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**FINNISH FOLKLORE AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN THE GREAT
LAKES MINING REGION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT 1972-1978**

(Funded in part by the National Endowment For The Humanities)

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Allen R. Good
August 10, 1973

Arthur Puotinen

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R We spent 15 years in the Province of Alberta in the palisar triangle. It's a portion adjacent to the boundary of Alberta, southern boundaries of Alberta and Saskatchewan, that runs northward into the Province of Alberta and provided sub-arid area. I have a little background of geography and sort of crop-outrance in a while. Geographical training! And it was simply too dry to have reliable rainfall for a crop of Wheat. One could expect good returns in about 3 times, perhaps, in a decade. The rest of the time perhaps you could only get your seed back, confirming that a single crop just couldn't be carried on in that fashion, so we were driven out of the area and that was eventually reverted to use as a grazing area.

I Could you say a word about the people who were in that district whom your father was serving?

R Yes. They were simply an assortment of pioneers in our immediate township' probably over half the population were Norwegians, mainly born in Minnesota or the Dakotas.

E Did your father have to minister to them in the Norwegian language?

R No, he didn't continue as a minister in that area. He frequently filled pulpits whenever a minister was lacking but did not serve any pastorage in the region' in fact, after we had moved to town and he had attempted several other sources of income, he finally went back to teaching which he had been doing as a young man and had brought him to Michigan in the first place. He had gone through the depression of the 1890's as a cabinet carpenter working in furniture factories in Grand Rapids. This is all background, you see, that really doesn't get us to Michigan but in the meantime he went back to teaching and I had become a teacher of rural schools in Western Canada by completing the 11th grade which was the normal graduation point for small high schools on the praries; only the largest ones furnished a 12th grade; and we did not have that available in our small town. Instead that was the knowledge of junior matriculation, a technical term in connection with it, and after that I was asked to teach a rural school, applied for a permit and was allowed to teach. Our father, as I said, had returned to teaching also, but the economy in the area declined still further, and the palisar triangle became just to arid to support the farming population. My father was attracted out of the area by my brother-in-law who was then the superintendent of schools in Hancock. His name was Leonard Moniece; he was in the Hancock schools from about 1919 to 1933 approximately that time, most of the time as superintendent. He learned of a teaching opportunity from my father and that attracted Dad back to Michigan but in an entirely different area than previously, namely, in the Upper Peninsula. We lived, therefore in Hancock for quite a few years, while he became Superintendent of Schools, small school system out of Boston, the post office was Dedham, the mining company that originally operated the mine or had operated it for a goodmany years, was known as Albany & Boston; hence the Boston name for the community. But the mining company tried to have that name registered for the post office; it was denied because of the fear that Boston Massachusetts and Boston, Michigan would be confused in the post office operation, which made considerable sense and so it was named after an officer of the Franklin Mining Company, which had purchased the old mine at Boston, tried to develop it as Franklin Jr.

R during the 1920's and in the 1930's died off so completely that the secretary of the company began to burn the papers to keep warm in the office. He didn't have the coal!! Incidentally the school there --amongst the teachers were included Saima Ruohoniemi who was honored for 50 years of public service and as a public school teacher by Suomi College only a year or two ago. In the meantime, I attended the Hancock High school, 1925-26. I had had already a year's training in Western Canada at the Calvarley Normal School, that included preparation for rural school teaching. I still hold a Life Certificate from Western Canada for rural school teaching. By attending the Hancock High School for the 12th Grade, I could therefore gain admission to an American college without utilizing my credits from the Normal and claim those as college transfers. And that worked out very satisfactorily. Incidentally while I was in the high school in Hancock, I was introduced to a dating tool for American History, for memorizing the presidential terms. That proved to be such a simple operation that I could therefore date events during those terms; it gave me a considerable grasp of dating them.

I Was it some kind of pneumonic device or how?

R No, it was just a case of memorizing order of these presidential terms and the number of years that was served also at the same time. From 1926 to 1930 I was attending Northern and became somewhat "cornered" on scientific work which had been my intention at the time I entered there. I planned to become a chemist, instead I could not gain access and that rather knocked out my plans for that. However, history became my major as a result. Lou Alan Chase was head of the history department; he had been formerly at the Hancock Central High School and prior to that at the Houghton High School as a teacher. He noted the lack of historical works in mining and stressed that it was an opportunity for any person who would become a professional historian; he got tidbits on Copper Country history for the class; got quite enthusiastic about it' I began collecting information on the hydraulic air compressor at the Victoria Mine. This is something that used to appear in the Canadian physics textbooks in the high school. I didn't know where the Victoria Mine was, at that time, I supposed it was on Vancouver Island because of the name, and instead it was in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan on a branch of the Ontonagon River. And we therefore have found that the mining company reports had considerable detail, considerable information upon the construction of this underground item. After the mine had closed it still could function, that it the air was still being compressed. It could be bled off from the surface and incidently that was one of the jobs of the superintendent who incidently was Mr. Butler who was later at the maintenance department at Tech. So I saw this in operation on 1927 I presume it was when I first visited this on a Sunday afternoon. A substantial was by blowing this air out the release tube or pipe from a chamber more than 200 feet under ground. Or around 225 feet below the surface. And considerable water carried with it. That's the geiser affect. It was considered one of the items of the Copper Country backin the 1920's. This has become no longer available because the Power Company no longer wastes the water in that fashion.

R to provide pressure for an outdated method of compressing air. The compressed air you see was intended for underground use in the mines. I later got a story while I was working on this paper from the recently retired Chief Engineer of the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company. He was working in Marquette. He gave me the story that back in around 1908 the Cleveland Cliffs were seriously considering making such an installation on their own property. The question was should they go and strike out for hydroelectric power or directly compress the air. The decision was made up by a study by a whole group of Engineers who went up to Victoria and spent days testing. They arrived at the conclusion that too much of the oxygen was forced into the solution with the water. And hence oxygen poor air was reaching the stopes. Since the mine regularly released air into the stopes to blow off the fumes of the blasting powder it was therefore quite unwise to strike out for the direct compression of the air which seemed logical.

One more thing I could say about my time at Northern and I was very active in student affairs at that time. During 1931 and 1936 I taught at the Painesdale High School. Which is now known as Jeffer's High School. Now I plan to attend the reunion of the high school and meet one of the classes I taught. Also at the time I was teaching there I knew one of the fellow teachers there of Ann Arbor. In 1936 and 37 I went to the University of Michigan ^{on leave from} Painesdale High School. I spent two semesters and two summer sessions in the immediate sequence. Then I was engaged as a High School teacher in Houghton. Junior High School History and Senior Civics, and Economics. The Detroit Defense work took up 1942 and 43 and between 43 and 44 I was superintendent of Schools at Winona, Michigan. Which was a mining operation that just owned the Twin Lakes Parks. In 1944 in July I was employed on a temporary basis at Michigan Tech to relieve in the Geography Department. Geography had been my minor in college at Northern and I went there in a because I got some immediate shocks. I found that I had fallen completely behind in the course of Geography and I was completely out of date with the simple matters of attention to weather and planet factors. And therefore I found my work cut off to a considerable extent. We were teaching ASTP which means Army specialized training program. The Army specialized training Corp. Seventeen year olds were enlisted in the army directly from highschool. When they graduated from highschool then they would be enlisted at the age of seventeen and not required to serve in the army until they were eighteen. Any time after they reached the age of 18 they were subject to the army inductment I suppose is the term. So the seventeen year olds were given a chance to stack up a nominal amount of college credits. Some then achieved an entire year's credit.

Incomplete Transcript