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## Delaware 350 Jubileum & Australian Bicentenary

### Importance to the Future Migration Research



Anniversaries of historical events can be important and useful in promoting research. E.g. the preparations to celebrate in 1992 the 500th anniversary of the landing of C. Columbus in America have started for a long time ago on the both sides of the Atlantic. The work to celebrate the first landing of the Delaware Finns started in Finland only a couple of years before the anniversary. Australia began to prepare its bicentenary already 10 years earlier, especially by an extensive historical research and publishing.

The Finnish Government appointed a Delaware 350 anniversary committee led by Mr. Matti Ahde, the Speaker of the Parliament, with two aims: 1) to commemorate the role of the Finnish immigrants in the development of the United States, and 2) to make the modern Finland better known in the U.S.A. A good starting point was President Reagan's decision to proclaim the year 1988 as National Year of Friendship with Finland.

Point 1, to honour the history and achievements of the Finnish immigrants and their children, is closely related to the migration research. The importance of the Finns in the history of the early

Delaware River valley settlement is derived from many factors, such as:

- According to many scholars the Finns comprised the majority of the permanent settlers of the New Sweden colony.
- The most important Governor of New Sweden, Johan Printz, lived in Finland before his departure for Delaware in 1642 and recruited quite a number of settlers from Ostrobothnia.
- The role of John Morton as a signer of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. His great grandfather was born in Finland in 1606.
- The famous diary of Prof. Pehr Kalm, from the University of Turku, of his visit to North America in 1748 – 51. Fortunately this remarkable document happened to be out on loan during the big fire of Turku in 1827. Kalm copied old records and interviewed old settlers in Delaware.

#### Research on the Delaware Settlement

In the 17th century the Finnish presence in Delaware was well recognized, but then, until the 20th century the Finns were more or less "forgotten". Even the great Amandus Johnson in his *Magnum opus* <sup>1)</sup> from 1911 did not give the Finns their fair treatment. As Dr. Richard H. Hulan has pointed out Johnson was not especially in-

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terested in the Finns although evidence of their numerical significance can be found in the lists he published<sup>2)</sup>. In a way it is a pity that Johnson immediately became such an authority, and this has perhaps discouraged later scholars from taking an interest in the topic and tackling the laborious archival sources of the Delaware migration.

Similarly, only a few American historians of Finnish origin have studied the Delaware Finns. The Rev. S. Ilmonen studied for years the history of Finns in North America, and published a book on the Finns in Delaware, in 1916 in the USA and in 1938 in Finland<sup>3)</sup>. Ilmonen does not give detailed information about his sources. He is rather concentrated on finding as many Finns as possible, not having set up properly the historical context of international commercial developments etc.

Then, in 1925, E.A. Louhi published in English an extremely Finnish nationalistic book on the Finns in Pennsylvania and adjoining colonies<sup>4)</sup>. In conjunction with the tercentenary of the New Sweden colony in 1938, Prof. John H. Wuorinen wrote a small book which, however, to a great extent based on the work of A. Johnson<sup>5)</sup>.

In addition to the "histories" mentioned above there have been a few literature works such as Akseli Järnefelt-Rauanheimo's novel *Before William Penn*, published in 1921 in Finnish and 1929 in English.

As a vintage of the 350 Delaware Anniversary in 1988 there appeared a few studies on the both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. In the United States the most significant work was written by Terry Jordan and Matti Kaups claiming that the seventieth-hundred century Delaware Finns were a major shaper of the frontier culture<sup>6)</sup>. More credit should be given to the scattered settlements, log-cabins, worm fence, etc.,

but a statement by Matti Kaups that the fact that the present United States stretches from one ocean to the other is the real contribution of the Finns to the American pioneer culture (Suomen Silta 4/88), is an obvious exaggeration. Also C.A. Weslager, *New Sweden on the Delaware: 1638-1655*, (Delaware 1988) should be mentioned, as well as the work done by Dr. R.H. Hulan, especially a new map on the Delaware settlement.

In Sweden there appeared quite a few popular books on the Delaware enterprise in 1638<sup>7)</sup>. From the scholarly point of view the most important was, however, the diary of the last Governor Johan Rising by Stellan Dahlgren and Hans Norman<sup>8)</sup>. In Finland there were only two major publications: Olavi Koivukangas: *Delaware 350*, an exhibition catalog, and Karl-Gustav Olins book on Ostrobothnians to Delaware<sup>9)</sup>.

As appears from the above historiography there is no systematic and methodologically sound investigation of the Nordic Delaware immigration from the Finnish perspective. On the other hand, one could well argue that there is no need for such an approach as in the period of the colonization of Delaware in 1638 – 55 Finland was an integral part of Sweden, administered from Stockholm.

#### **Many Delaware Conferences – Little New Information**

To commemorate the 350th anniversary of the Delaware settlement quite a number of conferences were arranged in the U.S.A., Sweden and Finland. The following list covers the conferences of historical research:

- February 27, 1988; The Swedes and the Finns in the New World 1638-1988, New Jersey Historical Commission,



Mr. Rockwell A. Schnabel, Ambassador of the United States, presents Dr. Olavi Koivukangas a Certificate of Recognition for his contribution to the work of the Finnish Delaware 350 Anniversary Committee.

- Trenton, New Jersey, (300 participants).
- March 3-5, 1988; New Sweden in America, University of Delaware, Clayton Hall, Newark, (300 participants). The Delaware exhibition of the Institute of Migration in Clayton Hall was an object of lively interest.
- September 23, 1988; Suomalaisuus Amerikassa (Finnishness in America), Department of History, University of Turku, (100 participants).
- October 4, 1988; Nya Sverige (New Sweden) Symposium, The House of Emigrants, Växjö, Sweden, (50 participants).
- October 14, 1988; Uusi Ruotsi (New Sweden) Seminar, Finnish-Swedish

Cultural Fund, Hanasaari, Espoo, (150 participants).

As a conclusion of these five Delaware conferences is the following statement: Although quite stimulating with an opportunity to meet new people *not much new information or source material was presented. The most promising research had been done in the USA*, mainly with genealogical methods tracing the pioneer families, notably by Peter S. Craig. In Sweden the best contribution is the diary of Governor Johan Rising edited and analysed by Stellan Dahlgren and Hans Norman. In Finland there has not been any serious primary research with a slight exception by an author Karl-Gustav Olin of Pietarsaari.

## Future Research

A major conclusion about the above discussion could be that a comprehensive history of the Finn factor in the immigration and settlement in the Delaware River valley should be written. Naturally this study should be placed in the right historical and international context and it should take place as a joint project with Finnish, American and Swedish scholars. Simultaneously it could also be the beginning of a comprehensive history of Finnish emigration. This ambitious study based on original documents in Europe and America should be both part of the history of Finnish people and at the same time a significant part of the world history of the redistribution of European population to the overseas continents, i.e. a part of the colonial history of the future United States.

Also closely related to research and as a result of the Delaware 350 celebrations there is the plan to establish a chair of Finnish studies at the University of Minnesota based on funds half from Finland and half from the United States. Let us hope that this plan could be realized.

Another important result is to set up at the Institute of Migration in Turku a computer-based register of Finnish emigrants based on detailed information from passport and passenger lists and other sources. The register will serve as a databank for the study of later Finnish emigration. The data will also serve the descendants of Finnish emigrants trying to find their roots and to locate their relatives in Finland.

To promote the Delaware research the following proposals:

- An up-to-date Bibliography, on Swedish-Finnish immigration and settlement in the Delaware River Valley should be compiled and co-ordinated. This bibliography should also include information on research-in-progress.

- A List of Original Material in various archives and libraries in Europe and America would be the major finding aid and the basis for plans to have the major sources translated from Swedish and Dutch to English. A co-operation with a project, operated already 10 years in New York on the early Dutch presence in North America, would be most useful.
- The Research Needed:
  - a) Genealogical research; only 1/3 has been identified, 2/3 left (Peter S. Craig)
  - b) Historical research as a part of the Finnish overseas emigration
  - c) Ethnological, folklore, etc. studies including international collaboration in research projects.
- The next *Conference on the Delaware 350* project should be held after four years, in 1993. If resources available meanwhile a *Delaware 350 Newsletter* would be most useful, but also other journals can be utilized.
- Finance : Academy of Finland, Ministry of Education, 75th Anniversary of the Independence of Finland Funds, etc.; International financing.

## Australia 200

James Cook claimed the eastern part of Australia to the English Crown in 1770, but not until 1788 did permanent European settlement start at the site of present Sydney. In Finland the Bicentenary of European Australia was naturally not as conspicuous as the Delaware celebrations, mainly owing to the distance and the small number of Finns settled in Australia.

## Former Activities

From the point of view of migration research a major contribution was Olavi Koivukangas's dissertation: *Sea, Gold and Sugarcane; Finns in Australia 1851-1947*,

Turku 1986. Based on this research an exhibition was also made about the Finns in Australia, one copy was sent to Australia while the other one is still going around Finland.

Since 1978 the Scandinavian and Australian scholars interested in migration research have had a joint project to promote study on Nordic emigration to Australia and New Zealand. The first symposium was held in Växjö in 1978, the second in Turku in 1982 and the third symposium in Melbourne in 1988. The project is a good example of international co-operation in the field of migration research. From the Swedish side should be mentioned Allan T. Nilsons book *Nordbor i Australien* (1988). In 1988 Dr. Andrew Trlin, Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand, joined the project as the coordinator for New Zealand.

### The Melbourne Symposium

The major event of the anniversary from our research point of view was the Third International Symposium on Scandinavian Migration to Australia at the University of Melbourne on August 29th – September 2nd, 1988. From Finland the following papers were presented:

- Hannele Hentula: "The Finnish Language Spoken by the First and Second Generation Finns in Australia"
- Olavi Koivukangas: "Finns in Australia and New Zealand"
- Juha Pentikäinen: "Ethnicity of Finnish Immigrants in Australia, the USA and Elsewhere".

The historical exhibition on the Finns in Australia was opened by the Ambassador of Finland Mr. Ulf-Erik Slotte. This exhibition was first time opened at the Easter Festival in Sydney by Mr. Kalevi Sorsa, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Finland and

the exhibit has been touring round the Finnish settlements in Australia.

### Future Research and Co-Operation

The project on the Nordic emigration to Australia and New Zealand will continue and the next symposium is planned to take place in Aalborg, Denmark, in 1992.

Concerning the collection of research material in Australia I have made an initiative that the Finns in Australia and New Zealand should have a Historical Society but obviously members and interest there are not big enough. Simultaneously the National Museum in Australia located in Canberra is collecting material on ethnic minorities in Australia and e.g. the exhibition on the Finns in Australia will finally be on display and deposited there according to the proposal of Prof. Jerzy Zubrzycki. He visited Finland last year as a guest speaker of the Australian Bicentenary and is planning to make another lecture and co-operation visit to Finland in autumn 1989.

Another major co-operator in Australia will be the Center for Immigration and Multicultural Studies established in the Research School of Social Sciences at the Australian National University in Canberra. In August 1988 I had the opportunity to be a visiting fellow at the Australian National University for two weeks and to participate the big Terra Australis Conference in August 21–26, 1988.

In the future Olavi Koivukangas's major research targets would be to write a detailed history of the Finns in Australia 1948–88 as well as a monograph of the Finns in New Zealand. These projects would demand some field work in Australia and New Zealand. For the Finnish side should also be mentioned Hannele Hentula's study on the language of

the Australian Finns. There are also some other persons interested in Australian immigration and ethnicity.

The Australian corner in the Finnish migration research is relatively well-covered compared with other destinations. But there are gaps to be studied, e.g. the cultural activities of the Finnish immigrants and their general adaptation – as well as the second and the third generation. Similarly to the proposals made in the connection of the Delaware studies

also here *A Bibliography and a List of Holdings* of the original material in various archives and institutions in Australia, Finland and other countries should be produced either separately for the Finns or as a part of the joint Scandinavian project.

The final aim of the Delaware 350 and Australia 200 studies should be a comprehensive account and history of the Finnish migration movements all over the world through the centuries.

## Notes

- 1) **Johnson, Amandus:** *The Swedish Settlements on the Delaware, their History and Relations to the Indians, Dutch and English 1638–1664*, New York 1911.
- 2) **Hulan, Richard H.:** *New Sweden Bibliography*, a manuscript, 1985.
- 3) **Ilmonen, S.:** *Amerikan ensimmäiset suomalaiset eli Delawaren siirtokunnan historia* (The First Finns in America or the History of the Delaware Colony), Hancock, Michigan, 1916; and **S. Ilmonen:** *Delawaren suomalaiset* (Finns in Delaware), Hämeenlinna 1938.
- 4) **Louhi, E.A.:** *The Delaware Finns, or the First Permanent Settlements in Pennsylvania, Delaware, West New Jersey and the Eastern Part of Maryland*, New York 1925.
- 5) **Wuorinen, John H.:** *The Finns on the Delaware*, New York 1938.
- 6) **Jordan, Terry G. & Kaups, Matti:** *The American Backwoods Frontier; An Ethnic and Ecological Interpretation*, Baltimore 1989.
- 7) **Mattsson, Algot:** *New Sweden – The Dream of an Empire*, Gothenburg 1987.
- Åberg, Alf:** *Folket i Nya Sverige; vår koloni vid Delawarefloden 1638–1655*, Uddevalla 1987.
- Blomfelt, Frank** (ed.): *Andreas Sandels Dagbok 1701–1743*, Stockholm 1988.
- Carlsson, Sten:** *Swedes in North America 1638–1988; Technical, Cultural, and Political Achievements*, Örebro 1988.
- Ruhnbro, Rune** (ed.): *New Sweden in the New World 1638–1655; Visions of Greatness*, Italy 1988.
- Tigerström, Harald:** *Nya Sveriges siste guvernör och hans landsmän i Amerika; till den svenska Delawarekolonins minne 1638–1988*, Klockrike 1988.
- 8) **Dahlgren, Stellan & Norman, Hans:** *The Rise and Fall of New Sweden; Governor John Rising's Journal 1654–1655 in its historical context*, Uppsala 1988.
- 9) **Koivukangas, Olavi:** *Delaware 350; The Beginning of Finnish Migration to the New World*, Turku 1988, and **Karl-Gustav Olin:** *Våra första amerikafarare; Historien om finlandssvenskarna i Nya Sverige*, Jakobstad 1988.