	5.5
Via Latin America	11	2.5
Via Asia	3	0.7
Via Africa	4	0.9
Via Oceania	4	0.9
TOTAL	436	100.0

²⁵⁸ "Siirtolaisuus v. 1924 ja Keskipohjanmaan osuus siinä [Emigration in 1924 and the Role of Central Ostrobothnia]", *Kokkola*, 23 May 1925. The author was the Registrar at the Central Bureau of Statistics, A.A.M. Strömmer.

Of the male immigrants landing in this period for whom data are available from their applications for naturalization, nine out of ten had travelled straight from Europe to Australia; the corresponding proportions in the earlier periods examined were 73 per cent (1893—1920) and 77 per cent (1851—92). The third period was thus characterized even more strongly by direct migration to Australia, with fewer migrants arriving there by way of *etappe* migration.

In the pattern found in their areas of arrival, it is noticeable that about one fifth now made their way direct to Queensland, compared with only approximately 7.5 per cent in the period 1893—1920. The second destination area in Australia was now Victoria, and Melbourne in particular, which was now the destination of one immigrant in three, as compared with only 18 per cent in the previous period. This was largely related to the fact that Melbourne was a main destination for Finnish sailing ships during the 1920s, especially those out of Åland. The proportions landing in New South Wales, South Australia, and Western Australia all fell accordingly.

The typical migrants were young men, travelling in a group, and staying together within Australia, at least initially. They also often travelled together back to Finland, to fulfill their goal and buy a farm back in their native township. The striking new feature, however, was the arrival in Australia of larger numbers of Finnish women, often following their husbands at several years' interval, or — now — accompanying them from the outset.

(10) The Australian Alternative

Overall, Finnish overseas emigration contracted during the period examined here, in consequence of the immigration controls imposed by the United States at the beginning of the 1920s; and the impact of these controls, coupled with the weakness of the Canadian economy, were crucial in re-directing emigration both from the British Isles and from other parts of Europe towards Australia.²⁵⁹ The quotas imposed in the USA in 1921—24 cut the Italian immigration into America, for instance, from the level of 215 000 per year, which it had reached in the early years of the century, down to a mere 40 000. Australia also wished to restrain Italian immigration, but despite the Australian authorities' efforts, the number of Italians landing each year rose by half, reaching about 6000;²⁶⁰ and a similar account could be given for many other

²⁵⁹ APPLEYARD 1964; PRICE 1963, *passim*.

²⁶⁰ PRICE 1963, 90.

European countries, with part of the flow of emigrants switching from the United States towards Australia.

Once the North American doors were closed, the Australian pull factors were free to operate more powerfully. High levels of wages in the cane fields and down the mines attracted new arrivals to Australia, reinforced by the security and encouragement provided by relatives and acquaintances already in the country. What emerges very clearly from this investigation is the significance of a *migration tradition*, especially for the migration from the Ostrobothnian coastal strip to northern Queensland. These factors were made even more powerful by the rapid expansion of the Australian economy during the 1920s, creating an increasing supply of employment for immigrant labour.

Between 1921 and 1939, a total of approximately 2000 Finns emigrated to Australia; yet a very large proportion of these subsequently made their way back to Finland. The *return migration* will be examined more detail in the following Chapter, while an overall comparative picture of the migration between Finland and Australia will be presented in the Conclusions of this study.

III The Return to Finland

Return migration is a field of research to which students of migration have paid relatively little attention.¹ One of the reasons for this has been the absence of relevant source material, especially of migration statistics. In Australia, Finns landing in the country and leaving it were not listed as a distinct group until 1924,² i.e. just in the middle of a peak period in the Finnish migration; nevertheless, this date has to be taken as a boundary between the estimates which can be made for the period prior to 1924, with inadequate statistical evidence, and the rather firmer conclusions which can be drawn for the period 1924—44.

Some research has been carried out by Finnish scholars on return movement, especially with reference to the United States. TOIVONEN, who studied emigration from southern Ostrobothnia during the period 1867—1930, estimated that about one third of the emigrants returned. KERO has suggested that 25 per cent of all Finnish emigrants during the period 1894—1924 made their way back.³ The biggest advance in Finnish research on this question, however, was provided by VIRTANEN's study (1979), in which he concludes that approximately 20 per cent of all Finnish overseas emigrants setting out before 1930 eventually made their way back. This is an overall figure, however, and it is also necessary to examine the return phenomenon separately with reference to the United States, Canada, South America, and Australia.

For those who returned from Australia during the 19th century and during the beginning years of the 20th, only approximate estimates are possible. The earliest record of anyone returning from Australia to

¹ In 1981, an international conference was held in Rome with the intention of improving the conditions for research into return migration, at which European return migration was discussed in its historical and political context. See KUBAT 1984.

² See Table II.16, p. 133.

³ KERO 1972, 20.

Finland dates from 1857, when the brothers Alfred and Wilhelm Häggblom came back from four years on the gold fields in Victoria and New South Wales, after a farewell party lasting a week in the hotel in McIvor.⁴ The prevailing impression was that probably half of all the Finnish gold prospectors and ex-seamen in Australia during the latter half of the 19th century subsequently left the country, either to return to Finland or to move on elsewhere.

The sources which are extant for later periods, e.g. letters, newspapers, magazines, and books, confirm that many made the return journey home. Until the 1920s, the Finnish-Australian community consisted very largely of mobile ex-seamen and casual labourers. There were other alternatives, besides a return to Finland: some moved on, to New Zealand, for instance, or North America, e.g. many members of Matti Kurikka's utopian socialist colony *Kalevan Kansa* who followed their leader from Queensland to Sointula in British Columbia. There were even those Finnish emigrants who moved on from Australia via North America to end up in Soviet Karelia.⁵ Many stayed in Australia for several years, even decades, before moving on. Consequently, and especially taking into account the large out-migration by Finns during the First World War and immediately afterwards, it may be guessed that something like half of all the Finns who had come to Australia at some time before the 1920s did eventually leave again; but there is no basis on which any more precise estimate may be attempted.

This is not to say, however, that there is no information about migrants who returned before the 1920s. The Finnish Migration Statistics record 57 men who returned from Australia prior to 1924, the majority of them having emigrated from Vaasa Province (mainly from Munsala and Lohtaja) and returning to the same area. The shortest period spent in Australia had been one year, and the longest 35 years, the average being 3—8 years. Most of them (34) were unmarried,⁶ and it may be supposed that this fact was a strong factor in their decision to return: if no suitable woman was found in Australia, it was time to remember the girlfriend or fiancée left behind in Finland and go back and marry her. The married men, on the other hand, were drawn back to Finland by their family responsibilities. Some of these who came back to Finland, however, moved to Australia again in the 1920s, and then usually took their families with them.

The figures given in Table II.16, above, show that between mid-1924 and the end of 1944 there were 1426 Finns who landed in Australia. and

⁴ Cronquist 1859, 88—90.

⁵ KERO 1983, 63. See also Replies to Immigrant Questionnaire, papers of the Finnish Consulate in Sydney, SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb:5, 22, La-Le, and Fgb:22, Sandblom, Se, UM Helsinki.

⁶ Finnish Central Bureau of Statistics, Register of Migrants Returning Before 1924, VA.

638 who left, i.e. 45 per cent. Out-migration was particularly marked in the 1930s, on the one hand owing to the slump in the Australian economy, and on the other to the implementation by many immigrants of their original intention to return to Finland after a few years abroad. Moreover, many who had moved to Australia in the inter-Wars period did not leave the country until the period after the Second World War, some even as late as the 1980s; and this suggests that the ultimate return rate may be close fifty per cent for the inter-Wars immigrants as well. This conclusion is supported by the observations of contemporaries, e.g. Jorma Pohjanpalo, Secretary at the Finnish Consulate, who estimated in 1928 that about 50 per cent of the Finnish immigrants subsequently returned to Finland;⁷ and a similar estimate was arrived at by Pastor Paavo Hytönen for the inter-Wars immigrants as a whole.⁸

VIRTANEN also comes to the conclusion that of the 2000 Finnish migrants to Australia in the 1920s approximately half returned. There was an even higher return rate, however, among those who went to South America and South Africa, partly since the numbers of Finnish immigrants in these "second-class" countries of settlement were too low to allow the formation of local Finnish communities, such as happened in North America; moreover, the Finns in these areas were typically engaged in forms of employment which did not create lasting ties to their new country.⁹

In addition to the Häggblom brothers, other early names among those who returned to Finland include Jacob (Jakob) Lundqvist and Berndt Hiekka (formerly surnamed Lindell). Lundqvist, from Kovjoki in Ostrobothnia, returned in 1893 after having spent seven years in Tasmania, in order to marry his Finnish fiancée; she was unwilling to move to Australia, and the couple settled in Helsinki.¹⁰ Berndt Hiekka had been living in Melbourne and on the Western Australian gold fields for almost twenty years, where he kept a clocksmith's, goldsmith's and jeweller's shop, before returning to Finland in 1900. Hiekka had become a rich man in Australia, having set up in Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, a goldsmith's shop where he traded in gold; and after his return to Finland, he bought Steninge Manor, in Karuna on the south-west coast.¹¹

The reasons for returning, therefore, were many and varied. For Jacob Lundqvist personal reasons were paramount, whereas Berndt Hiekka had achieved his goals and amassed a fortune. The personal

⁷ Manuscript, April 1928, UM 36, K, f.

⁸ SK 3/1948.

⁹ VIRTANEN 1979, 165—166.

¹⁰ Letter from Jakob Lundqvist's daughter Anna Lundqvist, Helsinki, 14 May 1973, to Olavi Koivukangas, SI.

¹¹ NIEMI 1951, 205; Interview with Markus Markkula, 9 Nov. 1973; Interview with Risto Hiekka, 24 Oct. 1973.

reasons might include homesickness, patriotism, the search for a wife, the failure to adapt, or health; nor did the climate, with its extremes of heat, suit all the Finns who came there (though there were also those who moved to Australia precisely because of the warmer climate). On a more public plane, other reasons contributing to the decision to return included both political events, and the state of the economy; the latter was of particular relevance during the Depression, when many had no alternative but to leave the country in the face of unemployment, while a major example of the former was the enthusiasm and return home stimulated by Finland's achievement of independence in 1917. No longer need those who remained in Australia put up with the nickname "Russian Finn".

At the end of the 1920s, as the Depression and rising unemployment loomed ahead, more and more Finns began to think about moving back to Finland. The Finnish-Australian paper *Suomi* published lists of those returning, and reports on the current situation. Many of those setting out for home tried to get jobs on board ship, in order to save travelling expenses.¹² By 1929, the movement home was beginning to be a rush, and the lists of departures in the paper became longer than the lists of arrivals. Ten years later, *Suomi* reported a new surge in the numbers of departures.¹³ The mass-migration aspect of the Finnish migration to Australia is also illustrated in the return, for just as many had travelled out to Australia in groups, so they also made the journey in groups home to Finland.

For the great majority of the Finns who went to Australia, their intention had been to spend a few years there before returning home, i.e. normally to their home township, to begin a new life with the wealth amassed abroad. Rarely did the plans work out as hoped, for even in Australia, to amass wealth required hard work, in surroundings where inability to speak the language, the rigours of the climate, and unemployment, all imposed major difficulties for most Finns. One contributor to *Suomi* suggested that many were perhaps in too much of a hurry to rush back to Finland as soon as they had a little money saved up; whereas the golden time for an immigrant really only started after two or three years in the country, when one might be able to buy a farm with one's savings, and then, with luck, sell this for a profit four or five years later. This, suggested the writer, was the right time to go back to

¹² *Suomi*, 1 Feb. 1928.

¹³ *Suomi*, 31 March 1939. Those returning at this date included W. Jukkola, who had first come to Long Pocket in 1912, and again in 1921; he now moved back to Finland with his family. Others in the party included Hannes Kuusisto from Kannus (landed in 1929); V. Sulkava from Virrat (landed in 1928); J. Välläri from Vehmaa (landed in 1929); and Y. Savela from Ylivieska (landed in 1927). The average length of time spent by these migrants in Australia had been approximately ten years.

Finland, with a wallet truly bulging.¹⁴ Most of those returning had in fact been reasonably successful in financial terms, as is shown by their ability to buy the expensive ticket home. In this respect, the situation resembles that of those returning from America, too.¹⁵ In APPELYARD's study of the British immigrants (which concentrates on the period following the Second World War), he found that the overwhelming majority who returned from Australia did so not for financial but for other reasons.¹⁶

Eino Keskinen may be taken as a typical example of a Finn who went home. He had gone out in 1923, intending to stay for five years, but this stretched to almost twice the planned length as he wandered about Australia and New Zealand. Working on the sugar crop, down the mines, and on clearing the land, he earned large sums of money; these were soon used up, although he also found enough to send remittances back to Finland. In the long run, however, the monotony and irregularity of his life, and the loneliness of a bachelor existence, were too much for him, and in 1932 he returned to Finland. He was still unsure of his decision, however, and pondered on his way back what he would do back in Finland; and even at this stage, wondered whether he might eventually emigrate once more.¹⁷

One of the factors which in some cases contributed to a decision to re-emigrate was inflation: as the value of the savings accumulated in Australia or America dwindled, the hopes of a new life in Finland faded. This was the experience of Matti Orjala and his companions, for example, who came back to Finland in 1916, only to find that inflation had eaten up the capital with which they had intended to buy a farm; but with no farm to tie them down, it was easier to set out once more.¹⁸

Few of those returning had a job in Finland to come back to, and unemployment easily pushed them into re-emigrating. Keskinen's comments also reflect the fear of rootlessness: for the migrant, in the end, the only place which may feel like home is on board ship or on a plane, "on the road".

Those who came back from Australia usually returned to their native area, and assuming they had saved up enough money abroad, they would buy a farm. Sometimes they had the effect of stimulating more emigration, especially if they had prospered; the example of Berndt Hiekka, for instance, inspired Kaino Kanervo over twenty years later to set out for Australia from Sauvo (near where Hiekka had settled back in

¹⁴ *Suomi*, 1 May 1927.

¹⁵ TOIVONEN 1955, 14.

¹⁶ APPELYARD 1962, 368.

¹⁷ Diary of Eino Keskinen for 12 Jan. 1930 and 23 Feb. 1932, SI.

¹⁸ Interview with Matti Orjala, Kannus, 24 Feb. 1984. This Matti Orjala, junior, had also been in Australia in 1927—38.

Finland).¹⁹ On the other hand, those who came back wealthy were also able to contribute to the welfare of their neighbourhood, by providing employment on their farms or in their businesses. Yet perhaps the most significant result of all might be the increased social status which such an ex-Finnish-Australian could acquire in his native township, when the former farmer's lad or farmhand moved up to the status of a farmer, having bought a holding with the money saved from his time abroad.

Nor can the success of a migrant be measured simply in financial terms, for the decision to up roots and emigrate also meant the beginning of a life richer in experience.²⁰ For many of the emigrants from southern Ostrobothnia whom TOIVONEN studied, emigration had meant the opening of a wider mental world, not least as a result of the active voluntary associations among the Finnish-Americans. Emil Hirvi, preparing for his departure back to Finland after fifteen years in Australia, said that he had arrived full of hopes and strength, and was returning old and worn; but despite his financial success, he regarded the greatest gain as being the new world which had opened for him.²¹ Others valued the acquisition of English, and the broadening of the scope of their minds, although it had to be admitted that some of the best years of their lives were wasted in terms of direct benefit back in Finland.²²

For many who would have liked to go back, the journey home was simply too expensive. Some managed to sign up as seamen to get themselves home; others stowed away. There were even a few who came home at the expense of the Australian Government: a person who was found to be unsuitable as an immigrant might be repatriated, provided he or she had been living in the country for less than three years and if there was cause to fear he would become a burden on the state. The same shipping line which had brought him was required to take him back. No accurate information is available as to how many Finns may have been repatriated; rumour tells of a few isolated cases. The reasons for repatriation could be varied, including sickness (e.g. tuberculosis), vagrancy, or deportation following a criminal conviction.²³

Some were drawn back to their homeland even after a very long time abroad. Some people who have returned to Finland during the 1970s

¹⁹ Interview with Kaino Kanervo, Nambour, 24 Feb. 1981.

²⁰ TOIVONEN 1963, 204.

²¹ *Suomi*, 27 April 1938.

²² Questionnaire reply by Juho Mäki (son of Jaakko Mäki), Tampere, 6 Oct. 1973. SI. Jaakko Mäki had gone to Australia in 1924, and returned to Finland in 1928. His reason for setting out had been the bad unemployment in Finland, and the example of other young men; his reasons for coming back were mainly the poor wages he had managed to obtain in Australia, although he had liked the place where he was living.

²³ SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb: 5, 22, Ka, UM Helsinki; also "Vehkaoja, Gabriel" (file), 7 Me, UM Canberra.



Illus. 8: The emigrants who returned founded a club to cherish their memories from Australia. A meeting in Kannus in the summer of 1952. (SI)

and 1980s had been in Australia for as long as fifty years.²⁴ In cases such as these, the reason for return might be the sense of being Finnish, and the wish to rediscover one's roots. The force of ethnic Finnish identity may be illustrated with the example of Aatos Tiainen, who was taken to Australia at the age of 19 months in 1912. In 1948, Tiainen married Aino Salo, another Finnish-Australian, which reinforced their sense of their ethnic roots. The Tiainens moved back to Finland in 1977, partly because the medical treatment which Aatos Tiainen needed could be obtained in Finland more easily, but above all because of the crucial importance for Aatos of his Finnish identity.²⁵

No doubt, for many of those who came back, the Old Country was a disappointment. Having lived away for so long, they were forced to realize that they had been fostering a fantasy picture of their former home. Times and conditions had been changing in Finland just as much as anywhere else; and the emigrant too was no longer the same person who had set out, for inevitably the process of migration re-moulds the

²⁴ Letter from Harald Hägerström, Ingå, 18 July 1984, to Olavi Koivukangas, SI.

²⁵ Interview with Aino Tiainen (née Salo), Vammala, 27 June 1984.

emigrant's frame of experience and understanding of the world. Nevertheless, most of those who moved back to Finland from Australia settled permanently; the length and expense of the journey is probably one factor operating against repeated moves from one country to the other.²⁶

The most significant single reason for the high return rate among the Finnish emigrants to Australia, however, was the fact that they had in any case never intended to remain there for more than a few years in order to earn money. Moreover, Finns found the conditions in Australia alien; the climate was insufferably hot, and Finnish settlement was scattered, leading to the onset of homesickness, further reinforced by the lack of Finnish women.

Yet those who returned did not forget Australia, nor their experiences there. Berndt Hiekka, who had returned in 1900, used to spend his summers in Britain, where he could maintain contact with his acquaintances from Australia. In July 1952, over a hundred ex-Australian Finns (including Paavo Hytönen, Pastor 1935—45) met at Kannus to found an "Australian Travellers' Association". Santeri Erkkilä became President, and O.E. Hirvi Secretary. The Association flourished, especially in the 1950s,²⁷ and is still in existence in Kannus. Finally, in 1984, the Finnish-Australian Society was founded in Turku, and had soon attracted a thousand members, many of them returned emigrants from Australia.

²⁶ VIRTANEN 1975, 207.

²⁷ *Suomi*, 6/1952.

IV Seaman Migration

1. Introduction

An important contribution to Finnish migration to Australia in the period from the mid-19th century up to the Second World War was provided by seamen either deserting ship, or choosing to be paid off in an Australian port. A third manner in which seamen settled in Australia was when sick men were brought ashore for treatment, against a deposit paid by their employer.

Apart from HAUTALA's article (1967), there has been no detailed study of Finnish seamen's desertion, despite the fact that they were the pioneers of Finnish migration, spreading the news of the Gold Rushes, first in California in 1849 and slightly later in Australia, around the world and, more especially, back home. Not only in Australia, but also in the Americas, in Africa, in New Zealand, and elsewhere, the roots of the subsequent Finnish immigrant communities were in many cases established by the first arrival of a seaman, whose letters home gradually began to tempt relatives and acquaintances to follow the pioneer settlers.

Ex-seamen immigrants have left very little documentation concerning themselves. They are rarely mentioned in Passport Registers or Passenger Lists at the port of departure or in the other major sources for migration research. Moreover, many Finnish seamen served under other countries' flags. It has not been possible to carry out a systematic search in crew listings of vessels docking in Australian ports; nor in any case is identification certain, since many Finnish seamen serving on foreign ships used English names such as Brown or Smith. Nor can a seaman be defined as an immigrant, merely on the basis of having stayed for some time in a port; a longer residence is required. It might be assumed that the legal consequences of desertion would mean that

police files and court archives in the ports would perhaps provide a source of information, but this material was beyond the scope of the present investigation. In general, therefore, all that can be achieved is a general overall picture, based on specific examples. There is inadequate trustworthy material to permit reliable quantitative conclusions to be drawn. Nor do the Australian Naturalization Records, usually a valuable source, provide in these cases information other than the entry under 'Occupation' as 'former seaman', since naturalization in many cases did not occur until much later, possibly by several decades. The files maintained at the Finnish Consulate in Sydney on Finns who died in Australia between 1919 and 1941 offer the ultimate documentation on seamen immigrants. For seamen deserting prior to 1869, there are no Finnish statistics. Only four seamen are recorded as having deserted from Finnish ships in Australia in 1870—80; in 1881—90, there were five.¹ Many of the seamen who eventually immigrated to Australia may have deserted or been paid off in Britain, the United States, or elsewhere, and had then signed on for a ship bound for Australia.

The earliest seamen to visit Australia, of whom some may well have settled in the country at a very early date, appear to have arrived on non-Finnish ships. Finnish seamen particularly tended to sign on British or American ships as boatswains or ship's carpenters.² In the international literature of the sea, Finnish seamen are depicted as sturdy and strong and clever with their hands, and often as being familiar with fishing and seafaring, qualities which recommended them for a life at sea.³ The era of sail in Finnish navigation falls into three divisions: (1) navigation of the Baltic, up to approximately 1700; (2) the Spanish route, ca 1721—1800; and (3) the transoceanic period, from the beginning of the 19th century, although the first Finnish vessels to cross the Atlantic did so in the 18th century.⁴ The grant of staple rights to the ports on the Gulf of Bothnia, in 1765, led to a rapid expansion in the volume of commercial shipping. Ship-building expanded in the shipyards along the Bothnian coast, and traffic increased, up to the War of 1808. The two decades after the war were depressed, until the European economy began to pick up in the wake of British economic liberalism. The period leading up to the Crimean War then saw a rapid expansion in Finnish commercial shipping. The shipyards were busy, with the long-distance routes coming into regular service.⁵ During the Crimean War in the mid-1850s, the Finnish mercantile marine lost approximately half its

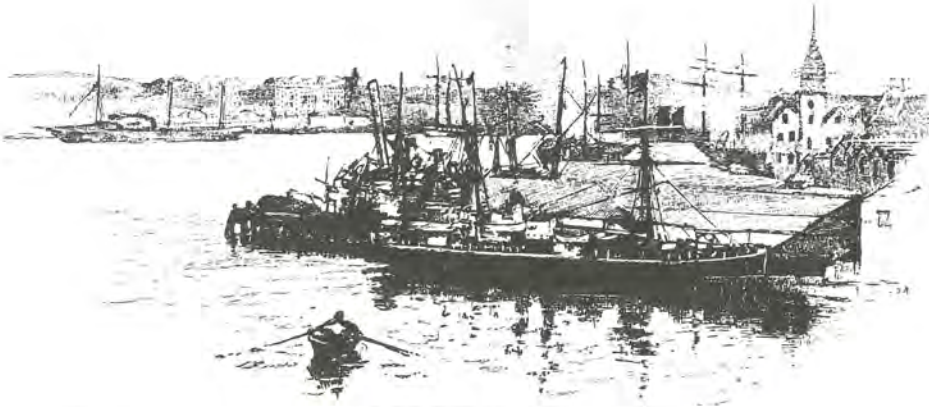
¹ HAUTALA 1967, 108.

² RAMSAY 1950, 22—26.

³ HORNBERG 1923, 442.

⁴ POHJANPALO 1949, 134. The first was probably the Helsinki frigate 'Anders Johan Nordenskiöld', in 1769—71.

⁵ NIKULA 1948, *passim*.



THE CIRCULAR QUAY.

Illus. 9: Sydney Harbour was the earliest port in Australia which seamen and settlers entered the country and encountered the first experiences of their new life. (Australia's First Century 1788—1888, 13)

vessels, but within a few years had regained its former state. In 1869, there were 544 sailing ships and 75 steam ships registered in Finnish seaports, in addition to which there were the vessels owned by members of the Peasants' Estate.⁶ During the decade following the Crimean War, navigation was the second most important branch of the Finnish economy after agriculture.⁷ Subsequently, however, changes in ship-building techniques, especially the switch from wood to iron, led to the collapse of the shipyards on the Gulf of Bothnia.

At around the same period, at the end of the 19th century, the major shipping nations began to sell off their sailing tonnage, but sail continued to be used in the Nordic countries for some time longer. Even into the 20th century, steel-built sailing ships were cheaply available, which provided Gustaf Erikson, from the Åland Islands, with the opportunity to establish his sailing fleet. Erikson's was the last sailing fleet in the world, comprising at its maximum extent, in 1933, 22 vessels. Since these sailing ships were in the main in service on the Europe-Australia run, they naturally played an important role in the immigration of Finnish seamen in Australia.

The Finnish ships for the most part plied tramp traffic around the world, returning home usually at the end of three years to hand over their earnings before setting out again.

⁶ POHJANPALO 1965, 59—60.

⁷ POHJANPALO 1949, 137.

There were also Finnish whaling vessels in Australian waters, following the establishment in 1851 of the Finnish-Russian Whaling Company, which despatched the *Suomi* and the *Turku* to sea. The ships' logs recount that the usual route was around Cape Horn via Hawaii to the Northern Asian whaling waters.⁸ At the end of the century, Finnish ships began to visit Australia more frequently, e.g. a barque from Åland, the *Mariehamn*, which called in at Port Phillip, at Melbourne, in March 1882. The *Rurik*, from Turku, spent four years at sea during 1870—75, beginning with the Australian run.⁹ A detailed examination of the Finnish vessels visiting Australian ports in the period 1851—92 has proved impossible, due to the wealth of the shipping records in existence. Examples of Finnish ships in Australia, however, include the *Onni* (1853),¹⁰ the *Carl* (1859),¹¹ and the *Ukko* from Oulu (1865).¹²

Desertion from ships was relatively common in the first half of the 19th century, according to HAUTALA. From 1856 onwards, provincial Governors and the Borough Magistrates in Finland were required to keep records of desertions. During the years 1856—60, a total of 500 desertions were reported, including 97 from Oulu and 91 from Raahе, the ports with the largest commercial fleets in Finland at the time, and especially including ships large enough for the oceanic passages.¹³ Desertion became common on Åland ships in the 1860s, and was particularly common during the 1880s in the ports on the Gulf of Mexico. The letters sent by deserters had a considerable impact on the flow of migration.¹⁴

Desertion from ships was at mid-century still covered by a Royal Decree dating from 1761, which laid down imprisonment on bread and water, or flogging, for deserters. In 1851, this was supplemented by a ruling that deserters would be liable to six years' enlistment in the Imperial Navy, or to six months' labour in the public service. Furthermore, an article was appended to the Anglo-Russian Navigation Treaty of 1852, under which seamen deserting in British ports from ships sailing under the Russian Imperial flag were to be returned to their ships.¹⁵ Consequently, Finnish seamen who had deserted were reluctant to return home, and frequently took a new name in order to

⁸ The first mate of the 'Turku', Otto Wilhelm Lindholm, mentions in his diary visiting many Pacific islands during 1854, and having met friendly, but not very honest natives. ANDERSSON 1971, 58—61.

⁹ JUTIKKALA 1957, I, 165, 170.

¹⁰ NIKULA 1972, 304.

¹¹ Shipping Master's Office: Passengers Arriving 1854—1922, AONSW, mfr. 407.

¹² Shipping Master's Office: Passengers Arriving 1854—1922, AONSW, mfr. 416.

¹³ HAUTALA 1967, 103.

¹⁴ BLOMFELT 1968, 16, 107—108.

¹⁵ HAUTALA 1967, 111.

protect themselves from pursuit, and this led in 1856 to an amnesty for those deserters who voluntarily came back.¹⁶

Moves were started in the 1860s, according to HAUTALA's investigations, to alleviate the severity of the penalties facing deserting seamen. Attention began to be paid to identifying and where possible removing the reasons for desertion. In 1865, the Finnish Diet passed an Act forbidding the enforced enlistment of Finnish deserters into the Imperial Navy or their detention in institutions of correction,¹⁷ i.e. reverting to the bread-and-water regime and floggings of the 1761 Decree. In 1873, a new regulation specified that deserting seamen were liable to three to six months' imprisonment, although even this could be commuted to shorter sentences or a fine provided they returned of their own will or there were other alleviating circumstances. Other reforms were initiated on behalf of the seamen. A Seamen's Pensions Fund was set up in 1873,¹⁸ and two years later the Finnish Seamen's Mission commenced operations to provide help to Finnish sailors all around the world,¹⁹ although it did not start work in Australia until 1916.²⁰

2. The Context of Ship Desertion

The major reason for the desertion of seamen, according to the Governor of Oulu Province in 1851, was "... higher wages on foreign vessels, although on the other hand it should also be borne in mind that seamen are not deterred by the pettiness of the penalties for desertion, viz. a few days on bread and water."²¹ In the opinion of the Russian Consul-General in New York in 1860, the main reasons for desertion by Finnish seamen were poor rates of pay and poor rations, especially in comparison with American ships. The masters of Finnish vessels, on the other hand, he considered to be better remunerated than their American colleagues.²² The real reason for desertion was thus that Finnish seamen, having signed on at low Finnish rates of pay, came to foreign ports and were tempted by offers of much higher pay on foreign ships. For instance, three of the crew of the *Veritas*, belonging to the trading house of Malm in Jakobstad (Pietarsaari) on the Gulf of Bothnia, deserted in Wellington, New Zealand, in 1866, of whom two

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 112—113.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 113—114.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 114.

²⁰ On the history of the Finnish Seamen's Mission, see e.g. WALTARI 1925, 302—317.

²¹ HAUTALA 1967, 110.

²² *Ibid.*, 113.

were subsequently recaptured. In Wellington, the men had been offered £6 a day.²³

The same reasons continued to contribute to desertion by Finnish seamen from the Finnish flag well into the 20th century. J.O. Boijer, who was appointed Warden in charge of the newly-founded Finnish Seamen's Mission in Sydney in 1916, commented in 1917 that the seamen's working conditions and levels of pay on Finnish ships were contemptible by comparison with both Australian and American ships, where legislation placed on a similar footing to that of the rest of the labouring population. On board American ships, the ship's owner was responsible for providing bedding, keeping the quarters clean, and supplying healthy rations. Boijer also alludes to poor relations between the men and the officers on Finnish ships, mainly due to pay. In conclusion, Boijer points out that where leaving a ship is not really a case of desertion but of taking a better job, the seamen is effectively claiming his status as a member of society in a fuller sense.²⁴ Boijer was appalled by the vulnerable position of Finnish seamen concerning their pay; the crew of the *Kensington*, out of Nystad (Uusikaupunki), were being paid a mere 60 marks a day, compared with 300 marks a day on ships of other nationalities.²⁵

On Australian ships, wages are said to have been many times those on Finnish vessels. Johannes Aaltonen, who worked on Australian coastal shipping during the 1920s, thought he was "in heaven" when he was paid £17.10s. a month; the typical rate of pay on British ships at that time was around £8.10s. a month.²⁶ The differential in pay could be as much as fourfold, according to Ragnar Ramstadius, since on the Norwegian ship on which he arrived in Newcastle, NSW, in the 1920s, the pay was £2 whereas on Australian ships it was £8. Like Ramstadius, many Finnish sailors therefore remained in Australia.²⁷ When a Finnish ship, with its under-paid crew, arrived in a port, the men would be offered double or triple the pay they were receiving, inevitably leading to desertion.²⁸

Seamen did not always remain on shore of their own free will, however. The poor relations prevailing between officers and men, themselves a contributory reason for desertion, also sometimes led to violence and to men being paid off. Another reason for enforced dismissal was strikes. When the *Marichen* arrived in Australian waters in

²³ NIKULA 1948, 268—269.

²⁴ Johan O. Boijer, Sydney 24 Jan. 1917, to the 'Merimiehen Ystävä' ('Seaman's Friend') paper, Helsinki; SMLA Brisbane.

²⁵ See "Sydneyyn lähetys" ("The Sydney Mission"), TYYH/S/X/7/IV.

²⁶ Interview with Johannes Aaltonen, Melbourne, 24 March 1981.

²⁷ Interview with Ragnar Ramstadius, Melbourne, 24 March 1981.

²⁸ HAUTALA 1967, 114.



Illus. 10: Finnish immigrants in Australia were often seamen who came ashore. The frigate Hoppet, in Wallaroo, South Australia, in 1902. (Vivian Å Tamp/SI)

1920, with a complement of three officers and 20 crew, 12 of the crew went on strike, leading to their being paid off.²⁹

Nor were better jobs, either, always a reason for desertion; social and personal factors in the treatment of seamen also played a role. A Finnish seaman wrote in 1921 to the Finnish Consul, Kaarlo Nauklér, describing how he had asked Finnish sailors why, unlike other nationalities, they did not love to sail under their own country's flag, and had received the answer that

"on board Finnish ships the old Finnish sea lawes are still Upheld to-day such as the bad Pay — Wages and dismissal Rations as well as working Hours — such as on this Mariehamn ship too which was then Punnished by the law of nature and stood idle for many weeks with a full load

I do not know whether she got her crew White or Black
so finland cannot blame her Sons for leaving her ships to Serve on other ships
for Nowadays there should be law and hueman rights in finland just as in any other country . . ."³⁰

²⁹ Shipping Reports: Finnish Shipping Calling at Australian Ports, SKA Sydney, 1919—1941, Ba:3, UM Helsinki.

³⁰ Letter from Anders Petteri Vartiainen, Newcastle, NSW, 3 Nov. 1921 to Consul Nauklér; Department of Foreign Affairs, Canberra, 7 Me.

The desertion of seamen frequently caused considerable financial losses to the ship-owners. Individual desertions were a regular feature of visits to foreign ports, but on occasion virtually the entire crew would desert. In addition on the causes discussed above, desertion was sometimes due to a quest for adventure, or simply to the wish to earn an easier living on land than at sea.³¹

An additional factor contributing to desertion by seamen was the fact that sailing ships remained in port in Australia for weeks or even months at a time, thus enabling the members of the crew to become acquainted with local conditions of employment — and local girls — and become tempted in this way to remain.³²

The Finns who came to Australia during the great Gold Rush in the mid-19th century were for the most part seamen, such as the Häggblom brothers mentioned earlier. The Finns made up only a small fraction of the large numbers of Nordic immigrants. The early arrivals included people from the Finnish-speaking areas of Ostrobothnia, particularly the region of Raahe and Oulu, which enjoyed the hegemony of Finnish commercial navigation after the middle of the 19th century; in 1867, for instance, there were 53 sailing ships owned in Raahe (Brahestad), 41 in Oulu (Uleåborg), 30 in Vaasa (Vasa), 24 in Jakobstad (Pietarsaari), 16 in Gamlakarleby (Kokkola), 14 in Kristinestad (Kristiinankaupunki), and seven in Nykarleby (Uusikaarlepyy).³³ These were all craft capable of making the long Australian run, which provides a natural explanation for the predominance among the early Finnish immigrants in Australia of people originating from the Raahe—Oulu region.

In 1863 the *Ukko*, built in Oulu in 1858, and for a time the largest Finnish ship in service, sailed on her second voyage, from London to China and Australia. In 1865, she ran into a storm off the southern coast of Australia, and was eventually, in Sydney, declared to be damaged beyond repair. Other ships out of Oulu, too, such as the *Grefve Berg*, built in 1859, made the Australian run.³⁴ After the Crimean War (1853—56) and more especially during the American Civil War, marine cargo was particularly profitable, and the Finnish merchant marine reached its greatest extent in the period 1857—70. Wolff's shipping calendar for 1869 lists 544 sailing ships and 75 steam ships from Finnish ports, two thirds of these being listed under the six leading ports of Raahe, Viipuri (Vyborg), Oulu, Vaasa, and Uusikaupunki (Nystad).³⁵

³¹ POHJANPALO 1965, 57.

³² Comment supplied by Oiva Koskinen, a seaman from Turku who visited Australia on several occasions, 30 Oct. 1985.

³³ Finnish 1924 Emigration Committee, 33, footnote 1.

³⁴ KOPISTO 1974, 115—118.

³⁵ POHJANPALO 1949, 52.

Internationally speaking, sail began to go into decline in the 1870s, especially following the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and the consequent cut in time for the Far Eastern run; yet in Finland, sail boomed in the 1870s. Ships out of Turku (Åbo) and other ports engaged in cargo trade between third countries, e.g. transporting coal to China and collecting sugar from the West Indies or wheat and wool from Australia.

Finnish ships were heavily involved in the Australian run at the beginning of the 20th century. Newcastle, in New South Wales, was the major port for this purpose, and once, in 1913, there were eight Finnish ships in port there simultaneously, though it should be mentioned that at the same time there were also 20 Norwegian ships in port, some of whose crews included Finnish seamen. During 1911, altogether 17 Finnish ships visited Australia,³⁶ which implies a large potential reserve of deserting Finnish seamen, especially when Finnish seamen aboard ships sailing under other flags are included.

3. Individual Deserters

The earliest forms of desertion by seamen were essentially acts by individuals, whether undertaken on the spur of the moment or planned long in advance. The bigger ports, Sydney, Brisbane, and Melbourne, had long been good places in which to desert, and in Sydney in particular had a long-established community of Finnish seamen. When Jorma Pohjanpalo was stationed in Australia in 1927—31 as the Secretary of the Finnish Consulate in Sydney, he was told by older seamen how in the good old days "Sydney was full of Finnish sailors, and there were Finns working on every goddamn ship on the coast." The seamen Pohjanpalo met had been in Australia for 30—50 years, and they reported that when they had arrived in the country as young men, i.e. in the period 1880—1900, there were already Finns who had been in Sydney for a long time.³⁷ When gathering information about Swedes in New South Wales, J.L. SANDERSON came across altogether 172 Finnish seamen mentioned in crew and passenger listings in Sydney for 1854—1870.³⁸

There is very scanty information to be obtained concerning the earliest Finnish sailors to desert in Australia. One of these seaman immigrants was Rudolf Veltheim, son of the founder of the Nuutajärvi

³⁶ WALTARI 1925, 308.

³⁷ POHJANPALO 1931, 297—298.

³⁸ Crew and Passenger Lists, January 1854—December 1870, AONSW, mfr 399—424.



Illus. 11: Matti Halonen, alias Andrew Anderson or "Snäper Antru", born in Oulu in 1853, arrived in Australia in 1884 as a seaman. When this picture was taken, in 1928, he was one of the oldest Finns alive in Sydney. (Jorma Pohjanpalo/SI)

glassworks, who deserted ship in Australia in 1875. In a letter from Australia to his brother Heinrich, Rudolf Veltheim recounted how after deserting (apparently in Brisbane), he had been pursued with dogs and aborigines, but had succeeded in taking cover with a German farmer. Veltheim eventually became a successful Queensland farmer, and died in 1907.³⁹

Another sailor, August Laukka from Oulainen, left his ship in 1889 in Sydney, either by deserting or by terminating his contract. His wife and son arrived later, Laukka settled on land and became like Veltheim a successful farmer, whose farm was a first base for many Finnish immigrants arriving in Australia.⁴⁰

³⁹ Mrs S. Martin, Beaudesert, to Uncle Heinrich, 29 Feb. 1953, Teuvo Veltheim, Jyväskylä, to Olavi Koivukangas, 6 June 1973, SI.

⁴⁰ Information is available concerning Laukka in particular since Jorma Pohjanpalo got to know him during his visit to Australia in 1927—31; consequently this information is quite reliable, having been obtained directly from Laukka himself and written down in the 1930s. See also p. 191.

In Victoria, lists of deserters have been preserved dating back to 1852, at first listing merely names, but later also nationality. Desertion usually occurred either in Port Melbourne or in Geelong. Finnish seamen can be found in the lists from the late 1860s, the first being one 'Charles Brady', 21, who deserted from the *Niagara* in 1869.⁴¹ The hundreds of Finnish seamen deserting their ships towards the end of the century, together with those who terminated their contracts legally, provide some indication of the numbers of Finns in Australia at that time.

Desertions are also recorded from an early date in the ports of Southern Australia. It is probable that there had been other Finns in Adelaide prior to 'E.N.', an Ostrobothnian sailor known merely by his initials, who states that he had deserted in 1872.⁴² E.N. was possibly the same person as one Nyholm, said to have been living in Adelaide for a long time by a visitor who met him there in 1887.⁴³

Another example of the Finnish seamen settling in Australia prior to the First World War is Edward Suvanto (formerly Svanberg; born in Lieto, near Turku, on 24 May 1890; moved to Helsinki in 1907).⁴⁴ One reason for studying Suvanto is the diary which he kept, which represents the best and earliest overall description of the journey to Australia.⁴⁵ This is in many respects an invaluable and evidently reliable source of information. Of especial value are his reports from the period of the First World War, since so far no other eye-witness document is available for this period. Possibly Suvanto had intended subsequently to write a book on the basis of his diary.

Moreover, Suvanto can be taken in several ways as typical of the Finnish immigration into Australia at this time. Firstly, he arrived in the country as a seaman, and had previous acquaintances in Australia. Secondly, he travelled widely around the country in search of work, and was employed at various times on the railways, in mining, and on the sugar plantations, i.e. in heavy manual labouring occupations. Thirdly, he had difficulties with the language, although eventually he reached a tolerable standard, despite spending most of his time with other Finnish labourers. His diary also reveals strong homesickness, a recurrent feature among the immigrants. The life in Australia was hard, and often monotonous, a major reason for his and many others' heavy drinking.

⁴¹ Register of Deserters, 1, 1852 to 1925 (Geelong), Series No 946, PRO Vic.

⁴² *ÖP*, 14 Apr. 1887.

⁴³ *ÖP*, 25 Aug. 1887. The person concerned was Erik Nyholm from Munsala. See pp. 210—211.

⁴⁴ There is a certificate dated 25 Jan. 1922 from the Parish Register in Lieto appended to a letter from the Finnish Foreign Ministry to the Finnish Consulate in Sydney, 2 Feb. 1922 (SKA Sydney 1919—1941, Fa:2, 1 B-3, UM Helsinki), with a further note that he could not be traced in the Parish Registers for Helsinki. In a letter to the Foreign Ministry dated 29 Sep. 1921, Tanner states that Suvanto had been born in Littoinen (near Lieto) in 1890 and had migrated from Finland in 1912. He had no nationality papers.

⁴⁵ Diaries of Edward Suvanto 1912—1922, SI.

Suvanto comments on the language barrier, noting that English is a difficult language for the Finns, while they were sometimes ashamed to speak Finnish for fear of hostile reactions.

The reasons for Suvanto's decision to move to Australia are obscure. One factor was an acquaintance of his who was already in the country; and human curiosity and a quest for adventure cannot be excluded. The reason for his remaining as long as he did — nine years — may well have been a wish to change occupations; he comments at one point that "life on shore is after all so much better and freer than at sea" (entry for 7 Nov. 1914). Nevertheless, a fundamental feature of the diary is Suvanto's wish to return home, which he was unable to do because of the War and because of his low earnings. After the War was over, clearing the land for sugar plantations at Cairns finally provided him with the money he needed to return to Finland, although even then he eventually worked his passage home as a seaman.

4. Group Desertion

Group desertion is a phenomenon with a range of contributory causes. Apart from simply following the example of others, seamen sometimes had effectively little choice but to desert, e.g. under the threat of military conscription awaiting them in Finland, or as a consequence of strikes on board ship. It was mentioned earlier that twelve seamen were paid off from the *Marichen* in 1920 for striking; on the same occasion, however, three other seamen also chose to terminate their contracts voluntarily.⁴⁶

Seamen were also exposed to strong pressure to desert, and in Melbourne, at least, there was a well-established route for deserters to use. This route was used, for instance, by Karl Väinö Suominen, a sailor born in Turku in 1887, who was on the crew of the frigate *Samoena* with a cargo of timber from Sweden for Melbourne, in 1910. By the time she had been in harbour a fortnight, around a dozen men had deserted, and they were joined on the night of 15 January 1911 by Suominen and another Finnish sailor, Viktor Mattila. In his diary, Suominen records spending the first night with a man from Helsinki, who had helped them escape.⁴⁷ In an interview, Suominen named this helper as someone who had changed his name to 'Holloway'.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Reports of Finnish Shipping Calling at Ports in the Jurisdiction of the Sydney Consulate, SKA 1919—41, Ba:3, UM Helsinki; Elli Ahlström, sister of H.J. Lindholm, to Olavi Koivukangas, Helsinki 25 May 1973, SI. See pp. 152—153.

⁴⁷ Diary of Väinö Suominen, 1910 and 1922, SI.

⁴⁸ Interview with Väinö Suominen, Turku, 17 May 1973.

The masters of Finnish ships calling at Australian ports, or their agents, submitted reports to the Finnish Consulate of arrivals and departures. The Finnish vessels were, almost without exception, sailing ships, usually with a crew of around 20. The most usual cargo was timber from the Baltic ports, or other goods from elsewhere in Europe if this was available. In Australia, they would load up with wheat from the ports of South Australia for the UK, or coal from Newcastle, NSW, for South America. The ships might well call in at several ports in Australia, occasionally remaining for several months, e.g. as a consequence of the long-drawn-out Australian strikes. These long stays in Australian waters were one further reason for seamen to feel tempted to remain there. The crews also included some who had deliberately signed up as seamen in order to avoid having to pay the expensive passenger fare.

Table IV.1: Seamen Deserting or Paid Off from Finnish Ships in Australia, 1919—32

Year	Ships	Crew	Officers	De- serters	Paid Off	Total
1919	9	180	23	5	18	23
1920	7	152	24	18	41	59
1921	14	276	40	48	8	56
1922	15	328	57	80	10	90
1923	9	223	39	90	30	120
1924	11	304	47	64	30	94
1925	12	350	74	56	26	82
1926	19	438	74	74	69	143
1927	13	200	35	51	50	101
1928	12	366	71	54	22	76
1929	24	524	114	30	51	81
1930	19	410	86	12	13	25
1931	15	290	49	8	26	34
1932	21	468	90	11	13	24
TOTAL	200	4509	823	601	407	1008
% of crew				13.3	9.0	22.4

Source: Reports of ships arriving and departing, 1920—1932, SKA Sydney 1919—1941, Ba:3, UM Helsinki. The lists include a few ships sailing to New Zealand or the islands in the region, but there were no desertions from these.

As can be seen from Table IV.1, approximately one thousand seamen left their Finnish ships in Australia between 1919 and 1932. Of these, six hundred, approximately thirteen per cent of the total crews, deserted, and four hundred, or nine per cent, terminated their contracts. Virtually every Finnish ship calling at an Australian port during this period lost seamen, and on occasions over half of the crew: e.g. the *Milverton*, in

Melbourne from 20 June to 5 October 1922, from which 17 men deserted and one was paid off.⁴⁹

The peak year for desertions was 1923, when 90 men deserted from Finnish ships and 30 terminated their contracts. The number of Finnish ships calling in Australia that year was nine, and desertions amounted to as much as 40 per cent of their total crews; when men paid off are counted, then over half the total crews (54 per cent) were left behind in Australia. For the slightly longer period, 1919—32, 22 per cent, or around one fifth, of the total crews of Finnish ships remained behind.⁵⁰ In other words, this constituted one form of migration. Desertion became so widespread that the Australian authorities took steps in the 1920s to restrain it; desertion was illegal, and could lead to imprisonment.

While not all the seamen deserting or terminating their contracts were Finnish, an analysis of the names occurring in the various lists does suggest that around ninety per cent of them were.

The foregoing discussion concentrated on the 1920s; during the 1930s the number of ships visiting Australia fell, and consequently Finnish desertion also became less common. A further reason was that the penalties for desertion were tightened up; it was a criminal offence under both Australian and Finnish law. Deserters usually remained in hiding in the port until their ship had sailed, or else headed inland immediately, in the fear of being apprehended; the Australian police, however, had other things to worry about than chasing large numbers of deserting seamen.

The Records of the Finnish Consulate in Sydney do not contain information concerning desertions and men paid off during the 1930s. Nevertheless there were plenty of ships: e.g., in 1933, eighteen Finnish vessels called at Australian ports, 17 of which were sailing ships.⁵¹ The level of dissatisfaction leading to desertion among Finnish crews that year appears to have been low, however. Desertion was not approved of by the Australian authorities, and each ship had to make a deposit of £100 against desertions. If a deserter was caught, he was liable to a prison sentence of six months, although in practice he was usually deported within a month on a passenger ticket, at the expense of his previous ship.⁵² The following year, 1934, twenty Finnish ships visited Australia, yet only one seaman deserted, partly due to restrictions on

⁴⁹ Shipping Lists 1919—32, SKA Sydney 1919—1941, Ba:3.

⁵⁰ Excluding Masters and Mates, who were unlikely to desert.

⁵¹ Harald Tanner, Consul, to the Finnish Foreign Ministry, 16 Apr. 1934, SKA Sydney 1919—1941, Fa:2, 1 K-4 a, UM Helsinki.

⁵² Annual Report of the Finnish Consulate in Sydney No 7, 26 Feb. 1934, SKA Sydney 1919—1941, Fa:2, 1 K-4 a, UM Helsinki.

shore leave and stricter supervision than in the previous decade.⁵³

Nevertheless, desertions did occur during the 1930s. The newspaper *Suomi* reported disturbances on board the Finnish ship *Olovsborg* in Melbourne harbour in March 1932, when she was taking on wheat for Shanghai; the crew were being paid a mere pittance, and had justified their demand for a 50 per cent increase on the grounds that the ship was bound for a war zone (i.e. following Japan's attack on China in 1931; hostilities continued throughout the 1930s, as Japan strove to extend her hegemony towards Indo-China). The captain, however, was not permitted under Australian regulations to pay the men off unless he also deposited £100 bond per man, repayable only on condition that each of them left the country within three months; otherwise the bond money would be used to pay for the man's passage home. Under these circumstances, a captain was authorized to refuse to terminate the men's contracts, and the captain of the *Olovsborg* did refuse. On the night before the ship was due to sail, 1 March 1932, three deckhands and the chief cook deserted, to join the five who had deserted previously. The remaining crew refused orders, whereupon the captain summoned a police guard to prevent any more desertions; three suspects were eventually placed under arrest, and taken to Williamstown police station when the ship finally sailed. Two of the deserters were arrested when the police visited the Finnish Seamen's Mission on routine enquiries. The Finnish seamen were however released from detention after a court hearing on 8 March 1932, for lack of evidence, and were informed that provided they could pass the Australian immigration authorities' language dictation test, they would be allowed to remain. The dictation test was however administered in German, which none of the men could speak, and they were accordingly classified as "illegal immigrants" and sentenced to six months' imprisonment, although the sentence remained a mere formality since the men were deported from Australia aboard the *Large Bay* on 12 March.⁵⁴

This report in *Suomi* is revealing: firstly, it shows that paying men off in Australia was difficult, and this helps to account for the frequency of desertion. Secondly, the reason for desertion in this case was bad relations between the men and officers. Thirdly, in this case the Australian police were actively involved, whereas in most cases of desertion, police involvement was probably more or less a formality. It is also interesting to note that the Finnish seamen were subjected to the immigration authorities' dictation test, one of the main props of the White Australia policies introduced in 1901. This statute enabled the

⁵³ Annual Report of the Finnish Consulate in Sydney No 7, 26 Feb. 1934, SKA Sydney 1919—1941, Fa:2, 1 K-4 b, UM Helsinki.

⁵⁴ *Suomi* 14 March 1932.

authorities to deport persons who failed to pass a dictation test administered by an immigration officer in any, unspecified, European language. It seems clear that in this case German was deliberately chosen as a language unknown to the Finns.

This incident is not reported in any other sources, but there seems no reason to doubt the authenticity of the report in *Suomi*. The paper was also published in Melbourne, and the seamen's pastor who edited it had been involved in the incident. The report was, moreover, published only a few days after the incident.

It has not been possible to investigate the extent to which Finnish seamen may have arrived in Australia on ships under other flags. As was mentioned above, ILMONEN states that around 1860 there were approximately equal numbers of Finnish seamen serving on Finnish and foreign vessels.⁵⁵ WALTARI states that around the year 1860 there were approximately 11 000 Finnish seamen serving aboard Finnish vessels.⁵⁶ It is reasonably clear that several hundred Finnish seamen may have come to Australia in the inter-War period on British or other nations' ships. A total estimate of the number of Finnish seamen arriving in Australia between the two World Wars is about 1500, of whom around half probably remained in the country. The total contribution of seamen to permanent Finnish immigration to Australia in the inter-War period is thus approximately 700—800.

5. From the Seaboard to the Interior

Seamen who deserted were apparently rarely caught, for there are few references in the 1930s to this happening. Shipping companies were required to deposit £100 for each crewman remaining in Australia; but there is no evidence as to how regularly this regulation was applied in cases of desertion, which was a frequent phenomenon. Where a seaman had to be left in hospital, however, this deposit did need to be paid.

As the seamen's own accounts reveal, after hiding up for the night, they usually tried to head inland and to pick up work on an Australian farm. Alternatively, once the ship was thought to have sailed, it was possible to return to the port and sign on another ship, either a coastal steamer or an ocean-going vessel. It was even possible to sign on a different Finnish ship, since these had often lost crew during their visit to an Australian port. Some of the Finnish seamen deserting in Australia between 1919 and 1932 thus joined a different ship on the

⁵⁵ ILMONEN I 1919, 77.

⁵⁶ WALTARI 1925, 11.

inter-continental routes, but many of them, possibly around half, remained in Australia, as was estimated earlier.

These deserters usually had a poor command of English, and this was a primary reason for searching out the company of other Finns, from whom possibly even work might be obtained, or at least food and shelter for the time being until a job could be found elsewhere. Favourite boltholes for Finnish deserters were places such as the farm run by August Laukka in Narromine, and in particular the Finnish community at Nambour, near Brisbane, dating from the beginning of the century. A staging post on the journey to Queensland, especially for Swedish-speakers, was often the farm of Karl Johan Back, originally from Munsala (Ostrobothnia), at Mullumbimby near the State border.

Not only did these seamen quite spontaneously gravitate towards their fellow Finns, but it appears that both the seamen's pastor, and the Finnish consular authorities, tended to guide Finns in need of work (i.e. not only seamen) in this direction. For newcomers, Finnish farmers functioned as a kind of unofficial labour exchange, apparently with success, since in 1923 August Laukka claimed that he could not recall a single Finn passing through who had failed to obtain work.⁵⁷ The Finns were restless, and Australian employers complained that once a Finn had picked up some of the language, in a few months, he tended to move on. The major reason, however, was the knowledge of better pay available in Queensland, clearing land for the sugar plantations or in mining. Thus there emerged a typical cycle of employment: first a temporary job in the country nearby, and then the trek to a Finnish community in Queensland.

Some of the Finnish seamen in Australia, on the other hand, signed up on coastal shipping, while others settled down in Sydney, Melbourne, or one of the other ports. Others moved inland, to jobs in gold, copper, and coal mining, or in arable farming, on orchards, on sugar plantations, or with graziers. Initially they would be farm labourers, until they could set up with a place of their own.⁵⁸

Some seamen remained in the towns, as well. Someone signing with the initials "D.T." wrote from Port Augusta, SA, to a Finnish newspaper:

"every now and then one bumps into seamen who have jumped ship, and who are looking for work while their ship is still around. Occasionally, some of these stay around for longer, though . . . I have got to know altogether six Finnish family people here. The way they live can be compared in every way with the 'gentry' in Finland. Every one of them has their own house . . . All the Finns have gained a good reputation hereabouts as workmen, and our carpenters are especially famous . . ."⁵⁹

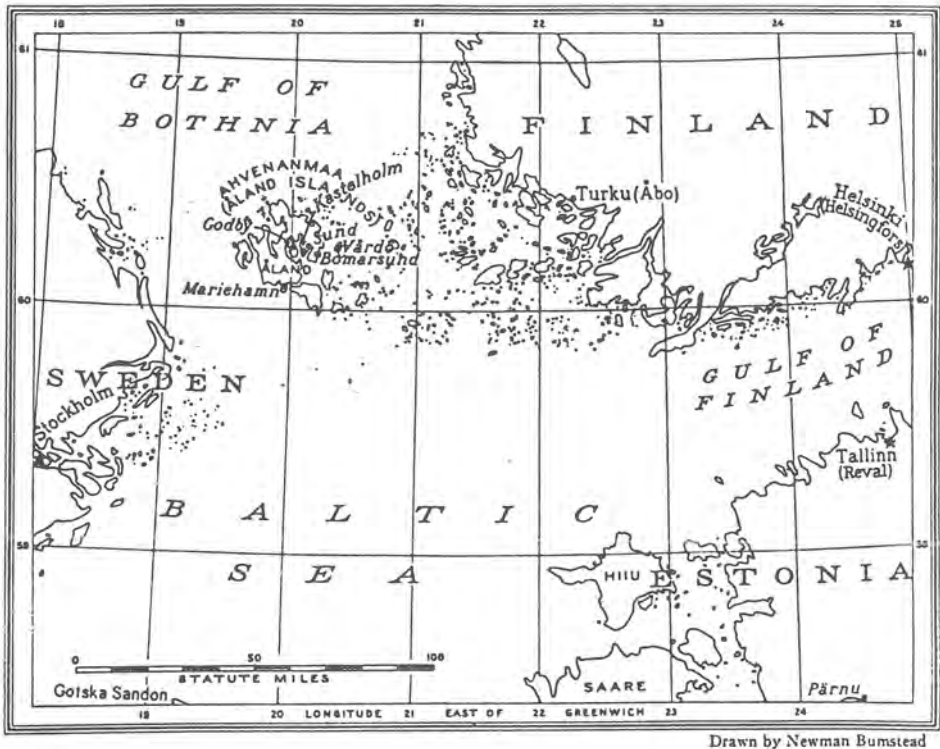
⁵⁷ Letter from August Laukka to the Seamen's Pastor, 27 April 1923, SMLA Brisbane No 146/23.

⁵⁸ See SS 2/1945, 63.

⁵⁹ *Uusi Suometar*, 9.11.1890.

Finally, some of the deserters moved on again to other countries, mainly to the United States.

6. Migration Before the Mast: The Sailing Ships of Åland and Seaman Migration, 1919—39



Map 5: The Åland Islands

Source: VILLIERS 1935, 105.

The population of the Åland Islands in 1920 consisted of 25 454 persons, most of whom made their living from agriculture or the sea. Seafaring has long traditions on Åland. The sea was a source of fish, and a route to market for farm produce. The farmers of Åland carried in their small boats meat, wool, and livestock to the city populations of Stockholm and Turku (Åbo). The sale of firewood was another important element in the economy of the province.⁶⁰ Seafaring has close connections with

⁶⁰ KÅHRE 1948, 30—31.

migration, and there had been emigration from Åland taking place from 1809 onwards, mainly to Sweden and to Russia; not until the 1880s, however, did large-scale emigration get under way.⁶¹ Shipping reached its peak in the early 1870s, with extensive independent ship-building being carried on; between 1871 and 1875, around sixty ships altogether were built for Åland, either on the islands themselves or in Ostrobothnia.⁶² The smallholders' seafaring tradition had died out by the First World War, as shipping became increasingly commercialized and increasingly concentrated on deep-sea routes. By the outbreak of the First World War, 30 large ships had been acquired on Åland. Sailing at that time still under the Russian Imperial flag, they were severely hampered during the hostilities, and where possible they were therefore deployed in cargo for third parties in the Pacific and the Americas. Mariehamn became a shipping centre, and the great shipping magnates, e.g. Robert Mattson and August Troberg, began to build up their empires. Although the tonnage under sail began to fall after World War I, the last great days of sail continued even into the 1920s, largely due to Gustaf Erikson.⁶³

Gustaf Adolf Mauritz Erikson was one of the great names in sail and shipping on Åland. He was born in the village of Hellestorp in Lemland, in southern Åland, the son of a smallholder and shipper, on 24 October 1872. Following the fashion of the times, Gustaf went to sea early, at the age of ten. Having acquired extensive experience, and his Mate's Certificate, Gustaf was appointed master of the *Adele* at the age of twenty. In 1899, he passed his Captain's Certificate in Vasa, and took over the command of the *Southern Belle*. He then changed ships several times, being more and more drawn to deep-sea shipping. He began to venture into business on his own behalf in 1913, when he purchased the *Tjerimai*. As time went on, Erikson began to build up an impressive fleet, including altogether 67 ships bought between 1913 and 1947. The main expansion came in the early 1920s, when Erikson bought a total of 17 ships, including his flagship, the *Herzogin Cecilie*.⁶⁴

Despite the increasing reliance on powered ships, sail still had a role to play at sea, particularly in cargo.⁶⁵ This was the niche which Gustaf Erikson made his own, above all with wheat shipments. In the 1920s Europe needed cheap Australian wheat, and the most economic means of transporting this was by sail. The Great Wheat Race, involving ships

⁶¹ BLOMFELT 1968, 8, 74.

⁶² ÅS 3/1972, 93.

⁶³ POHJANPALO 1965, 62—65; VILLIERS 1935, 101—128.

⁶⁴ ÅS 3/1972, 77—80.

⁶⁵ E.g. the *Lawhill*, which took timber from Sweden to Melbourne and then coal from Newcastle to Chile in 1922—23. Its example was subsequently followed by many other ships. See KÄHRE 1978, 144; cf. also *ibid.*, the chapter "The Wheat Trade", 158—177.



Illus. 12: One of the most handsome ships afloat was the Herzogin Cecilie, the flagship of the Erikson fleet from Åland. She served her master well, and was one of the fastest ships in the wheat ship's race between Australia and Britain between the Wars. She was eventually lost in the English Channel in 1936. (SI)

of many nations, was held from Falmouth on the English coast to the coast of southern Australia, and attracted great attention in the British press. The Finns did remarkably well in this Race, for between 1921 and 1939 they won no less than fifteen times, and Gustaf Erikson's ships did particularly well, being placed among the fastest ships twelve times, with the *Herzogin Cecilie* in the lead. The run took between 83 and 110 days.⁶⁶

During the great Finnish migration period, there had been emigration from Åland as from elsewhere in search of a better future. Notwithstanding a generally encouraging trend of development in agriculture in the latter 19th century, population growth remained slow. In 1880, approximately 700 Ålanders left the province, mainly for America, but including some who moved to Australia. Between 1895 and 1905, around 2800 Ålanders moved away, mostly to the United States. Emigrants comprised over 10 per cent of the total local population. The parish registers show 29 000 people living on Åland, but several thousand of these were in fact in America. The peak of

⁶⁶ HS 18 April 1982.

emigration from Åland to America came in 1901—05, when over 2000 islanders set out.⁶⁷

Emigration had a greater demographic impact on Åland than in other parts of Finland. Between 1901 and 1926, for example, the natural increase in population was reduced due to the impact of emigration; e.g. in 1923 the natural increase by births was 25, but the loss through emigration amounted to 245, resulting in an overall loss of population of 220.⁶⁸

Seafaring played an important role in emigration from Åland. Signing on, whether for sail or steam, offered a natural and cheap method of seeing the world and travelling from one place to another. There were many who set out from Åland for Australia as seamen, but later abandoned this trade in favour of better alternative opportunities or simply for adventure's and curiosity's sake. The simplest way of switching trades was to desert. Some impression of the scale of desertion can be obtained from the list of deserters at the Erikson Lines, which gives 123 seamen as having deserted in Australian ports in the period 1924—39. The largest number of desertions took place in 1925—30, the

Table IV.2: Desertions by seamen from ships of the Gustaf Erikson Line in Australia, 1924—39.

Sydney	NSW	9
Newcastle	NSW	1
Melbourne	Vic.	37
Geelong	Vic.	1
Pt Adelaide	SA	6
Pt Lincoln	SA	41
Pt Victoria	SA	11
Wallaroo	SA	7
Pt Augusta	SA	3
Pt Pirie	SA	1
Pt Germain	SA	6
TOTAL		123

Source: List of seamen deserting, the Gustaf Erikson Line, 1925—49. The original list is in the possession of Mr Edgar Erikson in Marichamn. Photocopies have been deposited with the Institute of Migration, Turku.

⁶⁷ SVT XXVIII, Migration Statistics 19, Helsinki 1927, 10. The figures given here for emigrants from Åland are 2150, and for Finland overall 81 056. See also KÄHRE 1978, 43, and ÅS 1/1973, 19.

⁶⁸ SVT XXVIII, Migration Statistics 19, Helsinki 1927, 11—13.

favourite places being Port Lincoln, SA, and Melbourne in Victoria. Desertion occurred most frequently in the harbours of South Australia, where altogether 75 men jumped ship. It was from these harbours that Gustaf Erikson's ships took on their cargoes of wheat for Europe. By the 1930s, however, it was difficult to obtain cargoes bound for Australia, so that the ships came with deadweight alone to collect their wheat from Australian ports.

Nevertheless, it must be recalled that only a proportion of these deserting seamen in fact settled in Australia. It must also be noted that the Erikson ships did not ply to or from Queensland. Over 60 per cent of the seamen deserting did so in South Australia.

The tradition of desertion and pay-off by seamen in Australia did not die out completely after the Second World War; e.g. when the *Passat*, one of the last of the Erikson ships, made the Australian run in 1947, two seamen left the ship.⁶⁹ Another example was in 1953, when eight Finnish seamen deserted from the Finnish Steamship *Bore IX* at Lucinda Point in Queensland.⁷⁰

7. Seaman Migration: Conclusions

Due to the distance involved in the journey to Australia, and the cost, working one's passage as a seaman effectively emerged as one alternative form of *deliberate* migration. Nevertheless, it was perhaps more usually the case that a Finnish seaman, whether sailing on a Finnish ship or under some other nation's flag, found himself in Australia by chance, liked it there, and chose to stay, either by terminating his contract legally or by deserting. The rapid expansion of shipping in Australia from the mid-19th century onwards offered experienced Finnish seamen considerably better-paid opportunities than were available on Finnish ships. Similarly, the rapid growth of Sydney and the other ports on the Australian coast also offered opportunities for work ashore. The farms in the extensive Australian hinterlands, especially the cane fields in Queensland, and the mines, needed manpower. Moreover, these were on the whole forms of employment in which one could get by with poor language skills in English, particularly relevant in view of the tendency of Finnish arrivals to gravitate to the company of their fellow countrymen.

The total numbers involved between the middle of the 19th century and the Second World War probably amounts to several thousand, including many who stayed in Australia for some time before returning

⁶⁹ Interview with Stig Siren, Brisbane, 27 Feb. 1981.

⁷⁰ Interview with Hannu Saarela, Turku, 28 May 1986.

to Finland or moving on elsewhere. Discounting the periods when assisted passages were made available to Finnish immigrants, it is clear that, prior to the 1920s, the typical Finnish immigrant was a seaman come ashore, whether he had reached Australia by accident or design.

There is only scanty information available on the subsequent stages of the Finnish seamen immigrant's adaption to Australian society, e.g. from their letters home to Finland and from one or two interviews.⁷¹ On the whole, these Finns apparently tended to live in small, withdrawn groups. The majority of them were unmarried; those who did marry, usually had a British wife; only a few brought their wives or girlfriends from Finland to join them.

⁷¹ E.g. interview with Karl Linden, Melbourne, 24 March 1981. Linden went ashore in Melbourne in 1927, and subsequently worked for 25 years in the Pilot Service. Another ex-seaman was Ragnar Ramstadius, from Turku, who eventually became a Pilot Captain in Melbourne; interview, 24 March 1981, Melbourne.

V The Consolidation of Finnish Settlement

1. Introduction

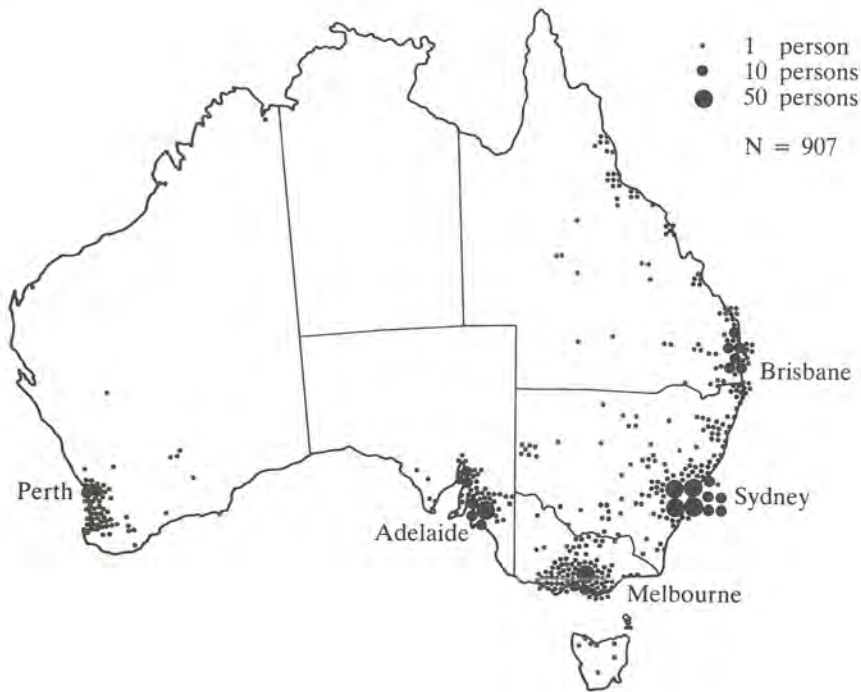
In the following, Finnish settlement in Australia will be examined separately State by State, owing to the geographical extent of the country and the differing conditions obtaining in each State. At the outset, however, an overall picture of Finnish settlement in the country prior to 1947 will be attempted. One crucial question concerns how, when, and why the original Finnish arrivals made the first permanent settlement in each Finnish colony. Similarly, the possible emergence, development and consolidation of group settlement, and the integration of the Finns into the system of Australian society, are also of central

Table V.1: Residence of Finnish Men, by Colony/State, at Naturalization in Australia, 1866—1946 (NR)

State	Date of Naturalization:					
	1866-92		1893-1920		1921-46	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
New South Wales	41	32.3	395	41.9	115	26.9
Victoria	27	21.3	167	17.8	89	20.8
Queensland	40	31.5	142	15.1	147	34.5
South Australia	14	11.0	141	15.0	37	8.7
Western Australia	—	—	87	9.3	35	8.2
Tasmania	5	3.9	8	0.9	4	0.9
TOTAL	127	100.0	940*	100.0	427	100.0

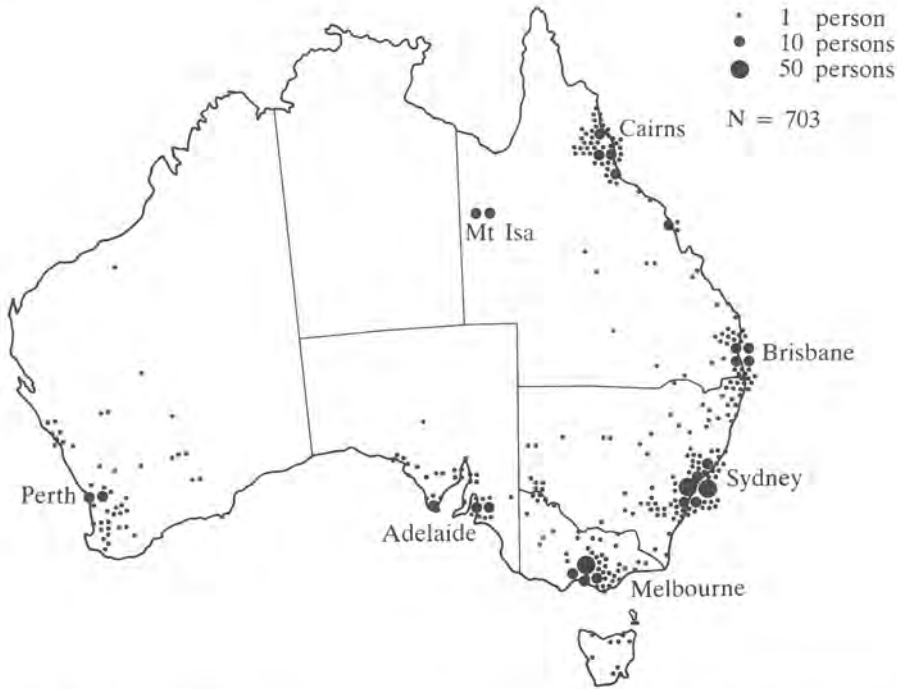
* The 940 men naturalized during the period 1893—1920 include 282 men who had arrived in the country prior to 1893.

importance. The starting point for this examination is the development of the Australian economy, and the opportunities which this offered for Finnish immigrants arriving from Finland, North America, or elsewhere. The major source of information consists of Naturalization Records and the official Censuses.



Map 6: Residence at Naturalization Prior to 1947 of Finnish Men Landing in Australia, 1893—1920 (NR)

Since there is no coherent information concerning Finnish patterns of settlement prior to the 1921 Census, it is necessary to base the earlier investigation on the Naturalization Records, which date from the mid-19th century. No separate map has been drawn to show the place of residence of Finnish men naturalized in the period 1866—1946 who arrived prior to 1893, since adequate data corresponding to those used for Maps 6 and 7 are not available for this group.



Map 7: Residence at Naturalization Prior to 1947 of Finnish Men Landing in Australia, 1921—1939 (NR)

The pattern of settlement in Australia has consistently been concentrated along the seaboard and in the cities. The same pattern also applies to the Finnish settlement, since in the mid-19th century Finnish settlement was already concentrating around the capitals of the various Colonies and their ports. Melbourne represented a centre of some kind for the earliest Finnish settlement, being a major port and also located near to the Victorian gold fields, which drew Finns from the middle of the century onwards. New South Wales, however, has been the most important colony and subsequently state for Finnish settlement, with approximately one third of the Finnish immigrants. The role of Queensland grew during the 1920s, due to the good wages available on the flourishing cane fields. The significance of Victoria was also further accentuated by Melbourne's role as the port of disembarkation for immigrants, especially in the period between the World Wars.

The reliability of the information obtained from the Naturalization Records is also reinforced for the last part of the period under scrutiny (1921—46) by the possibility of collation with data from the Census. As can be seen from Table V.2, in 1933, 33.7 per cent of the men were resident in Queensland, while Table V.1 shows 34.5 per cent of the men

Table V.2: Residence of Finland-born Immigrants, by State or Territory, 1921, 1933, and 1947

State or Territory	1921			1933			1947		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
New South Wales	506	44	550	496	74	570	404	72	476
Victoria	225	17	242	259	32	291	202	28	230
Queensland	203	51	254	542	90	632	327	95	422
South Australia	153	7	160	132	1	133	101	1	102
Western Australia	116	12	128	154	21	175	106	18	124
Tasmania	23	—	23	13	—	13	9	—	9
Northern Territory	1	—	1	8	—	8	8	1	9
Australian Capital Territory	—	—	—	3	—	3	1	—	1
TOTAL	1227	131	1358	1607	218	1825	1158	215	1373

Sources: Census 1921, 45, 47; 1933, 728, 730; 1947, 638, 640.

naturalized during 1921—47 as living in Queensland, which confirms the agreement between the Naturalization Records and the official Census of population.

As Table V.2 indicates, in the first year analyzed (1921), New South Wales was the State with the largest Finnish population, consisting of just over 40 per cent of the Finns in Australia. Nearly half this number lived in the second most popular State, Queensland, and almost as many in Victoria. At that date neither in the Northern Territory nor in the Australian Capital Territory was there a single person of Finnish birth, nor did these Territories take on great significance later either. The number of Finland-born persons in Victoria remains relatively constant at all dates throughout the period examined. The women are

Table V.3: Residence of Finnish Immigrants up to the early 1950s in Australia, by State (SMLA)

State	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
New South Wales	658	39.4	40	39.6	698	39.4
Queensland	499	29.9	41	40.6	540	30.5
Victoria	382	22.9	16	15.8	398	22.5
South Australia	96	5.7	2	2.0	98	5.5
Western Australia	26	1.6	2	2.0	28	1.6
Tasmania	3	0.2	—	—	3	0.2
Northern Territory	5	0.3	—	—	5	0.3
TOTAL	1669	100.0	101	100.0	1770	100.0

consistently more heavily concentrated in Queensland, where about one third of them lived.

This profile of the geographical distribution of Finnish settlement, with the largest concentration in New South Wales, followed by Queensland and then by Victoria, is confirmed by the card index at the Finnish Seamen's Mission (SMLA), which covers the period from the First World War to the 1950s. All three sources thus agree in this respect.

Table V.4: Residence of Finland-born Persons as Recorded in the Census Returns for 1921, 1933, and 1947 (Percentages)

Place of residence	1921			1933			1947		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Metropolitan	34.7	42.7	35.5	28.7	38.5	29.9	39.5	43.7	40.1
Provincial	14.2	9.9	13.7	10.3	8.7	10.1	11.6	6.0	10.7
Rural	39.0	46.6	39.8	53.5	52.8	53.5	45.0	49.8	45.8
Migratory	12.1	0.8	11.0	7.5	—	6.5	3.9	0.5	3.4
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	1227	131	1358	1607	218	1825	1158	215	1373

Sources: Census 1921, 52; Census 1933, 736; Census 1947, 646.

Table V.4 analyzes settlement in terms of urban versus rural as shown in the most reliable source, i.e. the Census returns.

Urban areas, including both the major cities and the smaller towns, accounted in the 1920s for virtually half of the Finland-born population in Australia. In 1933, this had fallen to around forty per cent, but at the end of the period under examination, in 1947, had risen to around one half again. The proportion of Finland-born persons resident in smaller towns was relatively small throughout the period, at around ten per cent, whereas the proportion living in rural areas was consistently high, reaching 53.5 per cent in 1933 (largely due to the impact of the 1930s Depression in the cities). The proportion of those with no fixed abode, i.e. mainly seamen, was at its highest in 1921, with eleven per cent, or 150 persons, but this proportion falls steadily thereafter; the largest numbers of unsettled persons were recorded from New South Wales, and the smallest from Queensland, with its agricultural economy. By comparison with the Australian population overall, Finns tended more to live in the country; e.g. in 1933, when over half the Finns were recorded as resident in rural areas, the equivalent proportion for the total population was approximately 36 per cent.

Table V.5: Length of Residence of Finnish Men in Australia before Naturalization (NR)

Years of Residence	Date of Naturalization					
	1866—92		1893—1920		1921—46	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
0- 4	13	2.1	204	31.1	7	1.6
5- 9	62	10.2	203	30.8	169	39.6
10-14	72	11.8	97	14.7	102	23.9
15-19	103	16.9	42	6.4	125	29.3
20-29	170	27.9	75	11.4	24	5.6
30-39	105	17.2	37	5.6	—	—
40-59	85	13.9	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	610	100.0	658	100.0	427	100.0

The place of residence at naturalization is usually identical with the location of longest residence; i.e. by this time the immigrant has usually settled down permanently.

Over most of the periods analyzed here, the majority of Finns acquiring naturalization did so after a residence of ten years or less in Australia (or some other British country). In the first period, however, naturalization did not usually occur until after 20 years in the country. It must be borne in mind that Australian society in the 19th century was somewhat different, and that nationality had not yet taken on the economic significance (e.g. pension rights) which it was to have in the 20th century. In examining the data for the last period analyzed, it should be noted that data are missing here for those arriving prior to the Second World War but taking out naturalization papers after 1946; this leads to relatively short lengths of time before naturalization in the Table V.5, which here mainly lists people immigrating in the 1920s who felt it necessary to acquire British nationality during the War.

The Australian Census also lists from 1921 the length of residence in the country, thus making it possible to establish the date of arrival of Finnish immigrants in the country.

In 1921, the largest single group consisted of those who had been in Australia for ten years or less, making up over one third of the Finnish population. One fifth of the Finland-born had been in the country for 30—39 years, i.e. had arrived in the 1880s; about 16 per cent had arrived around the turn of the century. The immigrants arriving prior to 1870 comprised at this point only 1.4 per cent, i.e. eleven persons, including two women, one of whom was the woman mentioned above

Table V.6: Length of Residence in Australia as Recorded in the Census Returns, 1921, 1933 and 1947

Length of Residence (years)	1921			1933			1947		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
0-9	439	51	490	702	108	810	91	24	115
10-19	205	16	221	245	24	269	219	69	288
20-29	141	35	176	293	31	324	412	55	467
30-39	267	20	287	105	25	130	268	31	299
40-49	119	3	122	106	16	122	92	20	112
50-59	15	1	16	86	5	91	28	7	35
60-69	2	-	2	9	-	9	12	4	16
70-79	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
Not available	39	4	43	61	9	70	35	5	40
TOTAL	1227	131	1358	1607	218	1825	1158	215	1373

Sources: Census 1921, 243, 244, 246; 1933, 974, 975, 977; 1947, 774, 776, 777.

who had arrived in Australia in the 1840s. For women in general, however, the second most frequent length of residence was 20—29 years.

By 1933, the proportion of those arriving within the preceding ten years had risen, to over 44 per cent. For the women, in particular, the new arrivals made up almost half, followed by those who had by this time been in the country for 20—29 years, i.e. had arrived at the turn of the century. Those who had been resident for 10—19 years made up the third group, thus revealing a wave-like fluctuation in the immigration, although this is partly obscured by the classification of length of residence in steps of ten years. Those having arrived prior to 1883 now comprised 5.5 per cent, or 100 persons, including two women.

By 1947, the largest overall group consisted of those with a residence of 20—29 years, i.e. arriving in 1918—27, but for women the proportionally largest group were those arriving in 1928—37. This fact confirms the impression gained from interviews and the literature, that wives often arrived some years after their husbands. The second largest group consisted of those arriving in 1908—17, but the group who had been resident for 10—19 years was nearly as large. Those arriving in 1897 or earlier now made up a mere 2.8 per cent.

Occupational Distribution among the Finnish-Australians

In most cases, the Naturalization Records for 1866—1946 state the applicant's occupation. Frequently, emigration entailed a change of occupation. Farmers became casual urban labourers, at least temporarily until they could accumulate enough capital for a farm; seamen tended to continue working at sea in Australia too, but they also often became farm labourers or, eventually, independent farmers.

Table V.7: Occupations of Finnish Immigrant Men Naturalized 1866—1946 (NR)

Occupation	Date of Naturalization					
	1866-92		1893-1920		1921-46	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Public servants & academics	—	—	2	0.2	6	1.0
Industry & commerce	2	1.6	9	1.0	17	2.8
Farmers	7	5.5	77	8.2	98	16.1
Farm & forest labourers	3	2.4	74	7.9	82	13.5
Seagoing occupations	56	44.1	270	28.9	127	21.0
Skilled workers	24	18.9	131	14.0	122	20.1
Mining	4	3.1	63	6.7	58	9.6
Service & transport	2	1.6	32	3.4	31	5.1
Labourers	29	22.8	274	29.2	56	9.2
No occupation stated	—	—	5	0.5	10	1.6
TOTAL	127	100.0	937	100.0	607	100.0

The most common occupations among Finnish men naturalized in 1866—92 were those of seaman, skilled worker, or ordinary labourer. Seamen, in particular, were represented in every State. Only a few were farmers or otherwise engaged in agriculture. Prior to 1893, it would seem, very few Finns had as yet acquired a farm of their own, nor had they yet moved in large numbers into farm labour. In part, this was a consequence of the stage of development of Australian agriculture, since intensive sugar cultivation, in which Queensland was to specialize, had not yet got under way.

The largest group of Finnish immigrants were engaged at this period as seamen in coastal shipping, or as casual or dock labourers. Prior to 1893, the Finnish-Australian community largely consisted of a mobile population of seamen and labourers, supplemented by those ex-seamen who were pioneering the movement inland, and whose farms would in time become bridgeheads for other ex-seamen or new immigrants from Finland.

The same pattern is repeated in the second period analyzed here, 1893—1920, with marine and labouring occupations comprising over half the total for Finnish men immigrants. One new category appears, that of public servants and academics, although of minimal size (0.2 per cent). The steady rise in agricultural occupations reflects the fact that many former seamen, together with other immigrant farmers, having worked their way as agricultural or forest labourers, had now acquired a farm of their own. The proportion of ordinary immigrants also increased during this period.

In the period between the two World Wars, the major occupations for Finnish immigrants were in agriculture and forestry, whether as independent farmers or as labourers; as seamen; in skilled work in construction and other industries, and as small businessmen, artisans, etc. One in five was a labourer, but there were few in upper social groups; in Australia, as in America and other countries of immigration, the Finns were largely engaged in manual labour. The special feature in Australia is the importance of seafaring, arising in most cases from the immigrants' previous background.

The geographical distribution of Finnish immigrants' occupations by States is essentially dependent on the kinds of economic opportunity available in each area. In Queensland, most were engaged in agriculture, and there were very few seamen, whereas in the States further south, which were the centres of Australian shipping, Finns were often involved with the sea. Finnish miners can be found in particular in Queensland and in Western Australia. Immigrants typically started out as labourers, and gradually made their way up to better positions.

The 1921 Census provides additional information on Finnish occupations to supplement that in the Naturalization Records, but corresponding information is not available from the Censuses for 1933 and 1947.

Table V.8: Finnish Occupations, 1921

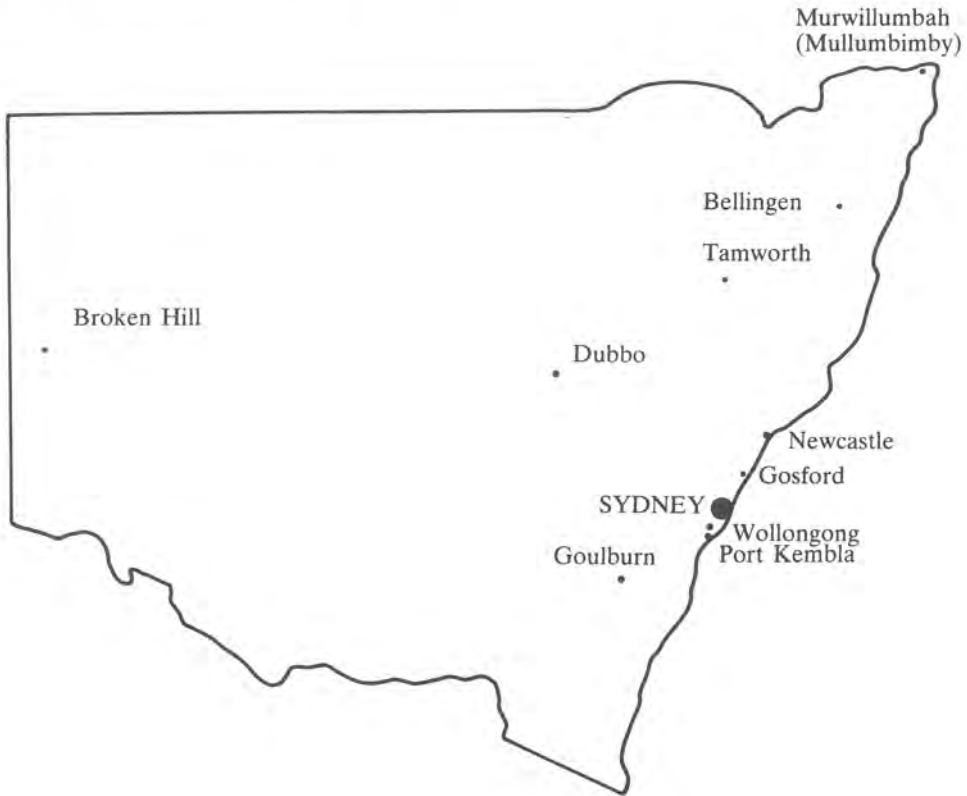
Occupational Group	Men		Women		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Employers	31	2.5	—	—	31	2.3
On own Account	148	12.1	5	3.8	153	11.3
Assisting Without Wages	4	0.3	—	—	4	0.3
Wages or Salary	768	62.6	19	14.5	787	57.9
Unemployed	136	11.1	1	0.8	137	10.1
Not Applicable	134	10.9	106	80.9	240	17.7
Not Stated	6	0.5	—	—	6	0.4
TOTAL	1227	100.0	131	100.0	1358	100.0

Source: Census 1921, 135, 139.

In 1921, one Finnish immigrant in ten is listed as self-employed. Many of these are presumably farmers. The largest group consists of the employed, comprising 62 per cent of the men and over 14 per cent of the women. 81 per cent of the women were not engaged in gainful employment, i.e. housewives. Among the men, 11 per cent were retired or otherwise outside the labour force. One Finn in ten was unemployed,

which gives some indication of the unemployment rate at the time.

The lack of adequate sources makes it impossible to carry out any more detailed overall study of the patterns of settlement and occupations. On the local level, however, quite detailed information is often available, e.g. through the Naturalization Records. The following sections will be devoted to an analysis State by State, with individual cases mentioned only as illustrative material.



2. Finnish Settlement in New South Wales

(1) Introduction

New South Wales was the oldest and most important European settlement in Australia. Founded in 1788 the population of the Colony was approximately 750 000 in 1880, and by the turn of the century (1901) it had risen to 1 354 846. A mere 35 344, or 2.6 per cent, were non-British.¹ Of these, the Chinese and Germans comprised the largest groups, making up over half between them (23 per cent and 27 per cent). Sydney held the major concentrations of Russians, Scandinavians, Austrians, Italians, and Greeks; these nationalities preferred the western parts of the town, near the harbour. The Finns are included in these, being classified by WOLFORTH, using naturalization records, as

¹ WOLFORTH 1974, 209.

'Scandinavians'.²

At the turn of the century, New South Wales was also the most important area of settlement by Finnish immigrants. According to the 1881 Census, there were 322 persons born in Russia, including 32 women; the corresponding figures for 1891 were 1176 and 189.³ "Russia" is stated to include Poland, Siberia, and Finland, and the Registrar General notes that the figure for Russians includes many Finns working as seamen.⁴ The 987 'Russian' men listed in the 1891 Census include 130 whose occupations are classified as 'shipping'; this does not apply to any of the women.⁵ The 1901 Census for New South Wales records 1962 Russian-born persons, including 240 women. In 1891, 51 of the thousand or so "Russian" men were listed with seafaring occupations.⁶ This suggests that the number of Finns engaged in marine occupations had fallen during the 1890s, which is plausible in view of the serious depression which afflicted Australia during that decade.

Table V.9: Places of Residence of Finland-born Persons in New South Wales Recorded in the Census Returns for 1921, 1933, and 1947

Location	1921			1933			1947		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Metropolitan	224	24	248	205	42	247	190	44	234
Provincial	98	6	104	76	12	88	56	7	63
Rural	133	13	146	193	20	213	141	20	161
Migratory	51	1	52	22	—	22	17	1	18
TOTAL	506	44	550	496	74	570	404	72	476

Sources: Census 1921, 54; Census 1933, 738; Census 1947, 648.

The 1921 Census is the earliest source of more detailed information about the location of residence of Finnish immigrants. As Table V.9 indicates, Sydney held the largest single concentration consistently through the three Censuses of 1921, 1933 and 1947; in comparison with other areas, it represents around one third. The proportion of those living in country towns falls after the 1921 Census, and had never been

² *Ibid.*, 211, 213.

³ Census of NSW 1881, Table 26, p. xxxiv, and 1891, Table IV, 439.

⁴ T.A. COGHLAN, General Report on the Eleventh Census of New South Wales (1891), Sydney 1894, 183.

⁵ Census of NSW 1891, Table IV, 446—474.

⁶ Census of NSW 1901, Table IV, 270.

high, probably due to the limited opportunities for employment which they had to offer. In the countryside, on the other hand, where a very significant proportion of the Finnish immigrants went, they were able to make a living, whether as a farmer or a farm labourer, even with no command of English. The increasing proportion recorded from the countryside in the 1933 Census is a reflection not only of the expanded rate of immigration, with a peak in the early 1920s, but also of a channelling of the preceding period's migration away from the country towns and from shipping into the countryside. This shift from the towns was further reinforced by the Depression. The number of seamen on board ship at the time of the Census in 1921 had been 52, but by 1933 it had fallen to 22. The distribution of the Finnish immigrants' places of residence could be summed up by saying that Sydney and the provincial towns together accounted for well over half. A majority of the women lived in Sydney, which offered the best opportunities of work for them, e.g. as domestic servants.

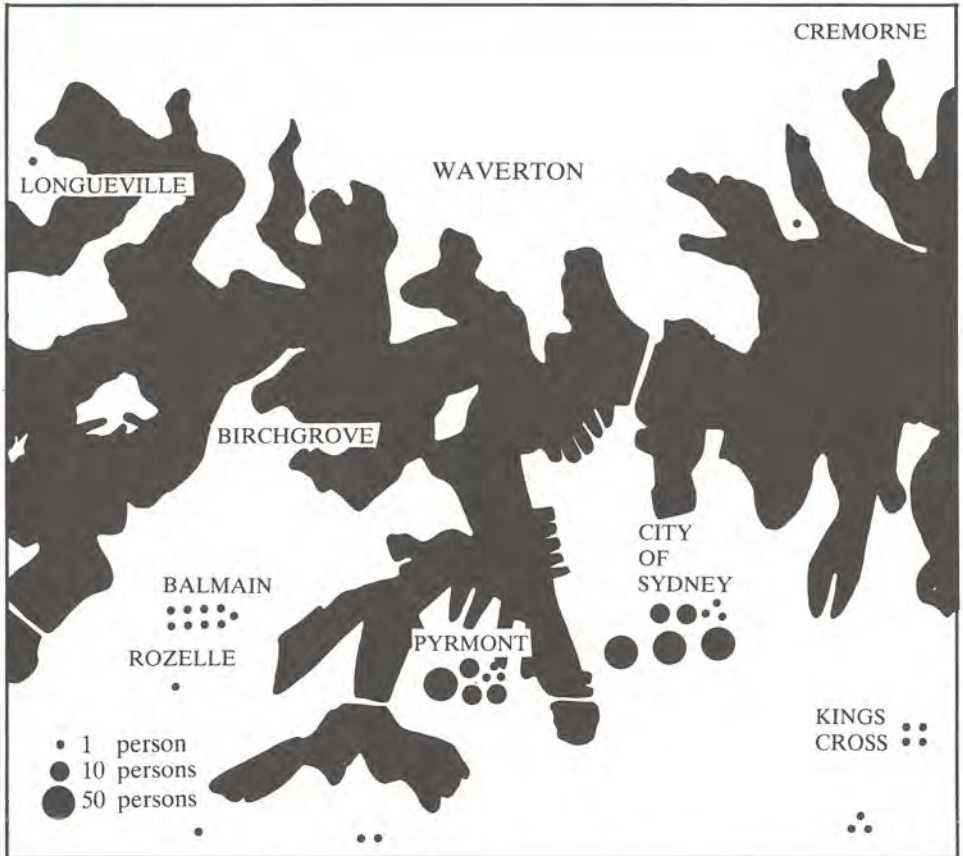
There is no information concerning the first Finnish settler in either Sydney or elsewhere in New South Wales. Many of the early Finnish immigrants arrived in the country through Sydney; one of the earliest was Isak Mattson, from Turku, who arrived there in 1852 from California, and headed on for the goldfields and Tasmania.⁷

(2) Finnish Settlement in the Ports of New South Wales

The Naturalization Records for New South Wales often fail to give a precise place of residence, making it difficult to determine where the Finns lived. When an address, is given, it is usually Sydney, often in Pyrmont, near the harbour. This part of the town was particularly favoured by Scandinavian seamen. The Finns in Pyrmont usually lived on Union St or Experiment St. Although this evidence is scanty, it does suggest that central Sydney, and especially Pyrmont, near the harbour, were among the early focuses of Finnish seamen's immigration settlement in Australia.

WOLFORTH refers to the fact that in America the immigrants often tended to settle in the downtown areas, since they were often forced to change their employment frequently and to work awkward hours. He suggests that the same considerations applied in Sydney in the 19th century. He cites, for instance, the many Scandinavians employed in shipping and on the docks, as an explanation for their choosing to live

⁷ Vic. NR 1911/19080.



Map 8: Location of Residence of Finnish Male Immigrants in Sydney Naturalized 1866—1946. Total number for Sydney as a whole 371, but very few outside the centre.

in the centre and particularly in the dockside area of Pyrmont.⁸ The seamen's community was constantly fluctuating, and varied in size according to the state of the Australian economy.

The seamen from the Oulu and Raahe regions on particular favoured New South Wales and Sydney, although the first Finn from Raahe, one John Smith, who arrived in 1852, spent his life on the Victorian goldfields, and stated his occupation at naturalization in 1895 as 'carpenter'.⁹ The large numbers of Finnish seamen from the seaboard on Oulu Province who arrived in Australia in the last three decades of the 19th century are a reflection of the decline in shipping and shipbuilding in their home region during the period after 1870.

Those Finns who stayed in Sydney and the other ports took work on

⁸ WOLFORTH 1974, 215—217.

⁹ Vic NR 1895/6173/A2318.

coastal shipping or as dock labourers, etc. Others set off inland, to work in the mines, in forestry, or in farming. Not all of those who remained in Sydney were fortunate, however; there were some who drifted to the edge of society. Eino Keskinen records in his diary having met many Finns in Sydney in 1925, but comments that "they were for the most part down and out; you bump into them all the time near the Seamen's Mission. Unemployed, sleeping out in the city's parks, etc., and getting hold of their food wherever they can."¹⁰ Keskinen's comments probably also hold true for the earliest Finnish immigrants.

The long history of Finnish settlement in Sydney is further confirmed by the records kept at the Finnish Consulate there of Finnish deaths in 1919—41.¹¹ The records contain the names of 170 Finnish men, mostly labourers or seamen by occupation. However, the deaths reported to the Consulate mainly concerned those who had no next of kin in Australia, which suggests that the total number of Finnish deaths is greater than that recorded in the Consulate's archives.¹² The largest group among the deaths in Sydney for 1919—41 had been born in the 1850s or 1860s, and many came from Turku & Pori Province (SW Finland).

There were also Finnish women in Sydney from an early date. The deaths records show one Anna-Brita Rancken, alias Susan Ericksen, reached Australia in 1883. She was born in Munsala (Ostrobothnia), and died in Sydney in 1935.¹³ Munsala was also the home of Mary Masters (née Nyholm), who arrived in South Australia on 1 January 1884, and died in Sydney in 1935.¹⁴ Only one of the women recorded among the deaths in Sydney in 1919—1941 is given as having an occupation: Selina Nyberg, from Oulu, who was a midwife or nurse.¹⁵

Early Finnish immigrants, mainly ex-seamen, also settled in other parts of New South Wales in the latter part of the 19th century. It is particularly important to trace these early pioneers, since subsequent clusters of permanent Finnish settlement could well grow up around them, and they could provide the first employment for newly-arrived Finns who could not speak English. Many of these Finnish pioneers bought land, but some of them were also engaged in other occupations, especially in the cities.¹⁶

The busy port of Newcastle, to the north of Sydney, had long been the home of many Finnish seamen engaged in coastal shipping or dock

¹⁰ Diary of Eino Keskinen for May 1925, SI.

¹¹ Archives of the Finnish Consulate in Sydney, UM, Helsinki (SKA).

¹² Correspondence of the Finnish Consulate in Sydney, 23 Aug. 1922, SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb:4, UM, Helsinki.

¹³ SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb:2, UM, Helsinki.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Fgb:6, UM, Helsinki; List of Passengers to Port Adelaide, SASA.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Fgb:6, UM, Helsinki.

¹⁶ Letter from the Consul to the UM, 29 Mar. 1939, SKA Sydney 1919—41 Fa:2, 1 B—3.

labour. Newcastle was a vital port for exports of coal and ores, the latter coming for example from Broken Hill. The earliest Finnish arrivals in Newcastle or its environs date back at least to the 1880s. The archives record a carpenter from Oulu, one Jacob Bleck, who arrived in Australia in 1886, and settled in the Newcastle region.¹⁷ There were Finnish women in Newcastle, too; e.g. Brita-Stina Chellman, who arrived in Australia in the early 20th century, subsequently kept a boarding house in Jesmond.¹⁸

To the south of Sydney, Port Kembla grew rapidly between the World Wars due to the mines and the railway network in its hinterland, and in his notes made in the 1930s, Karhula also records long-established Finnish settlement there.¹⁹ This is confirmed by the deaths records at the Sydney Consulate, where for example there is a record of one Oskari Heinonen, born in Uusikaupunki, who had arrived in South Australia in 1909.²⁰ There were around a dozen Finns still living at Port Kembla at the end of the 1930s.²¹

(3) Finnish Group Settlement in New South Wales

Other Finnish settlements grew up outside Sydney in various parts of New South Wales, especially along the seaboard. The growth of these settlements was powerfully affected by the pioneer Finnish settlers. Successful pioneers were able to offer their fellow-countrymen in Australia a job and a place to live. Settling down in a new place was also greatly encouraged by being able to deal with one's business in Finnish, which helped to alleviate the culture shock for new arrivals. Examples of such pioneers include Frederick Doepel, in the Bellingen area; Frank Charlson, at Gosford; and the Back brothers from Munsala, at Mullumbimby. Other influences which brought Finns together were advertisements and articles in the local Finnish newspaper, *Suomi*, and the Finnish Consul in Sydney, Harald Tanner, who used to advise new arrivals to look for work with their compatriot settlers who had already achieved success.

Bellingen

The earliest Finnish settlement at Bellingen dates back to the second half of the last century. An important local figure, for the Australian as

¹⁷ SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb:1, UM, Helsinki; NSW NR 1915/21631.

¹⁸ *Suomi* Jubilee Issue 1969, 38.

¹⁹ "New South Walesin suomalaiset" ["The Finns in NSW"], TYYH/S/X/7/III.

²⁰ SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb:3, UM, Helsinki.

²¹ *Suomi*, 17 Apr. 1939 and 8 Nov. 1939.



Illus. 13: Finnish pioneer settlers, arriving in Australia from the mid-19th century onwards attracted their countrymen to join them, especially if they could offer employment. One such pioneer was Frederick Doepel (centre, arms folded), who arrived in Australia in 1870 and settled in Bellingen. (Miss J. Bleakley/SI)

well as the Finnish community, was Frederick Doepel, born in Kristinestad in 1854. He arrived in Australia in 1870, and was naturalized fourteen years later in New South Wales.²² Initially, Doepel sailed on the Australian coast, but settled down permanently at the end of the 1870s on the Bellinger River as a ships' despatcher and ship-builder.

One Jack Winter, another Finn who lived in Bellingen, wrote to Karhula in 1936 that Doepel had been engaged in building sailing ships and in despatching cargo around 1880. Doepel's ship-building prospered, and his best-known ship was the *Alma Doepel*, built in 1903 and named after his daughter. The ship has been preserved as a reminder of the Australia sailing ship builders. In addition to ship-building, Doepel also maintained a sawmill and timberyard, which provided employment for many Australians and Finnish immigrants. He was a well-known local figure, who was active in local affairs, e.g. in the founding of a hospital. He lost his life in an accident in 1929.²³

²² NSW NR 1884/9/34.

²³ SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb:2, UM. Helsinki; *Suomi*, 20 July 1977. Obituary in *The Raleigh Sun*, 2 Aug. 1929; "Frederick Doepel", TYYH/S/X/7/III; Collection of Doepel's granddaughter, Mrs Josephine Bleakley, SI; BRAITHWAITE & BEARD 1978; letter from J.P. Winter to Karhula from Bellingen, 26 July 1936, TYYH/S/X/7/III.

Frederick Doepel was one of the larger employers in the area, leading to East Bellingen long being nicknamed 'Doepelton'. The records relating to many early Finns in New South Wales show that they had spent some time on the Bellinger River, including many ex-seamen who subsequently settled permanently in Bellingen. Settlement was further assisted by the fact that Doepel built dwellings for his workmen.²⁴

Finnish fruit growers at Gosford area

The Finns at Bellingen mainly earned their living in light industry, but at Gosford, the main source of income was fruit cultivation. Finnish settlement at Gosford made good sense in geographical terms. Gosford is located on the strip of coast between Sydney and Newcastle, in the zone of influence of both of those lively ports. Frank Charlson, who is mentioned in the local history as the pioneer settler at Toowo Bay, had arrived in Australia in 1886 and cleared a farm at Chinamen Bay. Charlson's farm prospered, and was well-known in New South Wales.²⁵ Prior to the First World War, there were Finns working on the orange groves, and in the inter-War period a small community of Finnish fruit growers gradually grew up around Gosford.²⁶ Not until the 1930s did a larger Finnish settlement develop in Gosford. Amongst the earliest arrivals were August and Maria Lammi, who soon set up for themselves a successful farm, cultivating passionfruit, oranges, and tomatoes.²⁷ In the wake of the Lammis, a steady stream of Finnish fruit farmers began to arrive, having heard of the low price of land in Gosford through reports in *Suomi*.²⁸ Some arrivals had been guided there by Tanner, the Consul. The major single reason, however, was the worldwide Depression, which was forcing workers, including the Finns, out of the cities in search of work in the countryside. New arrivals from Finland sometimes made their way to Gosford straight away, such as the brothers Kalle and Matti Hoipo, who arrived from Finland in 1930. By 1933, there were 12 Finnish fruit farms in the area, which had been established on land cleared by hand from the virgin bush.²⁹ Karhula's papers list seven Finnish families and nine unmarried men at Gosford 1939.³⁰

²⁴ "New South Walesin suomalaiset" ["The Finns in NSW"], TYYH/S/X/7/III; *Suomi*, 20 July 1977.

²⁵ SWANCOTT 1963, 171.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 75.

²⁷ Letter from August Lammi, "Kertomus suomalaisten historiasta Gosfordin paikkakunnalta [An Account of the History of the Finns at Gosford]", SI, A/1/1983.

²⁸ *Suomi*, 16 April 1930.

²⁹ Interview with Mimmi Tuomi, Sydney 8 March 1981.

³⁰ "New South Walesin suomalaiset" ["The Finns in NSW"], TYYH/S/X/7/III.

The Finland—Swedish Colony at Mullumbimby

The best known settlement of Swedish-speakers from Finland ("Finland-Swedes") was at Mullumbimby, near the border with Queensland. Even before the brothers Karl Johan and Wilhelm Anders Back, there had been an ex-seaman called Charlie Andersson, in the area, who had taken up a selection at Meranburn for sheep grazing.³¹

The Back brothers were pioneer settlers, who started out in their new surroundings virtually from scratch, gradually amassing over the years a considerable fortune. The elder brother, Karl Johan, left Finland in 1899 to avoid conscription into the Russian Imperial Army.³² He was interested in philosophy and literature (see p. 300), and at first in Australia he worked in farming. He also ran a sawmill, and sold timber from his own lands to surrounding farms. The younger brother, Wilhelm Anders (born in 1886), arrived in Australia with his father in 1902, having emigrated to escape the Russification measures being enacted in Finland. Their father was not happy in Australia, and returned to Finland, but Wilhelm remained, working on his brother's farm. Within a year, Wilhelm had acquired his own fifty-acre farm to the north of Mullumbimby, and went in for cattle grazing. In 1913, he sold his first farm, and a year later bought his first sheeprun: 20 000 acres, and 800 sheep, at Lochnagar near Barcaldine. This was the beginning of W.A. Back's career as a large-scale sheep grazer, which eventually was to make him a millionaire. In addition to sheep grazing, W.A. Back also functioned as a real estate agent and a building contractor. At its peak, the Back sheep empire comprised a dozen sheep farms with a total area said to have been the size of Vaasa Province in Finland and an overall herd of 200 000 sheep.³³ No doubt the reported size of these land holdings should be regarded with caution, and varied as land was bought and sold.

Beyond doubt, however, W.A. Back — living later in Queensland and Brisbane — was the wealthiest Finnish immigrant in Australia. Having arrived in the country at the age of 16, he rapidly adopted an Australian way of life, learnt English, and married an Australian wife of Italian origin.

The Backs were followed by other migrants from Swedish-speaking Finland, including members of their own family. The Finnish community

³¹ NSW NR 1895/12/465; "New South Walesin suomalaiset" ["The Finns in NSW"], TYYH/S/X/7/III.

³² He used the notorious Ostrobothnian route known as "the Monäs Pass", which ran from Monäs village, Munsala, over the Gulf of Bothnia to Sweden and thence continued overseas. The Gulf was crossed in summer months by boat, and during the winter on skis. MYHRMAN 1972, 20; KUMMEL 1980, 500.

³³ SS 4/1957, 76—77; interview with Paavo Vennonen, 12 March 1981; HBL 8 Aug. 1926; ÅKERBLOM 1972, 69; Munsala Församlings Kommunionsbook, Del II, 1901—1910, 605.

at Mullumbimby grew during the 1920s, as a result of the heavier tide of migration, and became firmly established during the 1930s. Karhula's list drawn up in 1935 mentions altogether over twenty adults, together with their children.³⁴ Many of these came from the Swedish-speaking areas of Finland, and banana cultivation was a common livelihood, although some of them also went in for cattle grazing. There were also Finnish-speakers who found their way to the Backs, including, for instance, Nestori Karhula, who was employed there for a time shortly after his arrival in Australia in 1921. Like his elder brother, W.A. Back also dealt in real estate, and on occasion was able to help a fellow-Finlander in the purchase of property. In the course of time, therefore, Mullumbimby developed into a Finland-Swedish colony, whose connections with Finland have survived to the present day.

Finns in Inland New South Wales

No Finnish colonies grew up inland in New South Wales on the same scale as those on the coast, with the possible exception of the mining community at Broken Hill. The Finns who moved inland fell into two categories: farmers who settled down permanently somewhere, and were a source of jobs for newly arrived fellow-Finnish immigrants; and migrant labourers. The first category, for example, included August Laukka (born in Oulainen) and his wife Maria, who set up a flourishing farm at Dubbo. Laukka was an ex-seaman, who had deserted from his ship in Sydney in 1889. Having first built up some capital by working as a forest labourer, he took up a Government selection of 208 acres, bought additional land from his neighbours, and cleared large areas of bush for cultivation. Laukka's farm eventually reached a size of 3000 acres, and provided the first job for many Finnish immigrants, including deserting seamen.³⁵ Additional manpower was not needed on the farm all the year round, however, but mainly at harvest time; for the rest of the year, there were two farm hands.³⁶ In Australian terms, this was a small farm, but Laukka also owned other properties, including farms, and houses in Kensington, Sydney. At the end of the 1920s, Laukka's workforce on his farms consisted of three Finnish farm hands as well as his own two sons.³⁷ The Laukka estate is no longer in Finnish hands.³⁸

Frans Robert Wacker (born at Rauma in 1856) belonged to the

³⁴ "New South Walesin suomalaiset" ["The Finns in NSW"], TYYH/S/X/7/III.

³⁵ SS 4/1938, 220; see also MY 4/1934, 60—63.

³⁶ Interview with Ilmari Aalto, Sydney, 6 March 1981. Aalto himself worked on the Laukka farm immediately after his arrival in Australia in 1927.

³⁷ Interview with Johannes Aaltonen in Melbourne, 24 March 1981. Aaltonen also worked on the Laukka farm in 1927.

³⁸ Interview with Ilmari Aalto, 6 March 1981.



Illus. 14: August Laukka, a seaman who came ashore in Australia in 1889. His wheat farm at Narromine was a first base for many newly-landed ex-seamen and other Finnish immigrants in Australia. Laukka provided work on his own farm, or arranged employment on other farms nearby. Many Finns used this as a staging post on their way north to Queensland. (Jorma Pohjanpalo/SI)

Illus. 15: Robert Wacker (1856—1936), an ex-seaman from Rauma, was a typical example of the gold prospectors in inland New South Wales. Photographed by Consul H. Tanner in the 1920s. (Finlandia News)

category of migrant labourers. He had prospected for gold in New Zealand and California, and eventually arrived in Sydney, probably in quest of gold, in the early 1880s. He spent a couple of years on the Hillgrave gold field, and then moved around various gold fields in New South Wales. He then lived the Armidale area, cut off from other Finns, and did not meet any other Finns until 1924, when he made contact with Finland through the Seamen's Mission Society's magazine *Merimiehen Ystävä*, as a consequence of which his nephew also came out to Australia. In Armidale, Wacker went under the name of Jim Johnson. He had acquired this name after having given his gold

prospecting permit to a friend who had been unable to obtain one, and then taking out a new permit himself under a new name. Wacker would appear to have found enough gold to keep himself alive and to enjoy a lively time in the hotel bars. He never succeeded in building up any permanent possessions, however, and was buried in a pauper's grave in 1936.³⁹

A similar story is presented by the life of Aleksii Tarvainen, who had deserted ship in Newcastle in 1923. He made a precarious living for himself travelling around the countryside of New South Wales trapping rabbits, doing forest work, and prospecting for gold. An essential feature of these men's lives was that they were perpetually on walkabout, prolonging as it were their seaman's way of existence ashore, with the weeks spent in work and the weekends in the local bars.⁴⁰

The evidence thus clearly indicates a long history of Finnish settlement in New South Wales, dating back to the middle of the last century. Both as Colony and State, this area played a crucial role in Finnish settlement in Australia, moreover, for during the period under investigation around 40 per cent of the Finns in Australia were resident in New South Wales. They tended to cluster in the urban areas, well over half of the men being found in either Sydney or the other towns; and the women also tended to gather in the cities, since they were there able to obtain work in service occupations.

³⁹ SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb: 8, UM, Helsinki: letter from Eino Peltomäki, at West Tamworth, 26 April 1932, and undated letter to Karhula, apparently soon after Wacker's death on 7 March 1936, TYYH/S/X/7/III.

⁴⁰ Interview with Aleksii Tarvainen, Canberra, 14 March 1981.



3. Finnish Settlement in Victoria

Alongside the early British settlement of New South Wales, another mainland colony was subsequently established on the south coast by settlers from Tasmania, first in 1834 at Portland Bay and then further east in 1835 at Port Phillip Bay on a site near the mouth of the Yarra river later known as Melbourne. The colony, at first known as the Port Phillip District of New South Wales, was separated off in 1851 as an independent Colony named Victoria. The gold rushes brought a sudden increase in its population, and by 1860 it had 76 000 inhabitants.⁴¹

The oldest Finnish settlements outside New South Wales are to be found in Victoria. Many of the Finnish prospectors who had come to try their luck on the gold fields in the 1850s thereafter settled down in Victoria, either finding work in the mines, or farming, or settling in the rapidly expanding town of Melbourne. This was one possible jumping-off point for work in the coastal shipping, since many of these too were ex-seamen. The era of the Finnish gold prospectors in the 1850s and 1860s has already been discussed separately above, and the following discussion will therefore concentrate on Finnish settlement in Victoria after that period. The sources available include the lists of seamen

⁴¹ McNAUGHTAN, 1978, 99.

deserting, the Naturalization Records, and such scanty other written material as has survived.

None of these sources indicate any significant wave of Finnish immigration into Victoria either at the end of the last or the beginning of this century. A certain number of Finns are no doubt included in the records under the heading of Russian nationals; the Victorian Censuses record the following figures for persons of Russian birth:⁴²

	1871	1881	1891
Men	319	302	911
Women	15	67	261
TOTAL	334	369	1172

The first Census to list those of Finnish origin separately is that for 1901:⁴³

Born	Men	Women	TOTAL
Finland	73	4	77
Poland	48	73	121
Russia-in-Europe	592	164	756

According to these figures, in 1901 the Finns comprised around 10 per cent of the total Russian-origin population. The data should be treated with circumspection, however, since it is probable that not all of the Finns were registered in the Census.

Gradually, therefore, individual Finnish immigrants were arriving in the Colony, and, in conjunction with the earlier gold prospectors, by the end of the century they had raised the Finnish population in Victoria to around one hundred. Subsequent growth brought the figure of 77, in the 1901 Census, up to 242 in that for 1921, including 17 women as against only four in 1901. Half of the Finns lived in Melbourne or the other towns; the remainder were for the most part in rural areas, and the smallest group were registered as seamen on board ship.⁴⁴

⁴² Census of Vic. 1871, 9; 1881, 6; 1891, 85.

⁴³ Census of Vic. 1901, 171.

⁴⁴ Census of Vic. 1901, 717, and 1921, 45, 47.

Table V.10: Place of Residence of Finland-born Persons in Victoria Recorded in the Census Returns for 1921, 1933, and 1947

Location	1921			1933			1947		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Metropolitan	81	12	93	112	19	131	114	21	135
Provincial	18	—	18	18	—	18	13	—	13
Rural	91	5	96	111	13	124	63	7	70
Migratory	35	—	35	18	—	18	12	—	12
TOTAL	225	17	242	259	32	291	202	28	230

Sources: Census 1921, 56; 1933, 740; 1947, 650.

The earliest Finnish settlement, which arose from the desertion of hundreds of seamen, can be traced after the middle of the 19th century through the Naturalization Records,⁴⁵ which date from 1851, when Victoria was established as a separate Colony. The first naturalizations of persons born in the Russian Empire date from 1854, and to judge from the names and occupations (usually 'merchant', 'shopkeeper', or the like) these were Jews. It is however also possible that these early Russians included some Finns.⁴⁶ The first definite case of naturalization of a Finn occurred in 1881: one Andrew Freeman, born in Ylivieska, who had arrived in Australia in 1869; at the time of naturalization, aged 35, he was a labourer in Bairnsdale.⁴⁷ It is noticeable that the Finns who arrived on the Victorian gold fields during the 1850s and 1860s were in no hurry to change nationality. John Smith, from Raahe, for example, who had arrived in October 1852, did not take out naturalization papers until 1895.⁴⁸

The total number of Finns naturalized in Victoria prior to 1904 came to 83, whereas the figure prior to 1893 had only been 22. Since about one Finn in four changed nationality, this suggests a figure of about a hundred Finns in Victoria prior to 1893. Since, on the other hand, 61 Finns were naturalized in the period 1893—1903, many of whom had in fact arrived before 1883, this suggests a total figure of Finns in Victoria during the time under investigation closer to two hundred. Many of

⁴⁵ Vic. NR 1851—1903, AA, Canberra.

⁴⁶ Vic. NR 1851—61 A 3977, Vol. I, 176/1861, AA, Canberra.

⁴⁷ Vic. NR 1881/1430/71, AA, Canberra.

⁴⁸ Vic. NR 1895/6173/A 2318.

these were originally from the seaboard of the north-western Finnish coast; others came from other coastal areas ranging as far as Viipuri (Vyborg). The common denominator would appear to be a career at sea. During the Age of Sail, there were direct links from the Finnish ports to Melbourne, which was a centre of international trade; nonetheless, many arrivals had made their way to Australia by way of America, New Zealand, or some other country.

A group of up to two hundred Finns was not large enough to lead to the establishment of any more permanent Finnish community; the Finnish immigrants in Victoria in this period lived scattered among the population, with which they gradually merged. By contrast, the Danes, for instance, had already set up a farming community at East Poowong, Gippsland, during the 1870s.⁴⁹ Similar ethnic groupings of Finns do not appear to have emerged in Victoria until the 1920s. The absence of any individuals acquiring large holdings of land or important public status in other occupations may perhaps be partially explained by the fact that, after the Gold Rush, Victoria offered relatively fewer economic opportunities than other Colonies. Moreover, the gold prospectors, being mainly ex-seamen or from otherwise mobile occupations, were not interested in settling down and working underground in the mines once the surface gold began to give out in the 1870s.

When Nestori Karhula was collecting his material in the 1930s, he either did not include Victoria, or failed to obtain any information, possibly due to the distance from Brisbane. Neither the Finnish paper *Suomi*, however, although published in Melbourne from 1926 onwards, nor its Scandinavian sister-paper *Norden* (1897—1940), provide much information about Finns in Victoria; it therefore seems likely that no more permanent Finnish community grew up in Victoria in the aftermath of the Victorian Gold Rush other than in Melbourne itself. The records of Finnish deaths in Australia collected by the Consulate for the period 1919—41 do however indicate that there had been some wealthy Finns in Victoria, but the rest of the Finnish community between the Wars was not aware of them.

The first Finnish Consul, Nauklér, stated in 1920 that Finnish settlement was concentrated in Melbourne, where there were Finns working as seamen, factory labourers, and mechanics. There were also Finnish miners in Bendigo and Ballarat, and fruit farmers at Mildura and in other farming areas. Some Finns had turned to farming very early; there is a letter from Australia, published in Finland in 1887, which has a comment added to the effect that the writer's father had owned a farm at Rutherglen, near Melbourne, for the past ten years;⁵⁰ if

⁴⁹ LYNNG 1907, 40; KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 149.

⁵⁰ ÖP 23 June 1887.

this is correct, then there had been Finnish farmers in Victoria since the 1870s. The Naturalization Records also list a number of Finns who subsequently became farmers, e.g. Johan Gustaf Björksten, from Gamlakarleby, who arrived on board the *Otto* from Kristinestad in 1860. He was naturalized in 1899, at which time he was living in Toolong, at Yarra Glen.⁵¹ To judge by the size of their herds of cattle or sheep, these Finns belonged to the higher social classes in Australia. There are also a number of other farmers, mainly from the Ostrobothnian coastal areas of Finland, who came to Australia in the 1870s and 1880s, and whose names occur in the Naturalization Records.

Finnish settlement in Victoria was in many cases the result of 'chain migration', when friends and relations came to join a pioneer settler. This can be exemplified by the case of the Rasmus family from Gamlakarleby. The second eldest of the ten children in the family, Anders Rasmus (born in 1845), was the most successful member of the family in Australia. His date of arrival is uncertain; the sources mention both 1871 and 1877, of which the former is the more probable, since in the Parish Records in Gamlakarleby he is mentioned as "Absent, current residence Australia" during 1873—82.⁵² At the end of the century, Anders Rasmus was living on Rouse Street in Port Melbourne, where he was known as a prosperous contractor, ship-builder, and bridge and dock construction contractor.⁵³ Anders Rasmus was active in Scandinavian church circles in Melbourne, and in assisting fellow-countrymen who had run into difficulties.⁵⁴ He eventually died, in Melbourne, in 1933.⁵⁵

Anders Rasmus' brother, Karl Rasmus (born in 1857) took out papers in 1884 for his departure for Australia.⁵⁶ A person of this name was later living at Mallacoota, giving his occupation as 'selector', i.e. he had taken up a Government land grant. This Karl Rasmus had arrived in Victoria from New York in 1881,⁵⁷ and is moreover probably the same person whom Tanner, the Finnish Consul, records having met near the Victoria — New South Wales border in the early 1930s: an elderly Finn called Charlie Rasmus, and an old widow called Amanda Anderson.⁵⁸ The confusion as to his date of arrival may perhaps be attributed to failing memory in the old man, for Karl Rasmus had in fact reached

⁵¹ Vic. NR 1899/7984/38128.

⁵² Vic. NR 1883/25/2072; Passport registers, [VMA]; information supplied by Frans Lillsunde from the Parish Records in Gamlakarleby to Olavi Koivukangas, 24 Apr. 1983, SI.

⁵³ See advertisement by A. Rasmus in *Norden* for 4 Dec 1897; LYNG 1901, 59.

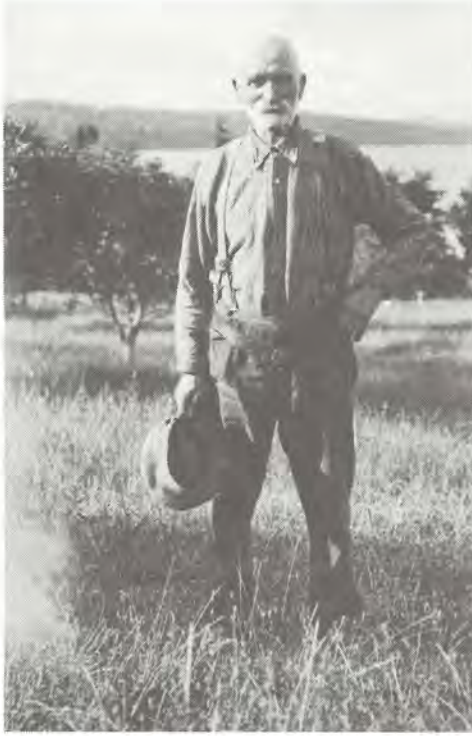
⁵⁴ *Norden* for 27 June 1925; see also EILERT 1981 and LYNG 1901, 191.

⁵⁵ SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb: 7, UM, Helsinki.

⁵⁶ Information supplied by Frans Lillsunde from the Parish Records in Gamlakarleby to Olavi Koivukangas, 24 Apr. 1983, SI.

⁵⁷ Vic. NR 1885, 29, 3449/291.

⁵⁸ *Suomen Joulu* 1932, 11.



Illus. 16: Charlie Rasmus, Malla-coota, Vic., photographed in 1931. Several members of the Rasmus family from Gamlakarleby (Kokkola) settled in Australia since the 1870s. (Tanner/Finlandia News)

Australia with his sister Lovisa in 1884. It may also be possible that he had visited Australia earlier, in 1881. Ten years later, 1894 then saw the further arrival of Alexander Rasmus (place of origin stated as Helsinki), via San Francisco, in Melbourne. In the Register of Deaths, his occupation is given as miner.⁵⁹

Axel Rasmus (born in 1846) also moved to Australia, and is presumed to have died there. One of the daughters in the large Rasmus family, Lovisa, also went to Australia (with her brother Karl, in 1884), where she married a Finn called Lehrback, originally from Nedervetil in Ostrobothnia; they subsequently moved to Western Australia.⁶⁰

The Finns in Melbourne were engaged in many different occupations, both in others' employment and as self-employed. One of the earliest Finnish building contractors was one Isaac Jacobson, who in 1882 set up a building firm in partnership with a German called Meyers. Meyers &

⁵⁹ Information supplied by Frans Lillsunde from the Parish Records in Gamlakarleby to Olavi Koivukangas; SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb: 7, UM, Helsinki.

⁶⁰ Information supplied by Frans Lillsunde from the Parish Records in Gamlakarleby to Olavi Koivukangas, 24 April 1983. It should also be mentioned that the South Australian records were found in 1981 to contain references to another extensive Rasmus family, originating however from Heiligenhofen, Denmark (near the German border).

Jacobson built many houses and business premises in South Melbourne.⁶¹ John S. MARTIN suspects that they fell victim to the Great Depression in the 1890s, since their firm is no longer mentioned in the lists of contractors after 1892.⁶² There is a later reference to Jacobson from 1902, when he had commissioned construction work in Footscray, but thereafter there is no further information extant.⁶³

One of the best-known Finns in Melbourne was Toivo Viktor Mannerheim (he adopted this name in Australia, his original surname having been Ylinen-Knuussi). Mannerheim was born in Merikarvia, on the western Finnish coast, and arrived in Fremantle, Western Australia, via Siberia in 1910. After working as a forest labourer in West for some time, he moved to Melbourne, where he obtained work as a sailmaker. According to Oscar Salonen, Mannerheim started out as a photographer in the public parks, but later went to work in a repair shop belonging to a Swede called Ericson. He continued his technical training, which he started in Finland, by attending the Workingmen's College (now the Melbourne Institute of Technology). Subsequently, Mannerheim ran a small workshop on Bourke Street, but then went on to expand his operations by renting a factory where he manufactured wooden clothespegs, etc. This business prospered, and he was soon able to purchase the factory buildings. During the First World War Mannerheim was manufacturing hairgrips; after the War, short hairstyles became fashionable for women, and the demand for hairgrips collapsed. Mannerheim built a new factory and reverted to manufacturing clothespegs.⁶⁴

Mannerheim expanded his operations again in the 1930s, when he bought land in Thomastown in eastern Melbourne, and built a new factory and sawmill. He now began to manufacture a wide range of wooden products, including yoyos, for which there was a current craze. The workforce in Mannerheim's factory numbered around a dozen, of whom only one was Finnish, according to George Hilton, a former employee. In order to ensure the supply of wood, he then bought 1150 acres of woodland to the east of Melbourne. Up to the Second World War, his wooden toys sold well, but in the post-War period cheap plastic toys flooded the market; Mannerheim therefore now concentrated on the timber trade and in raw materials for wooden fencing, which he obtained from his own woodland. In the 1950s,

⁶¹ SUTHERLAND 1888, 647.

⁶² Letter from John S. Martin, Melbourne, to Olavi Koivukangas, 28 Feb. 1985, SI.

⁶³ Sands & McDougall, *Directory of Melbourne*, 1900.

⁶⁴ Letter from Oscar Salonen, Frankenston (Vic.), to Olavi Koivukangas, 1970 (n.d.), SI; interview with George Hilton, Loyetea (Tas.), 7 April 1981; interview with Veikko Pulkka, Melbourne, 23 March 1981; interview with Paavo Vennonen, Canberra, 12 March 1981.



Illus. 17: A second Finnish businessman in Melbourne, in addition to Mannerheimo, was Ragnar Monthen, from Helsinki. He had run a factory in Helsinki manufacturing fasteners for bales of paper; in Melbourne he developed from this a new system for fastening bales of wool, and set up a company manufacturing the equipment needed for this. (Tanner/Finlandia News)

Mannerheimo's son, Francis, became a partner in the business, but following the father's death (in 1967) and the son's (in 1970), the firm was sold.⁶⁵

Both in Melbourne and its environs, Finns were active in housing construction. Their involvement here may have been partially influenced by the role of Oscar Salonen, who became Superintendent of Municipal Works in 1927.⁶⁶ Salonen was a central figure in the Melbourne Finnish community in a number of ways, being active on behalf of the local Finnish Society.⁶⁷

There were relatively few Finnish women in Victoria: four at the 1901 Census, and seventeen by 1921. One of these, Matilda Sophia Söderlund, from Vasa, arrived in Australia in 1900, where three years later she married one Charles Burney. Maria Burney died in Richmond

⁶⁵ Letter from Mrs P. Armstrong (daughter of Mannerheimo) from Swan Hill, 11 June 1981; SI; interview with George Hilton, Loyetea (Tas.), 7 April 1981; interview with Veikko Pulkka, Melbourne, 23 March 1981; letter from the Finnish Consul, Harald Tanner, to the Ulkosuomalaistenseura [Overseas Finns' Society] in Finland, 5 March 1930, concerning Mannerheimo's visit to Finland, SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb: 2, 8 M, UM, Helsinki.

⁶⁶ Letter from Oscar Salonen in 1970 (n.d.) to Olavi Koivukangas, SI; *Suomi*, 15 Jan. 1927.

⁶⁷ Interview with Väinö Suominen, Turku, 17 May 1973.

in 1934.⁶⁸ Another early Finnish woman was Suleima Siuro, from Orivesi, who died of the plague in Melbourne in 1919.⁶⁹ By the 1930s, however, there were a number of younger Finnish women in the city. Helena Karhenmaa, together with four others, known as the 'Viipuri girls' (whose surnames were Malmberg, Tarvonen, Ryno, and Partanen) all arrived at Midsummer 1930.⁷⁰ Like the men, these female immigrants also tended sometimes to emigrate from the same home town in groups. Prior to the Second World War, the overall number of Finnish women in Australia was very low, being no more than about one in ten of the Finnish immigrants. There was, however, no shortage of jobs for domestic servants in the cities, and the length and cost of the journey would seem to have been the main explanation for Finnish women emigrants preferring America to Australia.

By around 1924, as a result of the drastic curbs imposed on immigration by the United States, the numbers of ordinary immigrants arriving in Australia began to increase. The majority of these made their way to Queensland, but a number also stayed in Melbourne, their port of disembarkation, despite the poor opportunities for work there. When Antti Välttilä (who later worked for many years for the Finnish Seamen's Mission) arrived in Melbourne in 1924, work was very difficult to obtain for anyone who had neither any command of English nor any skilled occupation; it was easier for such people to find work in the countryside. Thus the more remote vineyards, e.g. at Mildura, often had dozens of Finns working there at harvest time.⁷¹ A letter from Mildura written in 1930 tells of almost fifty Finns working there picking the grapes, especially at Red Cliff, Irymple, and Merbein. The harvest lasted about eight to ten weeks, and any work was better than nothing. The letter states that the Finns had a good reputation as hard workers.⁷²

Work in the country was provided by road building and by Government dam construction projects, e.g. at Lilydale, Silvan, and Eildon. These places were all within a few dozen kilometres of Melbourne, where the Finnish navvies would then gather at the Seamen's Mission. There were similarly up to 80–90 Finnish miners employed at times at the coalmine at Yallourn, some hundred miles to the east of Melbourne; the number at the end of 1926 was around sixty.⁷³ Unemployment was driving the Finns out of the city. Most of the Finns, however, lost their jobs in the coalmine as a result of automation, and

⁶⁸ SKA Sydney 1919–41, Fgb: 1, UM, Helsinki.

⁶⁹ List of the Finns Deceased in Australia 1915–26, Finnish Seamen's Mission, microfilm roll 4, SI.

⁷⁰ Interview with Elsa and Hannes Saarinen, Melbourne, 8 March 1970.

⁷¹ *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936.

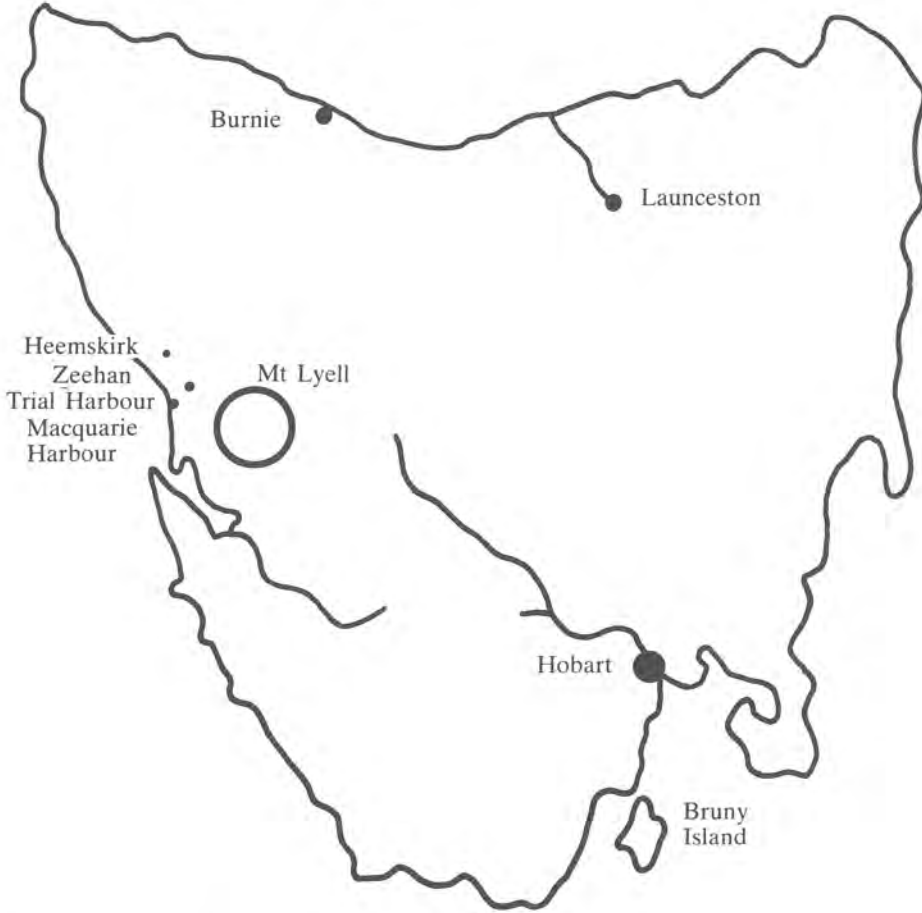
⁷² *Suomi*, 6 March 1930.

⁷³ *Suomi*, 1 Nov. 1926.

the Government dam works now offered the best opportunities for the roving unemployed Finnish labourers.

The construction of the dam at Silvan, about 50 miles from Melbourne, led to the establishment of a local Finnish farming community. Many of the Finnish labourers employed on the dam bought themselves land, and set about clearing it for agriculture during their free time. The first crop they planted was strawberries, which sold well. The emergence of the Finnish community at Silvan is thus very reminiscent of that at Gosford, near Sydney; here too, the Depression was a crucial factor behind the establishment of the first Finnish farms, in 1929. In 1970, Anna Jaakkola, herself a Silvan resident, drew up a comprehensive list of all the Finns living there. The first Finn in the locality had been B.L. Österman, who bought a small holding in 1929 in an area called Wandin East. He later married an Australian woman, and went on farming there until 1969. The densest concentration of Finnish settlement, however, grew up to the east of Lake Silvan, at Burleigh, the first Finnish settlers here being Edward Hilli and Reino Rae. Melbourne, nearby, provided a good market for strawberries and vegetables. One distinctive feature here, as compared with the Finnish communities that grew up in New South Wales and Queensland, was the absence of Finnish pioneers attracting their fellow-countrymen to join them; nor was the settlement at Silvan, consisting in all only of ten private farms, the same kind of intense Finnish community as those in the Queensland bush, for example. No communal organization grew up at Silvan, where the individual Finns were too dissimilar, and came from different backgrounds, whereas in Queensland it was precisely the shared background of a common home town in Finland which created the basis for community organization. In effect, Silvan had already by this time become a suburb of Melbourne, and by now is firmly integrated into the city; the local community must therefore be classified as a cross between rural and urban society.

In summary, it may be said that the Finnish settlement in Victoria, like that in New South Wales, was relatively early in origin, with the first Finnish settlers arriving around the middle of the 19th century. The earliest arrivals were seamen and gold prospectors, lured by the Victorian Gold Rush. No real centres of Finnish settlement grew up in Victoria, perhaps as a result of the restlessness of the early ex-seamen; nor were the prospectors the type to put down local roots. Victoria thus did not acquire the settled Finnish immigrant whose farm or home might have served as a base for other Finnish arrivals, and in the absence of any Finnish rural community, most of the Finns in Victoria remained in Melbourne itself or its immediate environs.



4. Finnish Settlement in Tasmania

The oldest Colony in Australia after New South Wales is Tasmania, where white settlement began in 1803. It was an important base for whaling and sealing ships (there were 35 whaling stations on the island in 1841), and the crews of these vessels may well have included Finns.⁷⁴ There is no information concerning the first permanent Finnish settlers on the island; most probably they will have been gold prospectors arriving from the gold field in Victoria in the 1850s, who would have been able to make the crossing over the Bass Strait from Melbourne relatively easily. Isaac Mattson, for example, originally from Turku,

⁷⁴ It is at any rate certain that these crews did include seamen from the other Nordic countries; see KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 142; also DAKIN 1963, 30—32, 43.

arrived in Australia in 1852, spending first seven years on the Ballarat gold field, and then eighteen months in New Zealand, before settling on Tasmania for the next thirty years. This would have brought him to the island around 1860. In view of the general reliability of the Naturalization Records, the information entered for Mattson on the occasion of his change of nationality in 1911 can probably be regarded as trustworthy; this states that Mattson had been on Tasmania at the time of the 1870 Census (in which there were five persons recorded as born in Russia among the 59 000 population, though it is not clear whether Finns would have been classified under 'Russia' or as 'other Europeans').⁷⁵

One of the pioneer Finnish settlers on Tasmania was August Anderson, born in Liljendal in 1833, who settled at West Devonport and worked in the shipyard there. According to the Naturalization Records, he had arrived in 1884,⁷⁶ although a letter from Anderson's daughter suggests that he may have come to Australia as much as ten years earlier.⁷⁷ He died in a Salvation Army old people's home in 1917.⁷⁸

The Tasmanian Census for 1881 recorded 17 men born in Russia on Tasmania, but not a single woman.⁷⁹ Ten years later, there were 33 men of Russian birth on the island, and 5 women;⁸⁰ Finland is explicitly classified under Russia. The 1901 Census reported 34 Russian-born men and three women on Tasmania.⁸¹ The main concentration was at Lyell, with ten men and one woman.⁸² In the statistics on length of residence in the country, the longest-residing Russian-born person recorded had been there for thirty years, i.e. since around 1870.⁸³

The earliest Finn to take out naturalization on Tasmania, however, was one Karl Karlson, from Turku, who came ashore at Launceston in October 1874 from the *Walborg*. By January 1883, when he applied for naturalization, he was living at Heemskirk, and stated his occupation as seaman and miner. His brother, Johannes Stefanus Karlson, born in 1854, arrived in Launceston in 1879, and applied for naturalization three months after his brother, stating the same occupation and address. Meanwhile, the third brother, Peter Erland Carlson (born in 1856), had reached Launceston in August 1880; his application for naturalization is dated the same day as his brother Stephen's, 23 April 1883, and includes

⁷⁵ Vic. NR 1911/19080; and Census of Tasmania 1870.

⁷⁶ Tas. NR 1909/10044. SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb: 1—9, UM. Helsinki.

⁷⁷ Letter from Marie Savolainen, Helsinki, 15 April 1920, to Nauklér, Finnish Consul, Fgb:1, UM, Helsinki.

⁷⁸ Fgb: 1, UM, Helsinki.

⁷⁹ Census of Tasmania 1881, Part IV, 73.

⁸⁰ Census of Tasmania 1891, 74.

⁸¹ Census of Tasmania 1901, 88.

⁸² Census of Tasmania 1901, 96.

⁸³ Census of Tasmania 1901, 99.

the request that his surname should be written with a C. His address is given as Reminex Mount. All three brothers are stated to have been able to write their own names.⁸⁴

The arrival of these three brothers from Turku is a nice illustration of the operation of family links in migration. Presumably they all arrived as seamen, and they made their name in Tasmanian history with a cutter they owned in the early 1880s, the *Trial*, which discovered an inlet providing a sea passage to Heemskirk. This inlet was accordingly named Trial Harbour. It was in January 1881 that Gustav Weber's and the Karlson brothers' ship found an opening in the rocks, and was cast up by the heavy seas onto the sand. Having unloaded her cargo, she was relaunched, but returned to Trial Harbour again and again, bringing food to the gold prospectors.⁸⁵ A jetty was built in 1883, and the brothers continued to supply the prospectors via Trial Harbour until at least 1887,⁸⁶ when the *Trial* was wrecked just off this small harbour.

In addition, the Karlson brothers, together with Weber, ran a hotel at Trial Harbour. Gustav Weber was from one of the Baltic countries; it is unknown whether he was of Finnish or of Baltic-German origin. His application for naturalization was dated the same year as the Karlson brothers'.

The major claim to fame for the Karlson brothers, however, was the role of Johannes Stefanus, alias Steve Karlson, in the discovery of the rich ore deposits at Mount Lyell in 1883. It is a matter of controversy in Tasmanian history whether the Karlsons found the mine alone, or in collaboration with someone else.⁸⁷ Capital for the mine was raised by selling shares in the mining company to a shopkeeper and to Steve's brothers Peter and Karl; the brothers had been making losses on their store at Trial Harbour, and were looking for a new venture. These ex-seamen proved excellent miners, mining the ore with fanatical vigour, according to one Australian historian.⁸⁸ It may have been the establishment of the mining company in 1883 which precipitated the brothers' applications for British nationality. Soon differences of opinion arose among the shareholders, however, and since the Karlson brothers

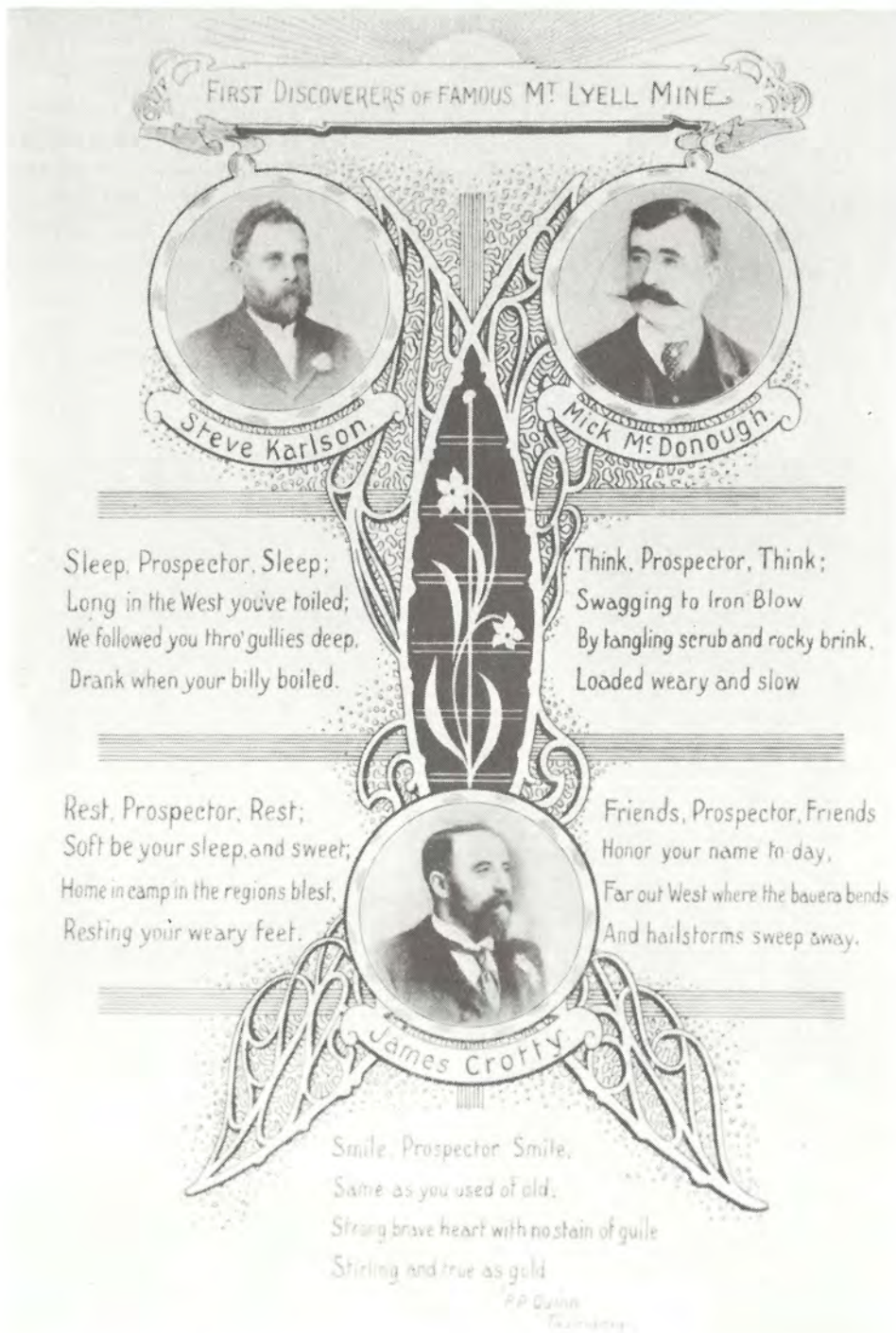
⁸⁴ During my investigations in Australia in 1969–72, I requested from the Naturalization Records data on all naturalized Finns, from which however Stephen Karlson was missing. I was able to trace his records in Hobart during my second visit, in 1981. None of the Karlson brothers are mentioned in the list of deaths at the Sydney Consulate.

⁸⁵ BLAINEY 1978, 18.

⁸⁶ TILLEY 1891, 23. This source, preserved at the Queenstown Museum in Tasmania, is invaluable on account of its early date of composition. Similar information was supplied in an interview on 6 April 1981 by the Museum Keeper, Mr E. Thomas (born in 1906), who had known the Karlson family in his youth.

⁸⁷ Interview with Mr. E. Thomas, Queenstown Museum, 6 April 1981; PINK 1975, 11.

⁸⁸ BLAINEY 1978, 33–34.



Illus. 18: Steve (Stefanus) Karlson, from Turku, who landed in Tasmania in 1879, was one of the co-discoverers of the Mt Lyell mine in 1883.

held only nine out of the twenty shares, they found themselves in a minority. They had run into debt, and when offered £250 for their six shares in 1886, Peter and Karl sold out. Two months later, Steve Karlson, who had lost his job at the mine, and was in debt to a shopkeeper, also sold his three shares, for £120. Once the Karlsons' shares had been prised away from them, gold and other minerals began to be discovered in the mine in large quantities, and the value of the shares rose to a very different level. The brothers suspected that the manager of the mine had concealed promising ore samples from them, but there was absolutely no way of proving this at the time; nine years later, however, in the course of litigation between the new owners, it emerged that the Karlsons had indeed been defrauded; the brothers' partners in the mine had put up the money to buy them out.⁸⁹

It is dubious, however, whether the brothers would have in any case been able to raise the capital needed for investments in the mine. Nevertheless, the Karlson brothers stand among the pioneers of mining on Tasmania, and were the co-discoverers (at the least) and founders of one of the richest mines in Australia. Mount Lyell emerged as one of the richest copper mines in the world, and was the largest source of copper in Australia in 1898—1906; in 1923 it emerged once again as the major copper mine in the British Commonwealth, a status it retained until 1953.⁹⁰

Information also survives on the fate of the Karlson brothers after they had sold their shares in 1886. Steve Karlson carried on prospecting for gold and copper in the canyons of Mt Lyell until his death in poverty from cancer of the tongue in 1904.⁹¹ Peter Karlson ran the Pioneer Hotel in Rosebery from 1898 to 1924. Peter seems to have been the only one of the three to marry; according to the Keeper of the Queenstown Museum, E. Thomas, he was married twice. Thomas knew nothing further of Steve and Karl beyond Steve's death in 1904; Karl he believed to have died around 1912, and Peter (the youngest of the three) in the early 1920s. Thomas had known Peter's sons, Earl and Bill, both of whom were involved in mining; his daughter Irene married and moved to Sydney. From his first marriage, Peter had another daughter, who subsequently married a man named Williams.⁹² In the Queenstown Museum there is a picture of the Pioneer Hotel, Rosebery, with a note stating that it was subsequently owned by Bill Karlson, son

⁸⁹ BLAINEY 1978, 35—41.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 134.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 237.

⁹² Interview with Mr E. Thomas, Queenstown Museum, 6 April 1981.

of Peter Karlson, brother of Steve Karlson, the founder of the Mount Lyell mine.

This story of the Karlson brothers, based though it is on incomplete evidence, is part of the history both of Finnish migration, and of the settlement and economic development of far-off Tasmania. The information given here is derived mainly from the Naturalization Records and from the interview with Mr E. Thomas (and Thomas's evidence, since he had been a classmate of Peter Carlson's two boys, may also be regarded as relatively reliable, even if he could not remember the years exactly).

The Finns in Tasmania prior to 1893 came from various parts of the Finnish seaboard, and there were probably few of them. Many of them remained permanently on the 'Apple Island', but others who arrived in the 1870s or 1880s may well have moved a few years later across to the Australian mainland or indeed back to Finland.

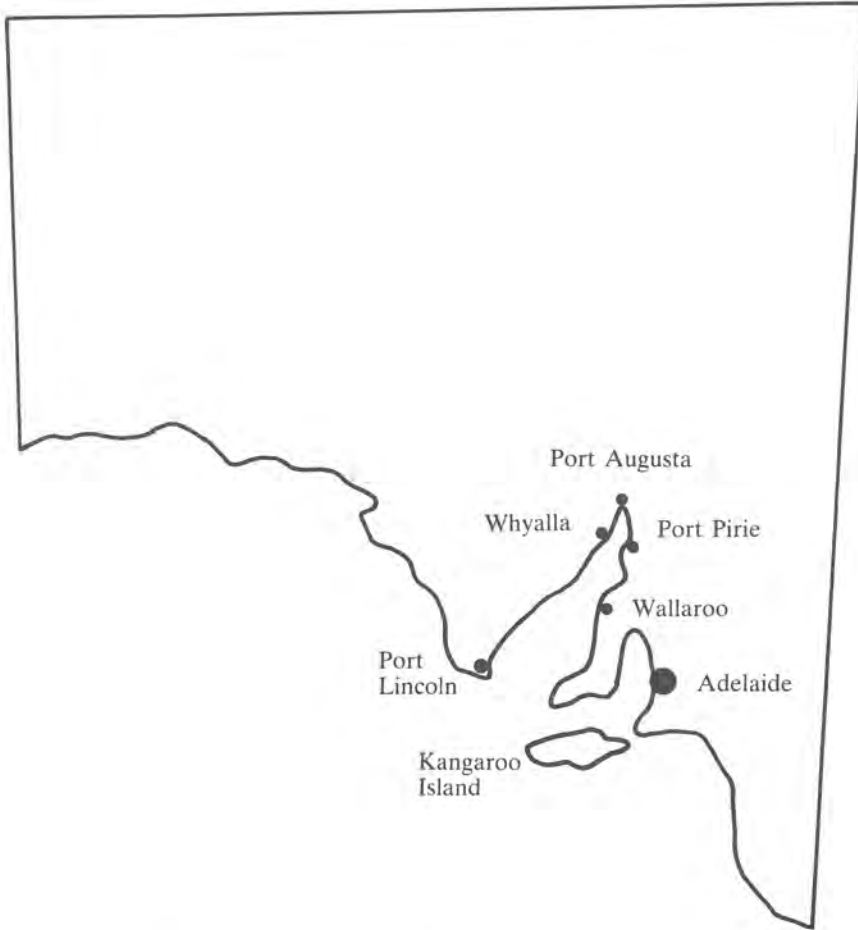
The notable feature about the Finnish settlers on Tasmania, even in the 20th century, is their scarcity. The Census of 1921 records only 23 men born in Finland, and this figure falls to 13 in 1933 and in 1947 to a mere nine. No women were recorded at all. Up to the Second World War, this small Finnish population consisted either of seamen or ex-seamen.

Table V.11: Residence of Finland-born Persons in Tasmania Recorded in the Census Returns for 1921, 1933, and 1947

Location	1921			1933			1947		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Metropolitan	—	—	—	3	—	3	1	—	1
Provincial	4	—	4	2	—	2	5	—	5
Rural	13	—	13	4	—	4	2	—	2
Migratory	6	—	6	4	—	4	1	—	1
TOTAL	23	—	23	13	—	13	9	—	9

Sources: Census 1921, 62; 1933, 748; 1947, 658.

Emigration from Finland to Australia in the period between the two World Wars did not reach Tasmania; the island did not have the same economic opportunities to offer the Finnish immigrant as did for example agriculture in Queensland. The Finnish men immigrants recorded on Tasmania in the Censuses for 1921, 1933 and 1947 had arrived there mainly before or during the First World War, or at the latest soon afterwards; and only occasionally did any Finns make their way to the island in the 1920s or 1930s, those who did do so mainly coming from Melbourne.



5. Finnish Settlement in South Australia

The first European settlers arrived in South Australia in 1836. The earliest Census was carried out in 1841, but these records do not reveal either Finnish or Scandinavian names. The population grew fast, and by the end of 1845 South Australia had 22 000 persons. In the Censuses for 1851 and 1861, lists of names are no longer included, nor do the Census statistics record the presence of any Finns at any point during the 19th century. It is not known when the first Finns arrived in South Australia, although it may be presumed that here too it was seamen who led the way. It should be noted, however, that prior to 1874 the South Australian lists of deserting seamen do not record nationality; thereafter, the first Finnish record is one John Mikkelson, stated to have

abandoned his ship in January 1874.⁹³ He is followed by large numbers of Finnish seamen deserting their ships, but none of these can actually be regarded as true immigrants until evidence is found of their having remained for at least some time in Australia; some of their names do in fact turn up later in Queensland or other States. The earliest trace of Finns in South Australia comes from the Naturalization Records, and dates back to the 1850s.

The first Finn to be naturalized in South Australia was Gustav Wilhelm Salberg, from Åbo (Turku), who had arrived in 1862; in 1866, when he acquired British nationality, he was working as a cobbler and shoe repairer in northern Adelaide.⁹⁴ An even earlier arrival, in 1858, was Stephen Hacklin, who however did not take out naturalization papers until 1894, at which time he was a farmer in Spalding.⁹⁵ The documentation does not indicate whether Hacklin had been resident in South Australia throughout this period. Altogether, the number of Finns arriving up to 1893 who were naturalized in South Australia amounted to 57 men and one woman. Even allowing for the fact that not all of these would have arrived directly in South Australia, the overall Finnish population of the Colony during this period may therefore be estimated at around 200 persons, with a maximum at any one time of perhaps a hundred. The majority of these originally came from the Finnish provinces of Turku & Pori, Vaasa, and Oulu. A considerable number of them came from the region around Raahe (Brahestad), on the western Finnish coast. Many of them arrived in the early 1870s, thus belonging to the early wave of Finnish settlement in Australia; moreover many of these settled permanently in South Australia. In the latter half of the 19th century, Adelaide, Port Augusta, and the other ports in South Australia had become important marine trading centres, e.g. for the export of Australian wool to Europe, and both the ports and their environs offered work for the Finns. Such little written source material as there is also confirms an increase in the number of Finns in South Australia during the 1870s. In 1887 there is a claim in a Swedish-language Ostrobothnian newspaper, the *Österbottniska Posten*, by one 'E.N.', who had deserted his ship in 1872,⁹⁶ to the effect that he was the first immigrant from Ostrobothnia in Australia; the Naturalization Records list an Erik Nyholm, who was aged 30 on naturalization in 1881. Nyholm is also listed in the South Australian Directory for 1886 as

⁹³ Deserters 1852—1876, AP 142, S. 8, AA, SA. These archives record only the deserter's name, the name of the ship, and the captain or ship's owner, and it has proved impossible to trace any Finns there. From 1874, the entry 'Finland' appears, indicating nationality. Vol. 1873—80, AP 142, S.8.3, AA SA.

⁹⁴ SA NR 1894/A733/VIII/246.

⁹⁵ SA NR 1894/A733/42/12.

⁹⁶ ÖP, 14 April 1887.

a coppersmith, with an address in Goodwood Park. Nyholm is listed in the Munsala Parish Records as having been born in 1850; he died in 1935, at Burwood, NSW.⁹⁷

It would seem that for seamen, the 1870s in South Australia were a promising time. By the 1880s, however, the situation had deteriorated. Newspapers report that seamen's wages had fallen by 1880 from £9 to £5 a month; wages ashore were falling, too, nor was there enough work to go round. Nonetheless, these wages were still higher than those paid in Europe, and thus continued to attract new arrivals.⁹⁸

Conditions continued to be unfavourable into the latter half of the 1880s. Erik Nyholm wrote that the economic situation was poor, but adds in conclusion that the Scandinavians were all doing all right, and that all of them — both men and women — were in work. It was largely as a result of drought that the South Australian economy was in difficulties.⁹⁹ In a letter from South Australia dated 25 July 1886, an unidentified Finnish writer describes how both humans and animals were suffering: hundreds of workers were unemployed; many had spent months hunting for work.¹⁰⁰ The following year saw a gradual improvement in the situation, however, and Nyholm writes that in the aftermath of a wet winter the future looked brighter.¹⁰¹

Erik Nyholm, who had been living in South Australia since 1872, was one of the key figures in the Finnish community in Adelaide. It may have been due to his influence that early in 1884 a party of ten Finns arrived in Adelaide. Unfortunately the newcomers' places of origin are not recorded, but their Swedish surnames suggest that they came from Ostrobothnia. They had sailed from Hamburg on the *Pracida* on 24 October 1883.¹⁰² The register of Finnish deaths in Australia records one Mary Masters, née Maja Kajsa Nyholm, who died in Sydney in 1935: born in Munsala in 1860, she is recorded as having arrived in Australia on 1 January 1884 aboard the *Pracida*.¹⁰³ She was thus clearly the same person, i.e. Erik Nyholm's sister.¹⁰⁴

Whereas the Finnish populations in New South Wales and Victoria

⁹⁷ SA NR 1881/A733/8307; ÅKERBLOM 1972, 69; Munsala Församlings Kommunionbok, Del I, 1880—1890, A:1, 14 a.

⁹⁸ *Pohjois-Suomi* for 19 June 1880. See also MY 8/1885.

⁹⁹ ÖP, 9 July 1886.

¹⁰⁰ ÖP, 25 July 1886.

¹⁰¹ ÖP, 4 Aug. 1887.

¹⁰² Hamburg Passenger Listings, Lists of Emigrants, K 1730, Hamburg City Record Office.

¹⁰³ SKA Sydney 1919—41; Fgb:5, UM, Helsinki. — Maria Nyholm had acquired British nationality through marriage to John Carlson (of Swedish origin). Following Carlson's death, she remarried, to Stephan Masters, in Belline, NSW; and later (presumably after Masters' death) lived with one Matti Kestilä. On Kestilä's death in 1931, it was mentioned in his papers that he had been living with Mary Masters (Nyholm), and that they had jointly owned a house worth approx. £400. Maria Nyholm had emigrated from Munsala at the age of 11.

¹⁰⁴ Munsala Församlings Kommunionbok, Del I, 1880—1890, A:1 14 a.

prior to 1893 were overwhelmingly male, it is striking that among the Finns in South Australia there were noticeably more women. This was a consequence of the assisted passages scheme. A letter survives from a Finnish woman in Goodwood, Adelaide, one Josefina H., dated 18 February 1885, in which she asks for the message to be passed on that it would not be worth coming to Australia:

"The pay here is a bit higher, but it works out at the same as in Finland, since servants here dress like the finest of ladies, which takes up all their pay, nor is the work so easy either."

The writer closes by complaining about the economic situation in Australia.¹⁰⁵ The author of this letter is probably Josephine Holmström, who had arrived with the party in 1884. The letter refers to a correspondent who had enquired about employment opportunities in Australia which indicates the incipient operation of chain migration. The letter was written from Goodwood, which as mentioned earlier was where the Nyholms lived.

Altogether 17 persons arrived from Finland during 1884, in two parties, including six young Finnish women classified as domestic servants, as well as Mrs Josephine Holmström¹⁰⁶ with her two daughters, and possibly also one Emma Nyholm whose name occurs in the Directory for 1899. By the mid-1880s, therefore, there may have been about ten Finnish women in South Australia. As is indicated by the case of Erik Nyholm and his sister Maria Nyholm Masters, some of them moved on later to other Colonies/States.¹⁰⁷

No definite information is available concerning the whereabouts or careers of any other early Finnish settlers in South Australia. Finnish settlement was however much too scattered to allow for the maintenance of any ethnic community. An extreme example of this may be illustrated by the case of an elderly man whom the Revd Heikki Castrén met in the 1950s; this man had been in Australia since the age of 15, i.e. since 1878, and throughout the entire period of his life in Australia had never had any contact with any other Finns.¹⁰⁸

Prior to the First World War, there also appears to have been a pool of mobile Finnish labour in South Australia. There were Finnish navvies, for instance, working on the construction of the railway at Karunda; in 1914 there were around 20 men involved, all of them ex-

¹⁰⁵ ÖP, 16 April 1885.

¹⁰⁶ Josefina Holmström, née Johanson, was born in Nystad (Uusikaupunki) in 1857, and moved to Australia with her husband Anders. She was naturalized in 1909. Munsala Kommunionbok Del 1, 1880—1890, II, A:1:4:b; C'th NR 1909/14523.

¹⁰⁷ Munsala Kommunionbok Del 1, 1880—1890, II, A:1:14:a.

¹⁰⁸ CASTRÉN 1960, 41—42; in *Suomi* 6/1957, which at that time was a mimeographed paper published twice a month, Castrén also describes how he had met a man named Mattson, then almost 90 years old, who had arrived in Australia in 1883. Both accounts probably refer to the same person, despite the difference in the dates given.



Illus. 19: An "isolated settler" in Adelaide was Waldemar Henrickson, born in 1883 at Taivassalo near Turku. He visited Australia in 1901 and in 1906 deserted his ship (as did almost all the crew) in Adelaide, married a British girl and for decades had no contacts with Finns; so at least he claimed (in 1970), having forgotten his Finnish. (Koivukangas/SI)

seamen.¹⁰⁹ The reason for the predominance of former sailors was the importance of Spencer Bay, in South Australia, as a landfall for Finnish sailing ships. Sea transport of grain expanded during the 1920s, and many seamen jumped their ships during this period, at Wallaroo, Port Pirie, Port Lincoln, or Port Victoria. As a further illustration of the frequency of desertion, it may be noted that as many as six to ten men at a time might desert from a single ship of the Erikson fleet from Åland.¹¹⁰

During the inter-War period, there were Finns living in all the ports mentioned here. The largest concentration, after Adelaide, was in Port Lincoln, where in 1936 Karhula reports fifteen Finns, most of them working as fishermen.¹¹¹ Karhula may have obtained this information from a report from the pastor at the Finnish Seamen's Mission, Hytönen, which refers to exactly identical figures and the same occupations.¹¹² The Finnish Consulate also has confirmatory information about Finnish fishermen.¹¹³ Fishing was a profitable business; earnings before the First World War could be as high as £20 a month.¹¹⁴

In Port Lincoln, the focus of the Finnish community was a boatyard run by Axel Stenroos, where many Finns found employment, and which served as a centre for the Finnish community in many ways. Stenroos came originally from the village of Finby (Särkisalo) on the southern coast of Finland. Later he moved to Åland and arrived in Port Lincoln

Table V.12: Residence of Finland-born Persons in South Australia Recorded in the Census Returns for 1921, 1933, and 1947

Location	1921			1933			1947		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Metropolitan	53	4	57	56	1	57	57	1	58
Provincial	11	—	11	16	—	16	16	—	16
Rural	48	3	51	38	—	38	21	—	21
Migratory	41	—	41	22	—	22	7	—	7
TOTAL	153	7	160	132	1	133	101	1	102

Sources: Census 1921, 59; 1933, 774; 1947, 654.

¹⁰⁹ Diary of Edward Suvanto for 27—30 April 1914, SI.

¹¹⁰ Interview with Väinö Hentula, Adelaide, 1970 (n.d.). See section "Seaman Migration", pp. 164—168.

¹¹¹ "Etelä-Australian suomalaiset [The Finns in SA]", TYYH/S/X/7/III.

¹¹² *Suomi*, 17 Feb. 1936.

¹¹³ SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb: 7, UM, Helsinki.

¹¹⁴ Interview with Joonas Kurki, Perniö, Finland, 30 Nov. 1973.

in 1927 as a seaman on board the *Olivebank*. Next year he and his mate Frank Laakso bought a boatyard called the Gulf Docking Slip, where fishing boats were built.¹¹⁵ Stenroos's other activities included a cargo business and sea rescue. His boatyard was for a long time the only one in the area which was capable of meeting the needs of the fishermen. Axel Stenroos died in February 1980, at the age of 84, and after his death a maritime museum was founded in Port Lincoln in his name.¹¹⁶

In the 1921 Census, the balance of urban over rural residence among the South Australian Finns is only slight, but by the following Censuses, they had increasingly come to settle in towns and cities. Ex-seamen tended here too to concentrate in the coastal towns, where trades connected with the sea offered congenial work, e.g. in boatyards or as fishermen. Nevertheless, it was the State capital, Adelaide, which attracted the most Finns.

The 1891 Census recorded 101 persons born in the Russian Empire, of whom 54, i.e. over half, were in maritime occupations. There were 16 of them living in Port Adelaide.¹¹⁷ By 1921, the Census returns recorded 160 Finland-born persons in South Australia, including seven women. The records for that year also report one Finland-born woman who had lived in South Australia for over 70 years; if this information is correct, she had therefore arrived in the 1840s. Her nationality is however uncertain; while she may have been Finnish, it is also possible that she was born in Finland of German parents who had then emigrated to Australia (the first Germans began to arrive in South Australia in the 1830s).¹¹⁸

By 1933, the Finnish population had fallen to 133, of whom only one was a woman. This figure fell even further during the period of the Second World War, so that by 1947, the Finland-born population in South Australia numbered only 102, still, as in the preceding Census, including only one woman.

With the notable exception of the 1880s, then, the Finnish population in South Australia was in the other periods much more male-dominated than in the other Colonies or States. In the 1880s, the proportion of women among the South Australian Finnish population was exceptionally high (possibly ten to twenty in number). A further feature of the Finnish population here was that virtually all of the men were

¹¹⁵ *Suomi* 12.11.1938; *Uusi Suomi* 7.3.1957; Holland, C.E., *A man of Tall Ships & Small Wooden Boats*, s.a. Port Lincoln.

¹¹⁶ Letter from J.L. Sanderson, Enfield, NSW, 5 March 1982, to Olavi Koivukangas, Turku, SI; letter from Marj. Vahlberg, Pt Lincoln 23.9.1983, to Olavi Koivukangas, SI; *The Lag*, Axel Stenroos Maritime Museum Inc., Vol. I No 1, July 1980, for further details of the museum, see also Holland op.cit.

¹¹⁷ Census of SA 1891, 460.

¹¹⁸ BORRIE 1954, 159; VONDRA 1981, 11; HARMSTORF & CIGLER 1985, 14.

seamen or ex-seamen. No information has come to light concerning Finnish farmers in South Australia. The Finnish community in South Australia continued to consist of seamen and fisherman at least up to the late 1950s, when a new wave of immigration reached the State; and only then did the Finnish population rise to a size capable of sustaining organized ethnic activities.



6. Finnish Settlement in Western Australia

(1) Introduction

The European settlement of Western Australia began in 1826, when a penal colony was established at Albany (withdrawn in 1831) to be followed by a free settler colony in 1829 on the banks of the Swan River, near present-day Perth. The colony was slow to develop, however, and by 1885 Western Australia still had a population of only around 36 000. The Gold Rush to the Kimberley and Murchinson gold fields, beginning in the 1880s, brought an increase in population, which by 1890 had reached 48 502, and by the time of the 1901 Census it had risen to 193 601.¹¹⁹ The depression of the 1890s, which badly affected the eastern parts of the continent, drove many to set out for the 'golden

¹¹⁹ STATHAM 1981, 181; APPELYARD 1981, 218—220, 234.

West' — a phenomenon familiar from the history of the United States in the 19th century.

There is scattered information concerning early Finnish persons in Western Australia prior to the Gold Rush of the 1890s. As has been noted above, the Finnish population in the adjacent Colony, South Australia, had risen in the 1870s and 1880s to around 200, mainly consisting of ex-seamen. Since many of these took work in Australian coastal shipping, they must have visited Fremantle and other ports in Western Australia from a fairly early date. Moreover, here as elsewhere in Australia there were seamen who deserted from their ships, taking on labouring jobs on the docks or elsewhere, or alternatively heading for sheep farms and other work inland, or even trying their luck prospecting for gold.

The pre-federation Naturalization Records for Western Australia are unfortunately very deficient, recording neither date of arrival, place of birth, nor even place of residence in the Colony. The Finnish-sounding names in these records are marked as 'Russian' (e.g. Christy Penttilä, naturalized in 1885).¹²⁰ In the period up to the transfer of responsibility for naturalization to the newly-formed Commonwealth of Australia in 1904, there are records of naturalization of nine Finns, and entries for a few other persons classified as Russian but with Finnish-sounding names. These naturalizations all occurred in the 1890s or around the turn of the century.

One of the earliest Finns to be naturalized was Matts Anders Lehrback, who deserted from a Russian ship in Melbourne in January 1884. He was described as follows: Finnish, an ordinary seaman, can speak only a few words of English, is 19 years old, clean-shaven, stocky, high-shouldered, walks with a stoop, and wears dark clothes, boots, and a Yankee hat.¹²¹ He was naturalized in Western Australia on 31 August 1898.¹²² No other information about him survives, except that his wife was one of the Rasmus family, Lovisa, whom Paavo Vennonen met in Western Australia in 1953.¹²³

Since in most cases Finns who took out naturalization had already been living in Australia for many decades, it is obvious that the majority of the Finnish immigrants mentioned above had also arrived earlier than 1893; and this certainly applies to those naturalized in 1903, for whom the year of arrival is recorded.

The Western Australian official register of deaths also confirms the arrival of some Finns in Western Australia in the 1880s and 1890s; e.g.

¹²⁰ WA NR 1871—1903, Acc. 1293.

¹²¹ List of Deserted Seamen, Series 946, Vol. 3 (2 Aug. 1881—30 July 1885), PRO Vic.

¹²² WA NR 1871—1903, Acc. 1293.

¹²³ *Kokkola*, 18 Feb. 1953.

the records for August William Stenström, who died in 1922 aged 60;¹²⁴ Johan Isidor Erickson, who died in 1914 aged 50;¹²⁵ and Albert Benjamin Fredrickson, who also died at the age of 50 in 1921.¹²⁶ These records also include the length of residence by the deceased in Australia, which for Stenström was 28 years, for Erickson 21 years, and Fredrickson 36 years. These examples thus demonstrate the presence of some Finns in Western Australia by the 1880s, and possibly earlier. The 1881 Census for Western Australia records six persons born in 'Russia', four of them in the port of Fremantle, and two in the northern regions of the Colony. (The same Census records 21 persons born in Sweden, 18 from Norway, and 11 from Denmark. The total population of the Colony at that time was still less than 30 000.) The following Census, a decade later, records 71 Russian-born persons, including fifteen women. Then began the Western Australian Gold Rush, as a result of which, by the 1901 Census, the State now contained 389 Russian-born persons, of whom 66 were women.¹²⁷ (For the three Scandinavian countries, the corresponding overall figure came to 245 persons, of whom however only two were women.) It is difficult to assess how many of those registered as 'Russian-born' may have been Finnish, since there is no information as to whether all Finns were in fact classified in this way. It may be estimated that by 1881 there were a few individual Finns in Western Australia, and by 1891 a few dozen.

The subsequent Censuses record the following figures for Finland-

Table V.13: Residence of Finland-born Persons in Western Australia Recorded in the Census Returns for 1921, 1933, and 1947

Location	1921			1933			1947		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Metropolitan	28	5	33	33	7	40	24	3	27
Provincial	12	2	14	13	—	13	13	1	14
Rural	70	5	75	64	14	78	64	14	78
Migratory	6	—	6	44	—	44	5	—	5
TOTAL	116	12	128	154	21	175	106	18	124

Sources: Census 1921, 60; 1933, 746; 1947, 656.

¹²⁴ Registration of Deaths, f 95/22, Registrar General's Office, Perth, WA; SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb: 8, UM, Helsinki.

¹²⁵ Registration of Deaths, Frem. 192/14; SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb: 8, UM, Helsinki.

¹²⁶ Registration of Deaths, Northam 177/21.

¹²⁷ Census of WA 1881 Part VII, Table I:99 and Table II:100—101. Census of WA 1891, Chapter VII, Table I: 116—119; Census of WA 1901, Part III, Table I:5—6.

born persons in Western Australia: in 1921, 128; in 1933, 175; but by 1947, only 124. In terms of place of residence the largest group of Finns (including the women) lived in rural areas — in 1921 and 1947, over half. This figure is however boosted by the mining communities. Another concentration of Finnish immigrants was to be found in Perth.

The preference of Finns for each other's company is undoubtedly one reason why new immigrants gathered in the concentrations of Finnish settlement on the eastern seaboard rather than in the unknown west. In addition, the internal distances in Western Australia were enormous, and the opportunities for employment fewer and more limited in scope than in the other States.

(2) 'Russian Jack' and the Finns on the Gold Fields

The rush to the gold fields in the northern part of Western Australia began in 1885, when the first find of gold was made at Margaret River, about 500 km from Derby and 400 km from Wyndham. Gold prospectors rolled in from all over Australia and New Zealand, and made their way on foot or horseback from Wyndham and Derby to the gold field. Some even came overland from Queensland.

Among the first arrivals on the Kimberley gold field was as tall, dark man, known simply as 'Russian Jack'. Jack arrived at Hall's Creek in 1886. He worked on the gold fields both on his own behalf, and as a paid prospector for others; his loyalty to his employers became proverbial.¹²⁸ Jack became known, however, not only for his helpfulness and friendliness, but also for his enormous strength. He was described as being seven feet tall, with the strength of Samson, and his figure has acquired legendary stature and gone down in Australian folklore. One anecdote recounts how the local policeman prevented Jack from setting off to push a load of explosives in his wheelbarrow while drunk, and chained him to a log until he had sobered up. On the police officer's return to the camp, both Jack and the log had vanished; they were eventually found in a nearby bar, but the Law had to stand Jack several rounds (much to the public's amusement) before the latter would agree to return his 'jail' to the camp.¹²⁹ Russian Jack has thus become part of popular Australian legend, and there are other anecdotes extant about him.

¹²⁸ BLAINEY 1963, 164.

¹²⁹ WILSON 1969, 21—22; BEATTY 1974, 107—108; WANNAN 1979, 457.



Illus. 20: Artist Norman Aisbett drew this sketch from a photograph in the Battye Library labelled "Russian Jack". (Battye Library)

Although Russian Jack's helpfulness and amazing feats were being reported by his contemporaries, his story undoubtedly includes a great deal of exaggeration. The most reliable source of information is probably the memoirs about the Kimberley gold fields by F.W.P. Cammilleri, an Italian prospector. In his book (published posthumously by his daughter), he twice refers to a large Russian miner pushing his sick companions in his wheelbarrow. According to Cammilleri, Jack, complete with his barrow, was one of the first arrivals at Kimberley

from Derby. Jack remained there for years, and gradually made his way around all the northern gold field. Cammilleri also met Jack later, at the Gascoyne River and at Cue. Jack also had a claim filed on the Nannine side of the Murchinson field.¹³⁰ These apparently eye-witness accounts confirm that Jack was not merely a mythical folk hero.

It is not entirely certain, however, whether Jack was indeed Russian or Finnish. In those days, when Finland belonged to the Russian Empire, and Finns were likely to have their nationality entered as 'Russian Finn', Finns easily acquired the nickname 'Russian Jack' wherever they went. According to one account the original name of this particular Russian Jack was Ivan Fredericks.¹³¹ The Australian historian, Peter J. BRIDGE avers that Ivan Jack Fredericks was born in Archangel in 1851, but this statement is unconfirmed.¹³² There is a record of John Frederick's death in the Western Australian register of deaths on 17 April 1904.¹³³ Information concerning Russian Jack has also been sought in the Soviet Union, so far without result. For the present, I am content to accept the view put forward by E. GIBNEY, a Western Australian historian with whom I became acquainted while studying at the ANU in 1969—72, who observed: "He was a Finn — no doubt."

Russian Jack has already a statue at Halls Creek, and Perth history enthusiasts are raising money to erect a headstone on the grave of Russian Jack (Ivan Fredericks?) whose name became a byword for Australian mateship.¹³⁴

Finns tended to be known by nicknames, presumably due to the difficulty of Finnish names for English-speakers. LYNG, who studied the history of the Scandinavians in Australia, mentions one Finn who made out well on the Western Australian gold fields, and who was simply known as 'Otto'. This man is said to have made £4000 prospecting for gold, to have been involved in the New Guinea Gold Rush in 1896, to have then lost most of his easily-won wealth and to have made his way back to the 'golden West'.¹³⁵ It is possible that this person is the same as

¹³⁰ CAMMILLERI 1963, 19—23, 31—32.

¹³¹ *Australian Post* for 16 June 1983; THOMAS 1982, 123. Letter from Henry M. D'Silva, District Registrar's Office, Perth, to Olavi Koivukangas, 6 July 1983, SI. 'Russian Jack' has also been identified with one Philip Krakouer, but this has not been confirmed. Letter from Mrs P.C. Krakouer, Tennant Creek, daughter-in-law to Philip Krakouer, to Olavi Koivukangas, 18 Aug. 1983, SI.

¹³² Letters from Peter Bridge, Victoria Park, to Olavi Koivukangas, 30 Dec. 1984 and 28 Feb. 1985.

¹³³ Death Certificate of the Registrar General's Office No. 983/04 Perth; According to BRIDGE, Russian Jack was John (Ivan) Fredericks or more correctly John Frederick Kirkoss who died in Fremantle on 17 April 1904 aged 40 and was born in Archangel, Russia, and had been in WA 18 years. Peter J. Bridge to Olavi Koivukangas 14 Feb 1986, SI.

¹³⁴ Robert Sharman (State Librarian), Perth 9 June 1986 to Olavi Koivukangas; *The West Australian*, June 9, 1986.

¹³⁵ LYNG 1901, 85.

Otto Gustafson, who later lived at Nambour, Queensland.¹³⁶

The biggest gold rush in Western Australian history began in 1893, when an Irishman named Patrick Hannan rode from Coolgardie with his pockets bulging with gold, which he had discovered 26 miles north-east of the town. Hannan had stumbled on the Golden Mile, the richest deposit of gold in the world, around which the towns of Kalgoorlie and Boulder were to spring up. There was a rush of people westwards from the eastern seaboard, which was currently in the grip of a bad depression. By the 1890s, there were probably several dozen Finns in Western Australia, including many ex-seamen now trying their luck on the gold fields.

(3) Finnish Settlers in Western Australia

There were, in addition, some Finnish immigrants who settled down in Western Australia to farm. The best-known of these was Joseph Johnson, who had come to the Western Australian gold fields from New South Wales in 1893. Karhula's notes from 1934 record that Josef Johnson (originally surnamed Herronen) was born in Kälviä in 1861. He emigrated to the United States in 1876, and later moved to Canada to work on the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway.¹³⁷ Family tradition recounts that while in the USA Johnson, alias Herronen, had taken part in the Indian War against Sitting Bull.¹³⁸

The date of Johnson's arrival in Australia is uncertain, since Johnson himself stated that he had come around 1890, but the Naturalization Records show his date of arrival as 1886.¹³⁹ The Naturalization Records give his occupation as 'quarryman', and in 1892, when he was naturalized, he was still living in New South Wales. He was employed for a time in a mine at Bowral, and also ran a hotel in Sydney for several years, where he married an Irish woman, Sarah Mooney; they had three children, two daughters (Christina, later Mrs Brenner, and Kathleen, later Mrs Kanny), and a son (Matt).¹⁴⁰

In the early 1890s, Australia was hit by a drought, which triggered off a depression. Many lost their money, Johnson among them, nor were

¹³⁶ Otto Gustafson died at Yangaburra, northern Queensland, in 1923, aged 63. SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb:3, UM, Helsinki. See also NIITEMAA 1971, 259—260.

¹³⁷ Länsi-Australian suomalaiset ['The Finns of WA'], TYYH/S/X/7/III.

¹³⁸ Interview with Joseph Johnson's granddaughter, Mrs K.J. Faulkner, in Perth, 29 April 1981.

¹³⁹ NSW NR 1892/11/254.

¹⁴⁰ Länsi-Australian suomalaiset ['The Finns of WA'], TYYH/S/X/7/III. Kathleen Kanny's husband was of German nationality, and is stated by Viljo Kippo to have originally been called Henderson. Kanny prospered, and on his death left to his wife and five children a big fortune. Letter from Viljo Kippo, Perth, to Olavi Koivukangas, 20 April 1973. SI.

jobs easy to come by in the cities. When the news spread of the gold strikes in Western Australia, Johnson joined the rush. He travelled by ship to Fremantle, and by train to Northam; the final three hundred miles he covered in a horse-drawn cart, arriving in Southern Cross in 1893.

Johnson failed to find gold, however, and went to work in the Frazer Mine for seven years, until he almost lost his life in an explosion.¹⁴¹ Following his recovery, he was no longer willing to go down the pits, and so, towards the end of 1899, boarded the southbound train from Perth. In those days the line only ran as far as Bridgetown. Thirty miles further south, in the depths of virgin forest, Johnson pitched his tent — the first farmer to settle in the area. Apart from himself, the only people living in the entire region were a few squatters grazing cattle.¹⁴²

On the land he cleared, he planted a 45-acre apple orchard, and built his own sawmill in order to manufacture the apple boxes.¹⁴³ Clayton Blechynden, who knew the Johnsons when he was a little boy, reports that at that time the farm covered approximately 700 acres. At first, Johnson worked on road construction during the week, and cleared the land for his farm at weekends.¹⁴⁴ He cleared the land by means of a new method, for which he had got the inspiration while working in the mines and using explosives: he felled the trees by blowing them up, thus also making them easier to burn. He later acquired the reputation of being the man who brought gelignite to Western Australia, and his method was adopted by many other farmer pioneers in clearing their land.

Johnson was an indefatigable worker, and soon the orchard began to bear fruit. He invested his takings in extending his land. Major changes and developments began to take place in his surroundings, too, for the Government built large-scale sawmills in the forest, and new settlers began to move in. The railway was extended south from Bridgetown, and a new town, Manjimup, grew up only five miles away from Johnson's farm, which greatly helped in getting the apples to the markets. By the 1920s, this orchard had grown into one of the most significant market gardens in Western Australia, and visitors came to study the methods used there. Eventually, the 'Fern Gully' orchards contained 5000 trees, spread over more than 20 hectares. The family employed staff on the orchards, and modern mechanical equipment was installed.¹⁴⁵

Following his marriage, Johnson was received into the Roman Catholic Church, and was one of the founder members of the RC parish

¹⁴¹ *Suomi*, 1 June 1927; HBL 8 Aug. 1926.

¹⁴² KOIVUKANGAS 1976, 450—451.

¹⁴³ "Länsi-Australian suomalaiset ['The Finns of WA']", TYYH/S/X/7/III.

¹⁴⁴ Interview with Clayton Blechynden, Nyamup, 24 April 1981.

¹⁴⁵ *Suomi*, 1 June 1927 and 15 June 1927.

Illus. 21: The most famous Finn in Western Australia was Joseph Herronen (1863–1935), originally from Kälviä. He arrived in Australia from America, and worked first on the gold fields and later as an orchard farmer at Manjimup, where he was known as "Apple King" Johnson. Here he is pictured with his Irish wife, Sarah. (Rauha Möttus/SI)



in Manjimup. In 1932, he sold his farm to his son-in-law, and moved to Balbarrup, in Manjimup. Karhula gives the date of Johnson's death as 8 March 1935, but on the statue on his grave and in the Consular list of Finnish deaths in Australia, the date is given as 8 February.¹⁴⁶

Johnson died a wealthy man, for his estate amounted to £5000. The information on his death certificate indicates that he had been in New South Wales for five years before moving to Western Australia.¹⁴⁷

Joseph Johnson's influence is strikingly visible in the area, for his example led to apple cultivation becoming the mainstay of the local economy; he was the first to make apple production the basis of his livelihood. There were other Finnish farmers who settled near Johnson. Andrew Emil Anderson (Pekkala) was born in Oulu in 1886, arrived in

¹⁴⁶ *Suomi*, 20 March 1935; KOIVUKANGAS 1976, 446–457; jubilee book celebrating the 25th Anniversary of St Joseph's Parish Church, Manjimup, donated to Olavi Koivukangas by the Revd Kevin Johnson, SI; "Länsi-Australian suomalaiset ['The Finns of WA']", TYYH/S/X/7/III; SKA Sydney 1919–41, Fga: 1, 8 I–J, and Fbg:4, UM, Helsinki. See also *Keskipohjanmaa* for 12 June 1970. An important source is two articles in *Suomi*, for 1 and 15 June 1926, signed 'Ahasverus', which are based on meetings with Johnson. The author of these was Henry (Heikki) Nore, who mentions in a letter to the Revd Otto Kaksonen, Finnish Mission to Seamen's Archives, Brisbane, dated at Jardee 31 July 1926, that he used the nom de plume 'Ahasverus'. Additional information was also obtained in 1981 from Johnson's descendants in Manjimup.

¹⁴⁷ Information from the gravestone in Manjimup cemetery, and Registration of Deaths, B'wood 9/35, Registrar General's Office, Perth, WA; SKA Sydney 1919–41, Fbg:4, UM, Helsinki.

Australia in 1908 and settled at East Broomehill near Gnowangerup. The next generation Niilo and Yrjö (George) in due course took care of the large farm.¹⁴⁸ William Kosonen from Sääminki arrived in Manjimup in the early 1920s and settled close to the Johnsons. The Kosonen family included four daughters and four sons. They had an apple plantation of seven acres, one acre of other trees, and twelve cows.¹⁴⁹

There were however more Finns who came to work in the mines than as farm labourers or as independent farmers. When the economic opportunities on the sugar plantations in Queensland began to deteriorate, in the later 1920s, some of the Finns there bought land in Tully or elsewhere, and others went to work in the copper mines at Mt Isa, while some moved back to Finland. One alternative to Mt Isa, however, was to move to Western Australia, and several of the names which appear in the lists of Finns on the sugar plantations in the 1920s turn up again in the 1930s in Western Australia.

The major mining employers in Western Australia were the mines at Kalgoorlie and Norseman, but Finns were also employed in the gold mines at Reedy.¹⁵⁰ In 1939—40, there were around forty Finns employed at Norseman, though these numbers rapidly fell during the War years. Following the outbreak of hostilities, it became difficult for aliens to obtain employment, for British workers were readily available.¹⁵¹ By August 1941, the number of Finns in Reedy (population 4000) had fallen to eight. One Finn had been killed, and three injured, in accidents.¹⁵²

The information received by the Finnish Consulate from Western Australia indicates that in 1939 there were 39 Finns in Norseman, three on the Leonora area, and one in the gold mine at Lancefield. There were four at the Triton Gold mine at Minesand on the Murchison gold field, and two at Big Bell.¹⁵³ In 1940, there were still at least ten Finns in Norseman, since there were ten who contributed to sending money to Finland during the War.¹⁵⁴

For newly-arrived Finnish immigrants in Western Australia, mining represented the first work they were able to obtain, and which was then used as a jumping-off point for other work, e.g. in fishing. A small

¹⁴⁸ C'th NR 1912/4720; Interview of Rauha Fox (Kosonen) Albany 23.4.1981; Ivy Helena Rixon (Aflecht), "Martta Helena Kalliokoski + Aflecht 13/7/1896—15/7/1971". Manuscript, May 1986, SI.

¹⁴⁹ C'th NR 1930/cc1104; also interview with Rauha Fox, 24 April 1981. Letter from William Kosonen, Manjimup, to Karhula, 12 March 1931, TYYH/S/X/7/III; Registration of Deaths, B'wood 9/35, Registrar General's Office, Perth, WA.

¹⁵⁰ *Suomi*, 1 Jan. 1936.

¹⁵¹ *Suomi*, 8/1952, *Suomi*, 4 Dec. 1939.

¹⁵² *Suomi*, 30 Aug. 1941.

¹⁵³ Letter from J.L. Paton Finnish Vice-Consul, Perth, to K.J. Kaasalainen, Department of Foreign Affairs, Canberra, 6/D No 2. The letter concerns accidents involving Finns in the mines.

¹⁵⁴ SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fi:3, 35, No 1, UM, Helsinki.

Finnish fishermen's community had grown up in Geraldton by the 1920s.¹⁵⁵ The Finns, many of whom were ex-seamen, felt the call of the sea. Runar Carlberg, from Åland, established a boatyard building fishing boats. Carlberg also fished himself, for prawns, off the island of Abrolhos, with his boat the *Suomi*. He was one of the first Finnish fishermen. Over the years, he provided employment for other Finns, many of whom had come from the mines at Mt Isa in Queensland. Once they had learnt the trade, they often subsequently got boats of their own and started fishing on their own account, and in this way a permanent Finnish community in Geraldton began to grow up.¹⁵⁶

Another Finn in Western Australia was Antti Ilmari Könönen, known as 'Kangaroo Frank'. His nickname alludes to his occupation, an unusual one for a Finn (no other Finn is known to have engaged in it professionally); he was a professional kangaroo hunter, having previously worked for a time in a sawmill and also as a whaler. Frank Könönen came back to Finland, but then returned to Australia, where he died in 1966.¹⁵⁷

Another unusual occupation for a Finn in Australia was practised in Western Australia by Berndt Lindell, born in Laitila in 1863. Having been trained in Finland as a clocksmith, he emigrated first to Stockholm, and then in 1882 to Australia, where he set up a clocksmith's shop in Melbourne. Some time later, he moved to Western Australia, and bought a clocksmith's and goldsmith's shop.¹⁵⁸ Lindell seems to have done well in Australia, for on his return to Finland twenty years later, he bought Steninge Manor in Karuna. He later finnicized his surname to Hiekka.

Why did Finnish settlement in Western Australia remain on such a small scale, despite its potential attraction in many ways for Finnish immigrants, e.g. the easy availability of land? The impact of depressions on the economy in eastern Australia was one factor affecting movement westward, especially, for instance, in the 1890s. In 1920, Nauklér, the Finnish Consul, estimated the Finnish population of Western Australia at around 200.¹⁵⁹ The paucity of Finnish settlement in Western Australia also caught the attention of Aino Malmberg, a writer who visited Australia in 1928, but who was unable to suggest any other explanation

¹⁵⁵ SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb:3, 30, 19 G, UM, Helsinki. Another Finn mentioned in the lists is a fisherman called Arthur Granlund, from Turku, born in 1887, who was drowned at Gingin in 1922.

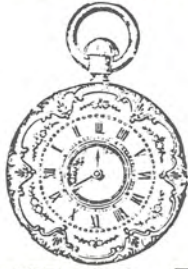
¹⁵⁶ Letter from Runar Carlberg, Safety Bay, to Olavi Koivukangas, 15 June 1981, SI.

¹⁵⁷ Letter from Mrs Stina Isotalo, daughter of Frank Könönen, Uaroo Station via Carnarvon, to Olavi Koivukangas, 29 April 1981, SI; Registration of Deaths, E. Murchinson 15/1930, Registrar General's Office, Perth, WA; Press Cuttings, SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb:7, UM, Helsinki.

¹⁵⁸ NIEMI 1951, 205.

¹⁵⁹ Nauklér 1926, 188.

B. V. LINDELL,
 Watchmaker
AND
 Manufacturing
 . . . Jeweller.



Importer. . .
 . . . Optician.
 Gold Buyer.

HANNAN STREET, KALGOORLIE.

Illus. 22: B.W. Lindell was one of the earliest Finnish businessmen in Australia; this advertisement for his jeweller's shop in Kalgoorlie is from Western Australian Post Office Directory 1900 (p. 149).

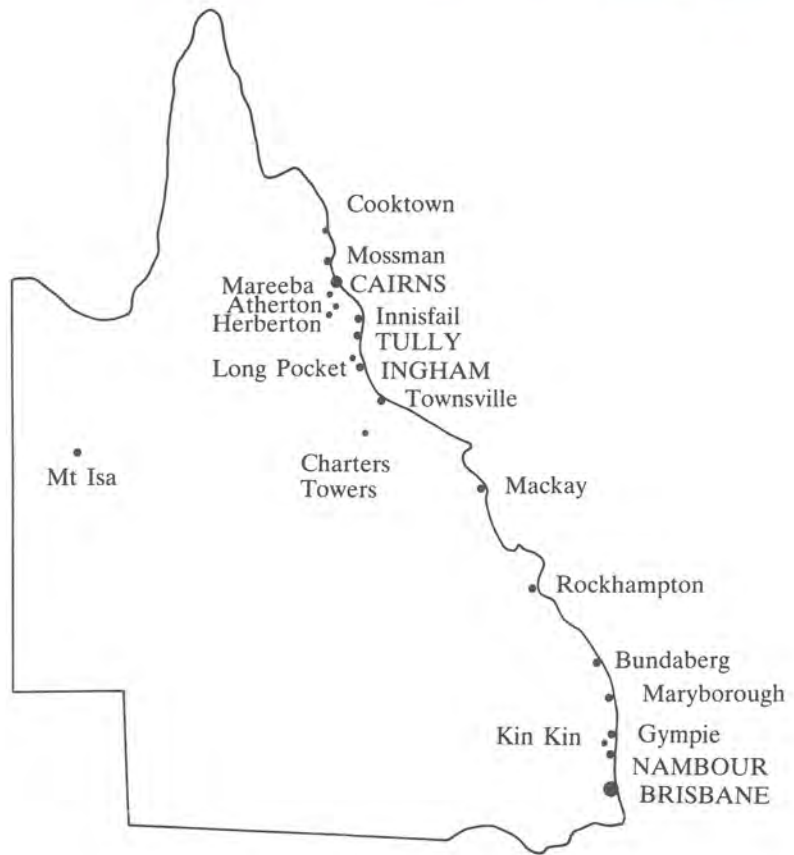


Illus. 23: B.V. Lindell (later Hiekka), seen with some employees in front of his shop in Kalgoorlie. Hiekka is on the extreme right; the bearded man is the German foreman, Schwarz; centre, three goldsmiths and on the left, the sales assistant. (Risto Hiekka)

than the absence of any significant Finnish leader or pioneer in the west. With Karhula in Queensland, the Finnish immigrants simply passed Western Australia by.¹⁶⁰

Other, more significant reasons for the low Finnish numbers in Western Australia are probably the harshness of the surroundings and the hot climate, especially in the mines inland. Mining often offered a first place of work for Finns arriving in the west from the eastern States. As the employment climate in Queensland worsened, and the overall depression deepened, many Finns left the mines of Mt Isa for Western Australia. The hot climate, however, drove many of these into fishing on the coast, where it was cooler, thus giving rise to the Finnish fishing community at Geraldton. A few Finnish immigrants went into farming, with success. Owing to the scattered nature of Finnish settlement, no Finnish ethnic organized activities were practicable in the period before the Second World War; even the chaplain from the Seamen's Mission did not reach these remote areas before WW II. Social contact took place within the family, and the footloose young men found their entertainment where they could.

¹⁶⁰ Malmberg 1929, 156.



7. Finnish Settlement in Queensland

(1) Introduction

The beginnings of white settlement in what was to become Queensland were on the Brisbane River, in 1823, when an Englishman, John Oxley, dropped anchor in Moreton Bay at the mouth of the Pumicestone River. Oxley was not the first white man to have visited this site, in fact, since Captain J. Bingle had visited it a few years earlier. Oxley's task was to search for a site for a new penal colony, and this he had now found. Such were the beginnings of the new settlement on the Brisbane River, which gradually expanded and developed, until in 1859 it was detached from New South Wales to form the separate Colony of Queensland,

comprising an area of 710 040 square miles.¹⁶¹ The population at this point amounted to around 25 000.¹⁶² The economy was based on grazing, arable agriculture, and in time, following the discovery of gold, on mining.¹⁶³ The new Colony began to attract settlers from the other Australian Colonies further south, and also arriving straight from Europe.

The first Finns in Queensland were probably seamen, on coastal shipping sailing out of Sydney or Newcastle. There is no information available as to the date when the first of these may have stopped in Brisbane or one of the other ports. The Naturalization Records, which in general are such an invaluable source of information, are particularly incomplete for Queensland prior to 1904, when the responsibility for citizenship was transferred to the new federal Government. The Queensland Records fail to state, for example, information on immigrants' date of arrival, and often omit place of residence and other personal data.

Towards the end of the 1920s, one of the later Finnish arrivals, Nestori Karhula, began to make notes about the history of the earliest Finnish immigrants. Another important source of information is *Suomi*, the Finnish newspaper in Australia. One of the earliest Finnish women to arrive in Brisbane, or indeed in Queensland, was Emma Seppänen, in 1888,¹⁶⁴ who knew many of the first generation of Queensland Finns. Karhula was fortunate enough to be able to record Mrs Seppänen's reminiscences just before her death in 1928, thus providing an oral tradition going back to the 1880s, the reliability of which can in many cases be checked against the Naturalization Records.

Altogether the Records include 87 Finnish men who took out naturalization in Queensland prior to 1904. Naturalization of Danes, Swedes, and Norwegians are recorded from the early 1860s onwards; but the first Finnish immigrant to take out naturalization papers in Queensland was one Frederick Peterson, in 1871, at which time he was a boatman for the Pilot Service in Maryborough.¹⁶⁵ Peterson (then aged 31) had evidently been living in Queensland for some time. The three cases of Finns applying for naturalization during the 1870s are a further indication of a Finnish presence by that time, possibly dating back earlier. This is as far as the Naturalization Records go. The Records for the post-1904 period even include a number of Finns who had arrived in

¹⁶¹ CILENTO 1959, 56, 163.

¹⁶² TOMKYS 1981, 1.

¹⁶³ CILENTO 1959; see Chapters XVIII, XIX, and XXI.

¹⁶⁴ In addition to 79 men, the Census of Queensland for 1886 records one woman born in Finland, who must therefore have arrived earlier than Emma Seppänen. The nationality of this woman is not stated, and could therefore be other than Finnish, although this is unlikely.

¹⁶⁵ Qld NR 1871/1075.

Australia in the 1860s.

Since in general during the 19th century about one Finnish immigrant in four changed nationality, the overall number of Finns in Queensland in the last century may be estimated at about two hundred. When the extreme mobility of this population is taken into account, however, and especially that of the ex-seamen, then it appears probable that the Finnish population at any given time would have been somewhat smaller, possibly around one hundred. This impression is also supported by the Census information. The 1871 Census of Queensland recorded 24 persons born in Russia, of whom three were women.¹⁶⁶ The population of the entire Colony at that time was around 120 000. By the 1881 Census, Queensland had 59 persons born in Russia, of whom again three were women. In this Census, persons born in Poland were listed separately, 87 in all; it therefore seems likely that a relatively large proportion of the Russian-born were in fact Finnish. Exceptionally, the Census for 1886 listed the Finns in a separate category; they amounted to 79 men and one woman, of whom 18 were living in Brisbane. One person was listed as having been born in Lapland, and one on Åland. The Russian-born proper amounted to 67 men and 12 women, i.e. approximately the same numbers as for the Finns (79 and 1).¹⁶⁷ Five years later, however, the Finns are no longer listed separately, and presumably have been conflated with the Russian category again, which now amounted to 207 men and 28 women.¹⁶⁸ In Finnish emigration to Australia, a peak occurred during the 1880s, and by the end of the decade the number of Finns in Queensland can probably be estimated as at least one hundred. Ten years later, in 1901, the Finns were once again listed separately, and their numbers had by now reached 197, consisting of 152 men and 45 women. The major Finnish concentrations were at Caboolture, i.e. the Nambour district, with 45 persons; Brisbane, with 32; and Townsville, with 22.¹⁶⁹ The expansion recorded here included the supporters of Matti Kurikka, who had arrived in 1899—1900, together with all the other new immigrants who were in the country on 31 March 1901 (the date of the Census). It may be noted that the number of Russian-born persons listed in the 1901 Census came to only 147 (108 men and 39 women).¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁶ In my earlier study, I estimated the Finns as comprising about half of the 'Russians', and thus obtained for 1871 the number of eleven Finns, and for 1881, thirty; KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 113.

¹⁶⁷ Census of Qld 1886, Table CLVI, 1308; Table CLV and CLVI, 1307—1308.

¹⁶⁸ Census of Qld 1891, Table CLXVII, 1328—1329.

¹⁶⁹ Census of Qld 1901, 1068.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

(2) Pioneer Settlers in Queensland from the 1860s

The earliest Finns to arrive in Queensland were for the most part ex-seamen, who either turned permanently to farming, became ordinary labourers, or continued in seafaring. One of the first Finns was Charles Robert Simes, from Turku, who arrived in Brisbane in 1863 from Jakobstad (Pietarsaari). Upon naturalization, in 1917, he was recorded as having lived in eight different localities, but had spent the last twenty years in Herberton, where he worked as a carpenter.¹⁷¹ The evidence of the Naturalization Records suggests that Finns were to be found all the way up the Queensland coast, even as far as Cooktown; there were Finns in the coastal town of Maryborough, to the north of Gympie, for instance, at a very early date, although the first permanent Finnish settlement in Maryborough did not develop until the 1920s, when Sami Haapakoski and his family arrived on Allenbie farm.¹⁷²

Ex-seamen who moved ashore and settled down as farmers included, for example, Erik Johnson, at Yanagi,¹⁷³ and Rudolf Veltheim, at Beaudesert.¹⁷⁴ There had also been Finns working on the sugar plantations in Queensland well before Nestori Karhula arrived in the 1920s, e.g. a group originating from Uusikaupunki, who settled at Mossman.¹⁷⁵ One Henry Henrikson, from Åbo (Turku), was living at Bundaberg from an early date, where he named his farm 'Åbo Plantation'. By the time Joonas Kurki arrived in Bundaberg, in 1917, however, Henrikson had already died.¹⁷⁶ The general picture thus obtained is also confirmed by Emma Seppänen's recollections of the early Finnish settlers, to the effect that they came as seamen, but that in the course of time some of them became captains, some farmers, and others carpenters, building labourers, etc.¹⁷⁷

(3) Brisbane: the Main Road into Queensland

The city of Brisbane dates from 1823, when an expedition sent by the Governor of New South Wales, (Sir) Thomas Brisbane, arrived at the mouth of the Brisbane River. In the course of time, it developed into a thriving port, with oceanic shipping arriving from all over the world.

¹⁷¹ Qld NR 1917/3195.

¹⁷² *Suomi*, 2 July 1929 and 28 Nov. 1930.

¹⁷³ *The Brisbane Courier*, 15 June 1931; *The Bundaberg News*, 6 June 1931; SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb: 4, UM, Helsinki.

¹⁷⁴ Letter from Teuvo Veltheim to Olavi Koivukangas, 26 June 1973, SI.

¹⁷⁵ Interview with Taavetti Luoto, Lieto, 21 Aug. 1973.

¹⁷⁶ Interview with Joonas Kurki, Perniö, 30 Nov. 1973.

¹⁷⁷ Recollections of Emma Seppänen. TYYH/S/X/7/IV.

Brisbane was made the capital of the newly-separated Colony of Queensland in 1859, and by a hundred years later, it had become Australia's third largest city.¹⁷⁸

A high proportion of the pioneer Finnish immigrants in Queensland settled in Brisbane or its immediate surroundings, the first Finnish ex-seamen possibly having arrived soon after mid-century.

The early Finnish sailors of Brisbane were employed on coastal shipping, but also on longer trips to collect Pacific Islanders^o to work on the sugar plantations, even though this was seen by the Finns as akin to the slave trade.¹⁷⁹ The use of coloured labourers, *Kanakas*, on the Queensland sugar plantations was part of one of the greatest waves of population movement in the Pacific, with the recruitment to Queensland in the period from 1863 to 1906 of almost 64 000 Pacific Islanders.¹⁸⁰

According to Emma Seppänen, one of the earliest Finnish settlers in Brisbane was a man called Helmoed, from Raahe (Brahestad), who kept a hotel on Elizabeth Street. There is no mention of this person in the Naturalization Records. Mrs Seppänen thought that Helmoed had probably arrived in Australia round 1860; he had married an Englishwoman, and they had three sons and a daughter.¹⁸¹ Another Finnish immigrant from Raahe, who had arrived in Australia in 1879, and went in Australia under the name of Matti Partin, told Karhula that he had met Helmoed in 1884, running a hotel on the corner of Elizabeth and Albert Streets in Brisbane; he had died in 1885, at the age of 61; his wife had been Irish, and Helmoed had eventually been received into the Roman Catholic Church. Before coming to Queensland, Helmoed had worked on a wheat farm in Victoria. Karhula also has a note, with no source mentioned, to the effect that Helmoed had died in Brisbane in 1888, aged 62.¹⁸² Since Mrs Seppänen had no more detailed information about Helmoed, it is probable that he had died prior to her own arrival in 1888. Helmoed may have been on the gold fields in Victoria before moving to Queensland.

The earliest Finnish arrivals in Brisbane had been seamen, but now other occupations began to be represented. In 1899, there were some women arrivals (Mimmi Lempinen from Helsinki; Katri Uotila from Liminka; Meri Niiranen and Sofia Puuperä from Oulu). These Finnish girls started out as domestic servants in Brisbane, but most of them later moved to America and married there.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁸ CILENTO 1959, 339—340.

¹⁷⁹ Emma Seppänen's reminiscences, TYYH/S/X/7/IV; *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936.

¹⁸⁰ GRAVES 1984, 112.

¹⁸¹ Emma Seppänen's reminiscences, TYYH/S/X/7/IV; *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936.

¹⁸² "Brisbanen suomalaiset ['The Finns of Brisbane']", TYYH/S/X/7/IV.

¹⁸³ Emma Seppänen's reminiscences, TYYH/S/X/7/IV.



Illus. 24: Mrs Seppänen arrived in Brisbane in 1888. She was a great help to the early Finns, as she spoke fairly good English. Here Mrs Seppänen, then a widow, is pictured with her children in front of their "Oulu House" in Brisbane about the turn of the century. (Hilma Weston/SI)

Emma Seppänen, née Kärnä, who was given the nickname 'Mother Finland' ('Suomi-äiti'), was one of the most important Finnish immigrants in Brisbane. She was born as the daughter of a shopkeeper in Oulu in 1856, and in 1888, following the death of her parents, she set out for Australia, still a young girl, to join her fiancé, Robert Seppänen, who had moved there some years earlier. Robert Seppänen sent the tickets for the journey both for Emma Kärnä and for his sister, Hanna Seppänen. Like other immigrant women, Emma started out in Brisbane as a domestic servant, but within a year of her arrival she had married Robert Seppänen and given up her job. Her husband worked on board ship, in a wool mill, and, eventually, as the captain of a river boat. He died in 1895, at the age of only 37, leaving his wife and three small children. After her husband's death, Emma rented a plot of land at Coorparoo, where she raised cattle and chickens. This holding was given up after her eldest son had died in an accident, and Emma then bought a house in the town.

Emma Seppänen was clever with her hands, and her skills were in demand during the First World War, when she taught spinning and knitting to Australians to provide socks for soldiers on the Front. In 1919 Emma won the Queensland championship in spinning. Emma Seppänen became an important pillar of support for Finnish immigrants, for many of whom she provided the first assistance after their arrival. She ran a boarding house, 'Oulu House' ('Oulu-koti'), which supplied a roof over their heads for many unmarried Finnish men. Deserting seamen were also able to turn to Emma for asylum and assistance.

Emma Seppänen also invited other members of her family to join her in Australia. Her own niece, together with Robert's two sisters and niece, all arrived in Australia by the end of the century.¹⁸⁴ Following the outbreak of the First World War, no more Finnish immigrants arrived in Brisbane for the duration of the hostilities. New arrivals did not begin to appear in Brisbane until 1921.

Another well-known Finn in Brisbane, also from Oulu, was Kalle Karppinen, who arrived there in 1909. Karppinen invented an electrical device used for medical treatment, and was able to cure many patients. The fame of the 'Electric Doctor' spread, and in the end Karppinen had so many patients that he had to give up his job on the railways and concentrate on treating the sick. Karppinen was very concerned about the well-being of Finnish immigrants, and contemplated plans to buy a large farm, for example, where Finns could learn about Australian methods of agriculture and receive tuition in English — in effect, the

¹⁸⁴ "Brisbanen suomalaiset ['The Finns of Brisbane']", TYYH/S/X/7/IV; see also Karhula, "Australian suomalaisten historiaa [History of the Finns in Australia]", 22 May 1928. — Emma Seppänen died a few months after the interview.

same idea which Karhula subsequently put into effect on his Suomi Farm at Cairns, except perhaps for the teaching of English. Karppinen lived on until 1963.¹⁸⁵

(4) The Establishment of the Finnish Colony at Nambour

Nambour, the centre of Maroochy shire, is located some 75 miles north of Brisbane. The economy of the region is based above all on dairy farming and the cultivation of sugar and pineapple.¹⁸⁶

The first Finns to settle in the Nambour area, however, were ex-seamen, most of them probably employed as casual labourers. One of the earliest Finns in the area was Antti Backman, from Oulu, who made his living by working on the potato harvest. Karhula states that Backman had arrived in 1875.¹⁸⁷ The first Finn known to have acquired land in Nambour, and started cultivating sugar cane, was Otto Gustafson, born in Ekenäs (Tammisaari) in 1857, who had arrived in Australia in 1889 and had started out as a gold prospector in Western Australia. According to the Naturalization Records, Gustafson stated in 1905 that he had then been living in Nambour for seven years,¹⁸⁸ suggesting that he had been farming in Nambour since 1897. Gustafson married, in Australia, a Finnish woman from Ingå called Sandra, and they had three children. Subsequently, around 1903—04, Gustafson sold his farm to another Finn, A. Lundan, and moved to a new farm which he bought on the Atherton Tableland.¹⁸⁹ He eventually died in Yarraburra in 1923.¹⁹⁰

It is not clear from the sources in what way Gustafson, or some other Finnish pioneer, may have contributed to the settlement of such large numbers of Finns in and around Nambour at the turn of the century. One factor may have been the construction of a railway line through the area, which provided work for Finns. Matti Kurikka, for example, arranged for his followers to get work on the railways somewhat further to the north.¹⁹¹ Väinö Anderson states that the earliest Finns in the area had indeed been working on railway construction. Once the scheme was

¹⁸⁵ Letter from Kalle Karppinen's son, Karl H. Karppinen, Brisbane, to Olavi Koivukangas, 21 Sep. 1981, SI. — See 'Matrikkeli ulkomailla toimivista insinööreistä ja teknikoista, jotka ovat Suomen kansalaisia [Register of engineers and technicians working abroad who are Finnish citizens]', *Teknillinen Aikakauslehti* 11/1933, 2; also Malmberg 1929, 57—58.

¹⁸⁶ CILENTO 1959, 356.

¹⁸⁷ "Nambourin suomalaiset (The Finns at Nambour)", TYYH/S/X/7/III.

¹⁸⁸ C'th NR 1905/216.

¹⁸⁹ "Nambourin suomalaiset (The Finns at Nambour)", TYYH/S/X/7/III.

¹⁹⁰ SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb:3, UM, Helsinki.

¹⁹¹ Interview with Santeri Suosaari, Nambour, 3 June 1970.



Illus. 25: Mr Edwin Anderson left and Finnish labourers on the Anderson cane farm at Image Flat, Nambour, after the turn of the century. (Hilma Weston/SI)

complete, the Finns may then have bought themselves land, particularly following the construction in 1896 of a cane mill at Nambour. Later, in 1912, a sawmill was also set up for local farmers' use.

There were thus a number of Finns living in and around Nambour before the end of the nineteenth century. Whether it was due to these pioneers, or to other factors, such as the land sales and tenancy agents, that Finnish settlers began to move into the area is not clear. At the end of 1899 and beginning of 1900, however, a largish group of Finns arrived in Nambour, mainly settling at Image Flat. One of the factors facilitating the emergence of the Finnish community in Nambour was the fact that in 1899–1900 Finnish immigrants were made eligible for the assisted immigrants' passage scheme. Local Finns later estimated the numbers arriving in Queensland at around 250, but it cannot be established from the sources how many of these may have settled at Image Flat.¹⁹² Some of the new arrivals had their families with them, e.g. Edwin Anderson (formerly Wuolle), who had brought his wife and five children to Brisbane, moving on immediately from there to Nambour.¹⁹³

¹⁹² "Nambourin suomalaiset (The Finns at Nambour)", TYYH/S/X/7/III.

¹⁹³ Emma Seppänen's memoirs, TYYH/S/X/7/IV; Same person as Edward Andersson, NIITEMAA 1971, 254.



Illus. 26: Aksel Rönnlund (originally Pihlajaviita) pictured with his family, Image Flat, Nambour, in the early years of this century. (Matti Peurala) Two of the family's nine children were known still to be alive in 1986. The family's descendants have maintained contact with Finland, and one of them is actually currently learning Finnish. (Information supplied by Juhani Peurala, of Isojoki, in Turku on 30 May 1986).

The Andersons had arrived in Australia in January 1900 with a party consisting altogether of 47 Finns.¹⁹⁴ At Image Flat, farmland could be bought from private land-owners on favourable terms.¹⁹⁵

Another of these early arrivals in the Nambour district was Frans Nyman, born in Panelia in south-western Finland in 1856, who arrived in Australia with his wife Nathalia (née von Hausen), and their two children, in 1899. Nyman worked as a building contractor in Brisbane, but also bought some Government land at Yandina. He had taken the Construction course at Tampere School of Industry, which well equipped him for the building industry. He built a total of seventeen hotels in Brisbane. In 1919, the family settled down permanently at

¹⁹⁴ Register of Migrants arriving on immigrant ships entering Queensland 5 Jan 1899—30 Mar 1906, QA, 46/16.

¹⁹⁵ Interview with Väinö Anderson and Salli Kanervo (née Anderson), Nambour 3 May 1970.

Yandina. Frans Nyman died on 10 August 1941.¹⁹⁶

Valuable further information on the number of Finns at Nambour is provided by an article from 1903, in a paper called *Orpo*. The author emphasizes the historical significance of the new local Finnish association, the *Erakko* Society, and sets out to list the number of Finns in Nambour and in Queensland in general. The author enumerates a total of 67 Finns in Nambour on 31 December 1902, of whom twelve were Swedish-speakers. More detailed information is only given for the Finnish-speakers: 19 men, 11 women, and 25 children, including 11 below school age.¹⁹⁷ This probably represents the Finnish population at its maximum. A striking and important feature is the increased proportion of women, a consequence of the assisted passages scheme.

The Finnish settlement in Image Flat came to be known as 'Finbury'.¹⁹⁸ The article in *Orpo* refers to an earlier article, in *The Week* for 8 April 1904, dealing with the conditions among the Finnish settlers in Finbury, in which it was stated that despite considerable difficulties, the Finns had succeeded in planting large areas of sugar cane; their efficiency in holding meetings also came in for praise.¹⁹⁹

The group under Matti Kurikka consisted of some fifty Finns (according to some accounts, 78), some of whom settled in the Nambour area, including Adolf Emil Lundan, Johan Makkonen, and I.O. Peurala. These became the intellectual leaders of the Finnish community in Nambour, all of them being actively involved in the *Erakko* Society, either as officials or ordinary members. Lundan was President of the Society, and sat on the editorial board of the paper *Orpo*, etc. He was also a farming professional, having studied in Finland at Mustiala Agricultural College, and applied what he had learnt there on his farm in Nambour.²⁰⁰ Johan Makkonen, originally from Rääkkylä, became one of the most prosperous Finns in Queensland, whose wealth was partly gained in successful dealings in real estate.²⁰¹ Johan Peurala, who came from Isojoki, was the Editor of *Orpo*, but left for America soon after the breakup of the *Erakko* Society in 1904.²⁰²

Another source of information on the length of residence of Finnish immigrants is available in the Electoral Rolls, which include Finnish names from 1901 onwards. Alien immigrants acquired voting rights on

¹⁹⁶ F.I. Nyman, Yandina, to Karhula, 17 Feb. 1928, TYYH/S/X/7/III; *Suomi* 13 Sep. 1941; NIITEMAA 1971, 258.

¹⁹⁷ *Orpo* 18 Jan. 1903. The article is signed with the nom de plume 'Tolonen', probably one of the people collaborating on the paper.

¹⁹⁸ Interview with Hilma Weston (née Anderson), 24 Feb. 1981.

¹⁹⁹ *Orpo*, 30 April 1904.

²⁰⁰ NIITEMAA 1971, 257.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 257.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 258.

being naturalized as British subjects. The Electoral Roll for the constituency of Moreton dated 24 August 1901 contains four Finnish names, and by 1903 this had increased to eight, all of them recorded as farmers and as resident at Finbury, Nambour.²⁰³ In 1903 the Finnish settlement at Nambour was at its peak, and the Electoral Rolls confirm the existence of a Finnish farming community. No doubt there were others in addition to these eight electors, who had not yet taken out naturalization. By 1904, the names of Frans Nyman, at Yandina, and Henry Heljä, at Image Flat, appear, and in the Rolls for subsequent years other Finnish names also appear.

The Finnish community at Nambour expanded relatively rapidly, for an Australian visitor to Finbury in 1904, A.W. Bowder, reports that where five years previously there had been thick bush, there were now fourteen families living, comprising altogether almost 60 persons.²⁰⁴ These figures may be regarded as relatively accurate, for by April 1904 a number of Finnish families had already moved on from Nambour, mainly for America. From this point up to the First World War, the Finnish numbers of Nambour remained around fifty to sixty,²⁰⁵ with those moving on being balanced by new arrivals. The gradual breakup of the Finnish community in Nambour, and in Finbury in particular, is again confirmed both by the Electoral Rolls and other sources. The only Finnish names still to be found on the Roll for 1915 are Edwin and Ada Anderson, Finbury, Nambour, and Oskar Anderson, Bli Bli. One other Finn living in Nambour at this date was Leo Hirmukallio, who had arrived in 1911. At Cooroy, there were two farmers, named John Keto and Axel Rönnlund.²⁰⁶ By 1928, the number of Finns in the area was about twenty, according to Väinö Anderson.²⁰⁷ By the 1930s, however, only a few were left, most having left for America, especially after the turn of the century. According to F.I. Nyman, as many as ninety per cent of the Finns who had come to Australia would have preferred to change countries if possible.²⁰⁸ Väinö Anderson, who was Karhula's source of information, stated that he himself and Väinö Tamppinen were the only survivors of their original group from the turn of the century.²⁰⁹

The Finnish settlers in the Nambour area were either sugar planters, cattle farmers, or ordinary labourers. There were many Finnish ex-

²⁰³ Electoral Rolls of Queensland 1903. District of Moreton, Caboolture Division.

²⁰⁴ *The Week*, 8 Apr. 1904. The author, A.W. Bowder, had visited Finbury in the company of his Finnish neighbour, apparently F.I. Nyman.

²⁰⁵ *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936.

²⁰⁶ Electoral Rolls of Queensland 1915.

²⁰⁷ TYYH/S/X/7/III. This memoir, apparently written in 1928, is probably highly reliable, the author having lived in the locality throughout the entire period.

²⁰⁸ Letter from Frans Nyman, Yandina, to Karhula, 17 Feb. 1928. TYYH/S/X/7/III.

²⁰⁹ "Nambourin suomalaiset [The Finns at Nambour]", TYYH/S/X/7/III.

seamen working as labourers at Nambour, often on farms owned by other Finns. Nambour began to be the first destination for Finnish seamen deserting in Australia, and the Finnish community in Brisbane began to steer ex-seamen there.²¹⁰ The Finnish community which emerged at Nambour in the early years of the century has, due to new arrivals, continued to be a Finnish centre to the present day.

(5) The Finnish Banana Planters of Gympie and Wolvi

The banana plantation belt in Queensland is located on a warm strip on the coast, extending from Cairns to Cardwell. Tropical fruit are cultivated extensively on the coast, as far down as New South Wales, and the valleys of the Brisbane River provide fertile ground for fruit and vegetable cultivation.²¹¹

The mining town of Gympie is located 123 miles to the north of Brisbane, and in 1924, William Lindström, together with two other Finns, rented a plot of land at Kin Kin nearby from an Englishman in order to grow bananas. The landlord paid for their food, which was to be repaid once the crop had been harvested; he also supplied the tools needed. The profit from the crop was then to be shared half-and-half. Lindström enquired through the Finnish pastor, Kaksonen, for two Finns who might be interested in joining the scheme on these terms.²¹²

The enquiry must have been successful, for when Kaksonen visited Kin Kin in 1930, he discovered that Lindström's plantation had become the centre of a banana-growing area. Even by 1926, there had been five Finnish banana planters at Kin Kin.²¹³ It was thus easy for new arrivals to obtain advice and support from their fellow-Finnish planters. In this period, the number of Finnish banana plantations at Kin Kin, Gympie, Widge, and Wolvi amounted to a score and more, and the total number of Finns in the region came to almost a hundred.²¹⁴

The Finnish community at Wolvi was started around 1927, when many Finns moved from the coast up into the highlands (1200 feet higher up) to grow bananas. By 1930, there was a group of about twenty or so Finnish banana planters in Wolvi. Initially, bananas fetched a good

²¹⁰ Emma Seppänen's reminiscences, TYYH/S/X/7/IV.

²¹¹ HOLT HOUSE 1978, 208.

²¹² Letter from William Lindström, Kin Kin via Cooran, 14 July 1926, to Pastor O. Kaksonen, SMLA Brisbane (no reference code). — In an undated letter to Pastor Groundstroem in the same archives (ref. No 374/24), Lindström mentions that his partners were Jaakko Alalahti and Yrjö Blomqvist.

²¹³ *Suomi*, 15 Nov. 1926.

²¹⁴ *Suomi*, 28 Nov. 1930.



Illus. 27: Finnish banana growers' quarters at Widgee via Gympie in the late 1920s (note the ventilation in the roof). (Jorma Pohjanpalo/SI)

price, and this encouraged Finns to rent land for plantations. Many were however dogged by bad luck, despite the hard work they put into clearing almost impenetrable bush. Sometimes the soil on the land they had chosen was unsuitable, leading to poor crops; and later on, when they had learnt which soils to choose, and had learnt the methods to use, came the world-wide Depression, with an ensuing collapse in the price of bananas. Market prices no longer even covered the despatching costs, and the situation was ruthlessly exploited by middlemen. Many became tired of the entire venture, selling their farms for a song, or leaving them in the care of acquaintances while they themselves tried to make a better living elsewhere.²¹⁵

Not everyone gave in to the Depression, however, and a few remained determinedly on their farms. In 1931–32, there were still five families, and a number of unmarried men, in the Finnish community at Wolvi. There were six 'lodgings' in the area, mainly used by the young single men. The community owned a communal sawmill, where lumber was cut for the banana boxes, and a communal lorry for transporting the bananas from the plantations. Naturally there was also a communal sauna.

Early in 1933, however, the Wolvi community broke up, with most of the planters moving away, either to other places within Australia or back to Finland.²¹⁶ One reason for the breakup of the community was

²¹⁵ *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1931.

²¹⁶ *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1931; "Queenslandin suomalaiset (The Finns in Queensland)", TYYH/S/X/7/IV.

the shortage of women, which discouraged permanent settlement, but primarily the Depression was to blame. A large proportion of the ex-planters moved on to Ingham.²¹⁷

(6) The Finnish Sugar Planters of Long Pocket

White settlement along the Herbert River valley at Ingham began around 1870, and Finnish settlers appear to have moved into the area at a very early date. Although the Naturalization Records for Queensland are incomplete, some Finns can be traced there, such as Henrik Erickson, born in Raahe in 1846, who had arrived in Australia in 1874 or 1875 and applied for naturalization in 1910. He is recorded as having died in 1930, being then resident at Ingham.²¹⁸

Long Pocket, which was to become one of the major Finnish settlements in Australia, is located on a plateau surrounded by mountains, about fifteen miles from Ingham. One of the most legendary of all Finnish immigrants in Australia, a pioneer known as Russian Jack, lived here. He is distinct from the other "Russian Jack" in Western Australia (p. 221). According to oral tradition, this Russian Jack — a seaman from Rauma called Johan Frederik Sjöroos — had jumped his ship in Townsville harbour in 1895 or thereabouts, with only two shillings and a bottle of whisky in his pocket.²¹⁹ As will be shown, however, Sjöroos had in fact first arrived in Australia by the early 1880s. The parish Records in Rauma show a seaman named Frederick Sjöroos as having been born there on 3 December 1857, and record him as 'Missing' for 1898 to 1907. Following Sjöroos' death in 1914, his estate was contested by a lawyer called L.E. Challands, who claimed to have known Sjöroos since 1888, at which time he had been growing potatoes and corn on the Stone River. According to Challands, Sjöroos had told him that he had run away from home at the age of twelve, and had been in the United States before coming to Australia.²²⁰

The first entry concerning Sjöroos in the public land registers for Queensland dates from 1884, when he applied for a selection of 160 acres at Lannercost on the Stone River.²²¹ A Government land survey was carried out in May 1885.²²² The documentation shows that Sjöroos

²¹⁷ *Suomi*, 18 June 1933.

²¹⁸ SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb:2, UM, Helsinki.

²¹⁹ Speech on the history of the Finns at Ingham, by J.K. Nissilä, 1960, taped by Arvi Kangas, who donated a copy to the Institute of Migration.

²²⁰ The court proceedings, see p. 246, f 228.

²²¹ Johan Frederik Sjöroos, Department of Public Lands. QA.

²²² *Ibid.* Proof of Fulfillment of Conditions on Selections.



Illus. 28: Johan F. Sjöroos, alias "Russian Jack", an ex-seaman from Rauma, eventually became a wealthy land-owner in Long Pocket. (The family of the late Arvi Kangas, Long Pocket)

was resident on his selection from June 1885 on.²²³ Since he had previously worked as a carpenter and lumberjack,²²⁴ his arrival in Australia must therefore be dated in the early 1880s or even earlier.

The next entry in the Land Register concerning Sjöroos is dated 13 September 1898, when he swore an oath respecting his ownership of the plot at Lannercost. The Register also records his purchase of another 160 acres in 1902, for a sugar plantation. In 1907, he obtained a further 100 acres at Hawkins Creek. In the course of his career, Sjöroos owned a number of different real estate properties, for he had a true businessman's instinct, as is illustrated by his purchase of land for a sugar plantation at a time when sugar cultivation was becoming increasingly important. When a cane mill was built at Ingham, the railway line ran right across Sjöroos' land. This line did not fully meet his own needs, however, and he accordingly built a branch line and

²²³ *Ibid.* Proof of Fulfillment of Conditions on Selections. This document (dated at Ingham, 5 Feb. 1891) shows that Sjöroos had by this time cleared 15 acres of land, was living in a two-room house built of corrugated iron about 4 × 7 metres in size, and owned one and a half miles of fencing and other property, to a value of £105. He was reported to be cultivating maize; the soil was good, with a yield of 80 bushels per acre. He had no livestock.

²²⁴ Janne Nissilä, speech cited above, SI.

bridge (the remains of which were still visible in 1970).²²⁵ The final documentation concerning Sjöroos' land holdings records the transfer of his entire property, consisting of 248 acres, to his former lawyer, L.E. Challands.²²⁶

According to depositions by the Finns in Long Pocket, Russian Jack had verbally promised his lands to his foreman and right-hand man, Antti Kluukeri (originally from Lohtaja). Following Sjöroos' decease on 30 January 1914, however, the Townsville Supreme Court confirmed his will, under the terms of which his property was bequeathed to his lawyer, L.E. Challands, and to the children of his banker, Cobcroft. There was an allowance of £50 p.a. for Antti Kluukeri. This led to long-drawn-out litigation, in the course of which a number of accusations were made, wills annulled and confirmed, sentences passed for perjury, etc.

In September 1914, i.e. very soon after the court finding in favour of Challands, Kluukeri appealed against the decision, presenting to the court a will dated 5 December 1913, which bequeathed the property to Kluukeri with the exception of a bequest of £200 for Challands. J.F. Sjöroos' estate was valued at his time at £14 000. Kluukeri stated that his reason for delaying the presentation of this will was the deceased's wish that its contents should not be made public for six months after his death.²²⁷ The Court reversed its earlier decision, and recognized the will submitted by Kluukeri.

This decision, in turn, led to charges being laid by Challands, claiming that the will submitted by Kluukeri was a forgery. At this point the figure of Abraham Jayasuria enters the story: a self-educated lawyer and shopkeeper from Ceylon, who claimed to have forged the will at Kluukeri's request; he now wished to reveal the true state of affairs, since the Finns had not paid him the fee, in lands and money, which had been agreed. Jayasuria accused Kluukeri of having threatened to shoot him if he told anyone.²²⁸ In the light of this new evidence, the Court ruled on 15 November 1915 that the Finns' will was invalid, and that Challands' will was therefore to take effect. Antti Kluukeri, together with his witnesses, Matti Orjala, John Kero, and both of the Nissiläs, were charged with perjury.²²⁹

²²⁵ Interview with Arvo Kerola, Halikko, 31 Oct. 1973.

²²⁶ Secretary of Public Lands, LAN/AG 363, QSA.

²²⁷ The contents of both wills are set out in the report of the Court's proceedings in the *Townsville Daily Bulletin* for 4 Nov. 1914.

²²⁸ Supreme Court of Queensland; notes by N.I. Karhula, apparently derived from a report of the court proceedings in the *Townsville Daily Bulletin* (SI). These notes are undated, but appear to have been made soon after 4 Nov. 1915; it has not been possible to trace the report itself in Australia. See also Mr Justice Shand's notebook, SCT/AQ 15—16, QSA, Brisbane.

²²⁹ Mr Justice Shand's notebook, SCT/AQ 15—16, pp. 56—57. The judge's notes on the lengthy proceedings (4—15 November 1915) are a valuable source of further information on the Finnish witnesses in this case.

The *Townsville Daily Bulletin* carried extensive and detailed reports (on 9, 11, and 14 February 1916) of the quarrel between the Jayasurias and the Finns, which turned round the question whether the will ostensibly dated 5 December 1913 had in fact been drawn up then, or six months later, after Russian Jack's death. The judge in the case did not regard Jayasuria as a reliable witness, and accorded relatively little weight to his evidence. The crucial question was whether the elder Nissilä had in fact been in Sjöroos' house on 5 December 1913, since he had signed the will as one of the witnesses. The jury found for the accused, however, and returned a verdict of not guilty, whereupon he was released.²³⁰

This release is a curious turn of events: the will in question had already been declared a forgery in an earlier court decision, yet in the ensuing criminal case the accusation was found not proven.

Russian Jack is one of the key figures in Finnish-Australian folklore, and there are many stories told about him. He is said usually to have been very cautious with his money, but all the more profligate with it when drunk. Jack would hire men to drink with him, and pay them as long as they could remain awake. When new Finnish immigrants arrived, Jack was in the habit of saying to them: "You've heard of Janne Halli, haven't you?"²³¹ Well, now you're looking him in the eye . . ." As a labourer, he used to demand double pay, and if this was not agreed to immediately, he would do one day's work as a demonstration.²³² A consistent thread running through the oral tradition, however, is that Jack had promised his property to his mate, Antti Kluukeri. After his death, however, the Finns had no way of proving this, which probably explains the forgery of a new will. Many questions in this case remain unresolved, despite all further investigations.

Russian Jack was one of the pioneer settlers in the Ingham area, and in time other Finnish settlers began to gather around him. Sjöroos used to employ new arrivals by allocating them 100 acres between two men for sugar planting with board and tools found.²³³ Some of the earliest names included Matti Hovi, who worked as Russian Jack's foreman, having arrived in Long Pocket in 1899, obviously on a Queensland Government assisted passage. He was later to buy a farm of his own for his family (his wife Maria and their six children) at Trebone, near the Stone River.²³⁴ Hovi found the climate too hot, and in 1907, the family

²³⁰ *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 14 Feb. 1916.

²³¹ An infamous Finnish murderer, who was exiled to Siberia in the 19th century.

²³² Interview with Martti Mikkola, Long Pocket, 26 May 1970.

²³³ Interview with Hans Hemmilä, Uusikaupunki, 28 Aug. 1973. — Hemmilä worked for a time as Sjöroos' cook and returned to Finland in 1921.

²³⁴ Letters from Matti Hovi's daughter, Katri Hoipo, Somersby; 11 Aug. 1970, and 3 Sep. 1970. Olavi Koivukangas. SI.

moved back to Oulu in Finland; but three of the children subsequently re-emigrated to Australia.²³⁵

The mainstay of the local economy in Ingham, for the Finnish settlers as for the others, was sugar cultivation. New arrivals found work as labourers on Finnish farms, and the bush was eagerly cleared for further planting. Within two years, the settlers who arrived in 1911 had cleared 70 acres for planting. In 1913, however, a series of natural disasters caused financial losses, and soon after this setback the original Finnish group began to break up.²³⁶

For many of the immigrants, the thought of their homeland began to seem more and more attractive, especially once the outbreak of the First World War made it impossible for their wives and womenfolk to join them in Australia. One group, consisting of Johan Kluukeri, Matti Orjala, Janne and Juho Nissilä, Wilhelm Jukkola, and someone named Mäntymäki, made their way back to Finland in 1916, via Japan and Siberia.²³⁷ Following the subsequent return also of Matti Mäkelä and Otto Kauppila, and the death of Antti Kluukeri in August 1918, the Finnish community in Long Pocket was falling silent.²³⁸

Even in the early 1920s, Long Pocket was a relatively untouched area. The bush was thick, and there were snakes and crocodiles to plague the settlers.²³⁹ Capital to invest in a farm of one's own had to be raised by working on clearing the bush, which was initially considered too exhausting for white men. In the early 1920s, however, Finnish immigrants began to arrive in such numbers that it became possible to set up an entirely Finnish bush-clearing gang. These arrivals also included some Finns who had been in Long Pocket earlier, in 1912–16, and had now returned to their previous Australian haunts. At the peak of the period, in the mid-1920s, there were actually eight or nine Finnish gangs.²⁴⁰ Wilhelm Jukkola, who had been the founder of the first Finnish 'kängi' (gang), was one of the main pillars of the Finnish community, not only in connection with bush-clearing but in other ways as well, being active in helping to set up not only a sports club, but also, together with his wife, running a Sunday School for the Finnish children for several years.²⁴¹ In the period between the two World Wars, Long Pocket probably represented the most unified Finnish community in

²³⁵ *Ibid.*; 1970 postal questionnaire among Finnish-Australians, No 155 (Seth Hovi).

²³⁶ Speech by J.K. Nissilä, 1960; *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936; "Lohtajalaiset [The Emigrants from Lohtaja]", TYYH/S/X/7/III.

²³⁷ "Lohtajalaiset [The Emigrants from Lohtaja]", TYYH/S/X/7/III.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*; and *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936.

²³⁹ "Erään siirtolaisen elämäkerrasta [From the Life of an Immigrant]", writing competition organized by the Suomalainen Kulttuuriseura [Society for Finnish Culture], No 10, 1969. Archives of the Society, Brisbane.

²⁴⁰ *Suomi*, 26 Aug. 1936.

²⁴¹ *Suomi*, 8/1951.



Illus. 29: Wilhelm Jukkola's farmhouse at Long Pocket in the 1920s (note the wall made of sacks and netting). (Revd O. Kaksonen/SI)

Australia. The farms were a mere stone's throw from each other, and formed a single village.

The number of Finnish sugar plantations in the Ingham region was around ten. Their lives were organized on a secure foundation, for most farmers had a family. This security was reflected in other ways too, for Long Pocket was the location of the first Finnish Society hall, complete with sports field.²⁴² There was a Finnish hotel, and a valuable library. Niilo Oja states that in 1933 the number of Finns in the area was about 150, including about ten families and even some young girls.²⁴³

In the early 1930s, however, as the bush-clearing gangs were cut back, the Finnish numbers began to decline. By 1934, there were only six Finnish gangs working in the area covered by the Victoria sugar mill, compared with the eight and a reserve gang operating a year before. More Finnish manpower could have been available, but many of them had left for Mt Isa, with its better rates of pay. By 1937, there were six Finnish families at Long Pocket, and two Finnish gangs, making up altogether around thirty adults.²⁴⁴

The Finnish community at Long Pocket had grown up in stages. The first stage was defined by the arrival of Russian Jack and Antti Kluukeri, the pioneers of the late 19th century. In 1911 they invited

²⁴² *Suomi*, 27 Oct. 1930.

²⁴³ Diary of Niilo Oja 1927–44, SI.

²⁴⁴ *Suomi*, 23 May 1936 and 25 Nov. 1937.

Kluukeri's brother and half a dozen Finns to work for them. The third phase in the inflow of immigrants took place in the wake of Wilhelm Jukkola, who had lived at Long Pocket previously, in 1912—16, and Nestori Karhula, in the early 1920s.²⁴⁵ Following this stage, however, the tiny rural village began to become oppressively small for the expanding immigrant community, and by 1922—23 Nestori Karhula had already left in search of work elsewhere, eventually finding land which he cleared for pay at Redlynch. Thereafter the current of immigration from Finland headed straight for Karhula at Redlynch, near Cairns up in the north.

(7) Cairns: the Finnish Bridgehead in the North

Cairns, on the eastern flank of the Cape York Peninsula, came into being as the result of the needs of gold prospectors on the Hodgkinson River for a harbour closer than that at Cooktown. The new port was named after William Cairns, the third Governor of the Colony of Queensland. Cairns grew slowly, however, until 1882—83, when the boom in sugar cultivation began. Railway construction followed soon after, and the line to Kuranda was completed by 1891. Not until 1923, however, was Cairns incorporated.²⁴⁶

Since Cairns was a port, Finnish seamen are likely to have made their appearance there from a very early date. Ex-seamen were engaged in harvesting the sugar, and other types of work, from the end of the 19th century, and some of these then settled down, such as Elias Victor Eliasson, a labourer who was resident in Cairns on his naturalization in 1887. He was then aged 33; no other information is available from the Queensland Naturalization Records, with their usual deficiencies, e.g. as to his place of birth or the date of his arrival in Australia, although it is evident that he had been living in Cairns for some time before naturalization. The fact of a permanent Finnish resident in Cairns only some ten years after the beginnings of white settlement demonstrates the long traditions of Finnish immigration in the ports of the northern Queensland coast.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the numbers of Finns in northern Queensland began to grow. Many of them, once again, were ex-seamen, the majority of them originating from southern Finland, especially from the regions around Turku and Uusikaupunki, whereas the earlier Finnish arrivals had mainly come from further north along the western Finnish coast. This situation prevailed up to and for some

²⁴⁵ Speech by J.K. Nissilä, 1960, SI.

²⁴⁶ CILENTO 1959, 380—382.

time beyond the First World War, by which time there were ten Finnish immigrants at Mossman, near Cairns, and a few Finns on their farms at Atherton²⁴⁷ (Otto Gustafson).

The 1920s saw the beginning of a new phase for the Finnish settlement in the Cairns region. In 1920, enough Finns had gathered in the town by the beginning of the season — eleven — to form one sugar cropping gang.²⁴⁸

A central figure in the Cairns Finnish community, Nestori Karhula, had arrived in Australia together with a couple of friends at the end of 1921. Initially, he worked at Mullumbimby, on the farm of W.A. Back, but soon moved on to join the gathering of Lohtaja Finns at Long Pocket, where he joined up with Wilhelm Jukkola's gang. In doing so, he offers a classic example of *etappe* migration. As the number of Finns at Long Pocket grew, and there was a shortage of work, Karhula decided to go north in search of employment. At Redlynch, near Cairns, he found work clearing land for a new farm for sugar cane. The need for labour was considerable, and Karhula was eventually able to provide work for his fellow-Finns, either on the farm he was engaged in clearing — later to be called *Suomi Farm* — on other farms nearby, or in the sugar harvest.

Cairns soon became the destination for entire groups of Finnish immigrants. A group of about 30 men gathered at Redlynch, too, some of them working on day rates, and others doing piecework.²⁴⁹ The phenomenon of chain migration began to operate, with ever new groups of Finns arriving to join their acquaintances or relatives. The gangs usually consisted of 6–8 men, who might be working in quite different places in the vicinity of Cairns.²⁵⁰ Bush clearance was often initially very heavy work for the inexperienced Scandinavian labourers, especially because of the heat. The labourers' hands were torn to shreds, and the soles of their feet and armpits were sore, as the sweat poured off them and the tropical sun of northern Queensland beat down on them.

Most of the immigrants led a vagrant life, moving all the time from place to place in quest of one temporary job after another. Their accommodation was primitive, consisting either of huts, corrugated-iron shacks, or other similar temporary shelters.²⁵¹

In 1928, when the best days of the Cairns Finnish settlement were already over, the Finnish author Aino Malmberg visited Australia, and

²⁴⁷ Letter from Väinö Merikukka, in northern Qld, 14 July 1918, to Boijer, SMLA Brisbane.

²⁴⁸ Diary of Edward Suvanto, 14 and 22 July 1920, SI.

²⁴⁹ Letter from Antti Hyypä, Redlynch, 6 Apr. 1924, to Kalervo Groundstroem, SMLA Brisbane 180/24.

²⁵⁰ Letter from Eino Keskinen, 2 July 1923, to the Pastor, SMLA Brisbane 224/23.

²⁵¹ *Keskipohtanmaa*, 14 July 1973; interview with Emil Hirvi, Kokkola, 17 July 1973.

studied the working and other conditions of the Finnish immigrants. She recounts that work started as soon as dawn broke, and finished at four p.m. There were three meals a day, and the workers had the right to two 'smoke-ohs', i.e. breaks for a cigarette.²⁵²

Encouraged by the enthusiastic letters of those already in Cairns, Finnish immigrants elsewhere in Australia began to head for the area: internal chain migration, in effect.

The magnet in the north was the availability of work around Cairns. In 1924, one Finnish informant described how all eleven men in his party had reached their destination; and on the same day as they had arrived at Karhula's place, some building contractors had just been looking for carpenters. The opportunities for Finnish workers were evidently good, since none of them were unemployed and they were in much demand.²⁵³

The Finnish settlement in Cairns reached its peak in 1924—25, by which time there were around 200 Finns resident in the whole area. This increase in the Finnish population is also reflected in the foundation of the local *Suomi Seura* [Finnish Society] on 21 September 1924. According to the Minutes of the Society, there were some 40—50 men at the beginning of the sugar harvest in 1924. In 1925, the numbers grew, with the initial group of seventy men being subsequently joined by others arriving both from Finland itself and from elsewhere in Australia; and by 1928, there were over a hundred Finns.²⁵⁴ A list drawn up by Otto Emil Hirvi includes altogether 256 Finns in the Cairns and Tully region during the 1920s and 1930s, although this number also incorporates a few of the Finns living on the Tableland and at Long Pocket. The largest group now came from Vaasa Province in Finland, which accounted for 178 of them. The localities within that Province best represented were the parishes of Lohtaja and Kannus, with 35 and 31 emigrants respectively.²⁵⁵

The immigration to northern Queensland during the 1920s was heavily male-dominated. There are two women recorded in the Cairns urban area in 1924—28, one of them coming from Toholampi and the other from Ähtäri; and in 1928, Mrs Pietilä arrived, and set up a boarding house.²⁵⁶ There were also some women in rural areas during the earlier

²⁵² Malmberg 1929, 61, 69—70.

²⁵³ Letter from Kalle Saksa, 16 Nov. 1924, to the Pastor, SMLA Brisbane 673/24.

²⁵⁴ Aarne Härämänen, "Suomalaishistoriikka siirtolaisuutemme alkuvaiheista P-Queenslandissa [A Finnish History of the Early Immigration in Northern Queensland]", Minutes of the Suomi Seura [Finnish Society] of Cairns, 31 Jan. 1926, TYYH/S/X/7/II; interview with Emil Hirvi, Kokkola, 17 July 1973.

²⁵⁵ O.E. Hirvi, "Cairnsin seudun ja Tullyn suomalaisia 1920—30-luvulla [Finns in the Cairns Region and at Tully During the 1920s and 1930s]", SI.

²⁵⁶ Interview with Vihtori Housu, Töysä, 30 Aug. 1973.

period, however, such as Emma Salo and Martta Rauma, who arrived from Kaustinen in 1925.²⁵⁷

By 1925, the situation had begun to change. In September of that year, Karhula announced that he was giving up the *Suomi Farm*, and had rented premises in Cairns with the intention of letting out accommodation to Finns. He was also intending to set up as a building contractor.²⁵⁸ At the same time, a recession in the economy of the Cairns region began to drive Finnish immigrants south, especially towards Tully, where a new cane mill was opened in 1925, while others moved on to the road construction works on the Atherton Tableland.

One of the reasons contributing to the increased difficulties experienced by the Finns in obtaining employment was the departure of some of the major figures in the Finnish community, either back to Finland or elsewhere in Australia. 1926 saw Nestori Karhula move to Brisbane; and the Pietilä family's boarding house in Cairns, a headquarters for the local Finns, closed down when Yrjö Pietilä bought some land in Tully. The boarding house had not been economically viable, since it was most used by the unemployed and the penniless. Most of the Finns arriving in the region first attempted to find work in Cairns, but jobs were becoming difficult to obtain, especially during the rainy season. Work was to be had on the farms, however, and a few found jobs on a road construction scheme at Daintree, near Mossman.

The major reason for the disintegration of the Finnish community so soon after Karhula's departure, however, was the failure to have invested in land when work and money were available. Many of the men were also thinking in terms of returning soon to Finland. As employment became harder to obtain, therefore, it became necessary to turn elsewhere to earn a living. During the rainy season, in particular, Finnish labourers often effectively went and camped on farms, helping out with the work. In the end, the Finns, who gained their first experience of cropping the sugar cane in Cairns did not buy their own land there at all, but in Tully, some 80 miles further south, as they came to realize that sugar farmers did better for themselves than those who cropped the cane.

Cairns had functioned for a period as a Finnish bridgehead in Australia, at one end of a migration pipeline mainly drawing from central Ostrobothnia (just as Long Pocket had mainly drawn from Lohtaja). The crucial figure in the emergence of this chain migration phenomenon was Nestori Karhula, former Lieutenant of Jägers, whose

²⁵⁷ Letter from Yrjö Salo, Edmonta, 19 May 1925, to Kalervo Groundstroem, SMLA Brisbane 546/25.

²⁵⁸ Letter from N.I. Karhula, Cairns, 7 Sep. 1925, to Kalervo Groundstroem, SMLA Brisbane 852/25.

articles in the provincial press in Finland awoke many a young man's desire to travel. Antti Isotalo from Härmä, too, was one of those who made the journey to Australia, to join his former fellow-Jäger, and many others from the southern end of Ostrobothnia followed his example. Both the journey out to Australia, and the return journey home to Finland, were best made in the security of a large group travelling together. This helped to overcome the language problems. Both living and working in Australia, too, often took place within the shelter of a Finnish group, so that it was in fact possible for a migrant to return to Finland from a successful tour of many year's duration in Australia without ever having come into more than superficial contact with either Australians or any other nationalities, as is amply illustrated in the interviews with Ostrobothnian return migrants.

In the early 1930s, the situation began to change. As the opportunities for employment deteriorated, fewer new immigrants were arriving. Finns had moved on elsewhere within Australia, or returned to Finland, or even moved on to America. The Finnish population in Cairns expanded from time to time, as a result of fluctuations in the economy elsewhere (such as lay-offs at Mt Isa). When work ran out in the mines, many Finns turned to the already familiar work on the sugar plantations as a stand-by. During the Second World War, the mines at Mt Isa were operating below full capacity, and this meant that in Cairns there were once again a good forty Finnish cane croppers.²⁵⁹

In terms of the history of Finnish settlement in Australia, the Cairns area provided a base, around which there initially grew up a cluster of settlement, which then scattered, giving rise to a spread of smaller clusters. For Finnish immigration to Australia in the inter-War period, Cairns was a first stage, and bore the stamp both of ties between relatives and acquaintances, and of the attraction exerted by dominant personalities such as Nestori Karhula and Antti Isotalo. Nonetheless, the greatest attraction lay in the knowledge that a few years' labour on the sugar plantations offered the opportunity to amass the capital needed to buy a farm of one's own back home. An Australian tour was thus for many smallholders, and even in some cases for farm hands, the fastest route to upward social mobility and financial security back home in Finland. The rates of pay obtaining on the sugar plantations were considerably better than those being paid in Finland, according to those there at the time: the daily rate was a couple of pounds, at a time when the exchange rate was slightly over 200 Finnmarks to the Australian pound, whereas a day's work in Finland would bring in only about 50

²⁵⁹ *Suomi*, 14 July 1941.

marks.²⁶⁰ According to another version, the pay in Queensland could be as much as 500 marks a day, in comparison with rates of thirty to forty marks in Finland.²⁶¹ Whichever version is correct, it is plain that the sugar plantations of Cairns and its region offered attractive wages to Finnish young men unafraid of hard work.

(8) The Depression: From the Cane Fields to Road Works on the Atherton Tableland

The Atherton Tableland is an astonishing volcanic plateau formed in ancient times, situated to the west and south of Cairns. It rises up like an enormous table to a height of nearly a thousand metres, with a surface pitted with the craters of extinct volcanoes. The climate is mild, and the vegetation growing in the fertile soil includes giant eucalyptus. The area is named after John Atherton, a settler who came here in 1877. Gold had been found in 1873 on the Palmer River, and a second find was made later, in 1879, near Herberton. By the end of the following decade, there were over 300 mines operating in the area. By the end of the century, however, mining had gone into decline, and attention turned to agriculture, but the development of the area proceeded slowly until the construction of a road network in the 1920s.²⁶²

No exact information is available on the date of arrival of the first Finns on the Tableland. It would be surprising, however, with three hundred mines in the area, if there had been no ex-seamen or the like in the early 1880s, at least briefly.

One of the earliest farmers on the Tableland was Otto Gustafson, who moved to Atherton from Nambour in 1903 or 1904.²⁶³ He was joined in 1909 by Frank Hillman, and then in 1916 by a third Finn, Frans Mikael Rock (Kallio), also from Nambour. Rock had been looking for a farm of his own, and eventually succeeded in acquiring one at Atherton, where there was Government land available. The family settled at Malanda until the land could be cleared and a house built. Within a few years the Rock family had cleared 100 acres for cultivation, 70 head of cattle, and the horse had been replaced by a lorry.²⁶⁴ Frans Rock died in Atherton in 1934.²⁶⁵

²⁶⁰ Interview with Eino Mäkikörvela, 5 Sep. 1973. Mäkikörvela arrived in Australia in 1924 and returned to Finland in 1928.

²⁶¹ Interview with Sulo Mutka, Kokkola, 3 Sep. 1973. Mutka's date of arrival in Australia was 1924, and he returned home to Finland in 1928.

²⁶² WHITE 1968, 212.

²⁶³ TYYH/S/X/7/III.

²⁶⁴ Frans Rock's journey to New Zealand in 1911, and the time he spent there, are recorded in a diary, of which a microfilm copy is deposited at the Institute of Migration (SI roll 8); C'th. NR 1920/4454

²⁶⁵ SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb:4, UM, Helsinki.

After the pioneer settlers, the first larger group of Finnish immigrants to arrive on the Tableland were those who came around 1924 for the road construction scheme. A few Finnish navvies had been working there earlier, for road work was one of the easiest kinds of work for immigrant labourers with no English, and the rates of pay were relatively good. Typical earnings for labourers on public works, such as forestry, road works, and construction, were £4 to £6 a week.²⁶⁶ By 1926, Finnish labourers were beginning to establish a foothold on the Tableland, and were to be found at Millaa Millaa, Malanda, Peramon, Yungaburra, and Ravenshoe. Most of these were engaged on road construction, although some were working as farm labourers or in forestry. At Atherton there were water mains to be laid, and most of the labour force at the sawmill in Millaa Millaa were Finnish. The newest concentration of Finnish immigrants was at that point in Ravenshoe.²⁶⁷

Around 1925, the demand for labour in the sugar harvest began to fall, and the union was opposed to new men being taken on. Only seven Finnish gangs were in operation around Cairns, i.e. two less than in the previous year. Of the two hundred and more Finns in the area, many were thus out of work.²⁶⁸ As the sugar cropping opportunities declined, the Finns began to look for other forms of work, and with jobs becoming available in road construction on the Atherton Tableland, many of them took up the opportunity.

In March 1925, the Pastor at the Finnish Seamen's Mission was told that there were 12 Finns on the road works at Malanda.²⁶⁹ Wages were good, for a bridge carpenter, for example, was able to earn 18s. 6d. a day, rain or shine. The company also provided tents and pots and pans. By 1930, there were about thirty Finns at work on the roads around Malanda and Ravenshoe.²⁷⁰

Yrjö Pietilä actively set about negotiating for road construction contracts, and in 1928, together with 20 Finns, succeeded in obtaining one at Daintree.²⁷¹ The first year of this contract was highly profitable, with each of the partners making £300, after which many of them returned to Finland. Most of the road navvies were from Ostrobothnia. Mrs Pietilä was the cook. This gang constructed two miles of road from Daintree towards Mossman. Another contractor in the road construction

²⁶⁶ *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936.

²⁶⁷ *Suomi*, 15 April 1926.

²⁶⁸ Letter from Matti Järvinen, Cairns, 27 May 1925, to the Pastor, SMLA Brisbane 573/25.

²⁶⁹ Letter from T. Saarinen to Kalervo Groundstroem, 6 March 1925, SMLA Brisbane 238/25.

²⁷⁰ Letter from Melida and Yrjö Pietilä, Tully, 18 March 1930, to O. Kaksonen, SMLA Brisbane.

²⁷¹ *Suomen Viesti*, Christmas 1933; *Suomi*, 15 Sep. 1928.

scheme on the Atherton Tableland during the 1920s was the Schildt Brothers' company.²⁷² There were a number of other Finnish 'companies' operating in the scheme, although most of them were of short duration, and by 1936 only one of them, Koivu & Co., was still in operation,²⁷³ this company, however, still had fifteen Finns on the payroll during the Second World War.²⁷⁴

Due to the heat, road construction work was just as exhausting as sugar cropping. It is described by Uljas Apila, himself a former road navy, in the following terms:

The temperature was over 40 degrees Centigrade down in the gravel pit. We were men without shadows, for the sun beat down vertically from the sky and your shadow was no more than a small dark circle around your feet. The heat of the sun rebounded from the gravel. The hard soil was hacked out with pickaxes and shovelled into lorries which carried it up to ground level. Each gang, of five men, had a foreman, who took no part in the actual work, but whose job was to see that the labourers kept hard at work; and [otherwise] it is unlikely that the work would have proceeded at the rate demanded, in the extreme heat.²⁷⁵

As, in turn, the opportunities for work on the road schemes began to contract, Finns turned to looking for suitable farms. It was relatively easy to buy or to rent land on the Tableland. By 1927, there were three Finnish farmers in the neighbourhood of Atherton, with a combined acreage of 107 and the promise of a good crop.²⁷⁶

In Atherton, the Finnish meeting place was the home of the Nivala family. It was nicknamed 'Finnhotel', and served as an unofficial poste restante and reading room for the Finnish community, as well as providing room and board for temporary visitors. Emil Nivala (brother of Kaisa Kallio, the wife of President Kallio of Finland 1937—40) had arrived here in 1924, earning his living at sugar cropping and as a construction labourer. In 1929, he rented a cattle farm near Malanda. In 1943, Nivala and his son jointly purchased a sugar plantation at Tully,²⁷⁷ where he continued to live until his death in 1981,²⁷⁸ while his son continues to run the farm.

As relief from the rigours of their work, the Finns also organized entertainments, the climax of which were the annual Farm Shows. Sometimes there were moving pictures, complete with soundtrack, the favourite for many. Dances were held almost every evening, with the younger ones on the dancefloor and the older ones playing cards. The

²⁷² See, e.g., Malmberg 1929, 94, 104.

²⁷³ *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936.

²⁷⁴ *Suomi*, 15 Nov. 1941.

²⁷⁵ Uljas Apila, reminiscences (in Finnish), pp. 129—30, SI.

²⁷⁶ *Suomi*, June 1927.

²⁷⁷ *Suomi*, 2/1966.

²⁷⁸ *Suomi*, 9 Nov. 1981.

churches, in particular, used to hold dances as a way of organizing their activities.²⁷⁹

The examples set by Emil Nivala and U. Torkkala were followed by others, and by 1936 there were five Finnish cattle farms on the Atherton Tableland, but the numbers stayed low, most probably since (as Pastor Kaksonen noted during his visit to the Atherton in 1930) the Finns did not find cattle farming congenial. Altogether, Kaksonen met about fifty Finns on the Tableland.²⁸⁰ In addition to the cattle farmers mentioned above, by 1936 eight Finns had established tobacco farms on the plateau as well.²⁸¹

(9) The Finnish Tobacco Farmers of Mareeba

There had been Finns earlier in Mareeba, 46 miles inland from Cairns, when Matti Kurikka and his followers were working on the constructions of the railway line (see p. 89) in 1900, although none of these is known to have settled in the area permanently. Up to the 1920s, Mareeba had been a mining town, but as mining went into decline and the Depression deepened, the town became the centre of Australian tobacco cultivation.

It was noted in 1930 that tobacco was causing a drain of millions of pounds annually from the country. Tariffs were therefore imposed on imports, and domestic production of tobacco was encouraged, and at the end of that year, the Government raffled 25 land holdings at Mareeba for the establishment of tobacco plantations. A 'tobacco fever' began, with people flooding in from all over the country. The Government selections were 100—200 acres in size, and the lucky ones proceeded to rent out plots to those who had been unlucky. Nor were the Finns in the Mareeba area immune to this tobacco fever. With unemployment running high, there was all the more temptation to invest savings in tobacco plantation. One of the conditions for being awarded a Government selection was capital of £300 or adequate backing. Only one Finn, named Walter Rauhala, entered for the first land raffle, but he was successful, and took on the Laine brothers to help in clearing his holding, situated seven miles from Mareeba. There were soon eleven men on the payroll and wages were paid in hard cash. By 1931 there were 20 acres under cultivation, and five drying sheds. By this time,

²⁷⁹ *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936.

²⁸⁰ *Suomi*, 12 Sep. 1930 and 30 Nov. 1936.

²⁸¹ *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936; interview with Antti Isotalo, probably in the 1950s, in the Papers of Anna-Leena Toivonen, Seinäjoki Municipal and Provincial Library.

there were several other Finnish tobacco farms around Mareeba: the capital accumulated in sugar cropping had been invested in land.²⁸²

In a normal year in Mareeba, in terms of weather, the crop was good. Consequently, other Finns also became interested, and began to buy plots of land. The Government's price was a mere 2s. 6d. an acre, whereas private land-owners might charge as much as £10. In the following Government land raffle, a number of Finns took part, but only one of them was lucky. Those who failed to obtain Government land turned to private land-owners, although their land was often of poorer quality. Companies were established. Everyone was after the same goal: to amass some money quickly, realize the capital invested in the farm, and return home.

The craze for tobacco farming soon led to 16 Finnish farms in Mareeba, jointly owned by 30 men and with another 40 to 50 employed as labourers.²⁸³ The most important cluster of Finnish tobacco farms was at Morgan Settlement, about 12 miles out of Mareeba in the direction of Atherton. Norman Morgan was an Australian road contractor, who had been forced into liquidation in 1930. He had employed many Finns on his road construction gangs, and had been so satisfied with their work that he was keen on collaborating with them in the new field of tobacco cultivation. Norman Morgan put up £3000, and each Finn contributed as much as he felt he could afford. The entire venture was undertaken in a strong spirit of communal enterprise, and it was agreed that if any one farmer had a bad year, the others would support him. The land was split up among the Finns in plots of 10—20 acres, where each of them then put up a house, a drying shed, and the other buildings necessary. Communal dams were built for water, and each was allowed to use as much water as was needed for household purposes and on the fields. Each of the holdings was shared among at least two farmers, and some of them among larger groups.

The Settlement also built a large two-storeyed sorting shed, with store-rooms and offices on the lower floor. Upstairs, there was accommodation for 50 girl sorters. Leisure activities included dances and a sauna with room for 20 at a time.²⁸⁴

Nonetheless, Morgan Settlement suffered the same fate as many other tobacco plantations. The first year went well, thanks to favourable weather and to the high quality of the tobacco. The following year, however, both the weather and the politicians turned against the

²⁸² *Suomi*, 25 July 1932.

²⁸³ *Suomi*, 10 July 1936.

²⁸⁴ *Suomi*, jubilee issue 1969; interview with Hannes Aho, Mareeba, 17 May 1970. "Mareeban suomalaiset [The Finns at Mareeba]", TYYH/S/X/7/III; *Suomi*, 24 Aug. 1933.

tobacco farmers. Heavy rains meant that the crop was not of prime quality, while the tariffs on imported tobacco were reduced. The tobacco farmers were left with their crop on their hands. For many, credit soon ran out, and there was no choice but to abandon the farm. The majority stuck it out for a third year, but the result was the same as in the second, and Finnish tobacco farming was finally destroyed by three weeks of rain which washed away all the soil from the hillside fields. Finally, in the fourth year there was too little rain. After four bad years, the number of Finnish tobacco farmers at Mareeba had fallen to six. Altogether three hundred farms in the Mareeba area were abandoned, and only fifty carried on; not until the fifth year did the farmers receive a fair return for their work. Hannes Aho suggests that part of the reason for the failure of Morgan Settlement was lack of experience and the relevant skills. Other problems included blight, which destroyed many seedlings at an early stage.²⁸⁵

Several of the farms which were now abandoned had been built up by Finns, who had invested in them not only their own hard work, but also thousands of pounds. A major reason for the failure was their lack of experience; many of them had never even seen a tobacco leaf before, let alone grown any. Secondly, in the Tobacco Fever land deals, many of the Finns came to believe that they had been swindled. Thirdly, they had not enough capital to see them through with the scheme until the point when the land began to produce a good crop, the methods had been learnt, and the Government had started to support the tobacco farmers. In the latter half of the 1930s, tobacco farming revived. Those lucky enough to get Government land did well, and some who had given up thought of starting again.²⁸⁶ For many Finns, Mareeba represented the third stage, after sugar cropping and road construction, and often then continuing inland to the mines of Mt Isa: an *etappe* migration thus not only in geographical, but also in occupational terms.

(10) The Finnish Colony at Tully

Tully is situated on the coast, about 80 miles to the south of Cairns. White settlement in the area began in the 1880s, and when the opportunities for employment in sugar cropping at Cairns deteriorated, in the mid-1920s, Finns began to move to Tully, where new areas were

²⁸⁵ *Suomi*, jubilee issue 1969; interview with Hannes Aho, Mareeba, 17 May 1970.

²⁸⁶ *Suomi*, 20 March 1935 and 10 July 1936.



Illus. 30: The town of Tully, many of whose hotels, churches, and other buildings were built by Finns. (Kaksonen/SI)

being opened up for sugar cultivation and a new sugar mill had been built.²⁸⁷

At the point when the new mill was being built (1924–25), the surrounding countryside was deep bush, and virtually uninhabited, the only settlers in the area being a few Chinese. With the completion of a railway line, jointly constructed by the sugar company and the State Government of Queensland in 1924, Tully began to grow, and gradually developed into a town.²⁸⁸ There were Finns involved in the building of Tully right from the start: on the construction sites for the railway and the sugar mill, and thereafter for the hotel, churches, and dwellings.²⁸⁹

Despite the fact that land was cheap at Tully, the Finns were in no hurry to buy. Lack of individual initiative, or a strong leader, were probably the main reasons why the advantage was allowed to pass to the southern European immigrants, despite Finnish interest in the area. The first Finnish farm to be established was the 80-acre sugar plantation set up by E. Vilenius, Lauri Kiviranta, and Niilo Toivola in 1926.²⁹⁰

It was not always easy, however, for immigrants to purchase land, since in the late 1920s they were not eligible for Government land. It was legal to buy land from private owners, often on very favourable

²⁸⁷ Emil Hirvi, "Muutamia piirtoja Tully'in suomalaisseudun synnystä [Some Observations on the Origins of the Finnish Colony at Tully]", MS dating from 1933, pp. 1–7, SI.

²⁸⁸ *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936.

²⁸⁹ *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936; Emil Hirvi 1933, 18–19.

²⁹⁰ Interview with Lauri Kiviranta, Vähäkylä, 30 Aug. 1973.

terms; the deposit was usually no more than 10 per cent, with the remainder being paid off in instalments over several years. In some States, on the other hand, aliens were not allowed to own land at all prior to naturalization, the precondition for which was a minimum of five years' residence in Australia or some other British territory.²⁹¹ Immigrants typically had difficulty in scraping together more than the original deposit, so that the balance remained to be paid off during the following years. It was not uncommon for immigrants to band together in twos and threes for the purchase of land.

In 1928, however, land fever hit the Finns, and by the end of that year no less than fifteen Finnish farms had been set up.²⁹² By 1930 or thereabouts, there were over a hundred Finns at Tully, and 50—60 at Ingham; the number of farms is recalled by Eemeli Klemola as having been 16.²⁹³ Almost without exception, the Finnish farmers at Tully started out with too little capital, and 40 per cent of their overall income might well be going on servicing their debts (instalments and interest). With what was left having to cover all essential expenses, there was no room left for financial manoeuvre. Many farmers found themselves forced to buy food, etc., on credit, and the storekeepers imposed extortionate rates of interest.²⁹⁴

Most of the Finns, however, were working at sugar cropping, without investing in land; for most of them, the aim was to return to Finland and buy a farm there. There are many Finnish farms, especially in Ostrobothnia, bought with the earnings from Australian sugar cropping. The number of cropping gangs was restricted, for the amount of sugar harvested was limited to the processing capacity of the mill. Many of the gangs carried on from one year to the next, and in times of high unemployment, it was particularly difficult for new men to get into a gang. The work was exhausting in the heat, and was carried out in two-hour stretches, with breaks for strong English tea and sandwiches. Sometimes the sugar cane would catch fire, and then the burnt cane had to be harvested quickly and got to the mill before its sap had time to dry out. The farmwork between harvests was also hard. Uljas Apila tells in his reminiscences of weeding the sugar beds when the sun was beating down with such force that it felt as if the air itself would have burnt if anyone had dared to light a match. When they were planting, holes were dug at 50 cm intervals, into which the pieces of sugar caneroot

²⁹¹ Jorma Pohjanpalo, "Australia siirtolaismaana [Australia as a Country of Immigration]", Sydney, April 1928, UM, Helsinki, 37 K, f.

²⁹² Emil Hirvi 1933, 19—22.

²⁹³ Interview with Eemeli Klemola, Veteli, 23 July 1973.

²⁹⁴ Oja 1972, 51.

were placed and then covered.²⁹⁵

During 1929, the Depression began to make itself felt in the lives of the Finns in northern Queensland. Out of the hundred men at Tully, only seven were taken on for cropping, and even these found themselves in English-speaking gangs. The unemployed, who had been waiting since the previous harvest for half a year, numbered 40 to 50. Many of these were engaged in casual labour on the Finnish farms in the area.²⁹⁶ The sugar crop was small in 1929 and 1930, since drought stunted the growth of the cane, and the harvest was broken off early, in November. Labourers began to drift from the sugar fields to road construction work in the neighbourhood.²⁹⁷

The hard times thus forced the Finns onto the move. The future looked bleak, and some of the Finns set off south. Out of over a hundred men looking for work in the 1930 sugar harvest, only five were taken on; British workers were given preference, and only 47 foreigners were taken on altogether.²⁹⁸ The unemployment situation continued to be difficult throughout the 1930s, and many Finns made their way back to Finland. In an interview in *Suomi*, they reported that at Tully foreigners were allowed to make up no more than 25 per cent of the sugar croppers;²⁹⁹ this was due not to the farmers, who would have been happy to employ more foreign labour, but to the trade union, which threatened the farmers with a strike if they did not give in.³⁰⁰

By the end of the 1930s, however, the Finnish colony at Tully had become firmly established. The surplus labour had moved on to Mt Isa or elsewhere, or had returned to Finland. In 1939 there were thirteen Finnish-owned farms at Tully, and a few new arrivals had also come.³⁰¹ A further indication of the stability of the Finnish settlement is provided by the fact that (in contrast to the early years, when there were no Finnish women in the area at all) there were now several Finnish families, as well as three young girls.³⁰²

The Finnish colony at Tully is a vivid example of the mobility of the Finnish population in Queensland in the 1920s, constantly moving on to wherever there was work available. By the time the settlement at Tully began, there were a number of Finns who had amassed several years of experience at sugar cropping, and were now ready to invest the experience (and funds) they had acquired in the land.

²⁹⁵ Uljas Apila, reminiscences, 125—126.

²⁹⁶ *Suomi*, 16 July 1929.

²⁹⁷ *Suomi*, 10 Jan. 1930.

²⁹⁸ *Suomi*, 18 July 1930.

²⁹⁹ *Suomi*, 17 April 1939.

³⁰⁰ Diary of Niilo Oja for 17 June 1930, microfilm roll 4, SI.

³⁰¹ *Suomi*, 4 Dec. 1939; Diary of Niilo Oja for 14 Dec. 1930, microfilm roll 4, SI.

³⁰² Diary of Niilo Oja for 6 Feb. 1939, microfilm roll 4, SI; interview with Emil Hirvi, Kokkola, 17 July 1973.

(11) The Mount Isa Mines: a Finnish Colony in the Outback

The history of Mt Isa began on a hot day in February 1923, when a prospector named John Campbell Miles pitched camp by the Leichardt River, in the dry interior of Queensland, some thousand miles from Townsville on the coast. His attention was caught by some heavy lumps of rock, which were later shown to contain high levels of lead and silver. Miles staked out his claim, and named the mountain Mount Isa, after his niece. Soon, hundreds of other prospectors flooded into the area. The Queensland Government took an interest, and soon a company was set up, Mount Isa Mines Ltd. The first tasks were to build a railway and a water supply, and only after this — in 1931, by which time the Depression had already begun — could mining proper get under way. Consequently, American financiers succeeded in obtaining a majority of the shares in the Company, which was on the verge of bankruptcy. During the Depression, the price of lead collapsed, and it was not until 1937 that the Company managed to show a profit. From that point onwards, however, Mt Isa has rapidly developed, until it is now one of the major mining centres in Australia.³⁰³

The history of Mt Isa is essentially immigrants' history. About half the town's population are immigrants, from dozens of different nationalities. Finns had heard of the great silver find at Mt Isa by 1924, but no great Finnish rush started straight away;³⁰⁴ the first Finns to arrive in Mt Isa were Taavetti Luoto. Luoto (together with one other Finn) was employed on the construction of the Mt Isa railway line in 1926—29.³⁰⁵ Edward Suvanto had earlier reported, in 1918, that there were three Finns at Kuridala via Cloncurry, where there were some copper mines and a smelting mill,³⁰⁶ but there is no information concerning them in any other sources.

Towards the end of the 1920s, the number of Finns in Mt Isa began to rise rapidly. In 1929, the Finns reported that there were 57 of them, but by 1934, the number had risen to about 300.³⁰⁷ No precise, official figures are available, but the immigrants' own reports give some indication. The historian of Mt Isa, BLAINEY, writes of the Finns as follows:

³⁰³ BLAINEY 1960.

³⁰⁴ Diary of Eino Keskinen for 8 May 1924, SI.

³⁰⁵ Interview with Taavetti Luoto, Lieto, 21 Aug. 1973. Luoto returned to Kustavi, his home town in Finland, in 1929.

³⁰⁶ Letter from Edward Suvanto, 5 July 1918, to Boijer, SMLA Brisbane.

³⁰⁷ Interview with Eino Keskinen, Jämsä, 9 Sep. 1973; interview with Lauri Kiviranta, Vähäkylä, 30 Aug. 1973.

Finns came from the canefields and sent for their compatriots in Europe, making Mount Isa the largest Finnish community in Australia, with its steam baths of hot stone that seemed exotic in these hills of sweat.³⁰⁸

By 1930 Mt Isa was emerging as one of the largest areas of silver, lead, zinc, and copper mining in the world. By then there were already six pits in operation. The Company provided workers with accommodation and a canteen, and with social facilities.³⁰⁹ There were a few Finnish women in the town, too, e.g. Katri Hoipo, who records how she cooked for the Finnish-American supervisors.³¹⁰ The town started out from extremely unassuming beginnings. One Finnish immigrant who was there in the early days reports that most of the buildings in the town were small tin constructions, although there were two hotels, two cinemas, a couple of dance halls, and a gambling club and a girlhouse.³¹¹

The level of pay was on the whole satisfactory, and working hours were also shorter than in many other jobs. Niilo Oja, who arrived in Mt Isa in 1934, writes in his diary that piecework in the mines paid better than cutting cane, and the work was far easier. It was however sometimes necessary to wait a long time, even months, for new contracts. New Finns arrived virtually every week, and everyone who passed the medical examination was signed on. Naturally, some became fed up and left town, but most of these came back once they had used up their money. Work in the mines was also dangerous; Oja reports that by 1934, many Finns had begun to suffer from lead poisoning, and some of the Finnish miners were killed in pit accidents.³¹²

The working conditions were far from perfect, for in many of the pits there was water to waist height and too little oxygen in the air. Night shifts made the work even more exhausting, for it was almost impossible to sleep during the day because of the overpowering heat. The temperature rose at times to 45 degrees Centigrade. Keskinen describes the miners' work in the following terms:

Being a miner is just like being at war. Dangerous? *Yes*. Especially in the *shaft* — stones, planks and props falling down. Once an empty package fell down into the middle of a group of men, and Tastula and Paananen were injured. Paananen quite badly. . . . In five weeks, there have been three accidents here where men have lost their lives. Smaller accidents, but still needing treatment in hospital, happen virtually every day The most dangerous of all are the misfires, that is, the holes where the charges have failed to go off. . . . Amongst the rubble from the blast face you can always find a few unexploded sticks of dynamite and *primers*. All it needs is for your pick to land on one of those *primers*, and it would be *Good bye* to the entire gang of six men.

³⁰⁸ BLAINEY 1960, 157.

³⁰⁹ Diary of Eino Keskinen for 20 Dec. 1930, SI.

³¹⁰ Letter from Katri Hoipo, Somersby, 3 Sep. 1970, to Olavi Koivukangas at Canberra, SI.

³¹¹ Diary of Niilo Oja for 10 June 1934.

³¹² SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb:1—9, UM, Helsinki, 27 July 1934, and 16 Aug. 1934; Oja, *passim*, microfilm roll 4, SI.



Illus. 31: Finnish miners at Mt Isa, photographed by N. Karhula in 1933. (SI)

There are 3 pumps weighing 2 tons each just above your head pumping out water, but all the same there is always water in the *shaft* up to your waist. The whole *shaft* is full of the most appalling noise. It's quite impossible to hear what someone else is saying, even if they shout right into your ear. The Jack Hammers are banging away like machine guns. The flow pipes hiss and the air feeds roar. But what caps it all are the enormous explosions from the 20-kilo dynamite charges. I'm almost always deafened when I come up to the surface, even with my ears stuffed with cottonwool.

Earnings are reasonable. A shift lasts 8 hours, including half an hour for eating and the trip down and up in the lift. So you actually work for about 7 hours.³¹³

The mines operated on a three-shift rota. There was little opportunity for social life outside the context of work, and what there was mainly took place at the bar,³¹⁴ while the Finnish women were usually busy with their boarding houses. According to Yrjö Korpela, in the early years at Mt Isa there were as many as eight Finnish boarding houses, and for the women who kept them the work went on virtually round the clock, since with the men on shiftwork there was always someone in need of clean

³¹³ Diary of Eino Keskinen for 7 and 24 Jan. 1931, SI. [Original diary in Finnish, but the words marked in italics here are in English. The word *mainari* (miner) is taken from English, instead of the Finnish term *kaivosmiehes*, but this (like *farmari* for farmer) has become effectively accepted in Finnish, especially with reference to immigrants in the settler countries. — Translators' note.]

³¹⁴ Diary of Niilo Oja for 18 Oct. 1934, microfilm roll 4, SI.

clothes or food. The housework was difficult, with only a wood-burning stove, and a chronic shortage of water.³¹⁵ Not until Pastor Hytönen visited the town in 1935 were steps taken to set up a joint Finnish and Estonian club and lending library, the *Heimo Seura*.³¹⁶

One of the important reasons for the growth of the Finnish community at Mt Isa was a Norwegian-American engineer called Nelson. He had mixed with Finns ever since his childhood, and had learnt to trust them as reliable workers when working with them in mines in the United States. As soon as he arrived at Mt Isa, he had made enquires about Finns, and as soon as he contacted some he invited them to come and work in the mines.

Whereas the Finnish colony at Mullumbimby largely originated from Munsala, and that at Long Pocket from Lohtaja, Mt Isa was largely dominated by emigrants from Kannus. By the later 1930s, unofficial Finnish placenames began to appear: e.g. 'Turku', 'Helsinki', 'Varpuskellari', and 'Kokkola', which were the names of speak-easies.³¹⁷

There was a rapid turnover among the Finns in Mt Isa, which by this time had a population of about 6000. Of the more than 200 Finnish immigrants recorded by Pastor Hytönen in 1935, only 50 were still at Mt Isa four years later. Those who left were replaced by others, however, and the total number in 1939 was around 130.³¹⁸ Financial goals could be achieved faster in the mines than in other kinds of work. Many of those who had left returned to Finland; others moved to the coast to escape the heat and desert of the interior, while some moved on into Western Australia.

During the Second World War, many Finns were interned as hostile aliens. It is said that a train was actually standing at the station in Mt Isa, ready to take the Finns away, but that the Company interfered, saying that if the Finns were taken away, mining would stop; and the Finns were allowed to remain.³¹⁹ The Finns were few in number, but many of them were employed in supervisory positions in the mines.

After the War, the numbers of Finns in Mt Isa began to rise again. By 1960, there were 445 Finns in the town (including children), and by the end of the 1960s, a new wave of immigration had brought the Finnish population in the 'town of lead and sweat' to nearly a thousand, although in the subsequent decades it fell once again.

³¹⁵ KOSKINEN 1985, 34.

³¹⁶ *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936 and 19 Sep. 1939.

³¹⁷ Diary of Niilo Oja for 26 June 1935, microfilm roll 4, Sl.

³¹⁸ *Suomi*, 19 Sep. 1939.

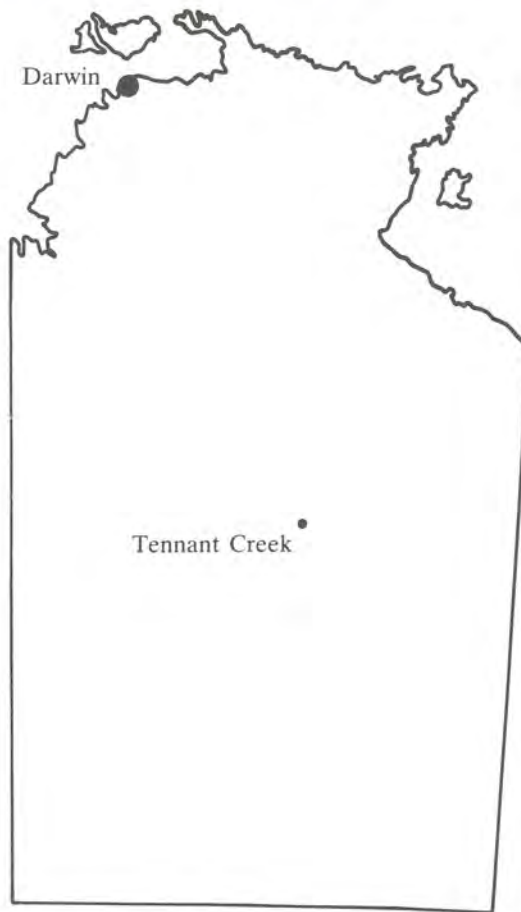
³¹⁹ Letter from Antero Miikkulainen (Secretary of the Mt Isa Society), Mt Isa, to E. Ertama, Helsinki, 26 Dec. 1960, Archives of the Mt Isa *Suomi Seura*. This story is popular in Finnish-Australian folklore: cf. KOSKINEN 1985, 44.

(12) Summary: Finnish Settlement in Queensland

The beginnings of Finnish settlement in Queensland date back to the mid-19th century, when the first Finnish seamen came ashore in the coastal towns. They engaged in a variety of occupations connected with the sea, and as labourers, but also in the cultivation of a number of crops exotic from a Finnish point of view: sugar cane, bananas, etc. These early settlers functioned as pioneers, and were later joined by new Finnish immigrants, e.g. the way in which the Long Pocket colony grew up around the figure of Russian Jack. During the 1920s, the vast majority of Finnish immigrants in Australia made for Queensland, attracted by the expansion of sugar cultivation, and the role of key figures such as Emma Seppänen and Nestori Karhula.

Finnish manpower in Australia was highly mobile, and even within Queensland, a process of *etappe* migration can be recognized. Finnish labourers might start at Cairns, and then move on in search of work to Tully, the road works at Atherton, the mines at Mt Isa, and possibly on from there into Western Australia. Only a few Finns settled as cattle farmers on the Atherton Tableland; Finnish men were not fond of milking cows.

The bridgehead for Finnish immigration in the early 1920s was Cairns and its surroundings; permanent Finnish settlements did not emerge until the focus had shifted to Tully and Long Pocket (and to a lesser extent on the Tableland), or in the 1930s to Mt Isa. Brisbane, on the other hand, had long been an important centre of Finnish settlement. In these places, Finnish ethnic societies were set up, and these in their turn contributed to successful adaptation by the Finns to their new homeland. A process of internal chain migration operated noticeably among the Queensland Finns, thus contributing to the concentration of settlement in particular locations. Ostrobothnian emigrants, in particular, were likely to head for the vicinity of relations and acquaintances: Long Pocket, for instance, was nicknamed the Australian Lohtaja. In fact Finnish settlement in Queensland in the period leading up to 1947 was essentially ethnic chain migration, with mobility from one location to another in search of work. Not until they acquired a farm of their own or joined the mining community at Mt Isa did Finns become tied to any one place; but in these locations, a Finnish community has persisted to the present day.



8. Finnish Settlement in the Northern Territory

The Northern Territory has never been a focus of Finnish immigration in Australia, although lone individuals have wandered there from time to time. The first Finns in the Territory were presumably either sailors in coastal shipping, or lone prospectors for gold or other minerals. In the 1920s, some of the more adventurous made their way into the Northern Territory: the 1921 Census records one Finland-born person, that in 1933 eight, and by 1947 there were nine of them.³²⁰

There is a little information available on Finns in the north during the 1930s. A Swedish geologist named Rosberg, together with a Finnish

³²⁰ Census 1921, 45, 47, 49; Census 1933, 728, 730, 732; Census 1947, 638, 640, 642.

companion called Frans Malmberg, were there in 1931 searching for minerals, and were involved in an accident in an overloaded boat on the Alligator River; the boat capsized, but both men managed to swim to the bank.³²¹ In 1936, Nestori Karhula reports that a Finnish miner called Ernst Karhula had been operated on in hospital in Darwin, and that by coincidence one of the other patients in the hospital at the same time was Frank Lee, who had left Finland fifty years before, and had spent 21 years in the Northern Territory. Since according to Karhula's information there were only four Finns in the entire Territory, it would appear that half the Finnish population was in the same hospital at the same time.³²²

The history of one Finn in the Northern Territory continues to be something of a mystery. This was Matti Ilmari Leinonen, brother of the writer Artturi Leinonen and a former soldier in the Finnish Jägers. Matti Leinonen was born in 1891 in Ylihärmä, Ostrobothnia, and trained as a tanner. In 1924, he sailed to Sydney, and moved immediately to the sugar farms at Tully and Cairns. By 1927, he gave his address as Darwin, NT, although he was also growing groundnuts at a place called Daly River Head of Berinka. He also used the name 'Jack Lee'. Later, he mined a claim at Tennant Creek until 1938. The last information available on Leinonen is a letter to the Finnish Consulate in 1938 from the police in Darwin, in which they state that he was working at Hatches Creek. No death certificate has been traced in the Registers of the Northern Territory, although it is possible that he had adopted a new name.³²³ Jim Aalto had heard that Leinonen was prospecting for gold in the Northern Territory together with a Finn called Lehtonen, and believed that Leinonen died of thirst and was buried in the Simpson Desert. Aalto believed this to have happened before the Second World War, around 1933 or 1934.³²⁴ No further information has been traced, despite repeated attempts.

There was some increase in Finnish numbers in the Northern Territory during the Second World War. In 1941, there were around twenty Finns in Darwin, mostly from Mt Isa, employed on building sites; one of them, however, C.F. Hamlin, was serving as a sergeant in the Army.³²⁵

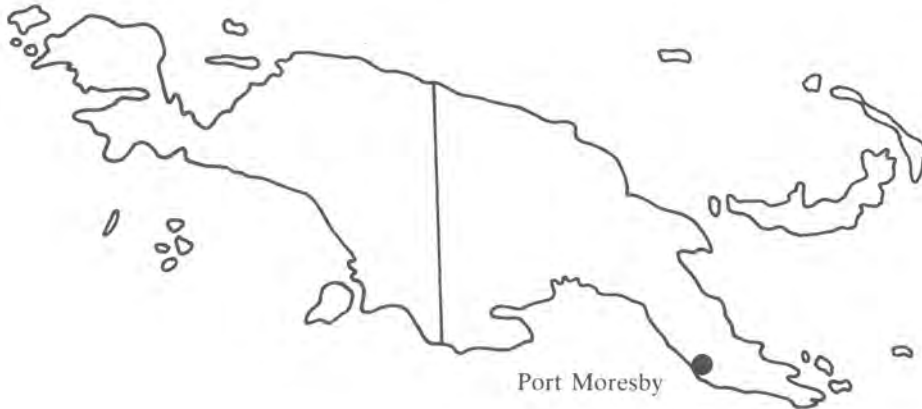
³²¹ Newspaper Cuttings File Ma to Me, UM Canberra.

³²² *Suomi*, 25 April 1936; letter from 'Ernie' (Ernst Karhula), Darwin, 26 March 1936, TYYH/S/X/7/III. — Frank Lee was originally a seaman from Hanko (Hangö), and travelled to Australia in 1887. NR 1926/21755 (28/3667).

³²³ *Finlandia News* 27 Nov. 1979; SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgc:5, 22 La-Le, UM, Helsinki.

³²⁴ Interview with Jim Aalto Sydney, 6 March 1981.

³²⁵ *Suomi*, 14 July 1941. See picture p. 293.



9. Finns in Australian New Guinea and Other Islands in the Region

New Guinea is situated in the tropics, to the north of Australia, and has been inhabited for at least 35 000, and possibly for 50 000 years. The earliest inhabitants came from south-eastern Asia, and supported themselves by hunting and fishing. The first European to discover New Guinea was the Portuguese explorer Jorge de Menes, who landed there in 1526. The name 'New Guinea' was given to the island in 1545 by the Spaniard, Inigo Ortiz de Retes, since it reminded him of the Guinea Coast in north-western Africa. The majority of the population of New Guinea consist of Melanesians, with some Pygmies and Papuans in the interior and a few local communities of Polynesians on the south-eastern coast and the surrounding islands. More recently, some Australians have moved to Papua New Guinea.

White settlement of the South Sea islands began during the 18th century, encouraged by interest in the China trade. The main centres of white settlement were New Zealand and Hawaii, although immigrant settlement in the strict sense initially only occurred on the Fiji Islands.³²⁶ One Finn who was in Fiji at the beginning of this century was a writer called Seth A. Franzén (the grandson of Bishop Frans Mikael Franzén). Later, Mrs Sylvie Bergroth, together with her son Kaj, bought some land in Fiji.³²⁷ There were also a few Finns to be found on some of the

³²⁶ KOSKINEN 1953, 126—127.

³²⁷ *Suomi*, 6 Aug. 1929; SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb:2, UM, Helsinki.

other South Sea islands, including a sailor called Edward Lindelöf, from Rauma, who had arrived in Australia at the beginning of the century, and eventually died in Port Moresby, New Guinea.³²⁸ The settlement of New Zealand has been excluded from the present study, as it is intended that this should be the object of a separate study at a later date.

Another Finn with a share in the history of New Guinea was Captain Hillel Liljeblad, the pilot who guided the Royal Navy into the harbour at Port Moresby in 1884. In recompense for these services, and for charting the difficult waters of New Guinea for the British Government, he applied for a grant of land at Granville, Port Moresby.³²⁹ It is not stated in the sources whether Liljeblad's request was granted or not. Later on, he worked as a harbour captain in Sydney, and died in 1925.³³⁰

Another early Finn in New Guinea was Otto Gustafson (mentioned above in the context of Western Australia and of the Finnish colony at Nambour), who took part in the New Guinea Gold Rush of 1896. Two decades later, the records tell of a Finnish pearl-diver and trading agent named Alek Stork living in New Guinea for several years.³³¹ Kalle Åström, also known as Charles Alfred Oström, born in Tuusula in 1875, made his fortune on the island of New Ireland in the Bismarck Archipelago to the north-east of New Guinea, where he owned four coconut plantations. Oström arrived in Australia in the late 1890s, and moved to New Guinea in 1904. He also arranged tickets and a job for his brother, Feliks Åström, who arrived with his family in New Guinea in 1926. Lauri Laiho (born in Rauma in 1895), an Esperanto enthusiast, moved from Melbourne to New Guinea in the 1920s, and was taken on the staff of a newspaper in Rabaul; he later wrote a book about his experiences, *Tropiikin kuvia* ['Pictures of the Tropics'].³³² Tanner, the Finnish Consul, also records that there was a Finnish ex-seaman living on the Solomon Islands.³³³

Gold was also the motive which brought August Peter Peterson to New Guinea, where he spent the years 1896—1901. He was an ex-seaman from Turku, who had gone ashore in Port Pirie in 1879, and thereafter wandered round various parts of Australia. He was

³²⁸ *Suomi*, 24 Nov. 1932.

³²⁹ Hillel Liljeblad to the Commissioner: Request for Grant of Land at Granville, 7 Aug. 1886, CRS G 9, 104/86, AA, Canberra; Original National Archives and Public Records Service of Papua New Guinea, Boroko; *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 June 1924.

³³⁰ Kalervo Groundstroem, Diary of the Seamen's Mission for 2 June 1924, SMLA Brisbane; cf. SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb:5, UM Helsinki.

³³¹ *Suomi*, 15 March 1926; letter from Lauri Laiho, Rabaul, to Tanner, the Finnish Consul, 18 Oct. 1925; SKA Sydney 1919—41. Fgc:5, 22 La-Le, UM, Helsinki.

³³² Laiho 1928, 89—90; see also *Suomi*, 14 March 1932.

³³³ Letter from Harald Tanner, Sydney, 7 March 1932, to N.I. Karhula, SKA Sydney.

naturalized in Croydon, Queensland, in 1928, at which time he was working as a market gardener.³³⁴ Finally, one Julius Conrad Forström, born in Åbo (Turku) in 1866, who had arrived in Sydney in 1883, eventually moved to New Guinea, where he died in 1931.³³⁵

The information listed here provides the known evidence concerning Finnish settlers on the islands in the vicinity of Australia.

10. Overall Summary: Finnish Settlement in Australia, 1851—1947

In comparison with many other nationalities, the numbers of Finnish immigrants in Australia during the period 1851—1947 were small. Nonetheless, they were to be found in every State and in the Northern Territory. In addition to scattered individuals, a number of permanent communities grew up. The earliest Finnish settlement, like that of the rest of the white population, was in New South Wales and Victoria, for the development of modern Australia in general was a process spreading outward from New South Wales and the eastern seaboard. Numerically speaking, the States with the largest Finnish populations were New South Wales and Queensland, with the former still in the lead in the 1921 Census, but overtaken by Queensland by the time of the following Census in 1933. In Victoria, the third most popular area for Finnish immigrants, the level of Finnish settlement remained fairly constant throughout the entire period under study. Finns were also to be found from an early date in South Australia, where a small Finnish community made their living from coastal shipping, fishing, and boat building. In Western Australia, the Finnish communities which grew up in mining areas and fishing ports remained small, Geraldton being the major one, while the numbers of Finns in Tasmania and the Northern Territory were extremely low. Finally, only isolated individuals made their way to the South Sea islands.

An essential feature of the Finnish settlement pattern in Australia is thus its scattered nature. Most of the Finns remained along the coastline, partly due to the attraction of the major ports; even the main Finnish agricultural communities were situated not far from the coast. The major exception to this rule is Mt Isa, the mining town in the bleak, hot interior, which drew Finnish workers in the depressed years of the 1930s with its promise of high earnings.

³³⁴ Qld NR 1928/4416.

³³⁵ C'th NR 1904/8088; NR 1940/8088 (the latter relates to the application of his son, Chas. Forström, to join the RAAF).

The few larger communities which did emerge in various parts of the country were largely the results of chain migration. This phenomenon arose following the larger-scale emigration to Australia from Finland (especially Ostrobothnia) in the 1920s. After spending a few years in their first locality, many of these immigrants then moved on, following work, relations, or acquaintances. Much of this 'local chain migration' occurred within State boundaries, but on occasion it involved crossing the border into another State, e.g. from Queensland into Western Australia in the 1930s; and in this, the Finns were essentially following patterns of movement in the Australian population as a whole, under the impact of fluctuations in the economy. Unemployment in the east triggered off movement to the west. A typical chain migration sequence could be from Cairns to Tully, via Mt Isa, to Western Australia; alternatively, there was always the option of the return to Finland.

The patterns of Finnish settlement in Australia will be analyzed further in the Conclusions of this study, in conjunction with an overall view of the history of Finnish immigration in Australia in its international context.

VI Adaptation

1. Introduction

This section will analyze the demographic features (gender, age, and marital structure) of the Finnish population in Australia before 1947, emphasizing the importance of these factors for the process of adjustment by an ethnic minority within European Australian society. The definition of what is meant here by the concept of *adaptation* has been discussed in detail in the Introduction (Chapter I, above): i.e. a process in the course of which the individual immigrant, or group of immigrants, adjusts to the surrounding society in economic, social, and cultural terms. Due to the inadequacy of the sources, only some general observations about the Finnish adaptation and the contextual conditions for this in Australian society can be made. Ethnic organizations, which form an integral component in adjustment, will however be treated separately in Chapter VII below.

The first prerequisite for adaptation by the individual immigrant is to find work, and to settle, in the new country. Patterns of settlement have been analyzed in detail in the preceding Chapter. Adaptation, however, begins from the moment the immigrants arrive in their new surroundings. Settlement in any one place by Finnish immigrants in Australia was slowed down, especially in the initial phases, by indecision. They were faced by a new country, with its myriad difficulties, yet simultaneously offering the opportunity to earn far higher wages than were attainable in the old country. The first few years were frequently spent effectively 'on walkabout', until the immigrant managed to obtain his own farm or a steady job. These initial years came to be called the 'dog years' (a phrase which took on added significance during the Depression of the 1930s): an Australian tradition, dating back to the beginnings of European settlement of the continent



Illus. 32: G.H. Wrede, tramping for work in Susegmon via Bourke (NSW) in 1923, and equipped in the Australian style to live outdoors both by day and by night. (Tanner/Finlandia News)

and the gold rush periods.

One of the factors affecting the process of adaptation is the immigrant's motives for emigrating. Characteristically, the Finns had set out for Australia solely with the intention of staying no longer than was needed to earn enough money to guarantee a better economic future back in Finland. The consequence of this, for many, was a restless trek from place to place in constant search of better wages. In practice, however, this way of life constantly consumed what savings they had managed to amass, on travelling and supporting themselves while searching for a new job, so that it was difficult to build up the capital they were aiming at.

The first stage in the process of adaptation was *economic integration*. In response to the employment opportunities available, the Finns were scattered around the continent: only in Queensland on any larger scale, and in a few places in other States, did any permanent Finnish settlement emerge, on the basis of farming or of mining. Time was needed to adapt to cultivating sugar cane, bananas, or other crops, or to working in the mines; in each case, the conditions were unfamiliar. Life became focused on money. In good times, though, there was plenty of this to be had.

The new immigrants also had to undergo a complex mental readjustment. The enthusiasm of the initial stage usually began to fade, or even vanished altogether, in the face of the everyday difficulties

which they encountered. Since all their available time was spent in the pursuit of material rewards, there was little opportunity left for self-fulfilment. The monotonous life, heavy drinking, and other problems made them prone to physical illness and mental stress. Nevertheless, the life of the immigrants also brought its own benefits: especially, an improved economic situation and the self-confidence gained from their experiences.

This section will begin with a survey of gender and age composition, which is essential for further analysis of marriage patterns, ethnic cohesion and adaptation.

2. Gender and Age Structure

As has frequently been observed, the migration process — especially over long distances — is selective, and usually leads to the emergence of an immigrant community with an abnormal gender and age structure.¹

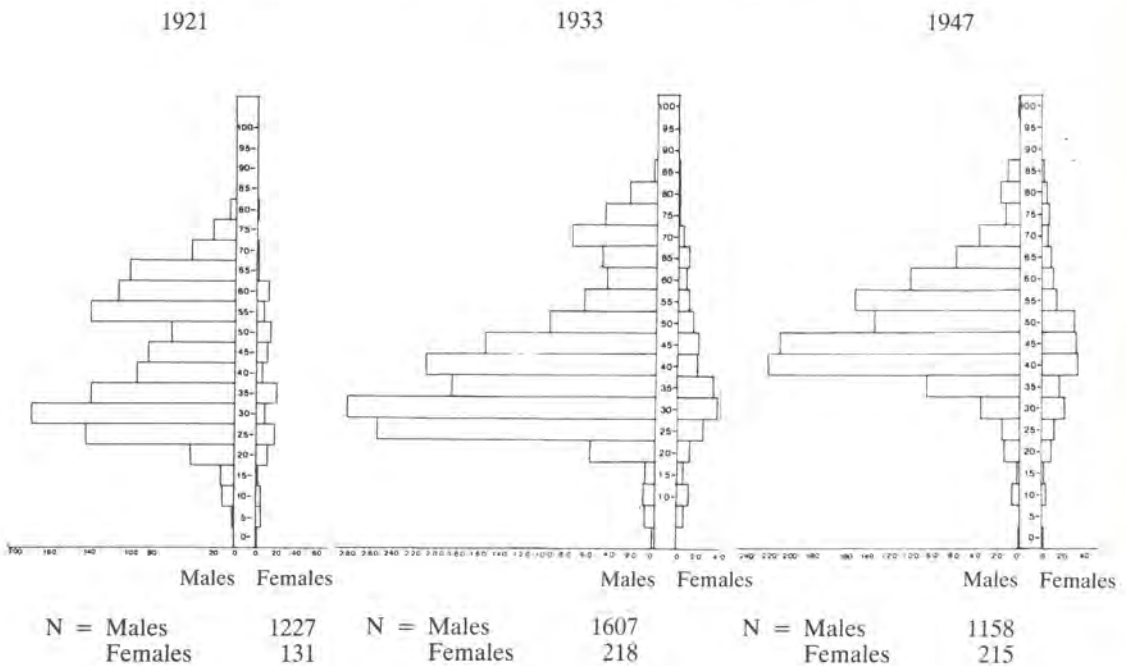


Fig. VI.1: Age Structure of the Finland-born Population in Australia as Recorded in the Censuses for 1921, 1933, and 1947

¹ LAVELL 1956, 22.



Illus. 33: The Finnish community in rural Queensland was male dominated. Evert Pennanen and Gösta Puutio from Kannus on the stairs of a caneshed at Long Pocket in Queensland in the early 1930's. Both returned to Finland. (Evert Pennanen/SI)

Fig. VI.1. illustrates the frequently-mentioned predominance of males in the Finnish community in Australia. In 1921, the women made up barely 10 per cent, expanding by 1933 to 12 per cent and by 1947 to 16 per cent. The highest relative proportion of women was to be found in the agriculturally-dominated community in Queensland, and the lowest in the ex-seamen's communities such as those in South Australia and Tasmania. In the 1880s, as has been pointed out, there were relatively many women in Adelaide, but by the 1920s these had either died or moved away. Tasmania, in turn, was virtually a pure ex-seamen's group, with 23 Finland-born men recorded in the 1921 Census but not a single Finland-born woman.

Compared with other Nordic immigrants in Australia the Finnish gender structure was very much similar. E.g. in 1933, when the proportion of women among the Finns was 12 per cent, it was 10 per cent among the Swedes, 13 per cent among the Norwegians and 25 per cent among the Danes.² Also in the USA, the men outnumbered the women: in 1900 there were 182 Finnish men to every 100 Finnish women. In time, however, this situation came into better balance, and by 1920 the ratio was 132 men to 100 women.³

² KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 227—232, 287.

³ HOGLUND 1980, 365.

A major factor affecting the process of adaptation by immigrants was their age on arrival. The majority of Finns arriving in Australia did so at a young age, for altogether two thirds of them were in the age-range 20—29.⁴

The earliest information available on the age structure of the Finnish immigrant population in Australia is from the 1921 Census. The most striking feature is the predominance of those of working age (see Fig. VI:1). Nevertheless, it may be noted that the proportion of those aged over 60 was higher in the Census for 1921 (over one fifth) than in either 1933 or 1947. These more elderly immigrants would have been those ex-seamen and others who had arrived in the 1880s. By 1933, the largest grouping consisted of the age-range 30—39, as a consequence of the new wave of immigration during the 1920s; but by 1947, the Finnish-Australian population had aged, due to the interruption of immigration by war and other causes. In 1947 there was even one Finland-born male over 100 years in age. The relatively small numbers of children recorded in these data are in part due to the fact that only Finland-born persons are recorded, immigrants's children born in Australia being excluded.

The low numbers of women in the data make it impossible for any major conclusions to be drawn. The age structure for the women does appear to match that for the men, however, e.g. in the 1933 Census the largest group of women was in the age-range 20—40. By this date, many of the men who immigrated during the 1920s had managed to bring their families to join them.

The comparison with other Nordic immigrants reveals that in the 1920s and 1930s the Danes, Swedes and Norwegians in Australia were in the older age groups, due to their early arrival, especially in the late 19th century.⁵ The different peaks of arrivals also make a comparison with Finns in North America not appropriate.

3. Marital Structure

The dominant feature affecting the marital structure of the Finnish-Australian population arises from the imbalance in gender structure: nine men to each one woman. Inevitably, this had implications for marriages, and for enforced celibacy, among the Finnish immigrants.

⁴ KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 24.

⁵ For the age pyramids of Swedes, Danes, and Norwegians in Australia; see KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 303.

Table VI.1: Marital Status of Finland-born Persons in Australia as Recorded in the Censuses for 1921 and 1933

Marital Status	1921			1933		
	M	F	T	M	F	T
Single	655	33	688	885	52	937
Married	495	82	577	613	143	756
Widowed	51	14	65	64	19	83
Divorced	2	1	3	11	2	13
Not available	24	1	25	34	2	36
TOTAL	1227	131	1358	1607	218	1825

Sources: Census 1921, 134—135, 138—139; 1933, 820—821, 824—825.

The 1921 and 1933 Censuses include information on the marital status of the Finnish immigrants, but unfortunately this information was no longer included in the 1947 Census.

Table VI:1 shows that in 1921 over half of the Finland-born men, and as many as a quarter of the women, were at that time unmarried. These figures do also include Finland-born children, though the numbers of these were not large (altogether only 33 persons aged under 20 in the 1921 Census). The proportion of the Finnish men in Australia who in 1921 were married was only 40 per cent, whereas for the women it amounted to almost 63 per cent. One woman in ten was widowed. There were no significant changes in this pattern of marital structure by the time of the 1933 Census, despite a slight increase in the proportions of unmarried men (due to the immigration in the 1920s) and of married women (since by 1933 many of the men registered in 1921 as single had managed to bring their families out to join them).

Table VI.2 shows that 56 per cent of the men naturalized between 1921 and 1946 were unmarried, as against only 51 per cent unmarried men recorded in the 1921 Census, and 57 per cent in the Census of 1933; thus both sources give the same findings.

Table VI.2: Marital Status of Men at Naturalization, 1921—46 (NR)

Marital Status	N	%
Single	395	56.1
Married	282	40.0
Divorced	8	1.1
Widowed	20	2.8
TOTAL	705	100.0

The Censuses do not include information on the nationality of spouses, but this information is available in the Naturalization Records for about 40 per cent of those taking out Australian citizenship during the period 1921—46. Only about one in four was married to a Finn; the majority were married to British women, as Table VI:3 shows. By this time there were a certain number of second-generation Finnish-Australian girls, but even so, the probability of finding a Finnish bride was low, since men from other ethnic groups were of course also attracted to the Finnish-Australian girls. Moreover, in places such as the sugar-growing areas of northern Queensland, there were other immigrant groups too — Italians and other Europeans — whose communities, like the Finns, were also male-dominated. Marriage to a spouse from a different ethnic group was hampered, however, especially in the early days, by hostile attitudes to the mixing of races and nationalities.⁶ Problems also arose from the differences in cultural background, especially with reference to role differentiation. In Finland, for example, housework was women's work,

Table VI.3: Nationality of Spouses of Married Finnish Men Naturalized 1921—46 (NR)

Nationality of Spouses	N	% ^a
Finnish or Scandinavian	78	26.9
Australian (British)	155	53.4
Other British	46	15.9
Other	11	3.8
TOTAL	290	100.0

Table VI.4: Country of Birth of Spouses of Persons Born in Finland and Marrying in Australia, 1923—40

Country of Birth	Men		Women	
	N	%	N	%
Finland	42	11.4	42	56.7
Australia	254	68.8	14	18.9
Other anglophone country	58	15.7	11	14.9
Other	15	4.1	7	9.5
TOTAL	369	100.0	74	100.0

Source: PRICE 1984, 24—25.

⁶ "Kun minä kotoani läksin [When I Left Home]", writing competition organized by the *Suomalainen Kulttuuriseura* [Finnish Culture Society], Brisbane, 1969, No 24.

whereas in Australia, domestic chores were shared by the men. Most of the marriages between two Finns were successful.⁷

As Table VI:4 indicates, four out of five Finland-born bridegrooms in Australia during the period 1923—40 married a British wife, and one in three Finland-born bride during the same period married a British husband, whereas around half of the women married Finnish husbands. The explanation for this imbalance is to be found in the gender structure of the Finnish-Australian community, with 10—15 Finnish women to every 100 Finnish men. In view of these figures, what is striking is the high proportion of Finnish women, one third, marrying British men. Marriage with a spouse from the host population is in most cases a strong influence promoting adaptation.⁸ Nevertheless, it is not possible to draw major conclusions in the case of ethnic groups where the absence of compatriot women forces the men to look for consorts from other nationalities.⁹

The comparison between the other Nordic nationalities in Australia reveals that marriage with British-Australians was most common among Norwegian and Swedish males. The frequency of Danish inmarriages was explained by the larger proportion of co-national women in Australia. The fact that the Finns, with a gender distribution similar to that of the Swedes and Norwegians, had even less marriages outside their own nationality than the Danes was considered to have some bearing on their adjustment process.¹⁰

4. Mortality

According to the records of deaths maintained by the Finnish Consulate in Sydney, during the period 1919—41 there were 594 Finns who died in Australia.¹¹ The cause of death is not always stated, but where it is, it is often illness (especially pneumonia) or accident (often drowning). There are also many reports in *Suomi* from the inter-Wars period of accidents involving Finns. Both mining and road construction appear to have been accident-prone occupations, and accidents befell seamen on board coastal shipping or in harbour. An additional factor often contributing to accident-proneness was drink.

⁷ *Keskipohjanmaa*, 11 Dec. 1951.

⁸ On the differing views on this issue, see KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 232—233.

⁹ Another group facing a similar situation, for example, were the Poles in Western Australia; see JOHNSTON 1965, 32—33.

¹⁰ KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 249.

¹¹ SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb:1—9.

5. Finnish Women in Australia

It is a striking feature of the early Finnish immigration in Australia — mainly due to the distance — that there were very few women; only 10—15 per cent of the Finns in Australia prior to 1947 were women, and in many places, there were no Finnish women at all.¹² Although it is possible that the first Finland-born woman to arrive in Australia may have come there in the 1840s,¹³ it has not been possible to verify this; the earliest Finnish woman in the Naturalization Records is Selina Nyberg, from Oulu, in 1882.¹⁴ Among the earliest Finnish women immigrants were probably the group of ten who arrived in South Australia in 1884. It is not possible to present any accurate figures for the total Finnish female population before 1921, but it is beyond dispute that they were outnumbered by the men many times over.

The majority of this small population of Finnish women lived in the major cities, where there were ample opportunities for domestic employment. The work taken by the women in Australia was thus largely similar to that in America, where virtually all the women were initially employed as domestics. Once they married, however, most of the women gave up paid work, although some of them then turned to running '*poortitaloja*', boarding houses.¹⁵

As was seen above in the examination of the marital status of the Finnish men, approximately half of them were married, which would *prima facie* have suggested the presence of larger numbers of Finnish women. Normally, however, the men went on ahead, leaving their wives and children in Finland, in order to explore the conditions in the new country and to make sure of a job, at least, before the family followed. This practice carried risks, however; sometimes the wife or fiancée would then refuse to leave her safe, familiar surroundings in Finland: sometimes the men became so used to their solitary existence on the farms that they lost interest in family life. Moreover, the majority of the Finnish immigrants had initially intended to remain in Australia only temporarily. There may also be cases where the departure of the man alone for Australia was in effect a form of divorce.

There has been relatively little investigation of the distinctive processes of adaptation to a new environment by women immigrants. There is a statement to the effect that in America the Finnish women adapted faster than the men to the new society. One reason contributing

¹² POHJANPALO 1931, 303, 306.

¹³ Census 1921, 256—258.

¹⁴ NSW NR 1904/9945.

¹⁵ TOIVONEN 1963, 147—148.

Illus. 34: Mrs Maria Lammi, a Finnish farmer's wife in her kitchen at Kulnura, NSW, 14 Sep. 1930. (Tanner/Finlandia News)



to this may be the nature of the women's typical employment. As domestic servants, they were introduced to the new way of life from the inside, as it were.¹⁶ The same observation would then also apply to the women immigrants in Australia, whose lives followed similar patterns to that of their Finnish-American sisters. Adaptation took place relatively rapidly, especially when it was furthered by marriage with a non-Finn. The major exception to this statement is formed by the farmwives on Finnish farms.

The second major role of the women, besides responsibility for the household and for the family, was that of preserver and promoter of culture. The women played an important part in voluntary organizations, being behind the initiative to form a Finnish society in both Long Pocket and Sydney, for instance. Wherever permanent Finnish settlement has emerged, the women have been prominently active in the voluntary organizations, e.g. by arranging 'Sewing Circles' to help to raise money to finance the societies.

¹⁶ AROMAA—KASKINEN 1984, 194.

6. The Second Generation

The official Censuses normally provide virtually no information at all on second-generation immigrants. In the 1933 Census, however, data are given on the numbers of dependent children under the age of 16. Only 7 per cent of the women were single parents. The total number of dependent children was 728. Over 40 per cent of the families had only one child, and almost 30 per cent had two; larger families, of five or more children, were recorded in only just under nine per cent of cases, and there were no cases of families with eight or more children.¹⁷ The majority of the Finnish immigrants recorded in the 1933 Census had arrived in Australia during the 1920s, and were still in the early phase of their marriages. It should also be borne in mind that over half of the Finnish immigrants at that time were unmarried.

There were difficulties of adaptation to be faced by those who had emigrated from Finland as children, just as there were for their parents. Newly arrived in an unfamiliar society, the immigrant children were often the butts of teasing and bullying; as one immigrant recalls, the hardest thing for a child to face was to be different from the others.¹⁸

The preservation of the children's Finnishness (including those who had arrived as babies) was crucially dependent on the environment in which they grew up. In general the second generation lived between two cultures. There is for instance a record from the Finnish settlement at Nambour in 1904 that — often after only a few years in Australia — children spoke English as well as Finnish, and English was used between children, but Finnish was spoken to the parents.¹⁹

The files of the Finnish Seamen's Mission do contain some information on a few Finnish children born in Australia in the period before the First World War. These files record nine girls and six boys, one born in Tasmania, eleven in Queensland, and three simply recorded as born in 'Australia', together with 36 for whom no place of birth is stated, and six born in Finland.²⁰

The descendants of the Finnish immigrants prior to 1947 were interested in their parents' homeland and its culture. Most of them spoke Finnish, especially in cases where it was used in the home, or supported in some other way, e.g. by the Finnish-language Confirmation

¹⁷ Census 1933, 832, 834.

¹⁸ "Kun minä kotoa läksin [When I left home]", writing competition organized by *Suomalainen Kulttuuriseura* [the Finnish Culture Society], Brisbane, 1969, No 24.

¹⁹ Letter from Richard Rönnlund, Nambour, 12 Oct. 1904, to relatives in Finland. Martta Luoma's papers, Karijoki.

²⁰ Files of the Finnish Seamen's Mission, SMLA Brisbane.

Illus. 35: Two Finnish girls (Martta Nissilä and Linnea Jukkola) at Long Pocket, Qld, in the 1920s. (Eino Keskinen/SI)



Classes held during the Second World War in Brisbane. (There were six confirmands attending the classes; Confirmation was nevertheless carried out in English, since two of the children were unable to understand Finnish.)²¹ According to Pastor Hytönen, virtually all Finnish children were confirmed, despite the difficulty of arranging for classes and confirmation by a Lutheran minister. Confirmation classes were held either in Finnish or in English; Hytönen noted that the youngsters in northern Queensland spoke Finnish well.²² The Church has played a major role in maintaining Finnish culture among the children of immigrants, as has been found in America by ILMONEN, who also noted that second-generation Finnish-American children did better in school than children of other nationalities.²³ In 1936, the *Heimo* Society in Brisbane discussed setting up a Young People's Association, in order to prevent the loss of their ethnic roots. This proposal received a warm response, but a decision on it was shelved, and the idea was never in fact taken up again.²⁴

Frequently the children of Finnish immigrants were unable to speak Finnish, especially if the mother was an English-speaker, as was usually

²¹ *Suomi*, 13 Sep. 1941.

²² MY 10/1946.

²³ ILMONEN 1931, 154—155. This may be an "over-nationalistic" view.

²⁴ *Heimo Seura*, Minutes of the Meeting on 8 Nov. 1936, §5.

the case with the earlier immigrants, due to the lack of Finnish women.

The second generation of Finnish-Australians had an easier time than their parents, thanks in particular to their command of English, which opened the way to upward social mobility, especially via education. By the 1930s, reports begin to appear from time to time in the press of Finnish students passing their Higher Certificates, for example, or becoming a pilot or an engineer, as the second generation began to move into occupations demanding a higher level of training.²⁵ There is a need for a more detailed study of the second-generation Finns in Australia, especially with reference to their maintenance of Finnish culture and identity.

7. Knowledge of English

On the whole, the evidence suggests little friction between the Finnish immigrants and the British-Australians or other ethnic groups. Such problems as did arise were often due to the lack of a common language, with the consequently greater risk of misunderstanding, and the greater difficulty of obtaining an objective information about other people. There is very little information concerning the language skills of the early Finnish immigrants, in the 19th century,²⁶ but since many of them were ex-seamen, it may be assumed that they had acquired at least a smattering of English on board ship. They would thus have been able to interpret for their fellow-countrymen who began to arrive in larger numbers around the turn of the century.

In Australia as elsewhere, the image of Finns as poor speakers of English was widespread. Nor did they necessarily need to learn English in all cases, especially in Queensland, where by the 1920s there were communities where one could manage with Finnish alone. In good

²⁵ Vuolle collection of press cuttings, microfilm roll 4, SI. The first Finnish-Australian student to pass the Higher Certificate may have been Wesley Virsu, in Sydney; the second was Toini Karhula from Brisbane.

²⁶ There has as yet been no thorough study made (in Australia or any other country of settlement) of the language of Finnish immigrants and its development to compare with Einar HAUGEN's major work, *The Norwegian Language in America: A study in Bilingual Behavior*, I—II (Philadelphia 1953; reprinted in one volume by the Indiana University Press in 1969). The state of information concerning the Finns in America will be radically improved once Professor Pertti Virtaranta's Dictionary of Finnish-American is published, and there is also a project on the language of the Finnish-Americans in progress at the University of Joensuu. Early in 1986, Professor Virtaranta also set up a project investigating Finnish in America and Australia supported by the Finnish Academy of Sciences. Research into Finnish spoken in America is also being carried out by Hannele Jönsson-Korhola, Maija Kainulainen, and Maisa Martin, and into the Finnish-Americans' English by Professor Pekka Hirvonen and Päivi Pietilä. The Finnish-Australians' Finnish language is being investigated by Hannele Hentula.

Table VI.5: Finnish Immigrants' Knowledge of English, 1921

Level of knowledge of English	Men	Women	Total
Cannot read	41	4	45
English language, read only	63	7	70
English language read and write	994	92	1086
Foreign language only, read only	10	2	12
Foreign language only, read and write	87	24	111
Not stated	32	2	34
TOTALS	1227	131	1358

Source: Census 1921, 134—135 and 138—139.

times, there was plenty of work even for those with no English. When times became hard, however, then the inability to speak English was a barrier.

For more recent periods, there are some statistics available on the language skills of the immigrants. The 1921 Census includes comments on the Finns' ability in English: as indicated in Table VI.5, four out of five of the Finnish men, and two out of three of the women, were recorded as being able to read and write English. The Censuses for 1933 and 1947, however, no longer included corresponding information.

However, statements concerning immigrants' language skills should be treated with some caution. The ability to speak a language is a relative concept. Table VI.5 would suggest that the Finns' abilities in English were quite good; one reason for this, however, is that at the time of the 1921 Census, a relatively large proportion of the Finns in Australia had been in the country for several decades; this Table does not include the thousand or so Finnish immigrants who arrived during the 1920s, and about whose English abilities it would have been interesting to learn, had the 1933 Census included equivalent information. The Census information in 1921, moreover, was based on self-reported ability, which reduces its value.

The Finns themselves were quick to realize the importance of language skills, and some language courses in English were proposed; a plan was put forward in 1902 for the *Erakko* Society in Nambour to hold such a course, for example, but this never materialized.²⁷ The motivation was however often inadequate to maintain active language

²⁷ *Erakko* Society, Minutes of the Meetings on 26 Oct. 1902, § 3, and 15 March 1903, § 6, TYYH.

studies, under the pressures of work and other commitments. In Tully, for example, in 1931 the local *Suomi* Society organized an English course; at the outset it was greeted with enthusiasm, and about twentyfive men registered for the course, but most of them dropped out fairly soon.²⁸ Although the first-generation immigrants therefore either never learnt English at all, or only to a limited extent, they nevertheless gradually found their niche in Australian society; and their children, attending Australian schools, soon had acquired enough command of English to be able to translate for their parents, and thus to ease the work of the Finnish interpreters such as Nestori Karhula in Brisbane.

There were some first-generation immigrants, on the other hand, who withdrew from Finnish contacts, and were absorbed into their anglophone surroundings so completely that they began to forget their Finnish, particularly if they married a non-Finnish-speaking spouse. Contacts within the context of work also led to the introduction of English terms into Finnish, and the emergence of various 'work slangs'; it became virtually impossible for a sugar farmer from northern Queensland and a miner from Mt Isa to understand each other talking about their respective work.

8. Relations with the Host Population and with Other Ethnic Groups

At the beginning of the century, Finns were often regarded by the Australians as potentially unreliable, because of the connection of Finland with the Tsarist Empire. Similarly, the impact of the Russian Revolution continued to reflect on the Finns until well into the 1920s, with articles in the Australian press writing about Finland in a hostile tone, and comparing Finns with Russians.²⁹ The Finns themselves partly contributed to the Australians' suspicions. In the aftermath of the Finnish Civil War, there is some evidence that the Finns on the sugar plantations in northern Queensland were divided into two groups, the Whites and the Reds, and the Reds published a warning against White Finnish spokesmen in the Labor paper *The Worker*.³⁰ The overwhelming majority of the Finns in Australia, however, were White. Their leaders,

²⁸ *Suomi*, 9 April 1931; Oja 1972, 82.

²⁹ Letter from Kustaa Wienonen, dated 1 June (no year), Valley Line, to Nauklér, the Finnish Consul, SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb:9, 22, Wi—Wö, UM, Helsinki.

³⁰ Letter from Nestori Karhula, Redlynch, 8 June 1925, to Tanner, the Finnish Consul, SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgb: 5, V 22, 'N.I. Karhula', UM, Helsinki. This issue of *The Worker* was published on 19 March 1925.

moreover, such as Karhula, always emphasized that the Finnish-Australians formed a single national group, without political divisions,³¹ one reason for this being their small numbers. The level of confrontation was quite different in the larger Finnish immigrant communities in the USA and Canada.³²

Other factors affecting contacts with the anglophone host population, besides language, were swings in the economy, and changes in the political climate. When depression leads to deterioration in employment, it is easy for host populations to blame this unemployment on immigrant labour. Competition for the same, scarce jobs does not encourage good relations between immigrant and host populations.

Among the Australian host population, there was considerable unrest about immigration into northern Queensland, especially from southern Europe. Organizations such as the trade unions, the Returned Soldiers, etc., drew attention to the extent of immigration and its impact on employment.³³ In response to these pressures the Labor Government in Queensland appointed a Committee of Enquiry under Thomas Ferry, to study the situation in the north of the State. T.A. Ferry visited Cairns on 8 May 1925; the meeting was held in the Town Hall, and evidence was submitted on behalf of the Finnish community in a written deposition by Nestori Karhula. He began by giving a brief survey of the history of Finland (and a reference to the Finnish successes at the Paris Olympics), and went on:

Most of the men got big families (and they have) to make their living. If they will now to be deprived of a chance to get some work, it should be for them too hard. It means that whole their life should have gone. — Humanity and from the point of view of interest of community it should be more right to support the newchums, when they in a short time could be useful inhabitants of the commun[ity] when vice versa they very easily could become permanent exertion to the country, what we Finns at least would not like to be. — Most of us Finns have come to Australia with intention to get a piece of land and settle here. We dont hope anything more than to get from the government a few thousands of acres of wild scrub land someway in North-Queensland or elsewhere. . . if anyhow it will be so that Australian-Government do not want us Finns here, from the reasons, what we do not know, so we beg only, that, the Government will, as soon as possible, stop the immigration from Finland and give us, who have come into the country the liberty to work 2—3 years under the existing laws and awards under which we have come into this country; without any restriction. This to our mind, will be the only lawfully right and honest method and every Finn known here, is willing to agree that.³⁴

³¹ "Australian suomalaisten yhteistyö (Co-operation among the Finns in Australia)", TYYH/S/X/7/III.

³² See KOSTIAINEN 1978; and RAIVIO 1975.

³³ PRICE 1963, 204.

³⁴ "Queenslandin suomalaiset (The Finns of Queensland)", TYYH/S/X/7/IV, original document in English (sic.).

Karhula's main motive was clearly to persuade the Government of Queensland that the Finns were desirable immigrants. The document also offers a valuable insight into the situation at that time. Newly arrived, and without an adequate command of English, the Finnish immigrants were in the process of adapting themselves to the employment available within the local economy, and clearly there were fears in the Finnish community of possible steps which the Government might take. Despite the fact that the real targets for the wave of xenophobia were the southern Europeans, the Finns felt themselves threatened.

In the *Ferry Report* the Italians and Greek came in for criticism, but the Finns were praised:

Among the Northern Europeans a number of Finns have recently arrived in the Cairns district. A few of these are farmers, others are field workers, carpenters and mechanics. Generally they are a well educated, clean living, and industrious people.³⁵

Sugar provided the main form of work open to those Finns who remained in the Cairns area. In 1928 there were seven Finnish gangs operating, but by the following year, their number had fallen to four. The Finns were bitter, accusing the Yugoslavs of depriving them of work by buying contracts from farmers at £50 to £100 a time; Finns had also been asked to pay. What was happening was indeed that the southern Europeans were taking over the jobs that had been done by the Finns.³⁶ The number of Finnish gangs continued to dwindle, and by 1933 there were none left in Cairns, although there were 11 Finns still working in Italian gangs.³⁷

The acuteness of the situation is revealed in the following description by a Finnish immigrant of a hiring fair for labour, in 1929:

... just like every year, there was an enormous crowd of men young strong workers of every nationality offering themselves for six months work. Only 100-per-cent British were wanted, *it was very bad day off all finns* [sic] — But just wait till the sun starts beating down in november again then the British lose their appetite for the work Then the Finns will do fine thankyou.³⁸

Nor was the Cairns district the only place where friction arose between different ethnic groups under the strain of the worldwide Depression. In 1931, at the initiative of the trade union in Mt Isa, new Finnish and southern European workers were barred from the mines, to prevent

³⁵ T.A. Ferry, "Report of the Royal Comission to inquire into the Social and Economic Effect of Increase in Numbers of Aliens in North Queensland", *QLD Parliamentary Papers* 1925, Vol. 3, p.19.

³⁶ *Suomi*, 18 June 1929.

³⁷ *Suomi*, 5 June 1933.

³⁸ Diary of Niilo Oja for 15 May 1929, microfilm roll 4, SI. Diary in Finnish, but the passage quoted in italics is in English in the original.

them from swamping the entire labour market. A complaint was lodged, however, which reached the Minister of Labor, and the whole question was then taken up again at a General Meeting. On a vote, a majority supported re-admitting Finnish job applicants, and their status was restored.³⁹ Similar problems arose on the sugar plantations at Cairns in the 1920s, when the State Government ruled that at least 50 per cent of the sugar cropping labourers should be British. The payment of 'backhanders' to employers was also widespread, and this the Finns never came to accept, according to the evidence available.⁴⁰

The material available does not give much information about the relations between the Finns and the other immigrant groups. There was some tension — or at least competition — between Finnish and Italian canecutters in northern Queensland, especially during the depression.⁴¹ There is also some evidence about contacts with Asian immigrants. When the group of Matti Kurikka was very "hard up" at the Chillagoe railway camp in northern Queensland, Chinese gave them food.⁴² As told earlier (p. 246) a storekeeper from Ceylon was involved with the Finns concerning the contest of the legacy of Russian Jack after his death in 1914 at Long Pocket near Ingham.

Concerning the attitudes of the Finnish immigrants towards the Aborigines, the major impression is that of general European curiosity. Niilo Oja visited local natives at the Tully River in 1927, and again by the Herbert River in 1932, publishing the pictures in his book⁴³ based on his diary. The lack of sources concerning the Aborigines is evidence of the paucity of contacts with the primitive people of Australia. There was, however, some co-operation between the Finns and the Australian Aborigines. Nestori Karhula recounted that when the first time he walked from Ingham to Cairns, in 1921, there were no roads and as a guide he had a "black boy".⁴⁴ A reason for the lack of information about the contacts between the Finns and Aborigines is also that there is not much information in general about the Finnish pioneer settlers, and when the Finns started to arrive in larger numbers in early 20th century the white European settlement was already well established.

Another measure of the degree of integration of the immigrants into the host society is the frequency of enlistment in the armed forces. Enlisting was not always genuinely voluntary, it should be noted; during the First World War, for example, the high unemployment, further

³⁹ Interview with Jussi Tilus, Mt Isa 25 May 1970.

⁴⁰ See especially the diaries (Oja, Keskinen); also oral tradition, recounted to me while visiting Finnish settlers in North Queensland in 1970.

⁴¹ Diaries of Eino Keskinen and Niilo Oja, SI.

⁴² Interview with Mrs Hirmukallio, Brisbane 15 and 17 June 1970.

⁴³ Oja 1972, 44, 104.

⁴⁴ Interview with Nestori Karhula, Brisbane 7 April 1969.



Illus. 36—38: Finns in the Australian armed forces: Top: Niilo Kara, a combatant in WW I (Karl W. Suominen/SI). Left: Victor Stenlund at Darwin during WW II (Toivo Kuusiola/SI). Right: Lt Ragnar Ramstadius, 1941. (R. Ramstadius/SI)

exacerbated by strikes, virtually forced foreign immigrants to sign up.⁴⁵ There are no accurate figures for the number of Finns in the Australian armed forces in 1914—18; it may be assumed that several dozen joined up (the highest number to have been suggested is 800, but this is obviously an exaggeration).⁴⁶ The files of the Seamen's Mission record a number of Finns in the armed forces during World War I (22 in all), some of whom must presumably have taken part in the fighting.⁴⁷ In the United States, on the other hand, the number of Finns in the armed forces by 1919 amounted to 11 000.⁴⁸

The outbreak of the Second World War, and the subsequent declaration of war on Finland by the United Kingdom on 6 December 1941, led inevitably to consequences in Australia as well. The Finns were now enemy aliens, and were regarded with prejudice and hostility. The press published articles which followed the official propaganda line, presenting Finland in a derogatory light; e.g. the article in one paper describing Marshal Mannerheim as "this German-Swede disguised as a Finnish hero".⁴⁹

During the Winter War between Finland and the Soviet Union, Fenno-Australian relations were warm. The Australian Federal Government even donated £10 000 to the fund set up by the Finnish immigrants, with the proviso that the money must not be used for military purposes (this stipulation applied to the entire fund). The money was channelled to the Finnish Red Cross.⁵⁰ Following the declaration of war by the United Kingdom, however, supervision and control were intensified in Australia, and internment camps were set up in various parts of the country. Altogether, 142 Finns were interned; the largest number, 88, in Queensland. By 1944, there were altogether 6982 aliens in the internment camps, including 4727 Italians and 1115 Germans.⁵¹

The evidence from interviews with some of those interned in Australia during World War II suggests that conditions in the camps were not particularly severe, at least in comparison with similar camps in Europe. One Finnish seaman internee recalls how they sometimes locked the doors in the evenings themselves, to protect their Australian guards from getting into trouble with their superiors. The Finns were regarded

⁴⁵ Letter from J.O. Boijer, Sydney, to L. Kurki, Shanghai, 9 April 1918: 'I maailmansota ja Australian suomalaiset [World War I and the Finns in Australia]', TYYH/S/X/7/III.

⁴⁶ *Uusi Suomi*, 14 Dec. 1926.

⁴⁷ Files of the Finnish Seamen's Mission, SMLA Brisbane.

⁴⁸ ILMONEN 1931, 8. It has not been possible to check this information from other sources.

⁴⁹ *The Australasian*, 31 July 1943.

⁵⁰ SKA 1919—41, Fgb:1, 22, UM, Helsinki.

⁵¹ LAMIDEY 1974, 52. On the internment of the Germans, see HARMSTORF & CIGLER 1985, 136—147.

as political internees, rather than as prisoners of war.⁵² As the War drew towards its end, internment was gradually relaxed, and by the end of 1944 there were only 4550 persons still in the camps, of whom 59 were Finnish.⁵³

The activities of the Finnish societies were suspended during the War, and even the press and records of the Finnish newspaper, *Suomi*, were impounded. The pastor from the Finnish Seamen's Mission, Hytönen, was interned, for it was considered that he had published pro-German articles in the Mission's paper.⁵⁴ Nestori Karhula was also interned on the grounds of his alleged German sympathies.

With the exception of the special situation created by the Wars, however, the relations between Finns and English-speaking Australians were on the whole good. Finns had the same reputation in Australia as they gained elsewhere, for being hard-working and reliable. For the first-generation immigrants, though, their inability to speak English presented in many cases a constant block to closer contacts with the host population. Matti Kurikka, for example, recounted how members of his group had obtained work from his neighbours, who had heard of the work of Finnish carpenters and joiners.⁵⁵

9. Changing Nationality

Neither naturalization, nor an immigrant's retention of his or her original nationality, necessarily permits any major conclusions to be drawn with respect to adaptation to the immigrant's new surroundings. In most cases, naturalization was linked with the decision to settle in Australia permanently. Other factors were major public events, such as war, or the fact that eligibility for particular benefits, such as the right to hold land, or to receive an old-age pension, was tied to nationality. Pension rights were the major factor from 1908, when the Commonwealth passed its first Old-age and Invalid Pensions Act, with retirement ages of 65 for men and 60 for women. Only British subjects, however, were eligible, the other conditions laid down being continuity of residence in Australia, good reputation, and responsibility for the applicant's family, whom the applicant was required to have supported for five years prior to the application. The minimum age for an invalid pension was 16, and the conditions imposed in this case were a minimum of five years' resi-

⁵² Interview with John Monola, Adelaide, 13 April 1981.

⁵³ LAMIDEY 1974, 54.

⁵⁴ Oja 1972, 165.

⁵⁵ *Elämä* 30.12.1905.

dence in Australia, that the applicant's disability was not self-caused, and that he or she was not receiving a pension from any other source. Both classes of pension rights were subject to withdrawal should the beneficiary permanently leave Australia, or receive a sentence for a criminal offence.⁵⁶

During the 19th century, approximately a quarter of the Finnish immigrant men were naturalized as British subjects; in the post-Federal period, approximately half were.⁵⁷ These are rough estimates; they also tally with the estimates for foreign immigrants in general in Australia.⁵⁸

Prior to the responsibility for naturalization being taken over by the federal Commonwealth Government in 1904, the separate States (i.e. the former Colonies) had been responsible for granting British nationality, although they had applied varying criteria. The main criterion was the length of residence in the Colony or some other British territory. Subsequently, under the terms of the 1920 Nationality Act, the following conditions had to be fulfilled for eligibility for naturalization:

(1) a total length of residence in Australia of five years, including at least one year continuously prior to the application;

(2) applicants were to be of good reputation, and to have a satisfactory command of English;

(3) applicants must have the intention of settling in Australia permanently.

Naturalization was granted by the Governor General, for a fee of £5, and involved the swearing of an oath of fealty. Dependent children could be included in the application; in this case they had the right to surrender their status as British subjects, if they so chose, within one year of reaching the age of majority.⁵⁹

In 1921, when the average age of the Finnish population in Australia was relatively high, almost 60 per cent had become British subjects, the men mainly by grant and the women mainly through marriage. Harald Tanner, the Finnish Consul, reports 902 Finns taking out naturalization during the period 1904—26.⁶⁰ As can be seen from Table VI.6, women were British citizens relatively more often than men. In 1933, on the other hand, following the wave of new Finnish immigration in the 1920s, 60 per cent of the men, as against only 46 per cent of the women, were still Finnish citizens. The subsequent flow of return migration to Finland, and the impact of the Second World War, however, meant that by

⁵⁶ *Suomi*, 22 July 1936; KEWLEY 1973, 43—44, 66, 73.

⁵⁷ KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 38.

⁵⁸ PRICE 1954, 294.

⁵⁹ P. Simelius, "Siirtolaisten maahantuloa koskevat määräykset [Regulations Governing the Entry of Immigrants]". *Suomi*, 23 May 1936; SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgc:4, 22 J, UM, Helsinki

⁶⁰ *Suomi*, 1 Oct. 1927.

Table VI.6: Nationality of Finland-Born Persons

Nationality	1921			1933			1947		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Finnish	517	37	554	962	100	1062	381	43	424
British or other	710	94	804	645	118	763	777	172	949
TOTAL	1227	131	1358	1607	218	1825	1158	215	1373

Sources: Census 1921, 209—213; 1933, 843—844; 1947, 788—793.

1947 two thirds of the Finland-born men, and four fifths of the women, were naturalized British subjects. The most important factor affecting naturalization is thus confirmed as length of residence; for as has been noted, immigrants tended to be relatively old when they took out naturalization.

Only in the 1933 Census is there any breakdown of the nationalities other than Finnish or British occurring among the Finnish immigrants: the category 'British or other', representing 42 per cent of the men (1607 altogether), included 634 British subjects (39.5 per cent), 13 Swedish citizens, 6 Russian citizens, three nationals of the United States, and one citizen each from Estonia and Denmark; the Finnish citizens numbered 949, i.e. 59 per cent. Of the women, (218 altogether), 51 per cent were British subjects, 44 per cent Finnish citizens, and otherwise there was a similar breakdown as for the men.⁶¹

10. The Preservation of Finnishness

The active involvement of the Finns in voluntary ethnic organizations, and their flourishing Finnish-language press, are clear evidence of the preservation of their ethnic identity. An essential element in Finnish identity is the Finnish language, which has continued to survive in homes and in the various clubs and in the press. Nowadays, the Finnish-Australians have started to establish Finnish-language schools, in order to ensure the survival of the language among their Australian-born children. Other features which the Finns brought with them to Australia included customs such as the manner in which Christmas and

⁶¹ Census 1933, 878—879, 880—881.



Illus. 39: The Finns must have their national steam bath, the sauna, even in the tropics. Finnish banana grovers at Wolvi via Gympie, Qld, on 29 Nov. 1930. (Jorma Pohjanpalo/SI)

Midsummer were celebrated.

Another very distinctive feature of Finnish culture, which the emigrants have carried with them all over the world, is the sauna. One of the distinguishing features of the Finnish farms in the United States was the log-built sauna, often put up before the actual house.⁶² Similarly, the Finns carried the sauna with them to the southern hemisphere, too. Even in the scorching mining town of Mt Isa there were saunas, which in fact provided relief against the heat: for an hour or so after sauna, the skin felt cool. Saunas were sunk underground, built on poles, or set up inside enormous tin barrels. Only in the making of the sauna whisks were the Finns forced to submit to the conditions imposed by the environment: in the absence of birch trees, the whisks had to be made from the soft-leaved eucalyptus.

Finnish-language names are another important aspect of ethnic identity; but in fact it often became necessary to change names in order to avoid problems with the new surroundings. For non-Finns, long Finnish names, with their unfamiliar letters — *ä*, *å*, and *ö* — were quite impossible to pronounce or to remember. Four practices emerged in adapting Finnish names to the English-speaking environment:

(1) The original Finnish name was used as a basis for the creation of a

⁶² ILMONEN 1916, 69—70; RUSSEL 1937, 73.

name observing the rules of English phonetics: e.g. *Montonen* › *Montana*, or *Korpi* › *Corby*.

(2) The Finnish name might be literally translated into English: e.g. *Pohjola* › *Northby*, *Saarinen* › *Island*, or *Kallio* › *Rock*.

(3) An English name might be adopted which was totally unconnected with the Finnish name; e.g. *Matti Halonen* › *Andrew Anderson*, or *Ludvig Bergström* › *Dick Thompson*.

(4) Occasionally patronymics were used and translated: e.g. *Antin poika* › *Anderson*, or *Jussin / Juhanin poika* › *Johnson*.

Nevertheless, no serious conclusions can be drawn from the assimilation of names, for this was essentially a step dictated by social pressures. Assimilation of names is a widespread practice among smaller ethnic groups in Australia.

There was no Finnish-language literature or art in Australia of any significance before World War II. Occasionally plays were put on in Finnish at local Finnish societies, sometimes written by the immigrants themselves. There was, however, one Finnish author, who wrote in English, the backwoods philosopher Karl Johan Back (originally a Swedish-speaker from Munsala arriving in 1899). Despite having become a relatively wealthy farmer in Mullumbimby, K.J. Back's real interests were in literature and philosophy, and in 1918, under the pseudonym 'Australianus', he published a 336-page collection of aphorisms called *The Concentrated Wisdom of Australia*. The main characteristics of Back's philosophy were closeness to nature, an assent to life, love of one's neighbours, and humour. In 1920, Back brought out his second book, *The Royal Toast* (248 pp.), dedicated to the Australian visit of the Prince of Wales. This book consists mainly of poems, many of them apparently written during the First World War in a patriotic, anti-German spirit. It includes poems on the British Royal Family and about the War, together with other kinds of poems, some prose, and a selection of the aphorisms contained in the previous book. At the end of the book, Back issued a challenge to the entire world for literature and poetry in any language whatsoever. The competition was to be open to all peoples, races, and languages, with the exception of Australia and New Zealand. Three universities would be asked to act as judges, and Back offered a prize of £500. It is not recorded how the world reacted to Back's challenge.

In addition to these two books, Back also wrote a number of pamphlets, four of which, written in 1931—32, are in the Mitchell Library in Sydney.⁶³

⁶³ Among these are: *K.J. Back's Banking System; A Christmas Present and a New Year's Gift to all Nations for 1931—32* (8 pp.).

K.J. Back's Credit System of Finance (9 pp.).

Illus. 40: Karl Johan Back (1877—1962, from Munsala, the first Finnish-Australian author.) (SI)



Karl Johan Back died in Australia in 1962, at the age of 84. He was the first Finnish author in Australia: a lifelong bachelor, eccentric, thinker and writer, he stands out among the Finnish immigrants. It is also striking how closely he had integrated into British-Australian society; only occasionally in his writings is there a hint of his former home in Finland, and his patriotism, strongly coloured by the First World War, is focused on Australia and on Britain.

A Solution of the World's Financial Problems (20 pp.).

K.J. Back's Financial System (8 pp.).

Back's other works include: *The Release of Credit on Securities; The Folly of Financing with Foreign Capital; The Fulfillment of the Prophecy; Spiritualism; and K.J. Back's Moral Philosophy.*

VII Ethnic Organization in Adjustment and in the Maintenance of Ethnicity

1. Introduction

Before the turn of the century, there were few Finns in Australia, and the few that there were led an unsettled life. Many were solitary ex-seamen, or labourers, drifting from place to place in search of work. There were also many who had married English-speaking wives, an additional factor isolating them from any moves towards Finnish links. Nor had the earliest immigrants probably any experience of organizational activities, and their education was minimal. The later Finnish immigrants, on the other hand, had in many cases experience of organizational activity in the labour movement, in youth organizations, etc., before they came to Australia.

The primary prerequisite for the emergence of any Finnish organization on a regular basis was relatively permanent Finnish settlement: there had to be a large enough community of people sharing a common language and living close to each other. The motivation had to be there; and there had to be intellectually aware and competent leaders, capable of taking on the often thankless task of organizing local activities. The Finnish women also played an essential role both in establishing and in maintaining organized activities. It was often the women who took the initiative towards setting up a local society, and their Sewing Circles and other women's activities played an important part in supporting the societies' often shaky finances.

The Scandinavians had established their first organizations as early as the 1850s, on the gold fields at Ballarat, complete even with their own premises.¹ Later on, moves were made to set up pan-Nordic activities, in

¹ KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 94—95.

which the Finns could also take part: e.g. in Sydney, during the First World War, where inter-Nordic church services, Christmas outings, etc., were held.² The language barrier, however, appears to have been an obstacle to Finnish participation. Co-operation with the Estonians, however, seemed a natural step. An Estonian Association had been founded in Sydney in 1912, but there is no evidence of Finnish involvement in its activities;³ then in 1924 a Finnish-Estonian Society was set up in Sydney.⁴ Estonians sometimes also took part in the activities of Finnish societies elsewhere. In most cases, however, Finnish-organized activities in Australia were exclusively Finnish.

The dominant objectives of the activities in the Finnish societies were social in nature, although educational and economic goals also had some influence. The majority of them aimed to be politically completely non-partisan, although there were a few exceptions, especially the early ones.

2. The *Erakko* Society in Nambour, 1902—1904

At the turn of the century, the sugar plantations at Nambour saw the emergence of a settled Finnish community including women as well as men. Soon the suggestion arose that a society might be set up, for the need was felt for a forum for contacts and discussion; and a General Meeting was accordingly held to found the Society, on 29 June 1902.⁵ The name chosen for the new organization was *Asiainedustusseura Erakko* — literally translated, 'The Hermit Society for the Promotion of Affairs' — for, as the Minutes report, to the Founders' knowledge there was no other Finnish society in Australia, "nor is there likely to be one in the near future, so that this Society will operate in seclusion, like a Hermit".⁶ The choice of name also reflected the Finns' isolation from the surrounding Australian society, for the Finns felt themselves cut off, "since we neither understand the language of our surroundings nor

² Diary of Pastor Groundstroem for 31 Dec. 1923, SMLA Helsinki; *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936.

³ VILDER 1983, 48.

⁴ Suomalais-Eestiläisen Seuran toimintakertomus [Report of the Finnish-Estonian Society], 6 July—30 Nov. 1924, SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fi:3, 35, No 2, UM Helsinki; Diary of Pastor Groundstroem for 6 July 1924, SMLA Helsinki.

⁵ "Wuosikertomus toimintakaudesta 1902 ja 1903 [Report for 1902—1903]", Records [*kantakirja*] of the *Erakko* Society, pp. 71—72, TYYH/S/a/4/V. Printed by Vilho NIITEMAA in Turun Historiallinen Arkisto XXV, Turku 1971. — All quotations from the Society's papers have been translated from Finnish unless otherwise indicated. (Tr.)

⁶ *Erakko* Society, Minutes for 6 July 1902, §2, §3; Records, pp. 72—73.

know what people are thinking."⁷

The aims of the Society are set out in Section One of the Rules:

The purpose of this Society is to gather the Finns of Finbury for joint activities for the improvement of their intellectual and social conditions and the advancement of their material livelihood. The Society shall refrain however from adopting any manifesto, its purpose being to pursue such questions as shall concern improvements within the frame of the existing social order.⁸

This statement of aims reflects the influence of the labour movement, especially in the reference to improvements in social conditions. One of the leading figures in the Society, A.E. Lundan, wrote about six months after the foundation of the Society that although no fixed policy is laid down in the Rules, it had in practice been following "socialist principles".⁹ The influence of Matti Kurikka can also be detected in the ideological background to the *Erakko* Society, for the Editor of the Society's paper *Orpo*, I.O. Peurala, was one of Kurikka's close disciples. Links between Kurikka and the *Erakko* Society continued even after Kurikka's departure in August 1900 for his new venture at Sointula ["Harmony"] on Malcolm Island, BC, in Canada. A letter from Kurikka was published in *Orpo*, describing the "Harmony" settlement, and encouraging the Finns in Australia to support the new venture financially, or to move to Canada themselves.¹⁰

The Society's officers included a Committee, Auditors, various Subcommittees (the most important of these being the Entertainments and Building Subcommittee), the Handicrafts Club, and the Editorial Board in charge of the magazine, *Orpo*. By the end of 1902, it would seem that over half of the 30 Finns at Finbury belonged to the Society, joined by a few of the twelve Swedish-speaking immigrants from Finland who lived in the area. Over its two and a half years of existence, the Society had a total overall membership of 28.¹¹

In addition to ordinary meetings, the Society arranged entertainments and discussion panels for its members. At these meetings, both the affairs of the Nambour Finnish community, and wider social issues, came in for comment; there were discussions on the justification for strikes, for instance,¹² and the impact of bourgeois society on the ordinary people.¹³ Other topics discussed included the use of pesticides to get rid of wildlife, and the possibility of raising a loan in order to build a cane mill.¹⁴ Plans were also discussed for a complaint to the

⁷ *Orpo*, 18 Feb. 1903.

⁸ *Erakko* Society, Records, pp. 2, 5.

⁹ *Orpo*, 15 March 1903.

¹⁰ *Orpo*, 30 Jan. 1904.

¹¹ *Orpo*, 7 Aug. 1904; *Erakko* Society, Records, p. 146.

¹² *Erakko*, Society, Minutes, 31 Aug. 1902, § 5, p. 23.

¹³ *Erakko*, Society, Minutes, 5 Oct. 1902, § 1, p. 26.

¹⁴ *Erakko* Society, Minutes. 16 Nov. 1902, § 5, § 7, p. 34.

Queensland Government at the rejection of Finnish labourers for the railway construction scheme at Tyylong (sic.). Improvements were urged in local postal services.¹⁵ Members of the *Erakko* Society were also concerned about educational questions. The importance of English was recognized, and plans were drawn up for a course to be held, though this never materialized.¹⁶ There was discussion of the schooling of the Finnish children in Finbury, and it was agreed that a nursery school should be set up to teach Finnish to the small children;¹⁷ this scheme, too, remained unrealized.

The *Erakko* Society maintained contacts both with the Australian authorities, and with the local population in Nambour. It was perhaps the promotion of Finnish interests which aroused the members' interest in local politics; and in August 1904, the Finns decided to put their weight behind the Liberal candidate for the Queensland Legislative Assembly. The Conservative candidate nevertheless won, by a large majority.¹⁸

On New Year's Eve, the Society held a party, which was attended by two Finns, from Brisbane, as well as a large number of 'English'.¹⁹ The Finns at Nambour appear to have maintained fairly close contacts with the older Finnish settlement at Brisbane, and these were especially lively towards the end of the Society's life, when the Finns from Nambour began to leave for America. Their route took them through Brisbane, and it was the custom to arrange a good send-off party.²⁰

A central focus of the *Erakko* Society's activities was its handwritten magazine, *Orpo* ('orphan'), so named by extrapolation from the 'hermit' name of its parent Society. The first issue, eight pages long, was brought out on 26 October 1902 by I.O. Peurala and A. Lundan.²¹ During 1902, four numbers were brought out altogether, comprising a total of 40 handwritten pages. Topics dealt with in the magazine included the right to strike, and the darker side of parliamentary institutions, as well as literature poems, etc. The following year, the magazine came out 13 times, containing a total of 190 pages. Articles were sometimes copied from the Finnish labour paper *Työmies*, and other publications, or readers' attention was drawn to articles of interest elsewhere. The magazine also included Letters to the Editor, and a few local advertisements. It was thus surprisingly varied in its composition, and a valuable local channel of communication for the Nambour Finns. It was

¹⁵ *Erakko* Society, Minutes, 29 March 1903, § 6, § 7, pp. 56—57.

¹⁶ *Erakko* Society, Minutes, 26 Oct. 1902, § 8, p. 31; Minutes, 9 Nov. 1902, § 4, p. 32.

¹⁷ *Erakko* Society, Minutes, 18 Jan. 1903, § 4, p. 45.

¹⁸ *Orpo*, 18 Sep. 1904.

¹⁹ *Erakko* Society, Records, p. 74.

²⁰ *Orpo*, 30 April 1904.

²¹ I.O. Peurala, "Katsaus 'Orpo'-lehden vuositoimintaan [Survey of the Year's Operations]", *Orpo*, 11 Oct. 1903.



Illus. 41: The artistically produced title of the manuscript paper, *Orpo*, in 1902–04 by the Finns at Finbury, Nambour, Qld.

intended to entertain as well as to inform, as can be seen from the frequent amusing articles and the jokes. The most consistent aspect of *Orpo*, however, was its policy on social questions, the magazine being used to spread ideas on co-operatives and other economic and social issues.

By the second half of 1904, however, internal dissensions were beginning to be reflected in the pages of the magazine. *Orpo* was read both at meetings of the Society, and also circulated in people's homes; the 1903 Christmas issue circulated privately for seven weeks (as compared with the two weeks the editors had expected).²² Conflict then arose as to whether the magazine should be allowed to circulate or not. Some wanted it to be looked after by the editors, and made available when wanted; they were afraid that it would get worn and dirty in people's homes, and thus frustrate the far-sighted aim that had been set when the magazine was started: that the magazine should be preserved, with the intention that in the future it would be possible to read about this stage in Finnish-Australian history.²³ When the Annual Meeting of the Erakko Society voted in favour of lending the magazine out, the editors refused to produce any more issues. Since it was the wish that the magazine should continue, the decision to loan it out was therefore revoked at the following Meeting. Nevertheless, as a consequence of the disagreements, the July 1904 number was never issued.²⁴ Altogether, there were nine issues in 1904; the last number came out on 5 November 1904, the magazine then closing down as a natural

²² *Orpo*, 21 Feb. 1904.

²³ *Orpo*, 7 Aug. 1904.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

consequence of the dissolution of the *Erakko* Society.

The first signs of the problems that led to the end of the Society had appeared in October 1903, when several members resigned, and it proved difficult to recruit enough people to some of the Subcommittees.²⁵ The Society struggled on for another year, but in October 1904, the Committee proposed that the Society be dissolved, in view of the lack of support for communal activities from the members. The proposal was carried 5:0. It was decided that the property of the Society should be auctioned, and that the proceeds of the sale, together with the Society's papers, should be sent to Malcolm Island in Canada. The last Meeting of the *Erakko* Society was held on 6 November 1904, with eight members present. The Society's funds stood at just under £3.²⁶

One of the main reasons for the break-up of the Society appears to have been ideological dissent and personal disagreements. In his retrospect of the Society, J. Kotkamaa emphasized the ideological disagreements, which divided the members into two camps and thus led to refusals to take on posts within the Society. It had been agreed, however, that these disagreements would not be mentioned in the Minutes.²⁷ The minority (which included Lundan) might be described as 'Finnish nationalists', whereas the majority, led by L. Nyström, were supporters of Kurikka's socialism. Another reason leading to the break-up of the Society was probably the rise of disagreements between members concerning jointly-acquired farms.²⁸ Besides these disagreements, however, a crucial factor was the drain of members as Finns moved away from Nambour. It is difficult to assess to what extent this out-migration was caused by financial difficulties, and how much it was the result of the pull of America or Kurikka; but when at the end of 1904 or beginning of 1905 I.O. Peurala left for North America, taking the papers of the Society and the handwritten *Orpo* files with him to Sointula, it marked the end of the *Erakko* story.

During the two years and four months of its existence, from 1902 to 1904, the *Erakko* Society was of enormous significance for the Finns at Nambour. By taking part in the organized activities of the Society, the members extended and developed their personalities, as I.O. Peurala noted:

We now have people capable of keeping the Minutes, for lesser if not for more important Meetings; who can chair a meeting; who can introduce a discussion, and present their opinions; who can write notes, and even turn out news items for the magazine.²⁹

²⁵ *Erakko* Society, Minutes, 11 Oct. 1903, § 4, p. 89.

²⁶ *Erakko* Society, Minutes, 16 Oct. 1904, § 3, p. 139; Minutes, 23 Oct. 1904, § 2, p. 142; Minutes, 6 Nov. 1904, pp. 143—144.

²⁷ *Erakko* Society, Records, vol. 2, p. 146; see also NIITEMAA 1971, 192.

²⁸ NIITEMAA 1971, 191—192.

²⁹ *Orpo*, 5 Nov. 1904.

The Society also provided relief from the arduous of work, and organized leisure activities. Yet the Society and the magazine were more than mere entertainment for the Finns at Finbury; they were also an important channel of information, by means of which the members were able to keep in touch with local, national, and international events. This function was all the more important in view of the inability of most of the newly arrived immigrants to read English newspapers (even assuming that these carried news of interest to the Finns). To these Finns, with their feeling of isolation, the 'Hermit' Society and its 'Orphan' magazine provided a window onto the wider world.

The *Erakko* Society, and more especially the handwritten *Orpo* magazine, form a unique chapter in Finnish migration history. In the Finnish colonies in South America, which offer perhaps the closest parallels the settlement in Nambour, there is no equivalent; and in North America, the much larger numbers of Finnish immigrants made it possible to maintain organized activities and printed publications from a very early date. Handwritten magazines did also circulate among the Finns in North America, but these have as yet been little studied.³⁰

Moreover, in addition to their intrinsic interest, the papers of the *Erakko* Society and the *Orpo* files are also a valuable and wide-ranging source of information on the history of the Finnish immigrants at Nambour at the turn of the century. The leaders of the Society, and the editors of the magazine, were far-sighted, perceptive people; one of them, I.O. Peurala, comments in his retrospect of the Society's history:

In the papers of the Society, there is all kinds of information about our history here and if in one way or another the papers of the Society come to the world's attention hereafter and tell about the Finns of Australia, even if they do not do so very well, the surely the 'Erakko' society will have played its small part in the grand work of History.³¹

It was on these grounds that Peurala supported the transfer of the Society's papers to Canada, particularly in view of the fact that before Kurikka had founded the 'Kalevan Kansa' colony at Sointula on Malcolm Island, he had previously explored the possibility of setting up his utopian colony in Queensland, some of the members of the *Erakko* Society being the survivors of this project.³² In addition to the papers of the *Erakko* Society which were saved, the *Orpo* files were recognized as being of especial historical value; the magazine contained precise information on the numbers of Finnish immigrants in Nambour and in Queensland altogether, this having been included specifically with the

³⁰ LINDSTRÖM-BEST 1981, 93—103.

³¹ *Orpo*, 5 Nov. 1904.

³² *Ibid.*

intention of providing a historical record for the future.³³

The Society set up by the Finns at Finbury, with its handwritten magazine, were simultaneously both a continuation of cultural traditions brought with the immigrants from Finland, and an act of integration into the new, foreign environment, with the language barrier that this involved. The *Erakko* Society and the *Orpo* magazine provided crutches, as it were, for the Finns of Nambour; and having fulfilled this task, and as the Finnish community began to break up, they were simply closed down.

3. The Queensland Finnish *Heimo* Society in Brisbane, 1914—48

In the capital of Queensland, Brisbane, the numbers of Finns began to increase at the beginning of the 20th century, due in part to the influx of Finns from Nambour and other parts of Queensland, or elsewhere in Australia, and in part to the followers of Matti Kurikka, who summoned their friends and relatives from Finland, from America, and from other countries too to join them in Australia. By the beginning of the First World War, the numbers of Finns in Brisbane had risen to between one and two hundred, and amongst these there were enough enthusiasts to set up a local Finnish Society.

The Society is reckoned as having been founded at a meeting held on 27 December 1914 at the home of John Riipinen, where a resolution was passed to set up "a regularly-functioning Finnish national Society." The name adopted was *Suomen Heimolaiset*³⁴; this was subsequently changed to *Suomalais-Heimolais Seura*, and eventually to *Queenslandin Suomen Heimo Seura* ['The Finnish National Society of Queensland'], usually simply referred to as *Heimo-Seura*. The aims of the Society were defined as "the overall mental and material improvement of the Finns".³⁵ Some of those involved in founding the *Heimo* Society included ex-members of *Erakko*, such as Linus Nyström and Jussi Kotkamaa; in this

³³ The papers of the *Erakko* Society were handed over in 1970 at Sointula, Malcolm Island, BC, to the Chief Executive of the *Suomi-Seura* [Finnish Association], Tauri Aaltio, who in turn deposited them with the Department of General History at the University of Turku.

The files of the *Orpo* magazine, on the other hand, were discovered in Sointula amongst some other papers in the loft of a house which was due for demolition, by Kalle Kassinen, of Sudbury, Ont., who donated them in 1976 to the Archives of the Institute of Migration.

³⁴ Translated literally, 'The Tribesmen of Finland'; the connotations of 'tribal' here are approximately the same as 'national(ist)'. *Suomalais-Heimolais Seura* could thus be translated as 'The Finnish National Society'. — Translators' note.

³⁵ *Heimo* Society, Minutes, 27 Dec. 1914. § 6.

sense, *Heimo* could be seen as a continuation of the earlier society, especially in terms of its ideological background and its objectives.

Initially, nevertheless, the *Heimo* Society operated in a strictly non-partisan manner, despite a number of left-wing features. A couple of years later, however, serious discussion arose about amending the constitution of the Society, leading to a postal ballot among the members. The ballot slips contained the following text (in Finnish):

Do you support the amendments to the Constitution?

Answer: Aye or No.

Which side do you support:

Labour or Plutocracy?³⁶

The outcome of the ballot was 19 votes in favour of reorganizing the Society as a Labour Club; four votes against the amendments; no votes in favour of Plutocracy; and one ballot paper disqualified.³⁷ It was decided to ask an Finnish-American Socialist Society to send a model constitution, and a five-member committee was appointed to draw up the new Rules. The number of members of the *Heimo* Society present at the Meeting where these important decisions following from the ballot were taken was ten.³⁸

Following its conversion into a Labour Club, the *Heimo* Society was for a time extremely active. Contacts were made with Australian and Russian socialists, and current political affairs were discussed. One issue that aroused considerable opposition was the proposed introduction of conscription in Australia. £2 was contributed from the Society's funds towards anti-conscription agitation.³⁹ Possibly it was this 'anti-war' talk by the Finns which brought an unknown 'warlord' to a Meeting in November 1916 to protest against the Society's activities.⁴⁰ The Society made a small donation to the labour paper *The Daily Standard* to support it in its struggle for freedom of the press; and urged members to support Labor candidates in both State and Commonwealth elections, and to vote in favour of the abolition of the upper house in the Queensland Parliament.⁴¹ The reaction of the Society to the events in Russia in 1917 was favourable, and it proposed sending a telegram of congratulations to the Social Democratic group in Russia, though this was actually not sent since it was felt that not enough information was available about the Revolution.⁴²

³⁶ *Heimo* Society, Minutes, 7 May 1916, § 6.

³⁷ *Heimo* Society, Minutes, 25 June 1916, § 4.

³⁸ *Heimo* Society, Minutes, *ibid.*

³⁹ *Heimo* Society, Minutes, 11 Sep. 1916, §2.

⁴⁰ *Heimo* Society, Minutes, 26 Nov. 1916, §7.

⁴¹ *Heimo* Society, Minutes, 28 April 1917, §6, §7.

⁴² *Heimo* Society, Minutes, 1 March 1917, §8. — The date of this Meeting is unclear in the Minutes, and could be 1 April 1917; the Russian Revolution had not yet taken place by 1 March.

The socialist commitment of the *Heimo* Society gradually began to change, however, and after 1922, a new stage in the Society's history began to emerge, following the announcement by the Finns of northern Queensland of their desire to affiliate to *Heimo*. These new members consisted of a group of 'White', i.e. right-wing, emigrants from central Ostrobothnia, under the leadership of Nestori I. Karhula, and their admission into the Society therefore created pressure for a modification of the Rules. The new members were strongly opposed by the Finns at Nambour, who wished to instigate an investigation of the northern Queensland Finn's political background i.e. whether they had possibly been involved in the right-wing Civil Guard militia during or after the Finnish Civil War of 1918.⁴³ Karhula, however, sent a conciliatory letter, urging that the Nambour Finns' motion should not be supported, since the time had come to build rather than to tear down.⁴⁴

At the Society's General Meeting in 1925 it was therefore agreed that the existing Rules were no longer appropriate to the prevailing situation.⁴⁵ In other words, as was later commented in a review of the Society's first 25 years, the *Heimo* Society was moving back towards the original non-partisan stance which it had given up in 1916.⁴⁶ Simultaneously the Society was suffering from a shrinking membership: by 1925 there were no more than 39 members, and of these, 14 had failed to pay their subscriptions.⁴⁷

For a time, the *Heimo* Society had a branch in Nambour, founded in 1915 under the name *Vapauden Veljet* ('Brothers of Freedom'), which originally operated as a gymnastics and sports club, but soon withered away; thereafter its members were simply individual members of the *Heimo* Society. The branch was however re-founded in 1922,⁴⁸ and was initially very active; for example, in 1923 they put up the first custom-built Finnish club premises in Australia. For a couple of years, this Hall was used for evening functions, but these were then abandoned, and the Hall was then only used for meetings held by the sugar croppers. Finally, in 1927, Basil Suosaari, who had originally put up collateral for the purchase of the building materials, demolished the Hall and used the materials for other purposes.⁴⁹

The reasons for the failure of the *Heimo* Society to attract new Finnish members deserve consideration. One crucial factor was the

⁴³ Diary of Eino Keskinen for 9 Sep. 1924.

⁴⁴ "Australian suomalaisten yhteistyö [Co-operation among the Finns in Australia]", TYYH/S/X/III.

⁴⁵ *Heimo* Society, Minutes, 22 Feb. 1925, §8.

⁴⁶ *Suomi*, 4 Dec. 1939.

⁴⁷ *Heimo* Society, Report for the Year, 1925.

⁴⁸ *Heimo* Society, Minutes, 26 March 1922, §1.

⁴⁹ "Nambourin suomalaiset [The Finns at Nambour]", TYYH/S/X/7/III.

constant mobility of the new Finnish immigrants. A second factor could be that the new immigrants belonged to the generation which had lived through the years when Finland had achieved her independence, whereas the older Finnish-Australians in the *Heimo* Society belonged to an earlier generation, and specifically to the Finnish labour movement, a tradition largely alien to Ostrobothnia, where most of the new arrivals came from. The tragedy of the Society was its failure to obtain a grip on the new arrivals, and the struggle it gradually drifted into with the group headed by Karhula.

Right from the beginning, there had probably been the intention that the *Heimo* Society, and the *Suomi* Athletic Club which was founded on Nestori Karhula's initiative, should be fused. Some collaboration did in fact take place, e.g. joint celebrations in honour of Finland's Independence Day on 6 December, and joint campaigns in support of the paper *Suomi*.⁵⁰ No steps were ever taken towards a formal fusion, however.

During the Second World War, the activities of the *Heimo* Society were mainly directed towards aid for Finland. In 1938 it donated £2 to a children's care society in Finland,⁵¹ and £50 to relief for war victims during the Winter War of 1939—40.⁵² The *Heimo* Society's final contribution to Finland was in 1948, when it was resolved to donate the funds left over from the dissolution of the Society in aid of war orphans in Finland.⁵³

Despite its non-partisan stance in its initial and closing years, the *Heimo* Society was essentially a socialist society. There are certain marked points of resemblance to the Finnish socialist movement in North America, and in the background, through the links with the earlier *Erakko* Society in Nambour, the influence of Matti Kurikka and his utopian socialism. Throughout its existence, the membership of *Heimo* was mainly limited to a narrow section of the Finnish community in Brisbane, to such an extent that it might almost be called the club of a few families, particularly once the *Suomi Athletic Club* had been founded in Brisbane in 1927. Following the demise of the *Heimo* and earlier *Erakko* Societies, the later history of the Finns in Australia contains no more socialist organizations of this type; the local Finnish societies set up in various localities during the 1920s operated on a national, and politically speaking genuinely non-partisan basis.

⁵⁰ *Heimo* Society, Report for the Year, 1938.

⁵¹ *Heimo* Society, Minutes, 13 March 1938, §4.

⁵² *Heimo* Society, Minutes, 18 Dec. 1939, §1; 11 Feb. 1940, §2, §3.

⁵³ *Heimo* Society, Minutes, 26 Sep. 1948, §2, §3.

4. Finnish Associations in Melbourne

The Queensland societies discussed above were not, however, the only Finnish organizations established in Australia prior to the 1920s, for in 1916 a *Suomalainen Seura* ('Finnish Society') was founded in Melbourne, and continued in operation until around 1921.⁵⁴ There were about ten Finns involved in setting up this Society, all seamen; they were unaware of any Finnish women in the vicinity. At its largest, the Society consisted of 15 members. They arranged dances on Saturday nights, and Sunday outings to the beach or into the country.⁵⁵ There were also on occasions sports competitions with the Swedes.⁵⁶ This was thus a society with exclusively social objectives.

In Melbourne, co-operation among the Nordic immigrants seems to have succeeded, for the next Finnish association was set up under the auspices of the Swedish Church. In 1922, the Swedish pastor in Melbourne, Alfred Guldbranzen, set up the *Skandinaviska Progress Association*, in which he hoped that the Finns would also be represented. In the absence of any local Finnish organization which could have nominated a representative to the Association, Pastor Guldbranzen therefore set up a Finnish Society in July 1922. One of the objectives of the new Society was to assist the Swedish pastor in his work among the Finns. In 1923, a Finnish Committee was appointed, to arrange meetings and entertainments for Finnish seamen and immigrants; and the Society played a crucial role in the decision to transfer the Finnish Seamen's Mission from Sydney to Melbourne in 1924.⁵⁷

It was the intention of the Finnish Society in Melbourne that in time it should acquire its own premises. The acquisition of a library was also a major project, as was also the case in Finnish associations elsewhere.⁵⁸ The greatest problem faced by the Executive Committee was how to satisfy both the Swedish-speakers and the Finnish-speakers at every meeting; for there were many speakers of Swedish among the Finns in Melbourne, especially from the Åland Islands. Pastor Guldbranzen commented that despite its promising beginnings, the Society was having difficulties with the language question, and also due to the fact that the younger members were mainly interested in dancing.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Letter from Oskari Salonen (President of the Society), Frankston, to Olavi Koivukangas, 26 Aug. 1970, SI; *Norden*, 27 June 1925.

⁵⁵ Interview with Väinö Suominen, Turku, 17 May 1973.

⁵⁶ Letter from Oskari Salonen, Frankston, to Olavi Koivukangas, 26 Aug. 1970, SI.

⁵⁷ *Norden*, 27 June 1925.

⁵⁸ Melbourne Finnish Society, meeting, 18 June 1923, microfilm roll 4, SI; Gunnar Engström, "Kirje Melbournesta (A Letter from Melbourne)", MY 8—9/1923, 112—113.

⁵⁹ Letter from Pastor Guldbranzen to Pastor Groundstroem, 20 Aug. 1923, SMLA Brisbane.

Guldbranzen took an active interest in Finnish affairs, and it was largely due to his efforts that the pastor at the Finnish Seamen's Mission in Sydney, Groundstroem, transferred the Mission to Melbourne in 1924. Guldbranzen had also backed the decision that in the event of the Finnish Society being dissolved, its funds should be transferred to the Finnish Mission;⁶⁰ and in 1926, following the discontinuation of the activities of the Finnish Society, its funds were put at the disposal of the Mission's magazine, *Suomi*, and this way, fulfilled an important role. Thereafter, organized Finnish activities in Melbourne were extremely dependent on the Mission. New immigrants were arriving from Finland every month, and Finnish ships were constantly putting into port, bringing timber and collecting wheat to take back to Europe. It began to look as though Melbourne was to become a Finnish centre in Australia, especially in view of the role of the magazine *Suomi*.

By the 1930s, however, the international impact of the Depression had led to a withering away of migration. Unemployment was driving many of the Finns out of the major cities to look for work in smaller localities or out in the country. Following the recall in 1931 of Pastor Kaksonen, both the Mission and *Suomi* were left untended. The Finns managed to keep the magazine running until the arrival of the new pastor, the Revd Paavo Hytönen, in 1935;⁶¹ and it would appear that a large portion of the leisure activities of the Finns in Melbourne revolved around the magazine.

When, in 1938, the Finnish Seamen's Mission was then transferred again, this time to Brisbane, the move meant the collapse of organized Finnish activities in Melbourne. There is no record of any organized activity during the second World War, and it was not until 1958, following the arrival of a new wave of Finnish immigration, that a new attempt at a Finnish association in Melbourne was undertaken.

5. Finnish Associations in Sydney

The Swedish-Australians in Sydney had set up local ethnic organizations by the time of the First World War.⁶² There was also a Finnish connection here, since the Secretary of the Swedish Association was actually a 'Finland-Swede', Axel Weydell.⁶³

As the size of the Finnish community in Sydney began to increase, in the early 1920s, it too began to provide a large enough basis for

⁶⁰ Letter from Pastor Guldbranzen to Pastor Groundstroem, 4 Oct. 1923. SMLA Brisbane.

⁶¹ *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936.

⁶² BEIJBOM 1983, 254.

⁶³ *Allsvensk Samling* 1.8.1918.

organized activities to emerge. Moreover, there had been two institutions of vital importance for Finnish ethnic activities operating in Sydney since the previous decade: the Seamen's Mission (founded in 1916 and stationed in Sydney up to 1924), and the Finnish Consulate (set up in 1918). Both of these provided opportunities for the Finns in Sydney to gather for a variety of occasions.

In addition the Estonians in Sydney had set up a society of their own in 1912, but there is no information about Finnish participation. Obviously the cooperation with Estonians in the early 1920s was focused on Consul Tanner himself, who was also the *chargé d'affaires* for Estonia as well. In July 1924 Consul Tanner brought about the foundation of the Suomalais-Eestiläinen Seura ('Finnish-Estonian Society')⁶⁴. During its first period of operation, the Finnish-Estonian Society had 69 members, of whom 19 were women.⁶⁵ There was also some measure of Nordic collaboration with the Scandinavian organizations, e.g. joint evenings and outings.⁶⁶ After a good start, however, the attempt at a joint society with Estonians did not have much success, although the Finns in Sydney used to participate in local Estonian events.

In addition to this attempt with the Estonians by Consul Tanner, after the removal of the Seamen's Mission to Melbourne in 1924, there was no organized Finnish activity in the city other than the Reading Room on Harmer Street, which was also occasionally used for church services.⁶⁷ The Secretary at the Finnish Consulate, Jorma Pohjanpalo, considered the situation, and came to the conclusion that the main cause for the inactivity of the Sydney Finns was the lack of women. A second reason was the liveliness of activity, and excellent facilities, at *Eesti Kodu Linda*, the Estonian club. Thirdly, Finnish activities were hampered by differences of opinion within the community.⁶⁸

The initiative to establish a separate Finnish association was then taken up by the women (especially by Miss Aino Potinkara, later Hovi), who decided to set up a Sewing Circle. At the founding meeting, in May 1929, there were ten women present, and subsequently the number of members grew to 19.⁶⁹ Then, in 1929, the Seamen's Mission, then operating in Melbourne, opened a hostel for the Finns in Sydney, the *Suomi-Koti* ('Finnish Home'), and the Sewing Circle began to use its more spacious premises; and now, men too began to join in the

⁶⁴ Finnish-Estonian Society, Report for 6 July — 30 Nov. 1924, SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fi:3, 35, No 2, UM Helsinki; see also Pastor Groundstroems's Diary for 6 July 1924, SMLA Helsinki.

⁶⁵ Finnish-Estonian Society, Report for the Period 6 July — 30 Nov. 1924, SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fi:3, 35, No 2, UM Helsinki.

⁶⁶ *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936.

⁶⁷ VILDER 1983, 48.

⁶⁸ *Suomi*, 1 Aug. 1928; see also POHJANPALO 1931, 306.

⁶⁹ *Suomi*, 19 June 1929.

activities. The name of the Sewing Circle was changed to *Suomalainen Club* ('The Finnish Club'), and membership was opened to men as well. Later, the name was changed again, to *Sydneyn Suomalainen Seura* ('The Sydney Finnish Society'), and around a dozen men became members. Most of the officers of the Sewing Circle continued to function in the enlarged association, under the President, Ms Aino Potinkara.⁷⁰

However, just as the Finnish Society in Sydney was beginning to establish itself, the impact of the Depression began to be felt in the city. Factories closed down, construction came to a halt, and the Finns began to move away from Sydney in search of work elsewhere. Organized activity withered away, and even the women in the Finnish Sewing Circle began to withdraw from active involvement.⁷¹ The Finns also lost control of the Finnish Home hostel, whose Finnish residents, with a couple of exceptions, had scattered,⁷² so that the Society was now without any regular locale for meetings.

During the Winter War, The Sydney Finnish Society, along with many other Finnish ethnic organizations, contributed to collecting funds for Finland's assistance, which thus indicates at least some level of activity at that time. In 1941, however, a state of war was declared between Finland and Australia. The last meeting which the Finnish Society held, at Balmoral Beach, was broken up by the police; the men were taken away for questioning, and those in employment were required to report to the police station the following day.⁷³ Organized Finnish activities did not begin again in Sydney until after the War, in 1950, on the initiative of Vilho Pullinen.⁷⁴

6. Finnish Associations in Rural Queensland

(1) The *Suomi* Society in Cairns

The new wave of Finnish immigration during the 1920s was largely directed to northern Queensland, and gradually there began to emerge Finnish communities in the sugar-growing area. Here too, however, organized Finnish activities were sharply affected by swings in the economy, and nowhere more clearly than in northern Queensland were the fortunes of the Finnish associations linked with the movement of the Finnish labourers in search of work, the associations themselves following a process of etappe migration from Cairns, via Brisbane and

⁷⁰ *Suomi*, 30 Jan. 1931.

⁷¹ *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936.

⁷² *Suomi*, 25 Oct. 1937.

⁷³ BEVERLEY 1979, 15.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

Tully, to Mt Isa.

At the beginning of the 1920s, the *Heimo* Society in Brisbane was the only Finnish association operating in Queensland. The Finns at Cairns were in touch with the Society, but no organized forms of collaboration emerged, owing to the distance between the cities and the barriers created by ideological differences. It was an obvious step, therefore, for the Cairns community to set up an association of its own, in September 1924 — officially in June 1925. Nestori Karhula was elected President.⁷⁵ During its first year of activity, the association had 147 members, of whom four were women.⁷⁶

During its brief period of existence (altogether about five years), the *Suomi* Society turned its attention to many different things. Sports were a central activity, but economic questions were also taken up. Karhula, the President, was authorized to provide the press in Finland with accurate information about local working conditions, for some immigrants had been encouraged to set out by misleading information, and had then been disappointed at the true conditions prevailing in Australia.⁷⁷ The Society also decided to affiliate to the Overseas Finns section of the *Suomalaisuuden Liitto* ('Finnish League') in Helsinki. Information was sought through the Finnish Vice-Consul in Brisbane on the land question, i.e. in particular on the possibility of Finns acquiring land. Ultimately, the Executive Committee was authorized to use Society funds to invest in employment for the Society's members.⁷⁸ There was also discussion both of language courses and of setting up a library, but neither of these schemes came to fruition.⁷⁹

As the Finns began to drift away from the Cairns district, the Society gradually died. By 1930, there were only a few Finns left in the area. Despite its brief existence, nonetheless, the *Suomi* Society in Cairns had contributed significantly to the contentment and to the adaptation of the Finnish immigrants in their first years in the new country.

(2) The *Suomi* Athletic Club in Brisbane

One of the reasons for the association in Cairns abandoning operations was the move to Brisbane in 1926 of the crucial local Finnish figure, Nestori Karhula. When Karhula arrived in Brisbane, the local *Heimo*

⁷⁵ Meeting of the Finns at Cairns, Minutes, 28 June 1925. TYYH/S/X/7/II.

⁷⁶ *Suomi Seuran vuosikertomus* [*Suomi* Society, Report for the Year] 1925, TYYH/S/X/7/III; list of members for 1925, microfilm roll 5, SI.

⁷⁷ *Suomi* Society, Minutes, 30 Aug. 1925, TYYH/S/X/7/II.

⁷⁸ *Suomi* Society, Minutes, 31 Jan. 1926, TYYH/S/X/7/II.

⁷⁹ *Suomi* Society, Minutes, 22 Jan. 1927, TYYH/S/X/7/II.



Illus. 42: Celebration of the Suomi Athletic Club, on the Markkanen's farm, Nambour, in 1931. The Club's flag, seen on the porch, was made and donated by Vieno Rostedt, Kerttu Karhula, and Ida Ruhanen. (SI)

Society was in torpor, but as had been their practice, several members had gathered at the home of K. Karppinen to celebrate Finland's Independence Day, 6 December. This led to the proposal to revive the association; yet despite Karhula's efforts, nothing came of this, and he therefore suggested that instead, a Finnish sports club might be set up.⁸⁰ A meeting was held on 5 February 1927, and the *Suomi Athletic Club* was founded, with the aims of "awakening and maintaining interest and involvement in sport, in all its various forms, among the Finns in Australia. The Club is also dedicated to promoting, as far as its resources permit, the mental and intellectual efforts of our fellow-Finns."⁸¹ Nestori Karhula was elected the first President.⁸²

Soon afterwards, the Club was admitted to affiliation to the Queensland Athletics Association. The idea was also repeatedly put forward that the Club and the older *Heimo* Society should merge, but this proved completely impossible owing to the extent of the ideological differences between the socialist inheritance of Matti Kurikka, and the Finnish Nationalist views in the Club, led as it was by a former Jäger combatant on the White (right-wing) side in the Finnish Civil War. Competition between individuals for domination in the small Finnish

⁸⁰ N.K.K., "Suomi A.C:n synty [The Origins of the *Suomi* AC]", SAC, Minutes, 1, TYYH/S/A/7/II; see also *Suomi*, 15 Jan. 1927 and 1 March 1928.

⁸¹ SAC, Rules, §3.

⁸² SAC, Minutes, 5 Feb. 1927.

community also played a part. Nevertheless, it should be noted that some of the founder members of the Athletic Club were also leading figures in the *Heimo* Society; their motives are difficult to assess, although possibly they may have seen the Club as a means to re-stimulate local Finnish organized activities, or perhaps hoped to achieve the affiliation of the Club to the Society. It is also unclear whether Karhula and his supporters were really intending to set up a rival organization to the *Heimo* Society, which they saw as being effectively defunct. Such an interpretation would be supported by the fact that right from the beginning the Club's activities included more than mere sports: in 1931 it established a library;⁸³ it maintained its own band, which supplied the music for its functions; and it held "Citizens' Meetings", at which matters of importance to the Finns in Australia were discussed.⁸⁴ In 1931, a fund was set up to collect money towards acquiring its own clubhouse, a scheme which dominated the Club's activities for some time, although it was not actually realized until after the Second World War was over. There was also discussion of a subsidy for the magazine *Suomi*.⁸⁵

Once the Depression began to ease, the Club also revived. There were evening meetings and parties, a Sunday School, a visit by Pastor Hytönen, and a church concert. By this time, athletics had become of secondary importance.⁸⁶ The impact of the Winter War in Finland was also sharply reflected within the Club: towards the end of 1939 there were three telegrams sent to Finland by the Club, with the messages: "Hold fast" (to Antti Isotalo, 13 October 1939); "A united Finland will conquer; stand unshakable and firm" (to Josua Ruotsala, at the Ostrobothnian newspaper *Keski-Pohjanmaa*, 20 October 1939); and finally, "The Finns of Australia are hurrying to your aid; strike hard and firm" (to Marshal Mannerheim, 8 December 1939).⁸⁷

During the War, the Club joined with Australian organizations in sending aid to Finland,⁸⁸ but these activities ran into difficulties after the British declaration of war on Finland in 1941. The Club ceased operations for the duration of hostilities, but recommenced its activities in 1947.⁸⁹

Part of the great significance which sport had for the Finns in Queensland was its contribution towards their adaptation to Australian

⁸³ SAC, Report of Activities, 1931.

⁸⁴ SAC, Report for the Year 1931.

⁸⁵ SAC, Report for the Year 1932.

⁸⁶ SAC, Report for the Year 1938; Minutes, 3, TYYH/S/A/7/II.

⁸⁷ SAC, Appendix to the List of Members, 1939: "Sähkösanomia Suomeen [Telegrams to Finland]", TYYH/S/A/7/II, 3.

⁸⁸ SAC, Report for the Year 1952, TYYH/S/A/7/II, 3.

⁸⁹ SAC, Minutes, 28 Dec. 1948, TYYH/S/A/7/II, 3.

society. It provided something to do during their free time, kept the young men out of the hotels, and made life more interesting. Sport also provided an opportunity to make contact with the Australians on an equal basis, and the Finns' sporting achievements soon gained them a good reputation. The best-known Finnish athlete was Eino Keskinen, Australian champion and record holder many times over before his return to Finland in 1932.⁹⁰ The popularity of sport among the Finns may also partly explain their low crime rate and the lack of disorderliness on their part.

(3) The *Suomi* Society in Tully

The *Suomi* Society in Tully was a natural continuation of the one in Cairns, and was set up by the Finns in Tully as they moved in from Cairns at the end of the 1920s. On 14 October 1928, twelve Finnish men gathered on the farm owned by E. Hirvi, V. Herlevi, and A. Leppiniemi. The first suggestion was to set up in Tully a branch of the Cairns Society, but eventually it was decided to found a distinct new Society. The Rules of the Cairns Society supplied the basis for the new organization. The first President was Lauri Kiviranta.⁹¹ There were thus no women behind the initiative to organize in Tully, since at this point there was not a single Finnish woman in the entire locality.

The aims of the new Society were "to promote the mental, moral, and material wellbeing and livelihood of the Finns, and where possible to assist and support Finns arriving in this country."⁹² The Society rapidly grew, and by the end of 1929 there were 56 members.⁹³ For the Finns in Tully, a library seemed particularly important, and this was therefore established early in 1929; by 1939 the collection of books had grown to about 700 titles.⁹⁴ The members of the *Suomi* Society in Tully also played a crucial part in keeping the magazine *Suomi* going through the difficult times in the 1930s; in 1934, indeed, the Editorial Board of the magazine was drawn entirely from Tully and Long Pocket. The Tully Society also went in for music, supporting a choir of 20 voices which performed on occasion to Australian audiences as well. Sports

⁹⁰ Interview with Eino Keskinen, 9 Sep. 1973. When the Australian team attended the Helsinki Olympics in 1952, Keskinen was invited as guest of honour. He still lives in Jämsä, now aged 85.

⁹¹ Tully *Suomi* Society, Minutes, 14 Oct. 1928, §1, §3, §4, & §5. — See also "Historiikki Tullyn "Suomi" Seuran 10 vuotistoiminnasta [History of the First Ten Years of Activities of the Tully *Suomi* Society]", appendix to the Report for the Year 1938, microfilm roll 5, SI.

⁹² Tully *Suomi* Society, membership card.

⁹³ *Suomi*, 15 Feb. 1930.

⁹⁴ *Suomi*, 28 Feb. 1939.



Illus. 43: Finnish team of Tully was the tug-of-war champion of North Queensland in 1933. (Aarne/Eero Lehtilä/SI).

were also important, the tug-of-war being especially popular.⁹⁵

In addition to its Executive Committee, the *Suomi* Society in Tully had Subcommittees for the library, sports, entertainments, and employment. It thus covered the objectives which it had set itself. In the Report for the Year 1932, it is stated that although (despite the Depression) there was as yet no unemployment in the Tully region, the Society would be wise to take steps to prepare for this. The Society decided to contact the cane growers at Innisfail with a view to securing the employment of Finnish sugar croppers, and to send letters to the Australian Workers' Union, the Queensland Minister of Labour, the Association of Overseas Finns (in Finland), the magazine *Suomi*, and to the press in Finland to warn off anyone potentially considering emigrating to Australia.⁹⁶ Finnish women now also began to move into the locality, so that the first Sewing Circle was set up, and in 1935 a woman, Inkeri Keto, was elected President of the entire Society.⁹⁷

During the Second World War, the activities of the Tully *Suomi* Society were interrupted for almost five years. During the first two years

⁹⁵ *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936; see also *Finlandia News*, 9 Jan. 1979.

⁹⁶ Tully *Suomi* Society, Report for the Year 1932, microfilm roll 5, SI; Tully *Suomi* Society, Minutes, 3 June 1930, §4, and 29 June 1930, §2 & 3, microfilm roll 4, SI.

⁹⁷ *Suomi*, 28 Feb. 1935.

of the War, the Society was active, participating in the collection of funds to assist Finland and holding a party in aid of the Finnish Red Cross; a donation was also made to the Australian Patriotic Fund.⁹⁸ The total sum collected in Tully between 1939 and the end of 1940 amounted to £469.⁹⁹

After 6 December 1941, the Society's operations were suspended. The Society's Minutes and archives were impounded by the authorities, and the homes of leading members of the Society were searched at the end of that year. Following the end of hostilities, however, the impounded property was returned, and the Society recommenced activities, with the first new Meeting being held in July 1946.¹⁰⁰ The next meeting of the Executive Committee, however, did not take place until August 1948. Later that year, a Finnish-language Sunday School was set up.¹⁰¹

(4) The *Yritys* Gymnastics and Sports Club in Long Pocket

At the end of the 1920s, the Finnish women at Long Pocket and in the Ingham district began to take steps towards setting up a Finnish association in the area. They decided to hold an evening entertainment in May 1929, to raise funds for the purchase of books, which in turn led to the setting up of a Library and Reading Circle. Later, men also began to join in, and the Finnish Consul made a donation of books which had arrived from Finland.¹⁰²

Early in 1930, interest then began to spread among the Finns at Long Pocket in the foundation of a sports club, and the *Yritys* ('Endeavour') *Gymnastics and Sports Club* was founded on 18 May 1930. This soon led to enthusiasm for acquiring club premises which could be used for meetings, etc. The Reading Circle was invited to join in the project for a clubhouse, but it was decided that it should retain its existence as a separate organization. A site was donated by V. Jukkola, and the building was completed in August 1930, constructed by the members themselves.¹⁰³ This was thus the second Finnish association to have constructed its own premises in Australia, the first having been that in Nambour (1923—27).

For the first three years, the Club was very active. Music was especially lively, for there were many in the district who could play an

⁹⁸ Tully *Suomi* Society, Minutes, 6 July 1940, § 2, microfilm roll 5, SI.

⁹⁹ Tully *Suomi* Society, Report for the Year 1940, microfilm roll 5, SI.

¹⁰⁰ Tully *Suomi* Society, Minutes, 28 July 1946, § 2, microfilm roll 5, SI.

¹⁰¹ Tully *Suomi* Society, Report for the Year 1946, microfilm roll 5, SI.

¹⁰² *Suomi*, 4 Dec. 1939.

¹⁰³ *Suomi*. 13 Sep. 1937.

instrument.¹⁰⁴ The Club suffered, however, from the departure of many of its members elsewhere in search of work,¹⁰⁵ and in 1933, the Finnish community began to break up under the impact of the Depression; the following year, there were many who moved on to the mines at Mt Isa. The loss of members inevitably hampered Club activities, particularly in sports. In 1935, it was therefore decided to fuse the Club and the Reading Circle into a single organization, mainly no doubt since it was largely the same people who were active in both. There had also been a Sewing Circle in Long Pocket, affiliated to the Finnish Seamen's Mission, which had run for almost as long as the Sports Club. The library, however, was of great significance for the local Finns; by 1939 it contained almost 500 titles, which were in constant demand.¹⁰⁶

By the time of the Second World War, the Finnish community at Long Pocket had shrunk drastically. With the exception of a few who had settled as cane planters, it had consisted of mobile labour. Nevertheless, the Club continued to function for the first two years of the War, engaging in similar measures in 1940 as in Tully, and considering setting up a Committee to organize aid for Finland. A donation was also made to the Australian Comforts Fund. The Club was suspended, and its papers impounded, for the duration of hostilities, but activities appear to have recommenced after the War approximately as before.¹⁰⁷

(5) The *Heimo* Society in Mount Isa

The Finns at Mt Isa had for a long time been considering setting up some form of club or association, but it was the visit to the town of the then pastor from the Finnish Seamen's Mission, the Revd Paavo Hytönen, at the end of 1935, which provided the impulse for concrete steps to be taken.¹⁰⁸ The first Meeting was held on 16 November 1935, when the *Suomen Heimoseura* was established, with J. Kuusisto as the first President. The choice of name for the new association¹⁰⁹ was probably intended to imply collaboration between the Finns and the Estonians, for there were several of the latter nationality involved in the

¹⁰⁴ *Suomen Viesti*, 11/1931.

¹⁰⁵ *Yritys* Gymnastics and Sports Club, Report for 1931, microfilm roll 1, SI.

¹⁰⁶ *Suomi*, 4 Dec. 1939.

¹⁰⁷ *Yritys* Club, Minutes of Executive Committee meetings, 12 March 1940, § 1; 8 April 1940, § 2; 11 June 1940, § 8; 2 Feb. 1941; 10 Dec. 1945; Minutes of Annual General Meeting, 3 Feb. 1946, § 1; Report for the Year 1941, microfilm roll 1, SI.

¹⁰⁸ Y. Korpela, MS dated 4 Dec. 1965 (Papers of the Mt Isa *Suomi* Society); see also *Suomi*, 17 Dec. 1935.

¹⁰⁹ The name might be literally translated: Association of the Finnish 'Tribe' or People(s).

scheme, and one Estonian was elected to the Executive Committee.¹¹⁰ The size of the membership varied; in the period 1936—41, the minimum was 30 and the maximum was 86.¹¹¹

The Second World War had an enormous impact on the lives of the Finnish miners at Mt Isa, even although they were exempted from internment. During the Winter War, the Mt Isa Finns, like those elsewhere in Australia, collected money to aid Finland, and managed to raise the impressive amount of £1000. Funds were also raised in aid of Finland among the Finns in North America; it has been calculated that the total amount raised was around \$2 per person, at a time when daily wages in America were \$5—8.¹¹² There were at that time around one hundred Finns at work in the mines. Following the declaration of war by the United Kingdom and by Australia against Finland, in December 1941, the Minutes and membership lists of the Society were impounded by the police. No formal functions were now permitted, but evening entertainments and sports meetings were still arranged. It was not until January 1949 that the papers were returned, and the Society could begin to function normally again. In 1954, the Mt Isa Mines Company donated a site to the Society for a clubhouse, which was completed the following year. In 1961, the name of the Society was amended to the simpler *Mount Isan Suomi Seura* ('Mt Isa Finnish Association').¹¹³

In an isolated mining town in the desert outback such as Mt Isa, the *Suomi* Society has played a vital role in making the life of the Finnish immigrants more pleasant and interesting. Other functions have included the acquisition of a library, and setting up the gravestones for about twenty Finns.¹¹⁴ Moreover (although little fuss has been made of this, and information in the available sources is scanty) it has also provided charitable aid to Finns who have found themselves in difficulties.¹¹⁵

7. The 1924 Scheme for a Pan-Australian Finnish Federation

There was collaboration between the various local Finnish associations from a very early date. During the period when the *Erakko* Society was

¹¹⁰ *Suomi*, 20 March 1937.

¹¹¹ "Mount Isan Suomen Heimoseuran jäsenluettelot vuosilta [Lists of members] 1936—1941", microfilm roll 6, SI.

¹¹² VIRTANEN & al. 1986, 251.

¹¹³ Y. Korpela, MS dated 4 Dec. 1965 (Papers of the Mt Isa *Suomi* Society); see also "Mount Isan Suomen Heimoseuran vuosikertomus [Report for the Year] 1940", microfilm roll 6, SI.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ For a more detailed history of the Finnish Society in Mt Isa, see KOSKINEN 1985.

in operation, 1902—04, there were no other Finnish organizations functioning in Australia, but after 1914, when the *Heimo* Society was set up in Brisbane, contacts were maintained both by correspondence and possibly in other ways as well. Owing to the enormous distances involved, there could be little joint activity by the associations. As the numbers of Finns, and of Finnish associations in the major concentrations of Finnish settlement, began to grow with the wave of immigration in the 1920s, the idea was raised of organizing some form of activity on a pan-Australian level, or possibly of setting up a Commonwealth-wide federation. The establishment in 1926 of the magazine *Suomi* did in effect provide a form of central focus, which also required constant effort to maintain continuity of publication. Central functions were also to some extent fulfilled by both the Finnish Seamen's Mission, and the Finnish Consulate.

It is not recorded who originally initiated the idea of the immigrants themselves having a national organization of their own, but the first person to propose this in public was Nestori Karhula, the leader of the northern Queensland Finns, who wrote to the Finnish Consul in Sydney in 1924. In his letter, Karhula suggests the creation of an organization to cover the whole of Australia: "The Finns in Australia", perhaps, or "The Australian *Suomi* Association". The purpose of such a national organization would be to preserve the Finnish community's identity, and it would be strictly politically non-partisan. The model proposed for the organization of such an association foresaw (1) a central association located in Sydney; (2) affiliated associations in each State; and (3) local branches in each centre of Finnish settlement. The entire national association would then also affiliate to the Overseas Finns section of the Finnish League (*Suomalaisuuden Liitto, Ulkosuomalaisosasto*). Sports clubs, bands and musical societies, and libraries could also be grouped under the national association. Equipped with such an organization, the Finns would be able to present a united front, which in turn would greatly increase their opportunities for action. The objectives of such an organization could include (1) the appointment of an energetic officer to travel around the country arranging jobs for new immigrants; (2) negotiations with the Australian Governments to facilitate the acquisition of land holdings by Finnish citizens; (3) publication of its own newspaper or magazine; (4) negotiations with the Finnish Government to obtain assistance for Finnish immigrants, or possibly to totally ban all further emigration; (5) the establishment of funds to finance its operations; and (6) the creation of libraries, bands, sports clubs, etc.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ N.I. Karhula from 'Suomi Farm' (Redlynch), 24. Sep. 1924, to the Consul of Finland (Sydney). TYYH/S/7/III.

Karhula also put this plan forward to both the Finnish Seamen's Mission¹¹⁷ and the *Heimo* Society in Brisbane.¹¹⁸ Despite extensive lobbying among the Finnish-Australians by Karhula for his idea, however, the plan came to nothing. A couple of years later, Karhula returned to the idea, proposing this time, however, that the central association might be located in Brisbane, since the largest concentration of Finns was emerging in Queensland.¹¹⁹ The idea of a pan-Australian association for the Finnish immigrants also attracted some support in Finland, where organizations had been set up in the 1920s to deal with affairs concerning Finnish expatriates; and in 1931, the suggestions put forward by the Overseas Finnish Association (*Ulkosuomalaisseura*) were referred to by the President of the Sydney Finnish Society, Aino Potinkara, in an appeal to the other Finnish associations.¹²⁰

Not only Karhula, but also Emil Hirvi, one of the leaders of the Finns at Tully, also urged the foundation of a national Finnish association. Pointing out that steps had been undertaken in Finland to provide support for the Finns overseas, he also drew attention to the creation of a central organization by the Finnish immigrants in Canada, and argued that the time had now come for the Finns in Australia to follow suit.¹²¹ It was not long after these opening moves had been made, however, before the impact of the Depression began to make itself felt in the Finnish associations. Nonetheless, the idea of a central federation was never completely abandoned, and once the local associations began to expand again, following the new wave of Finnish immigration in the 1950s, a Federation of Finnish Associations in Australia and New Zealand (*Australian ja Uuden Seelannin Suomalaisien Seurojen Keskusliitto*) was indeed set up, in Canberra on 10–11 February 1962.¹²² The main objectives of the Federation were still the same as had been outlined by Nestori Karhula, 38 years previously.

¹¹⁷ Letter from N.I. Karhula, 'Suomi Farm', to the Revd Kalervo Groundstroem, 8 June 1925, SMLA Brisbane No 703/25.

¹¹⁸ In his letter to the Consul, dated 24 Sep. 1924, Karhula states that he had also written to Karppinen in Brisbane.

¹¹⁹ *Suomi*, 5 Nov. 1928.

¹²⁰ *Suomi*, 9 April 1931.

¹²¹ *Suomen Viesti*, September 1931, 193.

¹²² Now the Australasian Federation of Finnish Societies and Clubs (Australasian Suomalaisien Liitto).

VIII Links with Finland

1. Introduction

The Finnish immigrants did not cut their links with their former home, but maintained contacts by means of correspondence, the Finnish press, and visits. Their culture they automatically brought with them, and it was cherished, at least by the first generation. Saunas, for instance — one of the most distinctive features of Finnish culture — were built even in the Australian tropics, and Finnish festivals were celebrated in Australia after the Finnish fashion.

Not only were links maintained on the private level, however; there were also official agents in Australia which provided links with Finland, i.e. the Consulate, and the Finnish Seamen's Mission. The Finnish associations also maintained a certain degree of contact with Finland, with the difference that the Consulate and the Mission were both actually run from Finland. Both institutions, however, developed quasi-autonomously, in response to the conditions and demands which they faced in Australia and to the special needs of the Finnish-Australian community. Through these official institutions the Finnish immigrants, scattered around the continent, were able to obtain assistance in practical matters such as dealings with the Australian authorities, and also to keep up contacts with each other either by visiting their offices or by means of the Mission's magazine.

2. The Finnish Seamen's Mission, 1916—

In the period prior to 1947, the religious activities of the Finns in Australia were mainly centred around the Finnish Seamen's Mission.

There is scarcely any information available concerning the religion of the earliest Finnish immigrants: the majority of them were ex-seamen, for whom religion was perhaps not of primary importance; nor were the other occupations represented such as were particularly likely to be religious. The emigrants who left Finland for America usually had a Bible and a hymn book in their luggage;¹ and the same applied to those emigrating to Australia, as is demonstrated by the old Finnish Bibles found at Nambour. (This is all the more striking at Nambour in view of the fact that the majority of Finns there were socialists.) Both the act of migration, and homesickness, are also likely to have affected religious behaviour.

The very earliest Finnish immigrants in Australia were mainly Swedish-speaking, which would have enabled them to join in church services and other functions arranged by the other Scandinavians. Right from the beginnings of Scandinavian missions to seamen in Australia (in the 1880s), the chaplains had also attempted to look after the Finns' spiritual needs. Finns were always welcome to attend the Scandinavians' activities, and several of them were indeed actively involved: in Melbourne, for instance, one of the active members was A. Rasmus, from Gamlakarleby (Kokkola), who assisted the Swedish pastor, Carlson, in setting up a joint Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1883.²

This Scandinavian collaboration continued throughout the latter decades of the 19th century. In 1889, the Evangelical Fatherland Foundation of Sweden proposed to the Finnish Seamen's Missions Society (founded in 1875) that they might maintain a joint pastorate in Melbourne, but this plan fell through due to financial difficulties. In 1908 the Swedes then established their own Swedish church in Melbourne, where Finns were also welcome.³ The proposal to establish a Finnish mission was renewed in 1909, but again this led to nothing.⁴ The decisive moment came with the visit to Australia in 1913 by the Revd Hugo Winter. He estimated the number of Finns in Australia at that time at around 2000, and considered that Sydney would be the most suitable location for a mission.⁵ Following this visit, the Finnish Seamen's Missions Society set about collecting funds and making other preparations for establishing a mission in Australia.⁶ The outbreak of the First World War imposed obstacles, but by 1916 it was decided to go

¹ KUKKONEN 1975, 139.

² *Norden*, 27 June 1925; see also EILERT 1981.

³ KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 164; KANSANAHO 1983, 239.

⁴ WALTARI 1925, 305—306.

⁵ *Ibid.* 1925, 307—308, see also KANSANAHO 1975, 24—25.

⁶ WALTARI 1925, 310.

ahead and officially establish a Mission in Sydney.⁷

The first Warden of the Mission was Johannes Oskar Boijer (1868—1943), an engineer who had previously been involved with the work of the Finnish Mission in San Francisco. He was no stranger to the life of immigrants, having himself lived in South Africa for almost ten years (1893—1902), where he worked as a surveyor, a prospector, a cattle dealer, a game hunter, and a soldier.⁸ From South Africa, he moved to America, where he was employed as an assistant at the Finnish Seamen's Mission in San Francisco, and married a Finnish-American girl. Following a period spent back in Finland, Boijer returned to act as Warden of the San Francisco Finnish Mission, before moving on to Australia.⁹

By the time Boijer arrived in Australia, in November 1916, conditions had changed drastically since before the outbreak of the Great War. The volume of shipping had sharply diminished, and many of the Finns had left the country, either for fear of being conscripted into the armed forces or for other reasons. The Finnish-Australians were now a scanty group, scattered across the continent. Initially, Boijer made a number of exploratory trips in the neighbourhood of Sydney, and also visited Melbourne and Adelaide, and the following year, 1917, he took up an invitation to visit the Finns in Queensland.¹⁰

In Sydney, Boijer rented premises near the harbour, on Day Street: the loft of an old warehouse, which he converted with the aid of some seamen into premises for meetings. The new Mission was opened for Christmas 1916, when for the first time the Finns in Australia were able to worship in their own language. After the Russian Revolution, Boijer found himself acting for a time as Finnish Consul, providing certain necessary consular services such as certificates of nationality, etc., for with the withdrawal of the Russian Consul from Sydney in 1918, Boijer was the only person available who could take on these duties.¹¹ 1918 was a difficult year in other ways, too, with contacts to Finland cut off, and restrictions in Australia on aliens' rights of movement and assembly. Although public parties and the like were banned, however, church

⁷ Finnish Seamen's Missions Society (Helsinki), Minutes of Board Meeting, 21 Sep. 1916, §3; see also WALTARI 1925, 311.

⁸ KANSANAHO 1975, 72; see also SS 2/1963, 7. Boijer's friend from Helsinki, C.T. Erikson, published a book of memoirs, *Seikkailujeni Afrikka* [The Africa of my Adventures], Jyväskylä 1932. There is also an account of Boijer and Erikson by Mikko Uola: "Boijer-veljesten ja C.T. Eriksonin vaiheita eteläisessä Afrikassa 1890-luvulta lähtien [The Boijer Brothers and C.T. Erikson in Southern Africa from the 1890s]", Tampere 1976.

⁹ SS 2/1963, 7; see also MY 12/1938, 224.

¹⁰ Letters from Johan O. Boijer, Sydney, 10 Feb. 1917, to Akseli Renvall, Helsinki, SMLA Brisbane, and 24 Jan. 1917, MY (publication of the Finnish Seamen's Missions Society), SMLA Helsinki.

¹¹ MY 6—7/1919, 98.



Illus. 44: The Finnish Seamen's Mission started in this building on Day Street in Sydney in 1916. (Tanner/Finlandia News)

services were permitted; and it was pleasant for the Swedish-speakers that the Norwegians and Danes joined them on Sunday evenings.

Boijer's commission was to lay the basis for the missionary work with seamen, and an ordained minister was to be sent out later on to take over. He soon realized, however, that it was the minister which was needed most of all in Australia straight away, to hold services, administer the sacraments, etc. Unfortunately, the Finnish Seamen's Missions Society had not enough funds for this.¹² Boijer continued to act as Warden until 1920, when, having completed a tour of service with dedication and with excellent results, he finally set off (accompanied by his wife and four children) for America and Finland. The Mission was then left untended for a long time.

It was not until 1922 that the headquarters of the Finnish Seamen's Missions Society was able to despatch an ordained minister to take over the Mission in Australia: a former military chaplain and officer in the German-trained Jägers, the Revd Kalervo Groundstroem (he later Finnicized his surname to Kurkiala).¹³ When Groundstroem arrived in

¹² KANSANAHO 1975, 26.

¹³ *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936.

Sydney, in August 1922, the Mission was still housed in the upstairs premises on Day Street. The congregation consisted of long-distance sailors, dockworkers, and seamen and boilermen off the coastal ships, together with about a dozen Finnish women.

The Mission's premises were in one of the more disreputable parts of the city, and Groundstroem therefore soon moved it to the lively surroundings of George Street; but these premises had to be abandoned after a speak-easy had started to operate on the floor above. Early in 1924, therefore, the Mission moved again, this time to premises in South Kensington. Church services were held in the Scandinavian seamen's hostel near the harbour. The moves had two disadvantages: the Reading Room was now too far from the harbour, while the Finns were reluctant to come to the Scandinavian hostel (largely for language reasons). These were some of the background reasons behind the decision to transfer the entire Mission from Sydney to Melbourne in September 1924.¹⁴ Essentially, during its time in Sydney the Mission was a church for seamen, not for immigrants.

The main emphasis in the pastoral work of the Mission began to change in the course of the 1920s, in response to the new wave of Finnish immigration, in conjunction with another change: Finnish sailing ships began to have difficulties in obtaining return cargoes in the ports on the eastern seaboard, and were forced to concentrate on the wheat cargoes from Victoria and South Australia. The presence in Melbourne of a community of Finnish coastal seamen, and the fact that it was a staging post for the Finnish ships arriving from Europe, provided supporting reasons for transferring the Mission there from Sydney. The Melbourne Finns, through their Melbourne Finnish Society, and strongly backed by the Swedish pastor, Guldbranzen, were also keen to bring the Finnish Mission to that city. In September 1924, therefore, the Mission moved to the capital of Victoria. The Reading Room remained in Sydney; and Sydney was also the location of the hostel for seamen, *Suomi-Koti* ('Finland Home'), opened on Arthur Street in 1929. Both the hostel and the Reading Room were looked after by Karl Selvinen up until 1933.¹⁵

In Melbourne, no suitable rented premises could be found, and the Mission therefore bought a house on Montague Street. Once activities in Melbourne had been established, Groundstroem began to follow Boijer's example, and to make trips to visit the immigrants: holding services (for 40 to 70 people at a time), administering baptism and confirmation, and holding funerals.¹⁶ There was particularly strong

¹⁴ WALTARI 1925, 316—317.

¹⁵ *Suomi*, 30 Nov. 1936.

¹⁶ MY 1/1926, 8.

interest in establishing regular parish functions among the farmers of northern Queensland, who would have wished for a minister of their own.¹⁷ It was also during Groundstroem's pastorate, in 1926, that the magazine *Suomi* was launched, which was to prove of invaluable assistance to the Seamen's Mission pastor and became an important channel of communication for the Finnish immigrants.

The next pastor, the Revd Otto Kaksonen, was also a former military chaplain, who spent five years in Australia, from 1926—31. During his pastorate, he made two extended visits to northern Queensland, which confirmed his recognition of this region as the primary focus of Finnish immigration.¹⁸ His proposal that the Mission should therefore now be transferred to Brisbane was warmly supported by the local Finnish organizations, the *Suomen Heimo* Society and the *Athletic Club*. A public meeting was held in Brisbane in 1929, and as a consequence an application was made to have the Mission relocated in Brisbane.¹⁹ Melbourne was also felt to be too far away from the main concentration of Finnish immigrants, while the Finnish sailing ships were now nearing the end of their era, and there were few Finnish seamen on the ships of other nations.²⁰

There were two Lutheran denominations in Australia during the 1920s: the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (ELCA), and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (UELCA). (In 1966, these united to form the Lutheran Church of Australia.)²¹ The clergy of both of these churches were mainly of German origin, and in their travels, they had from time to time encountered Finnish families who had been deprived of pastoral care for decades because of the language barrier. The Lutherans make up only a tiny proportion (around 1 %) of the Australian population in comparison with other Christian denominations: the Censuses of 1921, 1933 and 1947 show that the Roman Catholics formed the largest denomination, with approximately 40 per cent, followed by the Methodists, who before the Second World War made up about 20 per cent of the population.²²

The President of the UELCA, the Revd J. Stolz, contacted Kaksonen, the Finnish pastor, to discuss the situation of the Finns, and also wrote to the Archbishop in Finland to suggest that one seamen's pastor in Australia was not adequate. The Archbishop replied that the Church of Finland had no funds to expand the work any further, and

¹⁷ KANSANAHO 1975, 32.

¹⁸ Interview with Otto Kaksonen, Kisko, 8 Aug. 1973.

¹⁹ *Suomi*, 23 Nov. 1929.

²⁰ *Suomi*, 18 July 1930.

²¹ KANSANAHO 1975, 17—19.

²² MOL 1971, 5: 1921 Census, 1.06 %; 1933 Census, 0.92 %; 1947 Census, 0.88 % were Lutheran.

hoped that collaboration with the Lutheran Synod could be developed. The Australian Lutherans also suggested the possibility of transferring the Finnish seamen's pastor to the ministry of the Australian church. One of the major obstacles to collaboration continued to be the language barrier. Early in 1930, however, Pastor Kaksonen attended a conference of Lutheran clergy in Melbourne, at which the Finns were offered all the benefits of membership of Synod, without any obligations.²³

The Finns were however unattracted by the Australian Lutheran churches, which to the ordinary Finnish immigrant seemed alien, both in language and in spirit.²⁴ Nonetheless, Lutheran ministers did provide baptism and confirmation for the Finns in some places, e.g. Maryborough, Bundaberg, and Nambour.²⁵ Official collaboration between the Australian Lutheran clergy and the Finnish Seamen's Mission before World War II never seems to have developed beyond the interchange of correspondence and occasional meetings. Following the return of Pastor Kaksonen to Finland in 1931, the Mission was then left without pastor until 1935.

The next pastor, the Revd Paavo Hytönen, another former military chaplain, came to Australia from the Finnish Seamen's Mission in Rotterdam.²⁶ Immediately after his arrival, in August 1935, Hytönen set out to visit the Finnish immigrants, especially in Queensland. He tried to encourage them in forms of activity which they could keep running on their own, e.g. Sewing Circles, Sunday Schools, choirs, and sports clubs.²⁷ His visit to Mt Isa in 1935 actually led to the establishment of the local *Suomi* Society. Right from the beginning, the main focus of Hytönen's pastoral work was with the immigrants. Even before setting out from Finland, he had toured Ostrobothnia, visiting the families of emigrants from that region.²⁸

Gradually, the idea matured of transferring the Finnish Mission from Melbourne, where sailing ships no longer called and there were no longer many Finnish seamen, to Brisbane. The move was carried out in June 1938. The house which the Mission had bought in Melbourne was let, though the local Reading Room continued to function there; in Brisbane, a building was rented for a church, and dedicated with the assistance of Danish and Swedish clergy. The Mission's pastoral work quickly got under way, and it was clear that the move to Queensland had been the right step to take.

²³ *Suomi*, 15 June 1930.

²⁴ Letter from Armas Ojala, Bundaberg, 8 July 1930, to Kaksonen at Melbourne, SMLA Brisbane.

²⁵ *Suomi*, 5 July 1930.

²⁶ KANSANAHO 1975, 45.

²⁷ KANSANAHO 1983, 244.

²⁸ Diary of Niilo Oja for 23 Oct. 1935, microfilm roll 4, SI.

Both the Depression and the Second World War severely interfered with the Mission's work. The return of Finnish immigrants to Finland reduced the need for its services in Australia, while following the declaration of war, meetings were banned, and in 1942 Pastor Hytönen was interned in a camp in South Australia. For about two and a half years, all contacts with Finland were cut. Having been released from internment in 1944, Hytönen was at first forced to take a job as a storeman in Melbourne, until the Mission could start to function again. The largest change in the post-War period, however, was that in the second-generation Finns. Almost all of the children spoke English well, better than they could speak Finnish; only in a few places, such as Tully, was there still a flourishing use of Finnish.²⁹ Hytönen concentrated special attention on youth work for the rest of his time in Australia.

After Hytönen had been recalled, the Finnish-Australians were once again left for a time with neither pastor nor lay warden, since it was 1949 before the Revd Toivo Kuusiola was sent out. His successors were the Revd Heikki Castrén (1955—59), and the Revd Urpo Kokkonen (1959—67) — the last Finnish Seamen's Mission pastor to serve a parish covering the entire Australian continent.

Prior to the opening of the Seamen's Mission in Sydney in 1916, the Finnish-Australians had been forced to fend for themselves in religious matters. Moreover, in its early years under Boijer, the Mission's main pastoral work was with seamen. The immigrants were however never overlooked; ever since the Finnish Seamen's Missions Society had been founded, in 1875, its work with seamen had been closely tied up with care for Finnish emigrants, and eventually the latter were officially included in the Society's brief.³⁰ In Australia, it was in any case never easy to draw a clear distinction between seamen and immigrants. Both seamen coming ashore, and newly arrived immigrants, were frequently driven by their unfamiliarity with either the language or the customs of the country to turn to the Mission for assistance. As sail finally gave way to powered shipping, however, the numbers of Finnish seamen shrank, and the main focus of attention turned to the immigrants.

It is difficult to assess the overall strictly religious significance of the Finnish Mission. For many individuals, this was undoubtedly of crucial importance, as can be read in their letters home. There can in any case be no doubt that the opening of the Mission in 1916 marked the

²⁹ KANSANAHO 1975, 64. — There is a detailed account of the pastoral work of the Church of Finland among the immigrants in Australia in Matti PAAVONPERÄ's MA thesis, "Suomalaisten siirtolaispappien julistustyö Australiassa vuosina 1949—1967 [The Preaching of the Gospel by Finnish Immigrant Pastors in Australia, 1949—67]" (Department of Practical Theology, University of Helsinki 1973).

³⁰ KOKKONEN 1968.

beginning of a new phase in the Finnish-Australian community. This may be seen most clearly in very practical ways. The Mission was able to provide certain vital services: it was a bridge home to Finland, and a fixed address for immigrants to use as an unofficial *poste restante*. (It was not unknown for the European mail to contain 100—150 letters for the Mission to forward to their proper addresses.) The Mission also helped in transferring money to Finland; Pastor Kaksonen estimated the total value of these remittances during his period of office to have been in excess of a million marks.³¹

The new wave of Finnish immigration in the 1920s lent added significance to the role of the Mission. The Mission was a meeting-place (it provided neither meals nor loans for seamen), and those who had no families often came there night after night; frequently there were 20—30 persons present.³² With very few exceptions, both immigrants arriving, and those setting out back for Finland, passed through the Mission's doors; and those 'on walkabout' in Australia also often used it as a base from to set out and to which to return. When the Mission was located in Melbourne, people set out from there to pick strawberries in Silvan, grapes at Mildura, to dig potatoes at Ballarat, and so on. When the crop had been harvested, they would return to the Mission, and part of their share would be stored there. The Mission provided the Finns in Australia with a feeling of security, and a bond both to the far-off homeland and to their fellow-countrymen scattered around the continent, and in these ways, it made an important contribution to their adaptation to unfamiliar conditions.

3. The Magazine *Suomi* 1926—

Finns living overseas have long been involved in publishing newspapers, magazines, etc., in their own language. In the United States, since 1876 there have been published over a hundred different periodicals, while the first Canadian publication dates from 1901.³³ In North America, there have been altogether 364 Finnish-language papers published between 1876 and the present day.³⁴ Back in Europe, there was at least one Finnish-language publication in operation in St Petersburg from 1870 onwards.³⁵ In addition to these printed publications, moreover, there were handwritten papers, which were sometimes of very

³¹ Interview with Otto Kaksonen, Kisko, 8 Aug. 1973.

³² Interview with Uljas Apila, Helsinki, 14 Nov. 1973.

³³ WARGELIN 1924, 114—126; see also PILLI 1982, 40.

³⁴ VIRTANEN & al. 1986, 101.

³⁵ ENGMAN 1983, 63.

considerable significance within a local Finnish community within which they circulated.³⁶ KOSTIAINEN estimates that the number of handwritten magazines, etc., circulating at any one time in the United States and Canada at different periods runs into several dozen.³⁷

The most important task of the ethnic-language immigrant press is to supply information concerning both the old homeland and the country of adoption. It thus constitutes a bridge to both the old and the new societies. Moreover, immigrant periodicals are a bond and means of mutual co-operation within the ethnic minority community. Insofar as they report on current national and international political events, they also constitute a window on the world at large for the local immigrant community, which may well diverge from its host society on many dimensions: linguistically, socially, or culturally. A wide range of content in the ethnic press is thus important for the immigrants, and for the individual, often suffering from loneliness and rootlessness, a magazine or paper in his or her own language offers one of the few respites from the routine of daily work.

The ethnic press in Australia has deep roots. The oldest foreign-language publication in Australia was in German, *Die Deutsche Post fuer die Australischen Kolonien*, which was launched in 1848.³⁸ For five months in 1857, a short-lived publication called *Norden* was produced on the Victorian gold fields,³⁹ the same name, *Norden*, was taken up by a new Scandinavian paper, published in Melbourne from 1896 to 1940, which from time to time included news relating to Finns. Since many of the earliest Finlanders in Australia were Swedish-speakers, who tended to identify with their fellow-Scandinavians, their needs were adequately met by this Swedish-language press; the first publication in Finnish was the handwritten magazine *Orpo*, launched in 1902 at Nambour (see pp. 305—308).

It was the increased volume of Finnish immigration during the 1920s which then created a basis adequate not only for the organized activities discussed in Chapter VII above, but also for the launching of a Finnish-language publication, while the pastor at the Finnish Mission needed a channel of contact with his far-flung parishioners.

Initially, the new generation of Finnish immigrants in Australia in the 1920s subscribed to newspapers and periodicals from Finland, which also used to publish their letters. Gradually, however, they began to wish for

³⁶ See LINDSTRÖM-BEST 1981.

³⁷ Auvo KOSTIAINEN, "The Growth and Decline of the Finnish Labor Press in North America", FINN FORUM publication (in press, SI).

³⁸ GILSON & ZUBRZYCKI 1967, 4.

³⁹ *Norden*, 30 July & 6 Aug. 1857. These are the only copies known to be extant, and they also include information concerning the Häggblom brothers from Finland, KB Stockholm; see also Cronquist 1859, 88—90.

faster and fuller channels of information about Australian affairs, about employment opportunities and conditions, and about their fellow-Finns scattered around Australia. These factors, coupled with what they knew of the Finnish press in North America, sparked off the desire to create a Finnish-Australian publication of their own. This idea had been incorporated in the proposals put to Pastor Groundstroem by Nestori Karhula in 1924 for a pan-Australian Finnish federation.⁴⁰ This exchange of correspondence between Karhula and Groundstroem appears to have been the decisive factor leading to the launching of the magazine *Suomi*, and Groundstroem later commented that it was Karhula who had given the strongest support to the establishment of the magazine.⁴¹

The actual initiative for the launching of the new publication, however, is attributed to Groundstroem himself, in a speech to the Finnish Society in Melbourne on 10 May 1925, when he urged the Society to take steps to establish a Finnish-language paper. The proposal was opposed, on financial grounds, but it was agreed to send a circular to the local Finnish associations to sound out support. By September 1925, 180 shares had already been provisionally taken out, and approximately 200 subscriptions registered; it was therefore resolved to proceed with publication. The magazine was printed on the presses of *Norden*. The Melbourne Finnish Society considered itself to be too narrow a base to publish a paper for the entire Finnish community in Australia, and it therefore re-constituted itself as the Finnish Newspaper Company,⁴² with the declared objectives of publishing a periodical for the Finns in Australia, and in other ways promoting their wellbeing and organized combination. The Company declared itself politically non-partisan. Its share capital consisted of £500, and share holding was to be open to Finns or persons of Finnish descent and to Finnish consular officers. Should the Company cease to function, its funds should be surrendered to the Finnish Mission for Seamen.⁴³ Pastor Groundstroem agreed to edit the magazine. Originally, therefore, *Suomi* was to have been established as a limited liability company; owing to the expenses which would have been incurred by registration, etc., however, it was in fact published on a voluntary-association basis, i.e. on the personal liability of the Finnish Newspaper Company's officers.

The first issue of *Suomi* was published on 1 March 1926; the Finns not

⁴⁰ Letter from N.I. Karhula, Suomi Farm, 8 June 1925, to Kalervo Groundstroem, SMLA Brisbane No 703/25.

⁴¹ *Suomi*, 6/1966.

⁴² Melbourne Finnish Society, Minutes, 10 May 1925, § 5, § 6, § 7; Minutes, 9 Aug 1925, § 4 microfilm roll 4, SI.

⁴³ *Suomi*, 15 March 1926, see also Melbourne Finnish Society, Minutes, 23 Aug. 1925, § 2, and 27 Dec. 1925, § 2, § 19, microfilm roll 4, SI.



“SUOMI”

FINNISH FORTNIGHTLY PAPER.

Editor:

Rev. K. GROUNDSTROEM.

Published by The Finnish Newspaper Assn.
144 Montague St., Sth. Melbourne

N:o. 1

Melbourne, maaliskuun 1 p.

1926

TAIVALTA ALJETTAESSA

Noin vuosi sitten heräsi Melbournen suomalaisten keskuudessa ajatus oman suomalaisen äänenkannattajan hankkimisesta Australiaan. Melbournen Suomalainen Seura valitsi erityisen komitean asiaa valmistelemaan. Tämä komitea lähetti asiasta kiertokirjeen kaikille suomalaisille Australian eri valtioihin kehottaen koemerkintään perustettavaa sanomalehti-yhtiötä varten. Koemerkinnän tulos ei tosin ollut erittäin loistava, mutta kuitenkin päätettiin hanketta ajaa edelleen.

kansallishenkeen. Me uskomme, että suomalainen kansallishenki on siksi vahva, että se täällä maapallon toisella puolellakin keskuudessamme tarvitsee puhe- torvea ja ilmenemismuotoa. Me uskomme, että suomalainen kansallishenki on siksi elinvoimainen, että se tulevaisuudessakin kykenee suomalaista sanomalehteä täällä ylläpitämään.

Joku kenties halveksii lehtemme pientä kokoa. Silloin on otettava huomioon, että suomenkielisen lehden painaminen tässä maassa vaatii suhteellisesti paljon suurempia kustannuksia kuin Suomessa. Kun Sanomalehti-Yh-

Illus. 45: Suomi, the first Finnish-language paper in the southern hemisphere, was launched in Melbourne on 1 March 1926.

only of Australia, but of the entire southern hemisphere, had acquired their first Finnish-language paper. *Suomi* was a modest publication, appearing twice monthly: small in size (11.5 × 21.5 cm), with two columns and four pages. Thanks to its small size, it could be posted to its 120 subscribers in ordinary envelopes. The opening issue contained news both about Australia and about Finland. During 1926, altogether twenty numbers were published.

Suomi continued to be set and printed on the presses of *Norden*, for its first four years of publication. Since the printer knew no Finnish, misprints easily occurred, despite careful proof-reading. In 1928, the assistant at the Finnish Seamen's Mission, Antti Välttilä, joined the

paper; and subsequently, he learnt type-setting, which made it possible to print the paper elsewhere. At the end of 1930, the paper acquired its own printing press, at a price of £20.⁴⁴

The content of the magazine was also improved. In November 1927, Jorma Pohjanpalo arrived in Australia, and started to contribute articles. He had brought with him from Finland some old illustration plates, and the first pictures, depicting the 19th-century Finnish writer Runeberg, commemorated in Finland on 5 February, and a Finnish winter landscape, appeared in February 1928.⁴⁵

The paper ran into financial difficulties, and in an attempt to reduce these, advertisements were taken; for a time, this helped, but the financial status of *Suomi* remained weak throughout the Depression, and the Finnish Newspaper Company decided to appeal to the local Finnish associations to raise funds to support the publication. Antti Välttilä, the assistant at the Mission, had been working for *Suomi* for a year without pay, and in fact since the departure of Pastor Kaksonen had not only printed, but edited the entire paper.⁴⁶ Antti Välttilä's contribution to *Suomi* was very significant, and in 1933 he was presented with ten shares in the Company in recognition of his work.⁴⁷

During the interregnum when there was no pastor at the Mission, in 1931—35, *Suomi* and the Mission headquarters were still located in Melbourne, but members were now elected to the Board of the paper from Queensland. The Finnish community in Tully made an especially significant contribution to keeping the paper going through the most difficult period. The proposal to transfer the headquarters of *Suomi* up to Brisbane, however, was linked to certain other aims pursued by some of the Queensland Finns. In 1932, the Annual General Meeting of the Finnish Newspaper Company was held at Bli Bli, near Nambour, and the main item on the agenda was a move to make *Suomi* independent of the Mission and transfer it to Brisbane, a proposal inspired by distrust of the Church and the Mission and the wish to free the paper from ecclesiastical control. A Subcommittee was appointed, which drew up plans under the slogan: "Independence and freedom for *Suomi*: a matter of Finnish-Australian honour!"⁴⁸ This intention was however frustrated.

The 1933 Annual General Meeting was held in Brisbane, and this was the first time that Board members were elected from outside Melbourne. It had been decided earlier that *Suomi* should continue to

⁴⁴ *Suomi*, 27 Oct. 1930; see also interview with Otto Kaksonen, Kisko, 8 Aug. 1973.

⁴⁵ POHJANPALO 1961, 11.

⁴⁶ Finnish Newspaper Company, Minutes of the Biannual Meeting, 11 July 1931, § 4 & 5, microfilm roll 4, SI.

⁴⁷ Finnish Newspaper Company, Minutes, 23 July 1933, § 6, microfilm roll 4, SI.

⁴⁸ *Suomi*, 29 Feb. 1932; see also Tully Suomi Society, Minutes, 25 Sep. 1932, microfilm roll 5, SI.

be printed by Välttilä in Melbourne, on the responsibility of a Melbourne-based member of the Board. Queenslanders were now also elected to the Supervisory Board (in practice an organ of little importance). At the following year's Annual General Meeting, it proved impossible to elect a complete new Board, and the future of the paper seemed threatened. Publication was awkward, with the offices and press in Melbourne, but most of the Board in Brisbane. Some 1934 numbers were never published. This drove the Finns at Long Pocket and Tully to take steps to save the situation; and in June 1934 they held a Meeting at which a new Board was elected, consisting of members recruited from that area.⁴⁹ The central figure in this manoeuvre was Emil Hirvi, who was now to take over liability for publication and to assist Välttilä in the practical work of editing; he went on to write a review of the first ten years of the paper's history. In order to intensify sales, a network of agents was now established.⁵⁰

The situation improved radically, however, with the arrival from Finland in August 1935 of the new pastor, the Revd Paavo Hytönen. In December, he published in *Suomi* the following statement of editorial policy:

1. *Suomi* shall be a religious and moral paper;
2. report news concerning both Finland and Australia;
3. convey information on the situation of the Finns in Australia, and function as a channel of contact among them;
4. publish articles about the various occupations they engage in;
5. and promote discussion on a wide range of questions, strengthen links with the homeland, and publish the life stories of figures from Finnish history.

Hytönen also emphasized the cultural role of *Suomi*.⁵¹ He rapidly ran into the old problem again, however, i.e. was the paper to be seen as the voice of the Mission, or of some other body? Hytönen's view was that *Suomi* should be recognized as the paper not of the Mission, but of the entire Finnish-Australian community, and that it should therefore aim to be as wide-ranging as possible; the Mission merely had taken over the task of supervising publication. If the paper could be expanded, to something like three or four times its current size, it would then be possible to separate it from the Mission and appoint full-time staff.

Hytönen's arrival also sparked off discussion once more about relocating the headquarters of the paper.⁵² With the centre of gravity of Finnish settlement now in Queensland, Brisbane seemed the more sensible place, and the move was made in 1938. By this time, *Suomi* was

⁴⁹ *Suomi*, 23 March 1936; see also Finnish Newspaper Company, Minutes, 29 Jan. 1933, § 17 & § 28, microfilm roll 4, SI.

⁵⁰ Finnish Newspaper Company, Minutes, 30 Jan. and 5 March 1933, microfilm roll 4, SI.

⁵¹ *Suomi*, 17 Dec. 1935.

⁵² *Suomi*, 15 Jan. and 21 Feb. 1938.

well established, with over 250 regular subscribers, and it was even able to publish 16-page supplements by means of which immigrants could send greetings back to Finland. In its best years, as many as fifty contributions might be sent in to *Suomi* by immigrants. Its central task, nonetheless, continued to be the maintenance of Finnish identity.⁵³

The Second World War marked a crucial turning point for the paper. Following the resumption of hostilities between Finland and the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941, the editors enquired from the Australian authorities whether they could continue to publish. They were informed that for the time being, at any rate, *Suomi* could continue; and the editors stated that should it be decided, in the name of consistency, that the paper must be closed down, they would understand this, and look forward to being able to recommence publication once peace came.⁵⁴ Following the declaration of war between Finland and the United Kingdom on 6 December 1941, both the Finnish Seamen's Mission and *Suomi* were closed down.

Following Paavo Hytönen's return to Finland after the War, in 1946, the Finnish-Australians were once again without a pastor for three years, until the arrival in Brisbane of the Revd Toivo Kuusiola. At this point there were no funds for publication, and it was not until Christmas 1950 that *Suomi* appeared again, in a short run of just under a hundred mimeographed copies. Throughout the following year, the paper continued to be published by mimeograph.⁵⁵ The acquisition in 1952 of the Mission's own premises in Brisbane, however, meant a radical improvement in the conditions for *Suomi* as well. In 1954, Antti Välttilä was employed on a part-time basis, and the paper now had the staffing it so urgently needed.

In 1959, a new pastor, the Revd Urpo Kokkonen, arrived in Australia, and he immediately set about the expansion and extension of *Suomi* with energy and enthusiasm. Early in 1961, the old printing presses were brought into action again after almost twenty years, and *Suomi* appeared in a four-column, four-page format. Soon, new presses were acquired,⁵⁶ and *Suomi* entered a new era. Under Kokkonen's supervision, the number of subscribers passed the thousand mark.

Before the Second World War, *Suomi* was the only Finnish -language publication in Australia, but as the numbers of Finnish-Australians grew, other papers appeared, e.g. mimeographed parish magazines, etc. By 1965, there were five of these in operation, and they had begun to

⁵³ *Suomi*, 17 Dec. 1935.

⁵⁴ *Suomi*, 23 June 1941; see also Finnish Newspaper Company, Report for the Year 1938, SI.

⁵⁵ *Suomi*, 2/1951.

⁵⁶ POHJANPALO 1961, 21.

cut slightly into *Suomi's* subscriptions and potential advertizers.⁵⁷ The most serious competitor, however, did not appear until 1977, when a former assistant on *Suomi*, Mikko Mäki-Neste, launched the *Finlandia News*. This, in turn, was one of the reasons behind the move of *Suomi* in 1978 to Canberra, where it now became the official voice of the new Finnish Lutheran national organization in Australia, the Finnish Conference. Finally, the circle was completed with the return of the paper to its original hearth in Melbourne, in 1985.

The original launching of *Suomi* came at the ideal time, when there were large numbers of newly arrived Finnish immigrants in Australia, whose need for information, both about their former homeland and about their new home, was acute. Not everyone was confident about the new venture; the Finnish Consul, Tanner, was very doubtful whether suitably qualified staff could be obtained, and also argued that Finnish immigration was currently on the wane.⁵⁸ The immigrants, however, took to their new paper with enthusiasm. Their feelings are vividly described in the following reader's contribution:

As I read them [the issues of *Suomi*], it felt like refreshing rain on the parched ground. I have been away from Finland for over twenty years now, always in the company of English speakers, so that I've forgotten a lot of my Finnish, and even of Swedish, which is actually my native language. — Before I started to read 'Suomi', I was what you might have called a 'dead Finn', but this paper of ours has re-awakened my sense of being Finnish, and my love for my mother country far away.⁵⁹

Initially, it was a matter of honour to be a subscriber, but gradually this enthusiasm began to weaken, as can be seen from the difficulties the paper encountered in financing and publication during the 1930s. On the other hand, it may be pointed out that although for several years *Suomi* operated in a legal limbo, with no one legally responsible for its affairs, it continued to publish virtually without interruption.

The paper also had a role to play for those in Finland: it provided a channel of communication between the immigrants in Australia, and their friends and families and the migrants who had returned home. There were quite a number of subscribers in Finland; the records for 1935 show that 70 of the 156 copies printed were posted to Finland (no doubt largely to ex-immigrants), and one to Canada, leaving a circulation within Australia of 85 copies.⁶⁰ This gives too low a figure for the readership, however, since many copies were passed on from hand to hand.

The significance of *Suomi* for the Finnish-Australians cannot be

⁵⁷ Letter from Urpo Kokkonen, Brisbane, 16 Aug. 1965, to Jorma Louhivuori, SMLA Brisbane.

⁵⁸ Letter from Harald Tanner, Sydney, 29 Jan. 1926, to Kalervo Groundstroem, SMLA Brisbane.

⁵⁹ *Suomi*, 1 March 1927.

⁶⁰ *Suomi* 15.6.1935.

overestimated: it was a firm point of reference for the immigrants in a new and insecure environment, and a source of information in Finnish about Australian society, in particular relating to employment, while simultaneously providing a bond to the far-away homeland and thus reinforcing the immigrants' roots and identity.

4. The Finnish Consulate, 1918—41

The second Finnish-based institution in Australia, besides the Seamen's Mission, was the Consulate. Prior to the independence of Finland in 1917, the Russian Consul had been responsible for Finnish affairs. It is difficult to assess how much use Finns may have made of the Russian consular services; during the First World War, it is known to have issued passports and other certificates of identity, since during the War every alien was required to carry a passport, and it was impossible for aliens to obtain work without proof of identity. In addition to providing documents, the Russian Consulate is known on at least one occasion in 1889 to have arranged employment for some Finns.⁶¹

It is however unlikely that the Finns turned to the Russian Consulate very often for assistance, for they were afraid in many cases that no one at the Consulate would be able to speak Finnish. Boijer, the first Warden of the Finnish Seamen's Mission, reported that seamen had commented to him that "As for the Russian Consuls, who haven't an inkling of our language, and haven't shown much interest in looking after Finns anyway, you don't often find us Finnish seamen trusting them . . ."⁶²

The situation changed radically for the Finns in the aftermath of the 1917 Russian Revolution and Finnish independence, with the establishment in Australia of a new, Finnish Consulate. Even after the February Revolution there had been a degree of confusion, but following the October Revolution the situation became really difficult. In Queensland, the Finns had held a "Citizens' Meeting" back in September 1917, and had sent a letter to the Senate (i.e. Government) in Finland, protesting that the Russian Consuls had refused to renew the passports of Finns (at this point still Russian subjects) and in this way made it impossible for them to leave the country, thus placing them in a very invidious position. It was also impossible for many to deal with the Consular authorities since no one at the Consulates spoke Finnish. The Meeting therefore begged the Senate to take appropriate action with the

⁶¹ *Keskipohjanmaa*, 3 Oct. 1969.

⁶² Letter from Johan O. Boijer, Sydney, 24 Jan. 1917, to *Merimiehen Ystävä*. Helsinki. SMLA Brisbane: also TYYH/S/X/7/III.

Russian authorities to ensure that a Finnish-speaker was appointed to the Consulates, and specifically to the Consulate in Queensland.⁶³

By the end of 1917 and beginning of 1918, the Russian Consul was returning all passport applications by Finns to the applicants, and refusing to carry out any consular services on their behalf. In January 1918, he was dismissed from his post,⁶⁴ whereupon he absconded to Europe, having first destroyed many of the Consulate's files, and taking with him funds entrusted to him by many Finns.⁶⁵ Johan Boijer, the Warden at the Finnish Seamen's Mission in Sydney, now began to issue certificates of nationality and carry out various other consular duties, until the Finnish Government appointed an official Consul, from the beginning of 1919.⁶⁶

There happened to be in Australia at that time a suitable person for the post of Consul, Kaarlo J. Nauklér. He had first arrived in Australia in 1908, as a seaman, and spent a year there farming.⁶⁷ Later Nauklér graduated from the University of Helsinki, and during World War I left for Australia with his wife for health reasons. He was appointed as Consul on 15 November 1918,⁶⁸ with authority to perform the duties of Consul of Finland with effect from the beginning of 1919; his credentials were accepted by the authorities in February 1919. Initially, Nauklér received no salary for performing his consular duties. Later, the jurisdiction of the Consulate was extended to include New Zealand, New Guinea, and the South Sea Islands, and from 1920 onwards the Consul was also the *chargé d'affaires* for Estonia. Nauklér wrote frequent articles in the press, and gave many speeches. He was a keen sportsman, earning him the nickname 'the champion Consul', and it was his achievement to establish Finland's reputation and to lay the basis for the future development of economic and cultural relations between the two countries. The career of the first Finnish Consul in Australia came to an untimely end with his death in May 1921, followed a few months later by that of his wife Aina.⁶⁹

Nauklér's successor, appointed in May 1921, was Harald Tanner, who continued to fill the post up until 1935, when he was recalled to Finland to take up a post in the Finnish Foreign Ministry; in 1939 he was then

⁶³ Letter signed on behalf of the Meeting of Finnish Citizens, Brisbane, 15 Sep. 1917, by Karl Karpinen and Johannes Riipinen, 53, F 60 a, UM Helsinki.

⁶⁴ Letter from J.O. Boijer, Sydney, 10 Feb. 1918, to Pastor Hakola, Helsinki, SMLA Brisbane; also TYYH/S/X/7/III.

⁶⁵ SS 2/1963, see also SK 20 March 1920.

⁶⁶ WALTARI 1925, 315; see also MY 12/1928, 224.

⁶⁷ *The Daily Herald*, 19 Jan. 1909; see also *Urheilun Kuva-aitta*, 10/1964.

⁶⁸ Letter from the Consulate (Kaasalainen) to N.I. Karhula, Runcorn, 18 Sep. 1939, No 682, SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgc:5, 22, N.I. Karhula, UM Helsinki.

⁶⁹ SK 2/1963, see also the speech by Harald Tanner at the memorial occasion for K.J. Nauklér, 15 May 1921, SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fi.3, 35, No 1, and *Urheilun Kuva-aitta*, 10/1964.

appointed Finnish Consul in Shanghai. Having resigned from the Finnish Foreign Service in 1950, he retired to Australia, and settled in Gosford, New South Wales.⁷⁰ Later he lived in Sydney, where I interviewed him in 1969.

The services which the Finnish Consulate provided for Finns were not however limited to official business; it also forwarded letters, and even supplied sports equipment. In time, a Secretary was appointed to the Consulate, which greatly increased its facilities for maintaining contacts with the Finnish community. The role played by Jorma Pohjanpalo (Consular Secretary 1927—31) was particularly important.⁷¹

The Consulate, which was set up in Sydney in 1919, was at first the only representation Finland had in Australia; but even during Nauklér's period of office, he had taken the first steps towards appointing a Vice-Consul in Brisbane, and on 9 November 1921 this led to the appointment of Henry George Noble as the first Honorary Finnish Consul in Australia.⁷² At the end of the same year, Vice-Consuls were also appointed in Melbourne and Adelaide. The Sydney Consulate laid emphasis, however, on the need for further Vice-Consuls, especially for New Zealand and the Pacific islands;⁷³ and subsequently the network of Finnish Vice-Consulates was extended, with an appointment in Western Australia in 1927,⁷⁴ and supplemented by the appointment of Honorary Consuls, who were for the most part Australian businessmen.

During the Second World War, the Finnish Consulate in Sydney was closed down, and the Australian authorities requested the Finnish Consul to leave the country.⁷⁵ In August 1941, all of the Finnish consular offices were closed, and their records and responsibility for Finnish affairs were transferred to the care of the Swedish consular authorities.

For the local Finns, the Consulate fulfilled much of the same role as the Seamen's Mission. Its premises were open for one to meet other Finns, to hear the latest news about Finland, or to read the newspapers. Before the Finnish Society was established in Sydney, indeed, the Consulate met some of the needs which later the association was to care for. For those living further away, it was possible to deal with the Consulate by post, e.g. in applying for passports or other documents, etc.

⁷⁰ Letter from the Consulate (Kaasalainen) to N.I. Karhula, Runcorn, 18 Sep. 1939, No 682, SKA Sydney 1919—41, Fgc:5, 22, N.I. Karhula, UM Helsinki; see also UM Helsinki, 53 F 51 b, Tanner.

⁷¹ POHJANPALO 1931.

⁷² *Suomi*, 5 Nov. 1934.

⁷³ Report for the Year 1921, SKA Sydney 1919—41, UM Helsinki, 53 F 51 f.

⁷⁴ *Suomi*, 1 Dec. 1927.

⁷⁵ NEVAKIVI 1976, 150.

The extent of the demand for a Consulate may be illustrated by some of the statistics which are available. In 1925, 2961 persons visited the Consulate's premises in Sydney. The Consul forwarded during the same year a total of 3134 letters to Finland (839 to Estonia). Money transfers remitted to Finland amounted altogether to £1500, plus £200 to Estonia.⁷⁶

The establishment of the Consulate was a consequence of Finland's achievement of independence, and the office, together with the blue cross flag, were the outward symbols of this, strengthening the Finns' sense of national identity: no longer were they "Russian Finns", but "Finns" proper. The achievement of Finnish independence brought many emigrants back to Finland, but for those who remained, the Consulate not only issued passports and dealt with other documents, etc., but also for instance provided interpreters when needed, and in general provided a sense of security.

⁷⁶ *Suomi*, 1 April 1926.

IX Conclusions: Patterns of Migration, Settlement and Adaptation

1. Finnish Migration to Australia, 1851—1947

The main argument running through the present study is the impact of the distance between Finland and Australia on the migration movement between the two countries. As was pointed out a hundred years ago by RAVENSTEIN, the number of migrants decreases as the distance between areas of origin and of destination increases.¹ This hypothesis has been further developed by ZIPF, who suggests that the volume of migration between two areas is in inverse proportion to the distance between them,² which broadly speaking appears to be valid; and by STOUFFER, who in 1940 suggested that the number of people moving over a given distance is in direct proportion to the opportunities available at this distance, and in inverse proportion to the opportunities available in the territory between the area of departure and that of arrival;³ i.e. Stouffer takes into account the intervening obstacles. A further factor, emphasized by the Swedish scholar HÄGERSTRAND, is the flow of information concerning the opportunities available in the destination area.⁴

By the 1920s, JEROME had formulated a theory of *push* and *pull* factors operating on migration. He found that fluctuations in migration followed the economic trends in America more closely than those in the areas of origin, and therefore concluded that the pull effect is stronger

¹ RAVENSTEIN 1885 and 1889.

² ZIPF 1946.

³ STOUFFER 1940, 845—927; see also JACKSON 1969, 60—61.

⁴ HÄGERSTRAND 1957.

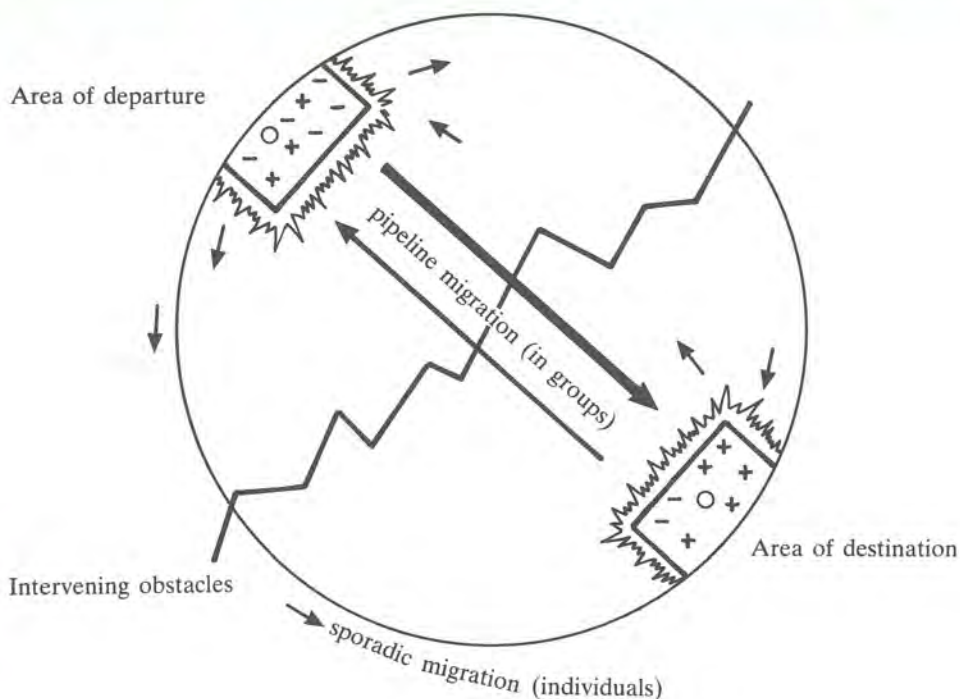


Fig. IX.1: Model of the Migration between Finland and Australia, 1851—1947: Casual and Goal-oriented Migration

than the push.⁵

Building on the ideas outlined here, in 1966 LEE formulated a theory incorporating the pull of the destination area, the push of the area of origin, the obstacles on the intervening journey, and individual factors;⁶ and this has perhaps been the most influential model of migration since that put forward by Ravenstein. Fig. IX.1 offers an application of Lee's model to the Finnish migration to Australia.

In Fig. IX.1, migration is conceived of as a global process, even though only that part of it occurring between two specific countries is depicted here. A central feature is the distance between Finland and Australia, which leads to a much lower level of migration than that between Finland and North America. The intervening obstacles here consist of the high cost of the journey, together with its danger (especially in the age of sail); legal restrictions on immigration; and, most drastic of all, the impact of the First and Second World Wars.

⁵ JEROME 1926, 205—208; see also RUNBLUM & NORMAN 1976, 150—153.

⁶ LEE 1966; see ÅKERMAN 1976, 46—47.

Improved communications — both transportation and telecommunications — have either removed or diminished the effect of earlier obstacles. Where the obstacles are major ones, however, e.g. a long and expensive journey, then the decision to migrate is not taken lightly. Consequently, long-distance migration has tended to be marked by selectivity with regard to migrants, the weak and indecisive being filtered out. Where the destination area is far off, LEE suggests that the migrants who arrive are likely to be of a high quality,⁷ and this has been seen to have been the case with many of the Finnish immigrants to Australia, although the situation as regards ex-seamen is less clearcut; even here, however, it may be posited that the seamen recruited for the inter-continental runs were probably the pick of their profession. In the diagram, the separate arrows represent this "casual migration", stimulated for instance by the gold discoveries of the 19th century, or opportunities of better-paid employment; and in fact many of these early arrivals subsequently moved on further, a fact which emphasizes the universal nature of the migration phenomenon. The others, who chose to remain in Australia, took on a pioneer function, attracting relations and acquaintances, and thus setting up a pattern of chain migration.

The straight arrows in Fig. IX.1 represent the next phase in the migration between Finland and Australia: group travel. The passenger lists show that group migration (to South Australia at least) had begun by the 1880s. This category also includes Matti Kurikka's utopian colony scheme at the turn of the century, whose members travelled out on Queensland Government assisted passages. Groups often travelled on an entirely self-financed basis, however, as well as under assisted-passage schemes. By the inter-War period, this developed into a "pipeline" pattern, in which groups of emigrants from Finland would travel out to Australia in a group, remain there for several years, and then return in a group to Finland. The development of this pattern grew out of the now well-established traditions of migration between Finland and Australia.

These migrants illustrate "goal-oriented migration", i.e. the accumulation of high income over a period of a few years by hard work in the host country; a phenomenon which somewhat resembles the employment on special projects outside Finland nowadays. The pattern of Finnish migration to Australia through the period 1851—1947 can thus be seen as a sequence: pioneer migration . . . chain migration . . . pipeline migration.

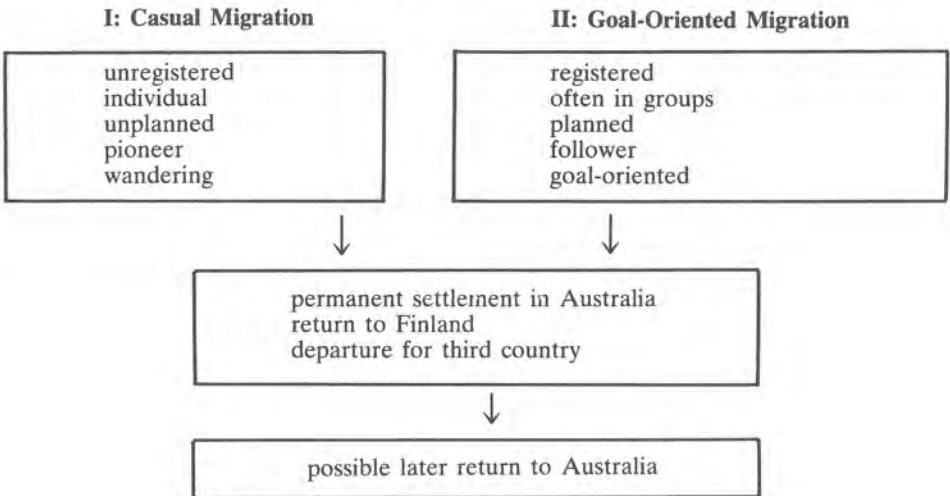
Forced migration, on the other hand, does not occur in the Finnish migration to Australia. Examples of "forced migration" in Australia

⁷ LEE 1969, 296.

might include not only the British convicts in the penal colonies, but also Russian⁸ or Hungarian⁹ refugees. None of the Finns, however, could be defined as "refugees", not even Matti Kurikka's group, even if they had political reasons for emigrating.

Attempts have been made to identify the features characteristic of particular forms of migration, and to develop typologies on the basis of these. As with many other aspects of theory in this field, there is much to be done here.¹⁰ The best-known typologies are those worked out by HEBERLE¹¹ and PETERSEN.¹²

On the basis of Fig. IX.1, the forms of migration occurring among the Finns moving to Australia may be classified as follows:



Any such classification remains to some extent arbitrary, since while some emigrants had originally intended to return home, others had intended from the outset to settle permanently in Australia, while many changed their minds in the course of their time there. Nonetheless, typologies such as this assist in the understanding and depiction of the character of migration involved here. The final stage in both types of migration is identical: the choice between return to Finland, movement onwards to a third country, or permanent settlement in the destination country.

⁸ AERTS 1971, 26—27. Many of the Russians are double refugees, who first fled from the Russian Revolution in 1917 to China, and then from China to Australia in 1949.

⁹ KUNZ 1969.

¹⁰ MANGALAM 1968, 6.

¹¹ HEBERLE 1955 and 1956.

¹² PETERSEN 1958.

Migration is a gender-selective process. RAVENSTEIN drew attention to the observation that over short distances, women migrants formed a majority, whereas over longer distances they were outnumbered by men.¹³ This is borne out in the Finnish migration to Australia, in which prior to 1947 only about 10—15 per cent of the Finnish-Australian immigrants were female.

Chronologically speaking, the patterns of Finnish immigration in Australia up to the Second World War correspond closely to those for immigration from Britain (see Figs. IX.2 and IX.3). Boom and depression are reflected in the same way in both the Finnish and British statistics. The relatively low level of Finnish emigration in the 1860s and 1870s may partly be explained by the boom in shipping and ship-building along the Ostrobothnian coast in that period, whereas by the 1880s, when the local economic conditions had worsened, those in Australia were booming, leading to an upsurge in emigration.¹⁴ In the depression years following 1890 and 1930, the numbers of emigrants sharply fell off, whereas the encouraging economic prospects in the 1880s and 1920s led to increasing numbers of emigrants from both Finland and the United Kingdom.

One of the laws proposed by RAVENSTEIN was the observation that every movement of migration leads to a compensating counter-movement. On the other hand, he suggests that the greater the distance involved, the less return migration is likely to occur.¹⁵ In the case of the Finnish emigration to Australia, the latter point does not apply; almost half of the Finnish-Australians returned to Finland in the inter-War period (in contrast to the figure of approximately twenty per cent who returned from North America).¹⁶ The predominance of goal-oriented migration, with its built-in motivation for return, together with the lack of women in the Finnish-Australian community, have been suggested as explaining this exceptionally high return percentage from Australia (and the associated phenomenon of re-emigration to America or some other third country).

A central mechanism in Finnish migration to Australia in the period before the Second World War has been identified as "chain migration", i.e. the movement of persons from the same locality of origin to the same destination locality; moreover, the same phenomenon has continued to operate, though on a lesser scale, in the post-War period.

¹³ RAVENSTEIN 1889, 288.

¹⁴ KUMMEL 1980, 445.

¹⁵ RAVENSTEIN 1885, 199.

¹⁶ VIRTANEN 1979, 69

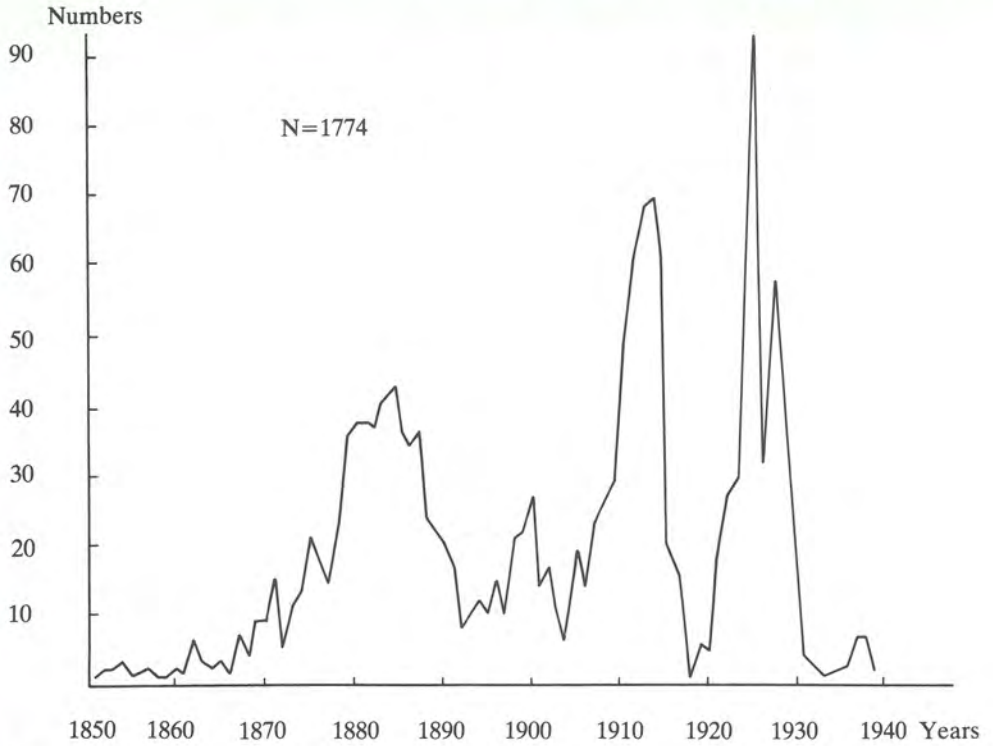


Fig. IX.2: Dates of Landing 1851—1939 of Finnish Men Naturalized in Australia 1866—1946 (NR)

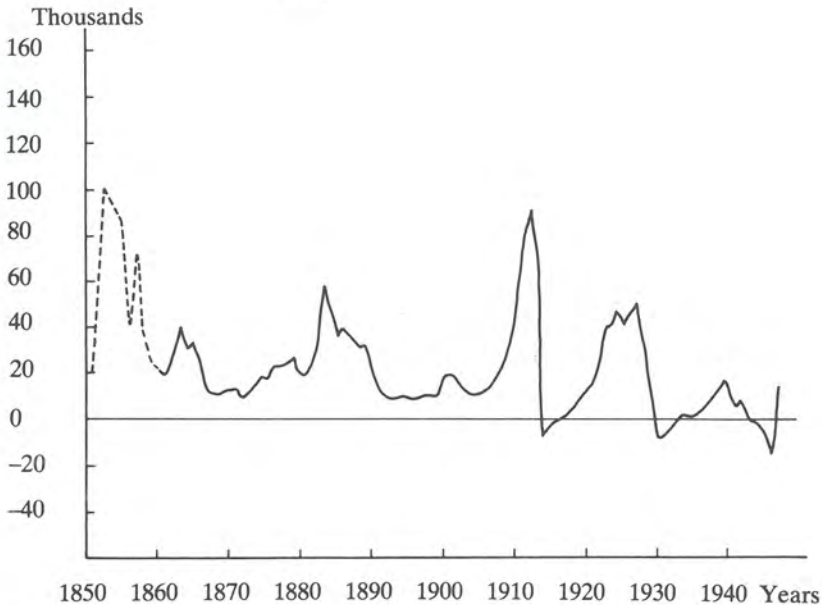


Fig. IX.3: Australia: Annual Migration 1860—1940

Source: PRICE 1982, 47.

There are features in Finnish migration to Australia since the 1950s which clearly indicate its continuity with the pre-War emigration, especially from the Ostrobothnian coast.¹⁷

It has been a characteristic feature of Finnish immigrants in America that they have frequently gone to join acquaintances originating from the same village or locality in Finland.¹⁸ Chain migration has also been typical of the Finnish migration to Sweden.¹⁹ It thus appears that there are mechanisms affecting migration which continue to operate from one generation to the next. NYMAN cites the chain migration from Jakobstad (Pietarsaari) in Ostrobothnia to Gävle in Sweden as reminiscent of the pattern in the migration to Australia: first, the arrival of a pioneer; then a wave of unmarried men, forming a colony; and then, gradually, married couples and women coming in their wake.²⁰ The basis for chain migration in this case is provided by the need for labour in Sweden, and a pioneer immigrant who then passes on the information to his place of origin, thus attracting others to join him; the entire process then continues until a downswing in the Swedish economy cuts off the "pull". In the Finnish migration to Sweden, as in that to Australia, financial considerations were uppermost. The Swedish-speaking belt in Ostrobothnia was always a major source of emigrants to Australia. NYMAN tells of one young man who had originally intended to move to Australia, but, discouraged by the difficulties, had gone to Gävle instead.²¹ Migration continues to be a matter of making choices.

2. Finnish Settlement in Australia: From Isolation to Chain Settlement

The single most striking feature in Finnish patterns of settlement in Australia was the constant mobility of the immigrants, especially in the early years. The second important feature was the small size of the community: no more than an estimated 5000—6000 over the entire period studied here. Thirdly, it was overwhelmingly male-dominated. Finally, there is the impact of the scale of Australia itself to be considered, 23 times the size of Finland, with its enormous distances from one place to another.

¹⁷ KOIVUKANGAS 1975, 17.

¹⁸ TOIVONEN 1963, 55—61; MYHRMAN 1972, 40—41; WIDÉN 1975, 10.

¹⁹ MAJAVA 1975; KORKIASAARI 1983.

²⁰ NYMAN 1984, 173—180. Nyman's main point of comparison was PRICE's study, published in 1963, in which he suggests that over half of the southern European immigrants to Australia came through patterns of chain migration.

²¹ NYMAN 1984, 139.

The first phase of Finnish immigration consisted of ex-seamen in Sydney, Melbourne, and the other important ports, which thus became the locations of the first Finnish communities in Australia. Gradually, individuals spread out from these ports to other parts of the continent, and those who settled down in one place, e.g. as farmers, could then initiate the second phase of the immigration, by attracting fellow-Finns to join them. In the third phase, the spread of Finnish settlement then moved on from these second-stage centres in the form of etappe migration in the trail of the job opportunities, most noticeably from the sugar cane fields to the mines in Queensland.

The first phase outlined above, dominated by ex-seamen and lone individuals, can be described by the term *infiltration settlement*. The difference between this kind of movement of and settlement by individuals, or individual families, and the patterns of group migration, is stressed by ISAAC.²² Where these individuals, having arrived in the country independently of each other, then begin to move together, they enter a phase which could be termed *gravitation settlement*. ISAAC defines this as the systematic migration of groups of people, often associated historically with the clearance of new areas for agriculture.²³ This model can be applied to the Finns, with the proviso that the Finnish gravitation settlement phase was in general not organized, but rather spontaneous. The communities which thus emerged became the cores of Finnish ethnic settlement, which then began to expand as a result of chain migration both from Finland and from elsewhere in Australia, i.e. *chain settlement*. This term (which is synonymous with the term *ethnic gravitation settlement*), or rather the more dynamic term *chain mobility*, describes the third phase of the Finnish settlement process.²⁴ These communities were not stable, however, but changed over the course of time, and sometimes gave rise to new group settlements in the vicinity, or even at a distance, in response to new opportunities for employment.

The Finnish patterns of settlement were characterized by the mobility of labour. It is probably a valid generalization to describe the early immigration in terms of an occupational continuum of seaman . . . labourer . . . farmer, or more simply labourer . . . farmer. Most of the Finns were engaged in manual labour, and few of them ever set up their own businesses. Moreover, their etappe migration was marked not only by geographical but also by occupational mobility, with a move from one locality to another often simultaneously involving a change of occupation. Many Queensland Finns started out on the cane fields,

²² ISAAC 1947, 151.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ See KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 256—257.

moved on to road works on the Atherton Tableland, and ended up in the mines at Mt Isa or even as fishermen on the coast of Western Australia. The women, on the other hand, were almost exclusively employed as domestic servants or as farmwives; and indeed the largest numbers of them had arrived in Australia at the beginning of the century, when there was a shortage of domestic servants.



Map 9: Finnish Chain Settlement in Australia prior to 1947

- I Place of arrival in Australia
- II Established Finnish settlement, or pioneer immigrant:
first place of employment
- III Movement to new locality in pursuit of work opportunities
- IV Emergence of Finnish agricultural group settlements (1920s)
- V Availability of higher wages in mining
- VI Final stage in adaptation:
Either permanent settlement or return to Finland

The aim of Map 9 and Fig. IX.4 is to illustrate and explain the impact of chain mobility on the process of Finnish settlement and eventual

expansion across the continent.²⁵ The major factor contributing to this process was the state of the Australian economy, and the consequent variation in employment opportunities available to the Finns. The supply of information on jobs was essential. This took place both by word of mouth and letter, and (from 1926) through the columns of *Suomi*. Crucial features are the high degree of mobility among the Finnish immigrants, and the predominance of males: in the period covered by the Censuses for 1921—47, men made up as much as 85—90 per cent of the Finnish-Australian population.²⁶

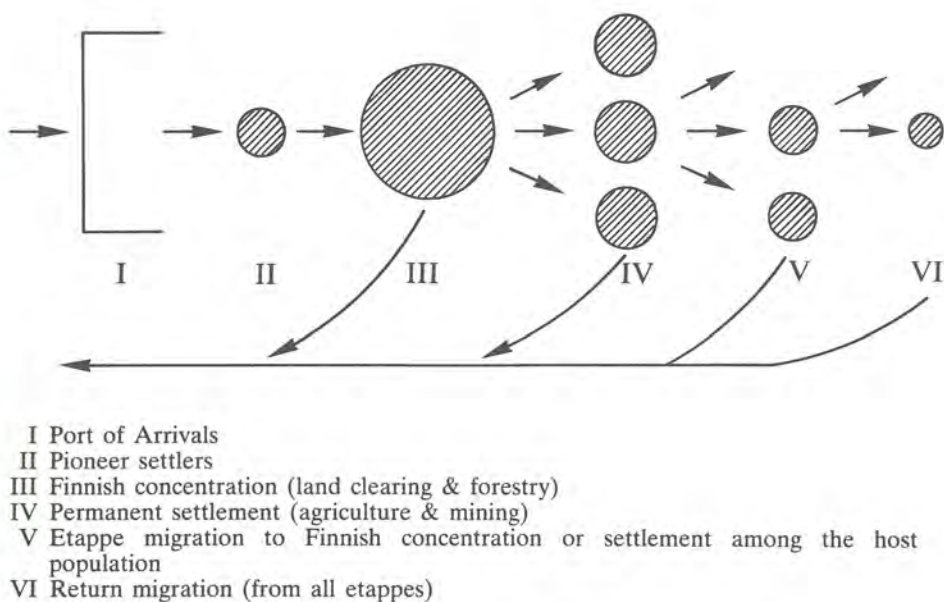


Fig. IX.4: A Modell of Finnish Settlement in Australia 1851—1947

In geographical terms, the Finns spread first from south to north (into Queensland), and then from east to west in two waves: first, in the 1890s, to the gold fields of Western Australia; and later, in the 1920s, to the Western Australian mining towns and beyond to the fishing ports on the coast. Since most of them were unmarried men, it was easy for them to move. The patterns of Finnish settlement up to the Second World

²⁵ On chain mobility in general, see OLSSON 1965, 39; HÄGERSTRAND 1969, 71; and ENGMAN 1983, 37—39.

²⁶ See the gender and age structure, p. 277.

War are characterized by concentration into ethnic communities, particularly in farming areas in Queensland and in certain mining towns, and by the predominance of rural settlement; there were relatively few urban Finns, the main groupings being the seamen's community in Pymont, Sydney, in the early years, and the communities in Melbourne and Brisbane. Neither of the latter was however concentrated in any particular part of the city; instead, the Finns gathered for their ethnic meetings from all over the metropolitan area.

The alternatives to mobility or settlement within Australia were to return to Finland, or to move on again to another country, e.g. America or New Zealand. Only about half of the Finnish immigrants settled permanently in Australia. For these, the country offered a livelihood, and they gradually adapted to their new environment (some well, some less so), first in economic terms, and then eventually linguistically, socially, and culturally. There was nevertheless a great difference in this respect between the situation of a lone Finnish immigrant arriving in the 19th century, and possibly marrying an anglophone wife, and that of someone arriving in Australia in the 1920s in pipeline migration. The background conditions, educational level, and the nature of the emigrants' experience in Finland prior to departure, for example, were all radically different. It is therefore essential that the Finnish immigration should be seen in its historical context, occurring over a long distance and spread over a lengthy period.

The patterns of settlement of the Finns in Australia are similar to those of the other Nordic immigrants. Neither the Swedish nor the Norwegian immigrants (both with overwhelming male predominance with high mobility) tended to settle in clusters, however. The Danes, on the other hand, with a more evenly-balanced gender structure, often settled down as farmers, and in occupational terms thus resemble the Finns more closely than did the Swedish and Norwegian communities of seamen and labourers.²⁷ Comparison with immigration by various other nationalities indicates the similarity of the Finnish immigration to that of many other European groups, with pioneer settlers originating pipeline migration and thus the emergence of ethnic colonies in Australia.²⁸ The same phenomena also occur in non-European immigration to Australia. Among the Lebanese immigrants, for instance, who started to arrive in the 1880s, the typical early figure was a lone pioneer immigrant, usually making his living in Australia as a hawker or travelling salesman. This man would then invite friends and relatives to join him, and they too typically started out as travelling salesmen. The Lebanese also

²⁷ KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 256.

²⁸ See especially the *Australian Ethnic Heritage* series of histories of specific groups, e.g. the Czechs, Germans, Hungarians, Poles and Spanish.

resembled the Finns in their tendency to establish 'colonies'; but these, unlike those of the Finns, were essentially urban, particularly concentrated in specific suburbs of Sydney and Melbourne,²⁹ whereas the Finnish colonies were usually rural, mainly in northern Queensland. A feature common to the Lebanese and the Finns was that they brought with them from their former homelands their occupational traditions: for the Lebanese, hawking, and for the Finns, seafaring, or farming and forestry. Whereas for the Lebanese hawkers, the typical aim was to acquire a shop of their own, for the Finnish cane croppers the corresponding goal was to establish their own farms.

A high degree of mobility, coupled with an *etappe* pattern of settlement, is also characteristic of Finnish immigration in other continents, most noticeably so in North America. For example, almost half of the Finns living in Cokato, Minnesota, prior to 1880, had previously lived in one of the mining towns of Michigan. Similarly, over half of the heads of households in the New York Mills and Sebeka area (possibly the most significant concentration of Finnish rural settlement in the 1870s) had earlier lived in upper Michigan,³⁰ where the first Finns had been recruited by the mining companies from northern Norway. This process thus emerges as one of *etappe* migration, commencing in northern Finland in the mid-19th century, moving first to Finnmark in northern Norway, on from there to the Hancock area in northern Michigan starting in the 1860s, and on from there in the next decade to form Finnish communities in Minnesota, from which extensions then reached out west into California and Oregon. If this process had continued, the next stages westward might possibly have been Alaska or Australia. KAUPS places special emphasis on the high mobility of the population in the Finnish concentrations around the Great Lakes in the United States, and points out how the Finnish colonies established in the 1860s in the mining region of Upper Michigan had by the 1870s sent out chain settlement extensions into the Rockies and the West Coast.³¹ Similarly, PASSI emphasizes the high mobility of the Finns in the fishing communities on the West Coast of the USA at the end of the 19th century,³² while MYHRMAN stresses the movement of Swedish-speaking immigrants westward, especially to San Francisco, leading to the contraction of the older settlements in the east.³³

In the United States and Canada, the Finns, whether arriving gradually through *etappe* migration or moving directly from Finland,

²⁹ BATROUNEY 1985, 34—36, 90.

³⁰ ROSS 1981, 2.

³¹ KAUPS 1975, 66. Push and pull factors were at work here, as in the trans-Atlantic movement.

³² PASSI 1975, 102—103.

³³ MYHRMAN 1972, 41—42.

clustered where there was work, to form 'Finntowns' in various parts of the continent.³⁴ The Finnish concentrations in Australia, such as those in rural Queensland, might similarly be called 'Finntowns': places where new arrivals could be sure of meeting fellow-Finns, finding shelter if needed, and possibly even a first job. The biggest difference from North America was the smallness of numbers involved — even the largest 'colony' numbering no more than a couple of hundred — and their fluctuation in size in response to employment opportunities. Setting up a farm, or work in the mines, were the only bases on which any Finnish settlements were made which have survived to the present day.

The same features as characterized Finnish migration and settlement in North America and Australia can also be seen in the movements of population from Finland into Russia. For emigrants from the countryside, Helsinki, or one of the other cities along the coast, was typically the first stage on the journey to Vyborg, and St Petersburg usually the last. Movement did not stop in St Petersburg, however. These migrants could choose between a number of directions: back to Finland; to a third country (especially Sweden, Denmark, Norway, or Germany); or onwards deeper into the heart of Russia. In addition, at the turn of the century, St Petersburg provided a stepping-stone for some Finns to join the migration to America.³⁵

Chain settlement is not a distinctively Finnish feature, but rather a universal phenomenon. Swedish settlement in the United States, for example, spread westwards from the eastern to the western coast in a series of *etappes*, and the same can be shown for the Danes and Norwegians.³⁶ Nor is chain settlement necessarily a matter of moves within a single generation, for a process initiated by one generation may well be continued by the next.

3. The Central Role of Ethnic Concentration in the Adaptation Process

Figure IX.5, presenting a model of the process of adaptation, is based (like those depicting migration and settlement patterns) on a global

³⁴ In the United States and Canada, Finnish concentrations grew up both in the countryside and in urban areas. No full-length study has been made of the problems posed by this phenomenon; there are however a number of local studies, e.g. (for the USA) YLIJOKIPII 1971 (Kaleva) and OLIN-FAHLE 1983 (New York); (for Canada) SAARINEN 1982 (Sudbury), VIRTARANTA 1982 (New Finland); and TOLVANEN 1985 (Thunder Bay). The best-known Finnish community, however, was Sointula, founded by Matti Kurikka in 1901 on Malcolm Island, British Columbia.

³⁵ ENGMAN 1983, 264—265, 267.

³⁶ See LJUNMARK 1971; RUNBLUM & NORMAN 1976; SEMMINGSEN 1950; and HVIDT 1975. On gravitation settlement by the Italians, see BORRIE 1957 and for the Russian, see FRIED 1980 (MS).

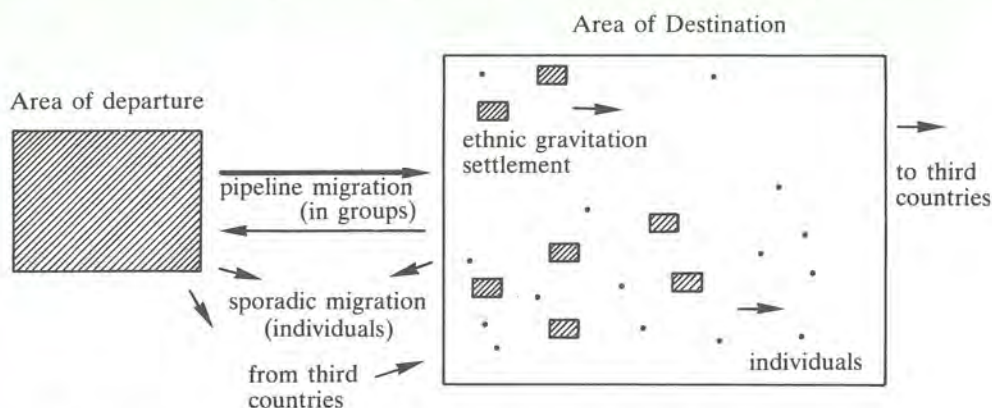


Fig. IX.5: Finnish Migration to Australia 1851—1947: A Model of Integration

concept of migration as a process dominated by an unremitting dynamic. In the process of adaptation by the Finns in Australia, a high degree of mobility, and gravitation settlement, were central factors. The Finnish colonies had a twofold significance: on the one hand, they assisted new arrivals in overcoming the difficulties initially encountered, and (especially where there were women present) created a viable basis for voluntary associations and cultural activity, but simultaneously isolated the ethnic community from the surrounding host population's social and cultural life, and thus actually had the effect of slowing down the learning of English.

Another important factor affecting adaptation is the emigrants' motives for setting out. The majority of Finnish migrants originally intended to remain in the target country only for a limited time, for a number of possible reasons, which in turn, affected the speed and success of adaptation.³⁷ Adaptation does not come about without effort, and an immigrant who intended to stay for only a short period of time might feel that it was not worthwhile spending time and energy on learning a new language and new ways. In practice, many immigrants came to modify their plans in the course of time; but the very fact of their gravitation to ethnic concentrations is in some measure an indication of their resistance to adaptation. A local Finnish community could offer a protected, but isolated, existence for years and even decades. Possibly the most isolated of all from the outside world were the housewives. Homesickness and loneliness might lead to alcoholism or even suicide. The process of adaptation is a highly complex

³⁷ VIRTANEN 1980, 55—56.

phenomenon, and the evidence available is too scanty to permit more than the most general conclusions to be drawn.

The Finnish community in pre-World War II Australia was heavily dominated by men, with only 10–15 per cent women. Those women who emigrated from Finland (as from many other countries in Europe) chose rather to go to the United States and Canada, where there was a wider range of opportunities for women than in the more 'primitive' conditions in Australia. The Finnish 'colonies' in North America actively recruited women, often providing a free passage, whereas the journey to Australia was long, expensive, and did not offer the same security of travelling with large numbers of fellow-migrants. Even in North America, many European immigrant communities were dominated by males;³⁸ in the Finnish community in America, two thirds of the immigrants after the 1890s were male.³⁹ In the overall Finnish emigration, though, the figure of only 10–15 per cent women in Australia is exceptionally low, and this was to have far-reaching consequences for the Finns' social life, possibly being the major single reason for the very high return migration rate from Australia. For Finnish overseas emigration as a whole, the proportion of men in relation to women was even higher among those returning than in the emigration.⁴⁰

Although from the perspective of Finnish emigration the Australian experience was exceptional, from the Australian perspective the Finns did not differ significantly from the immigrants of many other nationalities. The Swedish and Norwegian communities were virtually as male-dominated as the Finnish: in 1891, for instance, when the number of Scandinavians reached its peak in the Australian population, no more than one tenth were women, whereas among the Danes the proportion was one third, and among the Germans half; the southern European groups, however, repeated the same pattern as that of the Finns.⁴¹

Among the small number of Finns in Australia the ethnic organizations and the newspaper *Suomi* had an important dual role. On the one hand they maintained ethnicity and the old ways of life, and on the other hand helped the immigrants to adapt themselves to their new environments. A similar role could also be seen in the Finnish Mission to Seamen and the Consulate.

The *Erakko Society* in Nambour in 1902–04 and the *Heimo Society* in Brisbane in 1914–1948 were the only socialist Finnish associations in Australia; the Finnish societies founded in the 1920s were neutral or

³⁸ There is a revealing article by HARNEY (1979), 'Men Without Women', depicting the life of the Italian immigrants in Canada, 1885–1930.

³⁹ TOIVONEN 1963, 49–50; see also KERO 1974, 93.

⁴⁰ VIRTANEN 1979, 134.

⁴¹ KOIVUKANGAS 1974, 230.

"nationalist". A comparison with similar institutions among the Finnish immigrants in North America revealed a largely similar pattern. Due to the larger numbers and stronger societies the confrontation of these elements was conspicuous in the U.S.A. and Canada.⁴² In Australia, the only similar situation was that between the *Heimo Seura* and the *Athletic Club* in Brisbane. In America, religious institutions, especially the Lutheran Church, took up a strong position against the labour movement; in Australia the pastor of the Seamen's Mission did not have similar influence, not at least in local events, although there was some confrontation focusing around the *Suomi* paper.

4. Australian Immigration in Relation to the Overall Pattern of Finnish Migration to the Southern Hemisphere

The Finnish migration to New Zealand, amounting in the period leading up to the Second World War only to a few hundred persons, resembles that to Australia in a number of respects: it began with ex-seamen, and by the end of the 19th century had evolved into a movement mainly drawing emigrants from the Swedish-speaking belt in Ostrobothnia. A more detailed examination of the New Zealand Finns is due to be carried out at a later date.

There are useful points of comparison to be made between the Finnish migration to Australia and that to Latin America and South Africa. Finnish emigration to South America was on a very small scale prior to 1906, consisting almost exclusively of seamen and a few adventurers (including some 'black sheep from good families'). The first larger-scale Finnish settlement was the 'Colonia Finlandesa', founded in the Misiones Province of Argentina in 1906—07, and originally comprising 165 persons. At its maximum, between the two World Wars, the population of this colony rose to several hundred.⁴³ The purpose of the Colonia Finlandesa had been to set up a New Finland, in response to the oppressive policies being followed in Finland by the Russian authorities; but like Matti Kurikka's attempt to set up a utopian community in Queensland at the turn of the century, the Colonia Finlandesa failed in its aims. In each case, too many of the members were young men fired by enthusiasm, but unused to hard physical labour; and in each case, the group as a whole was too heterogeneous, and lacked strong enough leadership or clearly enough defined

⁴² See VIRTANEN & al., 1986, 118.

⁴³ LÄHTEENMÄKI 1975.

objectives. The biggest difference between these two experiments in colony-building was that the majority of those in the Argentine venture were from a Swedish-speaking middle-class background, whereas most of Kurikka's followers in Australia were Finnish-speaking socialists. Despite the failure of both colonies, some of the members of each nevertheless settled permanently in their respective new homelands.

There were also a few other Finnish settlements in various parts of Latin America before the Second World War: Penedo, in Brazil;⁴⁴ Villa Alborada, in Paraguay;⁴⁵ Villa Vasquez, in the Dominican Republic;⁴⁶ and a small number of Finns in Cuba.⁴⁷ Their most important single common feature was the failure to achieve their aims of creating utopian communities,⁴⁸ due partly to the Finnish colonists themselves, and partly to the unexpectedly difficult tropical conditions.

Finnish migration to Africa has so far mainly been studied at two points: in South Africa prior to the First World War;⁴⁹ and the Finns employed on the river-boats on the Congo.⁵⁰ South Africa lay on the main sea-route to India and the Far East, and the first Finns were consequently once again in this case ex-seamen: e.g. a sailor from Pojo (Pohja), Michel Lund, who deserted from the Jakobstad frigate *Concordia* on her trip to Batavia, Java, in 1783—85.⁵¹ Migration proper from Finland to South Africa did not begin until the Transvaal Gold Rush in 1885, but by this time there had already been scores of Finnish ex-seamen in the country. By the time of the First World War, about 1500 Finns had spent at least some time in South Africa.⁵²

Another indication of the link between the Finnish emigration to South Africa and Australia is the fact that in both cases the earliest emigrants were largely recruited from the area of the Swedish-speaking belt in Ostrobothnia centred around Munsala. Moreover, many of the Finns who were in South Africa in the period before the First World War had previously been in Australia or New Zealand; and the hypothesis that the Finnish immigration in South Africa might be an offshoot of the earliest migration to Oceania is further borne out by the Australian sources. The earliest mention of emigrants to Australia from the Swedish-speaking belt in Ostrobothnia dates from 1851, in the

⁴⁴ LÄHTEENMÄKI 1979, 29—42.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 30.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 1979, 130 and 1980, 21—32.

⁴⁷ JARVA 1971, 23—38.

⁴⁸ See PELTONIEMI 1985.

⁴⁹ KUPARINEN 1978.

⁵⁰ UOLA 1977. Uola has also studied Finns elsewhere in Africa (UOLA 1974) and in the Boer War (UOLA 1977) 2—12.

⁵¹ BJÖRKMANN 1921, 45.

⁵² KUPARINEN 1978.

Naturalization Records for Victoria.⁵³ It might be assumed that migration to South Africa, which was closer to Finland, would have started earlier than that to Oceania; but in practice, efficient communications by sea reduced or annulled the significance of distance, effectively making Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, together with the entire American continent, into parallel alternatives. In South Africa, however, until the discovery of gold and diamonds in the 1880s, there were few opportunities for high earnings, and this difference would provide an explanation for the earlier beginning of the Australian migration.

A second difference is the fact that 92 per cent of the Finnish immigrants in South Africa in the period before the First World War were from Vaasa Province, whereas the migration to Australia, although this too was dominated by emigrants from the western parts of Finland, also recruited much more widely.

Virtually all of the Finns in South Africa were men, only 4 per cent being women. During the same period, the proportion of Finnish women in Australia came to about ten per cent. Both countries had a high return migration rate: in South Africa, no more than a fifth of the pre-1914 immigrants settled permanently in the country. There was also a high mortality rate, from accidents and from fever. The high return migration rate (77 per cent) may be explained by the lack in South Africa of attractive opportunities, outside mining and road construction; e.g. in farming, etc. Altogether 30 per cent of those who returned to Finland, however, subsequently re-emigrated, to America, Australia, or New Zealand⁵⁴ — further evidence of the international nature of migration at this time.

Finnish migration to South Africa thus emerges as largely consisting of relatively short expeditions in pursuit of high earnings by men from the coastal strip of Ostrobothnia, and in this respect it closely resembles the characteristics of emigration from the same area to the cane fields of Queensland in the 1920s. The low numbers of Finns in South Africa, however, the impermanence of their settlement, and the lack of women, made it impossible for the ethnic associations and other activities to develop there which were a feature of Finnish life in Australia, other than *Den finska klubben*, 'The Finnish Club' (the name is in Swedish),

⁵³ Isak Herman Sandberg, arrived from London on a Bombay ship on 14 Jan. 1851, and was naturalized in 1901 (Vic.NR 1901/8541/N532).

⁵⁴ E.g. the Sundell family, originally from Munsala. I met Sofia and Elvira Sundell in Opotiki, New Zealand, in 1972. The family had returned to Finland from South Africa in 1912, and re-emigrated to New Zealand in 1916. Edvard Sundell had in fact been in New Zealand earlier as well, having gone to Lyttelton in 1888, at the age of 16 (Munsala Parish Records; Gothenburg Passenger Lists).

which operated for a few years in Johannesburg after the Boer War, and of which no more is known.⁵⁵

5. Concluding Remarks

As was pointed out at the beginning of this study, the Second World War constituted a watershed in Finnish migration to Australia. In the pre-War period, it was the pull of Australia's "sea, gold and sugar cane" which was strong enough to attract immigrants from Finland across the long distance between the two countries. Although the Finns never made up more than a tiny proportion of the immigrant population in Australia, there were certain areas of society in which they had a significant contribution to make to their host country, most noticeably in mining: at Mt Isa in Queensland, Finnish thoroughness and skills are still respected today, while in Tasmania, the name of the Karlsson brothers who discovered the rich copper deposits at Mt Lyell still lives on.

Most of the pre-War Finnish immigrants, however, were employed as manual labourers. Constructing houses and roads, loading ships, cropping sugar cane, working as deckhands on the ships along the coast or as domestic servants, or farming their land, they each made his or her own contribution to the building of modern Australia.

The new wave of Finnish immigration in Australia between the 1950s and the 1970s, on the other hand, was dominated by push factors in Finland, in particular unemployment, coupled with the pull of the Australian Government's assisted passages scheme. The total number of Finns who have moved to Australia since the end of the Second World War amounts to 18 000;⁵⁶ and of these (as in the earlier Finnish migration) approximately half have settled permanently. The new arrivals also include some who represent a continuation of the older migration tradition — descendants and relatives of members of the pre-War immigrant generations.

The next task in research on Finnish-Australian migration is to investigate the developments since the Second World War. Special attention should be paid to the process of adaptation, to research on culture and language, and to the study of the experience of the descendants of the Finnish immigrants. Nor should it pass unmentioned

⁵⁵ KUPARINEN 1982, 24; 1985, 196.

⁵⁶ Australian Immigration; Consolidated Statistics, No 13, 1982, Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Canberra 1983, p 35: 17 346 permanent and long term arrivals of Finnish citizens, Oct. 1945— June 1982.

that the enthusiastic quest in America for ethnic roots has more recently awakened in Australia as well, where the present-day descendants of generations of Finnish immigrants since the 19th century are beginning to search for their roots and distant relatives far away in Finland.

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Väinö Anderson	Nambour	1970
Clayton Blechynden	Nyamup	1981
K.J. Faulkner	Perth	1981
Rauha Fox	Albany	1981
Väinö Hentula	Adelaide	1970
George Hilton	Loyetea	1981
(Onni Hintikka)		
Aino Hirmukallio	Brisbane	1970
Anna Jaakkola	Melbourne	1981
Anneli Jaakkola	Melbourne	1981
Salli Kanervo	Nambour	1970
Kerttu Karhula	Brisbane	1981
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Frank Kaunisto	Brisbane	1970
Sirkka ja Matti Kauppila	Long Pocket	1973
Viljo Kippo	Perth	1981
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