

KIRJALLISUUSESITTELYJÄ – BOOK REVIEWS

Stellan Dahlgren & Hans Norman, The Rise and Fall of New Sweden; Governor Johan Risingh's Journal 1654-1655 in its Historical Context, Almqvist & Wicksell. Uppsala 1988. pp. 303.

The 350 anniversary of the founding of the "New Sweden" colony in the Delaware River valley has produced a number of publications both in the United States and Scandinavia. One of the major works is this book by two Uppsala historians, Dahlgren and Norman.

"New Sweden" was under the Swedish flag for only 17 years, from 1638 to 1655. The last Governor of the Colony was Johan Risingh, who wrote a fascinating diary of his journey to America and about his activities as the leader of the colony, as the previous — and the most prominent — Governor, Johan Printz, had already left for Sweden.

The manuscript was discovered by the famous "New Sweden" historian Amandus Johnson in 1906 at the Uppsala University Library. It is therefore surprising that Risingh's journal has not been published earlier, especially as there are many published editions of the diary of Peter Lindström, a Swedish engineer who followed Risingh to Delaware in December 1653. Amandus Johnson himself had the first edition of Lindström's *Geographia Americae* (at the National Archives, Stockholm) published in 1925. Probably Lindström's journal had more literary assets than Risingh's diary. Dahlgren and Norman compare the two journals, and come to the conclusion that as a source for the voyage to America with the "Eagle"

and for conditions in Delaware Risingh's works are to be preferred to Lindström's later manuscript. The authors also discuss the biases in Risingh's journal, in particular his need to demonstrate that he had followed his orders and taken the necessary courses of action.

The book is divided into three parts. The introduction, by Dahlgren, provides a survey of Sweden in the European context, the "New Sweden Company", and Johan Risingh and his journal in the light of source criticism. Secondly, Norman gives an account of the Swedish colonial venture in North America in 1638-55 in its historical context. The final section is Risingh's account of his journey to America and his stay in the Colony until autumn 1655. The journal is presented here both in its original Swedish version and with an English translation. The text is supplied with explanatory notes and illustrations. The book includes also a bibliography and indexes of persons and placenames.

An additional merit in this book is that the Finnish presence in Delaware is better visible than in most books on "New Sweden". This also appears from the pages of Risingh's journal itself, e.g. in this quotation:

"Then a soldier, Lars Olofsson, the Finn... admitted later that most of the Finnish soldiers had let it be known that they wanted to escape to Virginia."

In most references to the Finnish element in "New Sweden" the emphasis has been on the statement that the Finns made up a considerable proportion — according to many scholars the majority —

of the permanent settlers. In addition, however, as a result of recruitment by the former Governor, Johan Printz, in the Vaa-sa district before his departure for America in 1643, quite a number of Finnish soldiers and officers followed Printz, an officer in the Finnish cavalry in the Thirty

Years War, over the ocean.

Congratulations to the authors of a fine contribution in the field of the early colonial American and Scandinavian migration history.

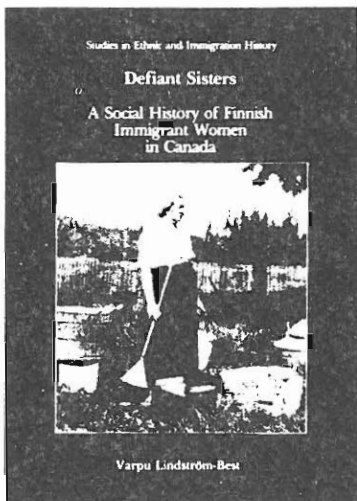
Olavi Koivukangas

From the
Multicultural History Society of Ontario

Ontario, Canada

Defiant Sisters

Varpu Lindstrom-Best



The Finnish immigrant women who left Finland for Canada at the turn of the century were almost exclusively working class, and almost all single. They brought with them a tradition of work, and many of them became domestic servants.

The spirit of optimism and defiance of traditional values which had led these young women to emigrate in the first place was carried over into their lives in Canada. They campaigned vigorously for higher wages, better working conditions and, above all, for dignified, humane treatment. They also rebelled against the conservatism of the Lutheran Church in Canada and actively espoused socialism. Because of their full-time, live-in status as domestics, they chose not to have families, or to limit their size severely. They were independent-minded, articulate and hard-working.

Varpu Lindström-Best has examined all aspects of the Finnish women's experience in Canada. This book gives a penetrating look at the social, cultural and economic conditions in which these women lived in the early years of the twentieth century. It is a valuable addition to our knowledge of ethnic and immigration history.

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