

# Salomon Ilmonen, Early Finnish-American Historian

The intent of this paper is to reacquaint the present generation of Finnish Americans with the work done by Salomon Ilmonen. He was born in Ilmajoki, Finland in 1871 and died in Fort Bragg, California in 1940. For people attending FinnFest V, held in Detroit, it is of interest to know that Ilmonen served a Finnish congregation in this community over 60 years ago. Through his writings, Ilmonen recorded the events and endeavors of Finnish people in the United States from the days of the early settlers of the New Sweden Colony on the Delaware River all the way to the fourth decade of the twentieth century. It is our contention that he laid the groundwork for all of the various writers and scholars of Finnish Americana, who have come after him.

It is probable that very few people of our day know much about Ilmonen. Most of this generation of Finns in America were born after his passing from this life. Another problem is that all of his many articles and nine books were written in Finnish, except one, namely, the book about John Morton. For people who cannot read Finnish, practically everything that Ilmonen wrote is a closed book. Furthermore, Ilmonen was a man of humble mien and low profile despite the fact that during his early manhood he was a newspaper representative and a temperance speaker. I had the opportunity of assisting him for a time as a teenager in Hancock, Michigan in packaging his books for shipment. About ten years later I became a clergy associate of his in the California

Conference of the Suomi Synod. He served in Fort Bragg while I had a congregation in Berkeley, California.

There has always seemed to be some difference of opinion among scholars and writers about the abiding value of Ilmonen's writing. Reputable writers have considered him important and strategic while others have preferred to ignore him. As far as younger writers are concerned, the reason may be the inability to handle the Finnish language. However, since this observation includes writers from Finland, whose native language is Finnish, the issue cannot be dodged. There has been a long established attitude by members of the educated class of Finland to look with some measure of doubt upon the academic achievements of Finnish Americans. This may partly account for this neglect. On the other hand, many academically respected Finland writers and scholars have paid Ilmonen's work genuine honor. For example, Jaakko Paavolainen, political scientist serving presently at the University of Turku, has called Ilmonen "the first noteworthy Finnish American historian."<sup>1</sup>

In order to place Ilmonen's writing into an understandable historical context, may we suggest four categories of Finnish American historical writing? The first phase of category is that of the generalist. The generalist comes upon the field quite early and

1) Paavolainen, Jaakko, "First Generation Finnish-Americans Serve the United States," in *Old Friends-Strong Ties*, Institute of Migration, Vaasa 1976, p. 235.

is tremendously concerned about preserving the historical record. The generalist has no idea that anything is going to be done and is worried that valuable information will be lost. As a result, the generalist tries to cover the entire spectrum. The second phase consists of writers who are concerned about preserving the story of Finns in specific regions of the country; we call them regionalists. The third phase relates to writers concerned about telling the story of Finnish American institutions and social movements. The fourth phase, and most recent, consists of writers of critical histories; they are the professional historians who seek to analyze and interpret rather than record a story. The time sequence of the first three phases is not linear; there is a certain amount of blending and intermingling time-wise among them. As far as Ilmonen is concerned, he tends to be the generalist, although his book on the temperance movement was his first.

A few words should be devoted to the critique made of generalist writers. Their tendency is to portray the heroic and good qualities of the immigrant, a tendency manifested by writers of all nationalities.<sup>2)</sup> It is a reaction to the criticism and low appraisal made of immigrants by the establishment of the country they have left and by the establishment of the country they have entered. The immigrant was demeaned and humiliated from both sides. Hilja Pärssinen, active in socialist circles in Finland at the turn of the century and in the United States, protested this treatment when she was a member of the first unicameral Finnish parliament of 1907.<sup>3)</sup> Rev. J.K. Nikander protested similar criticism by the Church of Finland of the shepherdless immigrant

Finns in his 1885 letters to Mission Superintendent Totterman.<sup>4)</sup>

Ilmonen was appreciated by the rank and file American Finns because he was their advocate and made known their accomplishments.

Ilmonen arrived in New York in 1891 at the age of twenty. After leaving his home in Ilmajoki at 16 he spent several years in Helsinki working at various jobs and studying art part time at the Atheneum in Helsinki. He is also known to have been secretary of the Tähti Temperance Society of Helsinki for several years. Upon arrival in New York he became a field representative for the SIIRTOLAINEN, a newspaper printed in Brooklyn and edited by Akseli (Järnefelt) Rauanheimo. Rauanheimo, a university graduate from Finland, was the author of the generalist book about early immigrant America, AMERIKAN SUOMALAISET, published in 1898 in Finland. Ilmonen is acknowledged by Rauanheimo as one of his researchers. It is significant to know that Rauanheimo devoted the nine-page opening chapter of this book to providing a brief sketch of the Finns in the New Sweden Colony. This must have made a deep impression on Ilmonen because the Finns on the Delaware became a compulsive subject for him. Furthermore, the opportunity to have participated in the research of the above named book was also significant for his life development. A close lifetime collaborative relationship with Rauanheimo was also established.<sup>5)</sup>

Since Rauanheimo became the role model for practically all of Ilmonen's work on Finnish immigrant history, we need to know who else had been active before this time in such efforts. Rafael Engelberg provides us the answer.<sup>6)</sup> He lists Konni Zilliacus, a Finnish Swede of a prominent family in Helsinki, university trained, who spent four

2) Handlin, Oscar, THE UPROOTED, Harvard Press, 1952 (Second edition 1973).

3) Engelberg, Rafael, SUOMI JA AMERIKAN SUOMALAISET, Helsinki 1944, p. 78. Pärssinen protested comments by prominent Finnish Writers like Juhani Aho and Johannes Linnankoski demeaning emigrants for being lazy, immoral and worthless.

4) Wargelin, Raymond, DEAR UNCLE F. Parta Printers Inc. 1984, p. 35.

5) Wargelin, R.W., "S. Ilmonen, Pioneer Finn. Am. Historian," K.K. 1979, pp. 155-169.

6) Engelberg, previous citation, pp. 69-77.

years in the United States working at various jobs and in many communities throughout the country. Zilliacus was a keen observer of the Finnish laborers and published his diary of stories about them in Swedish (1894). These diaries were translated by Juhani Aho and appeared as three books: SIIRTOLAISIA, 1897, TAAVITTI ANTTILAN KOHTALO, 1898, and SIIRTOLAISSEIKKAILUJA, 1898. Another predecessor to Ilmonen was Seamen's Mission pastor, Matti Tarkkanen. His article, "Siirtolaisuudesta" appeared in the KVS calendar for 1896 followed by a book, SIIRTOLAISUUDESTA, SEN SYISTÄ JA SEURAUKSISTA in 1903. Still another predecessor writer of the immigrant material was the political exile, Severi Nyman, whose powerful pictorial album 1904 (with explanations) was the result of his travels about the U.S. His preface also contained a poem written in behalf of the misunderstood immigrant Finns; this is a translation: "Do not criticize the wandering children for stepping aboard the ships. They didn't leave to play but to labor and endure and establish new homes. As their ships glide over the waves they sing Finnish songs and remember the land of their birth."

Viljami Rautanen's book, AMERICAN SUOMALAINEN KIRKKO (1911) also preceded Ilmonen's first book by one year. Hence the conclusion must be that Ilmonen was not the first to write about immigrant Finns. He must be evaluated on a different basis.

During the years that Ilmonen traveled for the SIIRTOLAINEN, he established the basis for his network of support-people who helped him in his research. During these same years he was involved in temperance speaking, visiting hundreds of halls across the country. He described himself, <sup>7)</sup> "Ilmonen spoke with youthful passion and vigor." It is obvious that he met many people and secured numerous oral interviews. He re-

corded this material in notebooks, referring to them time and again during his lifetime of writing. A few years later, after having graduated from the Suomi Theological Seminary in Hancock (1906) and having been a congregation pastor for some time, he again had new opportunities for travel (1914 to 1916) as a field representative for Suomi College.

Another facet of Ilmonen's research procedure is related to his being a pastor. Obviously he was not the typical pastor. Being a pastor gave him several distinct advantages. In an era of frequent pastoral vacancies, he was able to select calls from congregations which were located in large cities adjacent to the areas which he wished to study. Furthermore, these cities had large libraries which he needed. Here is a list of the communities and the years during which he lived in them: Brooklyn, N.Y. (two terms, 1906-1909 & 1916-1922, locations which favored work in the Delaware Valley communities and archives); Monessen, PA (1907-1909, a community related to Pittsburg); Worcester, Mass. (1909-1910, ideally located for becoming acquainted with New England Finns); Hibbing, Minn. (1910-1912, an area which became very familiar to him); New Castle and Warren, Ohio (1912-1914, communities which facilitated his knowledge of conditions in Ohio); Suomi College field representative (1914-1916, the country was his again); Detroit, Mich. (1922-1927, further involvement with Michigan, Ohio and Illinois); Los Angeles, Cal. (1927-1932, splendid libraries and time to pull several books together); Fort Bragg, Calif. (1932-1940, a quiet place where he could do his final work on the Delaware motif). None of the Finnish groups had anything like archives in those days. Opportunities for travel was most important. Ilmonen made good use of all of these circumstances.

Ilmonen was asked by the Finnish National Temperance society to write a book about its work in honor of its 25th anniversary. This 384-page book was published in 1912. The book traces the development of temperance work among the American Finns from the time that it was related to

7) Ilmonen, S., 25th ANNIVERSARY OF THE FINNISH NATIONAL TEMPERANCE BROTHERHOOD, 1912, p. 101.

the Good Templar movement to its flowering around 1910. The temperance movement among the Finns in the U.S. was a major phenomenon involving widespread educational and dramatic activities. Some of the huge summer conventions were larger than the best attended festivals of FINNFEST Inc. of today. Ilmonen described a gigantic festival held in Ishpeming, Mich. in 1903 to which chartered trains from various states brought thousands of participants, including uniformed bands, mixed choruses and outstanding speakers. Prizes were awarded to the best reciters of poetry, the best essayist, the best choir and the best band. The best band in 1903 came from Ely, Minn. <sup>8)</sup> The book also recounts other amazingly large festivals in remote areas such as Rock Springs, Wyoming in 1906 when hundred of Finns from surrounding Rocky Mountain states were in attendance, and bands played and choirs sang.

Ilmonen's book highlights also the ideological conflicts which characterized the heyday of the temperance movement. For example, he reveals that a few scant years after the above mentioned Rock Springs, Wyo. temperance festival of 1906, the Temperance Brotherhood had lost practically all of its halls in California, Colorado, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming to the Socialists; a total of 43 halls all told. <sup>9)</sup> Local societies frequently became embroiled over the question of dancing. Ilmonen quotes from the letter of the leader of the Templar Association, N.O. Lofgren, a reply to an inquiry from a local chapter as to the feasibility of sponsoring dancing in the halls of the Brotherhood. "Dancing is not to be countenanced in temperance societies in any form. Why not? Because it is the first step towards damnation and moral corruption!" <sup>10)</sup>

8) Ibid, page 149.

9) Ilmonen, Ibid, pages 137-138. Also: Ilmonen, AMERIKAN SUOMALAISTEN SIVISTYS HISTORIA, Vol. I, Hancock, Michigan 1919, pp. 178-180.

10) Ibid, page 78.

Ilmonen's book on the Temperance Brotherhood also makes it possible to estimate the number of women who had the opportunity of gaining leadership in the movement. Several outstanding women are singled out, among them Liisi Kivioja of Ashtabula, Lina Mahlberg of Calumet, Minnie Perttula and Hanna Siltala of Hancock, and Alma Hinkkanen of Fairport Hbr, O. Even without documentary notes, it is possible to tell that Ilmonen has made good use of the minutes of the various lodges. The above are but a few samples of what could have made Reino Kero's article Finnish Immigrant Culture in America in OLD FRIENDS - - STRONG TIES more complete. Kero thought that only a few halls were taken over. Neither did he mention Ilmonen's work on Temperance or on culture. It is as though Ilmonen's writing, in Kero's opinion, was not worthy to be considered culture! <sup>11)</sup>

Chronologically the next two books of Ilmonen dealt with the subject of the Delaware Finns. The first one was about the first Finns in America <sup>12)</sup> and was published in 1916. The second book, 1919, actually the first of a trilogy on the history of Finnish Americans, <sup>13)</sup> contained three chapters on the Delaware subject. However, for reasons of emphasis, we will consider the Delaware subject a bit later in the paper.

We turn now to the trilogy of books on the history of Finnish Americans, published between 1919 and 1926. Volume I deals with immigrants of the early 19th century before 1864, or before the Civil War. This book consists, in the main, of biographies of specifically named individuals dwelling in the country's large cities such as New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago and San Francisco. These immigrants do not represent the beginning of mass movements; they were isolated individuals. The only exception to

11) Kero, Reino, "Finnish Immigrant Culture in America," in OLD FRIENDS - - STRONG TIES, Institute of Migration, Vaasa, 1976, pages 115-144.

12) Ilmonen, S., MARIKAN ENSIMMAISET SUOMALAISET, Hancock, 1916.

13) Ilmonen, S., AMERIKAN SUOMALAISTEN HISTORIA, Vol. I, Hancock, 1919.

this would be San Francisco and northern California. This area attracted some of the very earliest Finnish immigrants.

We wish to point out another example of what neglect of Ilmonen's works accomplishes. Both Ilmonen and Toivo Harjunpää have written about Captain Gustave Niebaum, probably one of the wealthiest Finns to have lived in the United States.<sup>14)</sup> Niebaum commanded ships for the Russians and later for himself in the Alaska fur trade. Settling in San Francisco, he became owner of a shipping firm and other business enterprises, such as the famed Inglewood Winery of Napa County, Calif. Harjunpää's 35-page monograph of 1981 on the captain is very well researched but fails to mention Ilmonen's work. He is also vague about his possible contacts that Niebaum might have had with Finns living in California. At this point Ilmonen's account provides the information. Ilmonen reveals that Niebaum employed Finnish field workers and housemaids whom he reimbursed more liberally than the going rate. Furthermore, Ilmonen's account reveals that Niebaum, in his elderly years, was a financial patron of the Finnish Day celebration at the San Francisco World's Fair of 1894.

The second volume of the trilogy on history contains short but significant biographies of Finnish immigrants between the Civil War and 1880. All told there are 1500 biographies. Most of them were the result of oral interviews Ilmonen secured during his travels. As stated earlier, Ilmonen started his work as early as the 1890s while working for the SIIRTOLAINEN. In the introductory chapter of this book Ilmonen gives the reasons for migration from Finnish settlements in northern Sweden and Norway as well as Finland. We learn of the promotional schemes used by steamship companies to induce the migration of able-bodied workmen. Ilmonen tells of the saga of the Peter Swanberg Expedition, which left Haaparanta,

Sweden in June of 1873 with hundreds of Finns, bound for the northern Great Plains of the United States for construction work on the Great Northern Railroad. Upon arriving in Duluth, the Finnish laborers found out to their chagrin that they were headed for "Indian Country."<sup>15)</sup> Knowledge about tomahawk-wielding Indians had spread to Finland also, and the laborers refused to go any further West.

The biographies of this second book would still be of great value for individuals doing family history studies. Unfortunately the book is not translated. The biographies, 1500 in number, also reveal the penetration of Finnish immigrants into a surprising number of communities by the year 1880. This book is unique and worthy of continued attention. Here are two samples of the kind of material to be found in Book II of the historical trilogy.

The first is an excerpt of a general nature about early Finns living in Lower Michigan during the 1870s. "During the 1870s and the succeeding decades there were very large logging operations in Lower Michigan. The most important shipping places were Muskegan, Manistee, Traverse City, Cheboygan, Alpena, Oscoda, Bay City and Saginaw. One would meet Finns in most of these places during the 1870s but only a few of these communities became Finnish settlements. Forest workers and loggers are mobile people. The most important of the few Finnish settlements in this area was Oscoda, where, by 1875, there were more than a hundred Finns and about the same number of Finnish-Swedes. . . . Alabaster, another Finnish community close to East Tawas, developed later; the Finns there were farmers and also worked in factories. The extensive farming community of Kaleva began in the 1890s and actually belongs to a later period. The same is true of the extensive Finnish community in Detroit. It wasn't until the second decade of the 1900s that Finns began to

14) Ibid, pages 169-174; Harjunpää, Toivo, "Kapteeni Gustave Niebaum," Tornionlaakso K.paino, 1981.

15) Ilmonen, S., AMERIKAN SUOMALAISTEN HISTORIA, Vol. II, Jyväskylä, 1923, pp. 31-35.

settle into this famous center of the automobile industry."<sup>16)</sup>

The second excerpt is about settlers in Franklin, Minn. "Angelica Charlotta Jokela (nee Laestadius), daughter of Pastor Lars Levi Laestadius; she was born Nov. 28, 1842 in the Kaaresuvanto parsonage in Swedish Lapland. She married a farmer of Kittilä named Mikko Jokela. The couple moved to America in the 1880s to become farmers in Franklin. She was a strong, active person who held unflinchingly to the religious convictions of her famous father; she was frequently involved as arbiter in doctrinal situations concerning her father's teachings. Her only child died young and she herself was called to her eternal home on Sept. 18, 1900. A white marble tombstone has been erected on her grave by loyal friends. After her death, Mikko Jokela moved to Minneapolis and from there to Wisconsin."

Ilmonen's third volume of the historical trilogy is an enigma to most people since it appears to be a mere listing of names of family heads (men of course) according to place of birth, work and death. It encompasses 15,000 people! In the preface to this volume, Ilmonen states that it was his dream to record the names of all the Finn immigrants who became permanent residents in the United States and Canada! Obviously this was impossible. However, the list that he did assemble is impressive. He himself was puzzled as to its actual value. However, in retrospect it can be recognized as a colossal attempt at a matriculum of immigrants up to a certain date. It is also some kind of a watermark of the penetration by Finns into the country and communities by a certain date.

Ilmonen also expressed the hope that "some day the information contained in these books would be translated into English."<sup>17)</sup>

16) Ibid, p. 129.

17) Ilmonen, S., AMERIKAN SUOMALAISTEN HISTORIA, Vol. III, Hancock, Michigan 1926, preface.

The next two books by Ilmonen were designated by him as cultural histories. A recent version of Webster's dictionary defines culture (in the sense that it is used here) as: "ideas, customs, skills, arts, etc. of a given people in a given period of civilization." Ilmonen wished to heighten the consciousness of the Finns of his day so that they would continue their cultural efforts and uphold and preserve their traditions. He wanted the American community to realize what Finns have done. We quote from the preface of this book, "Finns can be compared favorably, on the basis of their education and cultural achievements, to the most enlightened nationalities in America such as the English, the Scotch, the Germans, the Swedes, the Danes and the Norwegians, etc. In spite of their few numbers, Finns have received recognition for their intellectual and technical accomplishments."<sup>18)</sup>

The two books on cultural history are actually one, since the numeration of chapters continues from the first through the second. Together they total almost 500 pages. They are a commentary on practically all of the activities of Finnish Americans from 1880 to the close of the 1920s, encompassing social, political, ideological, economic, religious and literary items. As usual Ilmonen, failed to document his sources. Nevertheless it is easily apparent that he made abundant use of organizational files, newspapers and festival publications. His focus tended to be midwestern, sometimes missing important cultural activities of the Eastern seaboard and the Far West. For example, he missed entirely the influence of the prominent Brothers and Sisters of Kaleva on the West Coast. Furthermore, his treatment of the cooperative movement is too brief, and he fails to develop sufficiently the polarization between the Socialists and the church.

On the other hand, he covered many subjects which later regional writers of Finnish history have failed to include in their writings. For example, he dealt with

18) Ibid, Vol. I, p. 5.

early attempts at women's equality and evaluated pioneer moral conditions.<sup>19)</sup> He described mines owned by Finns as well as mine disasters involving Finnish miners. He described relief efforts for starvation in Finland. He gave some information about outstanding women leaders.<sup>20)</sup> He also described merger attempts between the Suomi Synod and the Finnish National Church, and historical strikes in which Finnish laborers were major participants.

Much of the above singular information cannot be passed off as being inconsequential since it is needed in order to have a balanced understanding. It is from Ilmonen that we learn that the Eveleth Resolution meeting of 1908, during the great Misabi Range Steel Strike, was not an isolated incident, but the first of a series of meetings held in communities across the United States.<sup>21)</sup> To our surprise we also learn that the office of postmaster was once a prominent activity for both Finnish men as well as women.<sup>22)</sup>

No one else has ever attempted a comprehensive matriculum of Finnish choir directors, band directors, school teachers and administrators, doctors, lawyers and prominent businessmen. Again it seems strange that only one member of the symposium of writers for OLD FRIENDS - - STRONG TIES acknowledged Salomon Ilmonen's earlier work.<sup>23)</sup>

We are now ready to consider that portion of Ilmonen's historical writing which had to do with the Delaware Finns. As stated earlier, this subject is very timely because a year from now the next FinnFest festival will

convene in the region of the New Sweden Colony of 1638. That will be the 350th anniversary of the settlement on the Delaware by our ancestors. It is our intent to demonstrate that Salomon Ilmonen was the individual who did the most to awaken the Finnish American populace to a recognition of the deep and genuine roots Finns have in the founding of this country. Ilmonen accomplished this through the impact of his writing.

His first book about the Delaware Colony was titled AMERIKAN ENSIMMÄISET SUOMALAISET (America's First Finns); it was published in 1916. This 118-page book, written in simple, understandable Finnish is deeply in debt to the works of Amandus Johnson, the classic authority on this subject. In fact, everyone who has written on the subject inevitably must pay tribute to Johnson. Even, John Wuorinen leaned heavily upon Amandus Johnson's work. However, Ilmonen used in addition a wealth of other sources not mentioned by Wuorinen. The great amount of family geneological information that Ilmonen gathered about Finnish colonists is integrated with the studies by Finnish and Swedish geneological scholars. This is the core of Ilmonen's great contribution.

Ilmonen's second volume about the Delaware Colony published in 1919 is Vol. I of his historical trilogy. It contains three chapters on the Delaware subject and is mainly family geneology. Thanks to Ilmonen's geneological work done in court records of the colonial period and the records of Swedish Lutheran Church clerics, we are able to know actual Finnish names of hundreds of the original colonists. The name lists of the Swedish government practically obliterated any trace of the original Finnish names. However, after the departure of the Swedish governors with the coming of the Dutch and English, the Finnish colonists were able to record their original Finnish names. This doesn't mean that everything became crystal clear, since several layers of acculturation had affected the lives of the

19) Ilmonen, S., AMERIKAN SUOMALAISTEN SIVISTYSHISTORIA, Vol. I, Hancock 1919, p. 103.

20) See appendix for this information.

21) Ibid, pp. 182-188.

22) Ilmonen, S., Vol. II pp. 149-153.

23) Paavolainen, Jaakko, "First Generation Finnish-Americans Serve the United States," in OLD FRIENDS - - STRONG TIES, pp. 235-259.

Delaware Finns; namely, years in Sweden, years as a Swedish colony, the years as a Dutch colony, years as an English colony, and finally life as citizens of an independent United States. This latter phase while being the time of greatest freedom was, nevertheless, the time when the greatest American acculturation took place; the difference was that it was not forced. We can be eternally grateful to Ilmonen for unraveling the actual Finnish names of the original Finnish colonists and their descendants so that our record of the history of New Sweden is not merely a matter of unidentified people, shadowy and vague, but true Finns. Interest in the Delaware Colony would have been entirely different without this painstaking work of Ilmonen. It is entirely likely that there would have been a rather feeble participation by the Finns in the Delaware Tercentenary in 1938 if it hadn't been for the geneological work of Ilmonen. This is where the dynamite of Delaware Colony saga lay for Finnish Americans in 1938 and this is where it lies for even the 1988 event! The flood-gates were opened and a flood of information flowed forth from this time on baptizing the average Finn with the knowledge that he and she are descendants of the pioneers of this country!

We need to know how much was known by Finnish people (both in the United States and in Finland) before Ilmonen's books of 1916 and 1919. If it can be demonstrated that knowledge of the Finnish participation in the Delaware Colony was widespread among the rank and file in both countries before 1916 or 1919, Ilmonen's importance would be diminished somewhat. However, he would still be very significant because of this work on the family names of Finns in the Delaware Colony. What is the situation?

Koivukangas and Toivonen published in 1978 a general bibliography of Immigration history which lists the significant writers on the Delaware subject. Since our concern is with those who came before Ilmonen, we necessarily limit ourselves to pre-1916 writers.<sup>24)</sup> The first writer to write about

the Delaware Colony in Finland was Academician, Yrjö Koskinen, (affirmed as such by Reino Kero).<sup>25)</sup> This was only a 13-page chapter in Koskinen's book OPIKSI JA HUVIKSI. The title was "Suomalaiset Delawaren Siirtokunnassa Pohjois Amerikka". The book was published in 1863. This book had some impact in Finland and also spawned the erroneous theory that the Finnish ancestor of John Morton was a Rautalampi Finn named Murtonen. The joint work of Ilmonen and Akseli Rauanheimo proved this to be an unsubstantiated guess since the name did not appear in the parish records of that date in Rautalampi; furthermore, it was nowhere to be found in Swedish records of Värmland nor in colonial records, civil or church. Ilmonen describes the painful process he and Rauanheimo went through to find strong confirmation for Martti Marttinen as the ancestor of John Morton in the Rautalampi records as well as Swedish, and colonial records (civil and church). Rauanheimo found a copy of a colonial record relating to the Wicaco congregation (Old Swede/Gloria Dei congregation) in the Swedish Archives of Helsinki which revealed that Martti Marttinen (Martti Martensson) of the Wicaco congregation in Philadelphia was born in Finland in 1606. This man had lived to be over one hundred years of age. Ilmonen was able to confirm this information in the actual church records of the above mentioned church in Philadelphia.<sup>26)</sup> This was the great-grandfather of John Morton.

Other Finnish writers preceding Ilmonen's work, listed by Koivukangas and Toivonen, are K.J. Jalkanen, Nordman, Salminen and Hainari. K.J. Jalkanen's book (English translation, AMERICAN FEVER IN FINLAND IN THE 16TH AND 17TH CENTURY)

24) Koivukangas, Olavi & Toivonen, SUOMEN SIIRTOLAISUUDEN JA MAASSAMUUTON BIBLIOGRAPHIA, Institute of Migration, Turku, 1978: pp. 103-105.

25) OLD FRIENDS -- STRONG TIES, p. 44.

26) Ilmonen, S., JOHN MORTON, Hancock, Michigan 1936, pp. 41-45.



published in 1896 in Finland, is geneological study of the Finnish families who migrated to Värmland, Sweden at the close of the 16th century.<sup>27)</sup> Petrus Nordman, a Finn-Swede graduate student at the University of Helsinki, published his doctoral dissertation, "Finns in Central Sweden" in 1888. This too is a geneological study of the Finns who went to Värmland, Sweden.<sup>28)</sup> V. Salminen's book, CHRONICLES OF THE FOREST FINNS OF SWEDEN, was published in 1909; it is also a geneological study.<sup>29)</sup> Everyone of these writers is listed by Ilmonen as his sources. Each of these writers provided not only information but guidelines for further research. The reader must realize that the Finnish presence in the New Sweden Colony unavoidably goes the route traced by these Finnish Scholars and followed by Ilmonen, namely from Finland to Värmland, Värmland to New Sweden, Delaware. O.A. Hainari wrote a four-page article for the journal of the Helsinki Archives in 1908.<sup>30)</sup> Ilmonen does not list Hainari as a source.

Having listed these writers, who are the only ones to have preceded Ilmonen, (with the exception of Rauanheimo) we still need to ask the question: Did these writers awaken the attention of the rank and file Finn, either in Finland or the United States? The answer is a modified no. There has always been a slim margin of the educated elite ("sivistyneet" as they called themselves) among the Finnish immigrants to America so that it cannot be categorically said that nothing was known. All of the predecessor writers whom we have listed from Koivukangas and Toivonen, wrote for the educated class in Fin-

land. It is highly unlikely that their books were known to the ordinary American Finn. The conclusion, therefore, is that the American Finns had to be awakened by someone from their own midst. Peter Kalm's diaries were too remote to influence Finnish People in the late 19th century.<sup>31)</sup> So was Israel Acrelius' HISTORY OF NEW SWEDEN (1759). Both of these books were used by Ilmonen.

It was inevitable that a man such as Professor John Wuorinen was selected by the Finnish National Delaware Tercentenary Committee to write the official publication for the 1938 celebration. After all, he was a professor of history at Columbia University; he had already published two significant books about Finland (namely, NATIONALISM IN MODERN FINLAND and THE TEMPERANCE EXPERIMENT IN FINLAND).<sup>32)</sup> Furthermore, by the time this project surfaced, Ilmonen was an elderly, weak man who had worn himself out with his work. Nevertheless, his book on JOHN MORTON appeared in 1936 and his final supreme work, THE DELAWARE FINNS, appeared in 1938. Furthermore, the official festival book, by this time, had to be written in English. In one respect both writers followed the same path! They both use Amundus Johnson's classic book for the outline of their story. From this point they diverged rather strikingly. Wuorinen used exclusively American and Swedish sources (actually two Swedish sources, namely the Swedish economist, Eli F. Heckscher and Nils Ahnlund). Heckscher provided Wuorinen with an excellent insight into the politico-economic condition of the Swedish kingdom of the 16th and 17th century. Wuorinen called Ahnlund "one of the leading Swedish historians," yet he did not give the title of any books by Ahnlund nor did he mention him in his bibliographical "Index." In this respect Wuorinen seems to be somewhat guilty of the same weakness as Ilmonen, namely failure to provide reliable documentary notes.

27) Jalkanen, K.J., AMERIKAN TAUTI SUOMESSA 16. ja 17. VUOSISADALLA, Jyväskylä, 1896.

28) Nordman, Petrus, FINNARE I MELLERSTA SWERIGE, 1888 at the University of Helsinki.

29) Salminen, Väinö, RUOTSIN METSÄSUOMALAISTEN VAIHEET, Kansalaiskirjasto 7, Lappeenranta, 1909.

30) Hainari, O.A., "Suomalaiset Amerikassa 1600-luvulla," HISTORIALLINEN ARKISTO, Helsinki, 1908.

31) Kalm, Peter, TRAVELS IN NORTH AMERICA, 1966 & 1970.

32) Wuorinen, John, Columbia University Press.

Wuorinen's evaluation of the political insignificance of the Delaware Colony is very good. He has no obvious Finnish documentary sources; he intimated that his knowledge of political and economic conditions in 17th century Finland was sufficient, without resorting to other sources, because he had previously completed the two above mentioned books, namely on "nationalism" and "temperance" in Finland. His American sources are not numerous and there is no indication that he had researched the congregations and court records of the colonial era in the Delaware River Valley's numerous archives. He said nothing about family histories and geneologies and nothing about John Morton. It is at this point that Ilmonen is most rewarding and thorough. On the basis of this analysis of the content of both Wuorinen's and Ilmonen's Delaware research, the best thing to say is that the two books supplement each other.

It is important to note that those scholars who omit the ancestry of John Morton and the other Delaware Finns tend to be those who raise the accusation of fileopietism. If a historical work is romantic and incautiously categorical, the warning is just. However, when the geneological factors involved are studied carefully, and supported by careful documentation and conclusions are still offered in the area of the hypothetical, inquiry into matters such as John Morton's possible Finnish ancestry is a legitimate scholarly pursuit. We are sure that Ilmonen as well as other prominent scholars such as Armas Holmio and Martti Kerkkonen,<sup>33)</sup> (the latter having been the Director of the National Archives in Helsinki) spoke of the possible Finnish ancestry of John Morton in this cautious manner. Accepting Ilmo-

nen's studies on Delaware families in this context, we must conclude that he has made a great contribution. Ilmonen's studies were the basis for E.A. Louhi's familiarity with the names of Delaware Finns.<sup>34)</sup> Ilmonen's studies are the basis for the characters in Rauanheimo's documentary fictional novel, UUTEEN MAAILMAAN, and the English version, BEFORE WILLIAM PENN.<sup>35)</sup> Ilmonen's work on the Delaware Colony's Finnish families is the motivating power for our continued interest in celebrating the forthcoming 350th Anniversary.

To our knowledge, no public honor was ever bestowed upon Salomon Ilmonen for the magnificent work he did for preserving the memory of our pioneer forebearers in the United States. The various honors which the Finnish government gives to honor Finnish Americans, such as the Order of the White Rose, or the Order of the Knighthood of the Finnish Lion, were never given to Ilmonen whose entire adult life was given to preserve the work of his countrymen and their descendants. In retrospect, it seems inconceivable that such a neglect should have been perpetrated against a person so significant! It is our strong suggestion that the forthcoming 350th anniversary of the New Sweden Colony should be the opportunity to posthumously show him some single honor!

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33) Holmio, Armas, HISTORY OF THE FINNS IN MICHIGAN, p. 78.

Kerkkonen, Martti, "Finland and Colonial America;" in OLD FRIENDS - - STRONG TIES, pp. 13-34.

34) Louhi, E.A., THE DELAWARE FINNS, Humanity Press, 1925.

35) The first book published 1921; the second book in 1929.