

Petter Westerinen / Peter Peterson

A Life of Shadow and Soil

Eric Porter

July 5, 2026

Table of contents

Foreword	4
About this book	4
A note on sharing	4
Please be advised	4
Characters	4
Prologue	6
The Fires of Midsummer	6
I. Karttula: The Baptism of Uncertainty	7
Family Tree	8
Research	9
II. The Call of the Canadian Shield	16
Moses' Voyage: <i>The Scouts</i>	19
Family Tree	21
Research	22
Petter's Voyage: <i>The Reinforcement</i>	26
Family Tree	27
Research	28
Kalle's Voyage: <i>The Rear Guard</i>	33
Family Tree	34
Research	36
III. Land and Loss in Tarmola	38
Taking Root	38
The Reckoning	42
Family Tree	45
Research	46
IV. Replanting	61
Family Tree	71
Research	72
V. The River's Grasp	80
Family Tree	84
Research	85
VI. Room 13	89
Research	91

Epilogue	101
The End of Sisu	101
Afterword	102
The Question of Peter and Hilda’s Marriage	102
Option One: A Wedding at the Port	102
Option Two: A Quiet Marriage Elsewhere	103
Option Three: No Marriage at All	103
The Weight of the Sworn Records	104
Why I Tell It Without a Wedding	104
Archetypes	105
Family Tree	107
Timeline	107
Bibliography	108

Foreword

About this book

This biography reconstructs the lives of the Peterson family through official documents—death certificates, land registers, church books, and census records. Because history often records tragedy more diligently than joy, this narrative focuses heavily on the hardships of pioneer life on the Canadian Shield. While the story that survives is a tragic one, it is also a testament to *Sisu*—the Finnish concept of enduring resilience. I invite you to read it as a record of the price paid by one family to plant roots in a new land.

It has been created strictly for private, non-commercial purposes and is intended solely for family and close friends. It is also far from done: several avenues of research remain, in particular information from the descendants of the people in this story. If you have any feedback on anything here—from the choices I've made to spelling mistakes—I would be glad to hear from you at eric@ericporter.ca.

A note on sharing

Because this document contains third-party archival materials used under the premise of private use, it is vital that this story remains within our private circle. The sources, quotes, and images may be subject to third-party copyright if distributed further, and friends and relatives receiving this may not be aware of these restrictions. **Please do not post, upload, or share this document in any public forum or on social media.**

Please be advised

This story contains detailed accounts of terminal illness, accidental death, and the loss of several young children. These events reflect the harsh reality of the 1910s–1930s in remote Northern Ontario, where the mortality rate was significantly higher than in urban centres.

Characters

In order to tell Peter's story, we need to include everyone who played a large role in his life. He was well connected to his family and community, and so there are a lot of characters to keep track of.

Without spoiling the story, here is the family who migrated to Canada with him:

- **Kalle** and **Moses**: his brothers. Kalle is pronounced Call-eh; also known as Carl or Charles.
- **Aino**: Moses' wife. Also called Aina.
- **Sulo, Reino, Mirjam**: Moses' two sons and one daughter. Mirjam is pronounced the same as Miriam.
- **Lauri**: Kalle's son
- **Anna Maria Peterson**: his mother
- **Anna Maria Johnson**: Aino's mother

At the end of each section, I added a family tree of the characters with the names used in that part. Blue indicates male and pink female; grey indicates they were not in that part, and are only there to help show the relationships.

WARNING: you will spoil events of the story if you skip ahead to the family trees. If there was no spoiler and enough room, I put the family tree on the same page as the story.

I encourage you to take a break between sections and try to make sure you remember each character before moving on to the next section.

Prologue

The Fires of Midsummer

In the Finland of 1889, Midsummer meant fire.

On the eve of St. John's Day—*juhannus*, the longest day of the year—the *kokko* (bonfire) was lit on high ground above the water, built large enough to be seen across the lake. In central Finland, where Karttula lay scattered among its forests and dark chains of lakes, this was the one night the year seemed to hold its breath. Farm labourers who spent their days bent over other men's fields gathered from the outlying crofts and estates, drawn by the fire, the dancing, and the particular licence the night allowed. The sky stayed gold until nearly midnight and then barely darkened at all—this far north, true night never came—and in that long, luminous dusk the rules that governed the rest of the year loosened their hold.¹

Anna Maria Westerinen was thirty-six that summer. She had been a widow for seven years, a *loinen* (landless lodger) on another family's farm since the bankruptcy that stripped everything the year her husband died. She had four children who carried the Karhunen name. She herself still carried the Westerinen name, though it meant something other than it once had—no longer the wife of a shopkeeper with silver in the house, but a woman working land that would never be hers.

The young man was nineteen. Like the son he would never name, he had been left fatherless young—his own father, a Karttula farmer, had died when the boy was twelve, the year before Anna Maria buried her husband.

What passed between them that summer the church books do not record. Whether they had known each other long or met only that night, whether it was tenderness or loneliness or something with no name at all—none of it survives. The record preserves only what followed: a child who would arrive the next February, in the dead of a Finnish winter and weeks before his time, fighting for his first breath before a hurried baptism could be said over him.

¹Before 1955, Finland kept Midsummer on fixed dates—*juhannusaatto* (St. John's Eve) on June 23 and *juhannuspäivä* (St. John's Day) on June 24; only with the 1955 almanac—on the model Sweden had adopted in 1953—was the holiday moved to the Saturday falling between June 20 and 26 (*Kysy kirjastonhoitajalta* (Ask a Librarian), n.d.). In 1889 the eve therefore fell on Sunday, June 23. The midsummer bonfire (*kokko*) and the night's loosening of ordinary social custom are long-documented features of Finnish folk practice.

I. Karttula: The Baptism of Uncertainty

To understand the Peterson family, you must first understand Sisu. It is a Finnish word that has no direct translation in English. While it is often approximated as “guts” or “grit,” Sisu implies something far deeper and more primal. It is a white-knuckled form of courage that manifests only when all hope is seemingly lost¹. It is the decision to take one more breath and keep moving when the body and mind scream to stop. For Petter Westerinen, Sisu was not just a cultural trait; it was a survival mechanism required from his very first moment on earth.

Petter Westerinen (or Vesterinen) was born on February 13, 1890, in Karttula, Kuopio, Finland. He was given an emergency baptism immediately following his birth². A baptism before death was held to be necessary—washing away Original Sin, securing the child’s place in heaven—and an emergency baptism was performed only when there was real fear for a newborn’s life.

This struggle was his introduction to the world. It was not an easy beginning for Petter or for his mother, Anna Maria Westerinen, who had lost her husband eight years before³. Petter was given his mother’s surname, Westerinen, a tradition for children born out of wedlock.

Her late husband was also named Petter, and it was a poignant custom for widows to honour a deceased spouse by bestowing his name upon a later child. During the elder Petter’s life, the family had enjoyed a prosperity rare for the region; he was a country shopkeeper who owned gold, silver, and boats, affording Anna Maria a life of relative comfort. During the last year of his life, a debilitating illness made it impossible for him to maintain the business. The financial collapse was total; the family was forced to declare bankruptcy and lost everything just ten days before he died⁴. In the wake of his death, the family suffered a harsh social descent, sliding from the propertied class to the status of *loinen*^{5, 6}.

Petter was born into this reality of landless farm labour eight years after his youngest brother Yrjö was born. Kalle was his oldest brother, followed by his sister Anna, and then his brother Moses. They were all born with the Karhunen name except for Petter⁷. Perhaps out of love for their mother, they treated Petter as one of their own and they would accomplish many things together.

Petter grew up in the unchanging rhythm of a Finnish farm, where a family lived, toiled, and raised its children on land it would never own. The other constant was the Lutheran Church. The Church kept excellent records, and so every year of Petter’s life was recorded in the church records from birth until emigration.

¹(Raiskila 2018)

²(Karttulan seurakunta (Karttula Parish) 1890b)

³(Karttulan seurakunta (Karttula Parish) 1882)

⁴(Hellström 1882)

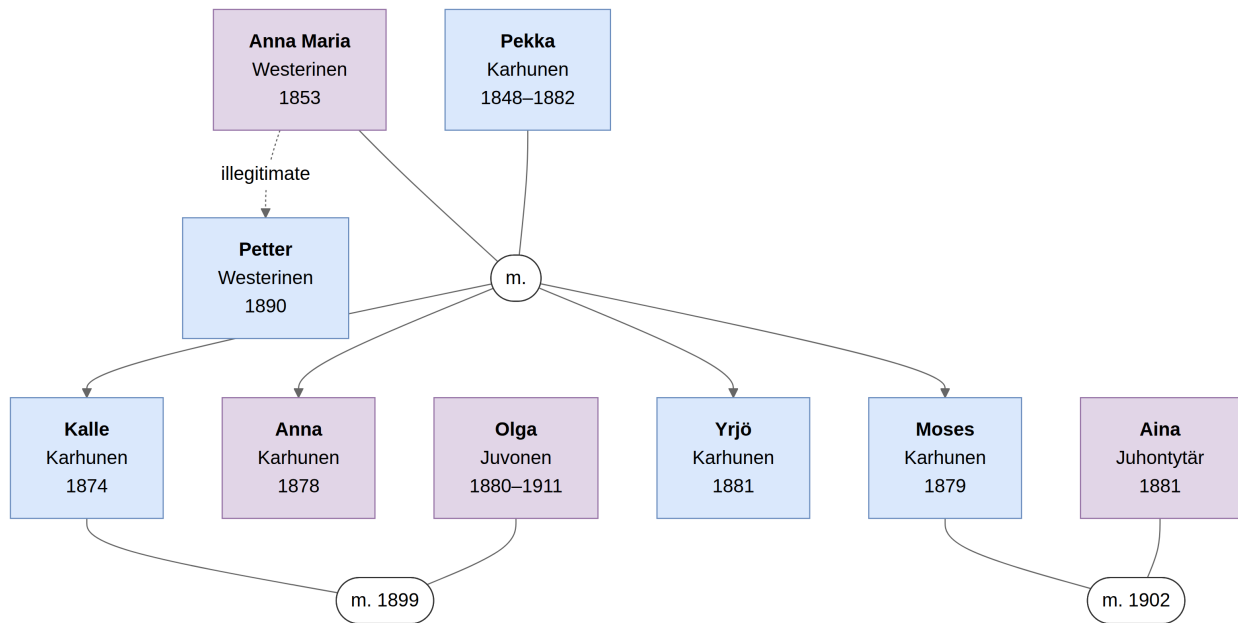
⁵(Karttulan seurakunta (Karttula Parish) 1890b)

⁶(Kielitoimiston Sanakirja 2024)

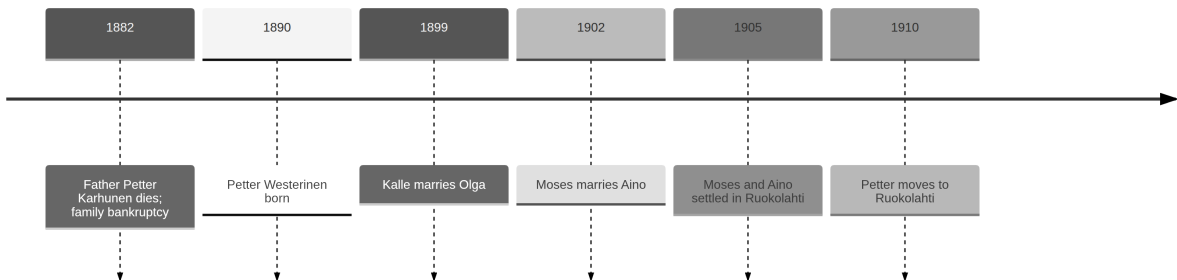
⁷(Karttulan seurakunta (Karttula Parish) 1890a)

From 1902 to 1910, the brothers left Karttula one by one, moving south-east across the country to the region of Ruokolahti, where they found new work on a different farm. Moses was the first to go—married to Aino in October 1902, he had settled in Ruokolahti by 1905⁸—followed by Yrjö, and then Petter in 1910^{9, 10}. Kalle joined them as well¹¹, and the four brothers remained together in Ruokolahti for a time, likely supporting one another as they worked and planned their futures. What finally set them looking abroad the record doesn't say—but in a land where the work passed down and the title never did, the pull of acres they could call their own needs little explanation. They would carry their Sisu across an ocean to meet a great adversary—and to win land of their own.

Family Tree



Karttula & Ruokolahti



⁸(Ruokolahden seurakunta (Ruokolahti Parish) 1910)

⁹(Karttulan seurakunta (Karttula Parish) 1910)

¹⁰(Ruokolahden seurakunta (Ruokolahti Parish) 1912a)

¹¹(Ruokolahden seurakunta (Ruokolahti Parish) 1912b)

155

Kuukaudet	Vuodet	Kuolleet	Suolteen	Säätö	Säily
Kuolleen säätö, nimi ja asunto			Kuoli	Syynä	Säily
		Maakauppias Karttula Petter Karhunen			
		Karttula N:o 13 Niska			
Elokuun 1. 6.	750	Maakauppias Petter Karhunen	Kuoli	16. 1804	Naimat. 1.
" 3. 8.	708	Lönnqvistin vaimo Maria Karhunen	Turossa	9. 1882	Lapsi 1.
" 3. 8.	626	Maakauppias Karttula Petter Karhunen	Kuoli	3. 1848	Naimat. 1.

Figure 2: The elder Petter Karhunen's 1882 death record

SUMMARY

This *kuolleet* (death) record shows that on August 3, 1882, Petter Karhunen, born 1848, 33-years-8-months-26-days-old, male, *nainut* (married), *maakauppias* (country shopkeeper), from Karttula, died of *keuhkotauti* (lung disease, i.e. tuberculosis) and was buried on August 8^a.

^a(Karttulan seurakunta (Karttula Parish) 1882)

NOTE

This record also points to page 626 of the Karttula *Lastenkirja* (children's book) where we find the family he left behind.

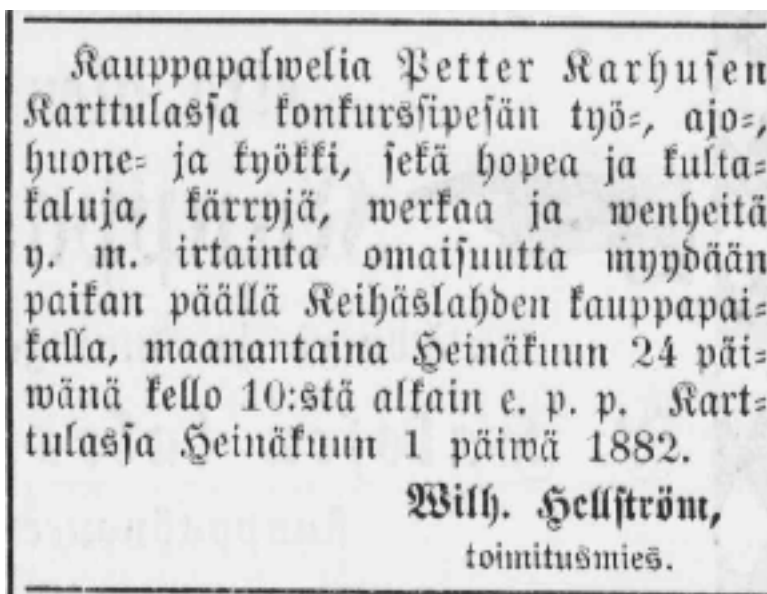


Figure 3: 1882 Savo newspaper notice of Petter Karhunen's bankruptcy estate sale

SUMMARY

This newspaper clipping from *Savo* is a notice of the bankruptcy estate sale of Petter Karhunen of Karttula, scheduled to take place on July 24 at 10 am on-site at the Keihäslahti marketplace^a.

^a(Hellström 1882)

TRANSLATION

Shop assistant Petter Karhunen's bankruptcy estate in Karttula: work, driving, room, and kitchen [items], as well as silver and gold items, carts, cloth, and boats etc. movable property will be sold on-site at the Keihäslahti marketplace, on Monday, July 24th starting from 10 a.m. In Karttula, July 1st, 1882. Wilh. Hellström, administrator.

NOTE

This bankruptcy represents the turning point for the family when they began the “social slide” into farm labour.

The above death record and estate sale notice present a tragic timeline. As his health failed, the business likely crumbled due to neglect, leading to bankruptcy. In the final days of his illness, while he was still on his deathbed, the bankruptcy sale was held and his possessions sold off. Tuberculosis was a deadly illness. The only reprieve would be if his family shielded him from the crumbling world around him, but the timing of his death suggests not. He likely knew what was happening; he died only ten days later.

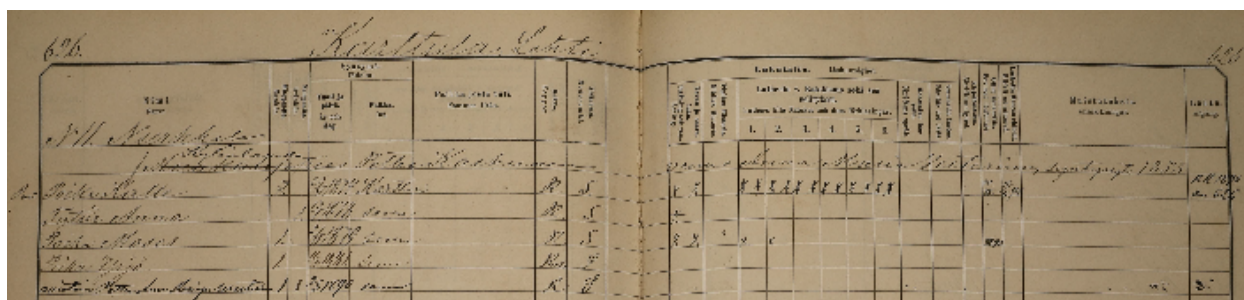


Figure 4: Karttula lastenkirja (children’s book) record of the Nurkkala farm household

SUMMARY

This Karttula *lastenkirja* (Children’s book) record shows the household at farm No. 11 Nurkkala in Karttula, listing Anna Maria Vesterinen (born 1855) as the wife of cottager Petter Karhunen. Below her name are four older children—Kalle, Anna, Moses, and Yrjö—followed by the entry for Petter Annanpoika Westerinen, who is recorded as born on February 13, 1890, and explicitly distinguished as *avioton* (illegitimate)^a.

^a(Karttulan seurakunta (Karttula Parish) 1890a)

TRANSCRIPTION

Name	Relationship	Sex	Born (or Baptized?)
Kalle Karhunen	Petter’s son	male	April 29, 1874
Anna Karhunen	Petter’s daughter	female	January 13, 1878
Moses Karhunen	Petter’s son	male	November 21, 1879
Yrjö Karhunen	Petter’s son	male	October 11, 1881
Petter Westerinen	Anna Maria’s son	male	March 9, 1890

NOTE

V and W appear to be interchangeable.

Figure 5: Karttula rippikirja (communion book) listing the Karhunen family, 1910

SUMMARY

This Karttula *rippikirja* (communion book) record identifies the family of Pekka Karhunen and Anna Maria Westerinen having children Moses, Yrjö, and Pekka Westerinen in 1910. In the right-most column, we can see that the brothers Moses, Yrjö, and Pekka [Petter] moved to Ruokolahti^a.

^a(Karttulan seurakunta (Karttula Parish) 1910)

NOTE

Their children Anna and Kalle are notably missing, but being the oldest, they got married and moved with their new families.

Figure 6: Ruokolahti communion book record for Moses Karhunen and wife Aina

SUMMARY

This Ruokolahti *rippikirja* (communion book) record identifies Moses Pekkanpoika Karhunen and *vaimo* (wife) Aina Juhontytär as having married on October 19, 1902, arrived in 1905 and moved to [North] Am[erica] in 1910^a.

^a(Ruokolahden seurakunta (Ruokolahti Parish) 1910)

TRANSCRIPTION

Poissa kutsunnasta 1902

TRANSLATION

Absent from the draft [conscription] in 1902.

NOTE

Juhontytär = Juho + tytär (Juho’s daughter). Juho can be translated to Johan or John. Later in her life, she appears with last names Johansson and Johnson and this is where they come from. Coincidentally, we will later see their son Sulo get mistranscribed as Johan (Sulo → Juho → Johan) during their voyage to Canada.

Aino’s own records bear this out. Her Asikkala birth record names her father as the *työmies* (labourer) Johan Johanson^a, and the family’s page in the Ruokolahti communion book (Siitola 4) records him in full as Juho **Fredrik** Juhonpoika (1844–1903), with his wife Anna Maria **Kaarlentytär**, born 1842, and their daughter Aina^b. The full name explains why Aino’s later Canadian records call her father both *John Johnson* (her 1927 death registration) and *Frederick Johnston* (her 1919 marriage affidavit)—all correct variations of the same man. Kaarlentytär (Carl’s daughter) likewise surfaces as *Anna Mary Carlson* on that affidavit, and the HisKi index of Anna Maria’s baptism—born May 19, 1842, to the crofter Carl Andersson—places her at the Hirvensalo croft in Paaso, the farm name that appears beside her in the Afterword’s family tree^c. (The communion book enters her birthday as April 14, 1842; this book follows the baptism index’s May 19.)

The conscription note is a fascinating historical detail. In the early 1900s, Finland was under Russian rule (the “First Period of Oppression”). In 1901, a new Conscription Act was passed that forced Finns to serve in the Russian Imperial Army, which many Finns considered illegal and unconstitutional. In response, a widespread Conscription Strike (*kutsuntalakko*) occurred. In 1902, thousands of Finnish men refused to show up for the draft as a form of passive resistance / civil disobedience^d. This note indicates that Moses was one of those men who refused to attend the Russian military call-up.

^a(Asikkalan seurakunta (Asikkala Parish) 1881)

^b(Ruokolahden seurakunta (Ruokolahti Parish) 1909)

^c(HisKi Project, Genealogical Society of Finland 1842)

^d(*Wikipedia* 2025, “Kutsuntalakko”)



Figure 7: Ruokolahti communion book record for Pekka (Petter) Karhunen

SUMMARY

This Ruokolahti *rippikirja* (Communion book) record identifies Pekka Anna Marianpoika Karhunen *ennen* (formerly) Vesterinen, *löysä* (itinerant labourer), as having arrived on June 10, 1910, and moved to [North] Am[erica] in 1912^a.

^a(Ruokolahden seurakunta (Ruokolahti Parish) 1912a)

NOTE

This record suggests Petter adopted the last name Karhunen and he will later apply for a passport using this last name. Note that Pekka is interchangeable with Petter in Finland.

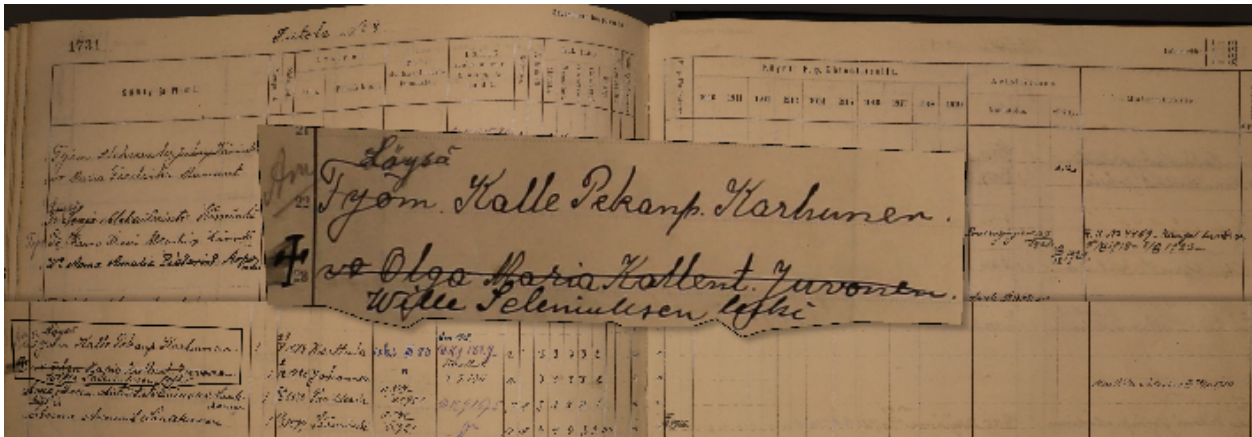


Figure 8: Ruokolahti communion book record for Kalle Karhunen

SUMMARY

This Ruokolahti *rippikirja* (communion book) record identifies Kalle Pekkanpoika Karhunen, *löysä* (itinerant labourer), from Karttula, as moved to [North] Am[erica] in 1912. His late wife Olga Juvonen, from Johannes, died on July 3, 1911^a.

^a(Ruokolahden seurakunta (Ruokolahti Parish) 1912b)

NOTE

Olga was born on December 3, 1880, at Pukkisaari in the Johannes parish^a. She and Kalle married in 1899: their banns were read in Wiipuri that June and July^{b, c}, the wedding was announced in the newspaper *Wiipuri* on July 16^d, and in August the couple applied for their moving certificate^e.

^a(Johanneksen seurakunta (Johannes Parish) 1880)

^b(*Wiipuri* 1899a)

^c(*Wiipuri* 1899b)

^d(*Wiipuri* 1899d)

^e(*Wiipuri* 1899c)

II. The Call of the Canadian Shield

Content Warning: Terminal Illness and Death

Waiting for them across the ocean was the Canadian Shield. To those who haven't stood on it, the Shield is a vast collar of Precambrian rock wrapping around Hudson Bay. But to the settler, it is an ancient, unforgiving beast. Scraped clean by glaciers eons ago, it is a landscape of jagged granite, black water, and deceptively thin soil^{1,2}. It is a place of breathtaking beauty that demands a high price for survival. It does not give life easily; it must be wrestled from the stone. This was the landscape waiting for the Finns.

The opportunity for Finnish immigration was set in motion years earlier, in 1868, when the Legislative Assembly of Ontario passed The Free Grants and Homesteads Act³. The Act as passed offered a settler of eighteen a free 100 acres—200 to the head of a family—in the townships the Crown opened for settlement, earned by clearing and cultivating the land, building a habitable house, and living on it. Over the following decades the scheme was carried across the districts of the north, and by the time the advertisements reached Finland the free grant in the Thunder Bay country stood at 160 acres⁴. The rugged terrain of the Canadian Shield in the Thunder Bay⁵ area proved to be a natural and immediate fit for the Finns, who centred their community there. They saw this homesteading program as a test of the national grit, of Sisu itself—a test made for a farming culture already accustomed to working in the hard conditions of the North.

Rail lines and shipping companies advertised the program everywhere they could; these are the kinds of advertisements Petter and his family would have seen.

¹(Britannica 2025)

²(Harris 2010)

³(Ontario 1868)

⁴As passed in 1868, the Act granted 100 acres to any settler eighteen or older—200 to the head of a family—with the patent earned by settlement duties (Ontario 1868). By the 1897 consolidation the free-grant territory was defined as the Districts of Algoma, Thunder Bay, Rainy River and Nipissing (with parts of the Ottawa–Georgian Bay country); the statute capped a location at two hundred acres and left the working amounts to Order-in-Council regulations, while the companion Rainy River Act fixed the family grant at a 160-acre quarter section outright (R.S.O. 1897, c. 29, ss. 4, 6; c. 30, s. 5) (Ontario 1897). The Thunder Bay townships were surveyed and granted on the same standard—the round 160 acres the advertisements promised; Peter's own patent, for the surveyed south half of Lot 6, Concession 4, ran to 155½ acres “be the same more or less,” and Moses' half-lot next door to 173 (Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1916a, 1919).

⁵(Turner et al. 2015)

Matkustakaa aurinkorikkaaseen Canadaan ja tulkaa rikkaaksi!

Jokainen mieshenkilö yli 18 vuoden saa ilmaiseksi 160 acraa helposti viljeltävää maata. Suora matkapiletti on aina paras. Kirjoja ja karttoja saadaan ilmaiseksi ja postimaksutta, jos vain käännytään

N. D. Ennis'in puoleen.
 Agentti Canadian Pacific-radalla.
Nygaten 9. Christiania.

HUOM! Kääntykää luottamuksella minun N. D. Ennis'in puoleen, sillä 10 vuoden kokemus Canadassa omataan ja maan tunnen täydellisesti.

(S. T. A. 13431.)

Figure 1: CP Rail advertisement enticing Finns to emigrate to Canada

SUMMARY

A Canadian Pacific Railway agent from Christiania (now Oslo) posted this enticing advertisement to Finns:

TRANSLATION

Travel to sun-rich Canada and become rich! Every male person over 18 years receives for free 160 acres of easily cultivable land.^a

^a(N. 1895)

 **Kanada.**

Jokainen 18 v. täyttänyt mieshenkilö voi saada 160 acraa helposti viljeltävää maata. Kirjoja ja karttoja lähetetään ilmaiseksi. Nopeimmin kulkevien laivojen piletien hinnoista saadaan tietoja pyydettäessä

**Suomen Höyrylaiva-osakeyhtiöltä
 Helsingissä.**

618 2-13

Figure 2: Finland Steamship Company advertisement for free Canadian land

SUMMARY

The Finland Steamship Limited Company posted a slightly more restrained advertisement:

TRANSLATION

Canada. Every male person who has turned 18 years old can receive 160 acres of easily cultivable land.^a

^a(Suomen Höyrylaiva Osakeyhtiö 1895)

While the program was popular, some Finns were skeptical. Governments warned of dishonest solicitations—one German warning was reprinted in the Finnish press—and anyone familiar with Thunder Bay will know that they were right to be skeptical. The real swindler was the Shield itself, a landscape of rock and unforgiving cold. But the Finns, armed with Sisu, marched willingly to meet it.



Figure 3: Finnish newspaper article: ‘Warning against migrating to Canada’

SUMMARY

This article, “Warning against migrating to Canada,” was a Finnish reprint of a German government warning. The article goes on to call the *Canadian Government*, the *Canadian*

Pacific Railway (CPR), and the *English Steamship Lines* ringleaders of the dishonest solicitation of 160 acres of free land^a.

^a(*Uusi Aura* 1900)

Moses' Voyage: *The Scouts*

Moses jumped on the opportunity. On April 25, 1910, the whole household—Moses, his wife Aino, her mother Anna Maria Johnson, and the children Sulo, Reino, and Mirjam—took out passports together, planning to set out at once^{6,7}. In the end only Moses departed on schedule. Likely due to Anna Maria experiencing early stages of an illness that would soon fall upon her, the rest of the family delayed their journey until later that year.

On April 27, only two days after receiving his passport, Moses boarded the *Titania* from Hanko, Finland, to the UK⁸. He arrived in Hull and on May 7 he departed from Glasgow on the *Pretorian* to Canada⁹. On May 16, he arrived in Quebec City and then rode the Canadian Pacific Railway to Port Arthur¹⁰.

In Port Arthur, Moses' first task was to find a place to live and a way to earn. The land would feed a family but pay no wages, and on his manifest Moses had named his intended Canadian occupation not as a farmer but as a *railway labourer*¹¹—the cash-paying foothold that drew so many Finns to the Lakehead before they could prove up a homestead. He likely rented a room in the boarding house at 335 Foley Street¹², situated in the heart of the Finlandia neighbourhood¹³, in time for the rest of his family to join him.

On August 3, Aino, her mother, and the three children boarded the *Titania* out of Hanko¹⁴; on August 12, the *Empress of Britain* out of Glasgow¹⁵; on August 18 they reached Quebec City and rode the Canadian Pacific Railway to Port Arthur¹⁶.

Reunited, the family settled into their rented rooms in Port Arthur while Moses turned to his main objective: securing land of their own. This was not something a newcomer could claim on arrival. The Crown kept two doors open to an actual settler—the free-grant *location ticket*, the permit that made a settler a *locatee*, the tenant-in-waiting of a parcel he could one day own, or an outright purchase at settler's prices, carrying the same demand for labour—and either way a man had to establish himself first: find paid work, learn the lay of the country, and scout the ground worth committing years of labour to. So while the homestead was always the goal, it lay a couple of years off; for now, Moses laboured and searched.

⁶(Viipurin lääninhallitus (Provincial Government of Viipuri) 1910a)

⁷(Viipurin lääninhallitus (Provincial Government of Viipuri) 1910b)

⁸(Finland Steamship Company 1910b)

⁹(Board of Trade 1910b)

¹⁰(Immigration Branch, Department of Interior, Canada 1910b)

¹¹(Immigration Branch, Department of Interior, Canada 1910b)

¹²(Registrar General of Ontario 1911b)

¹³(Finlandia Neighbourhood 2009)

¹⁴(Finland Steamship Company 1910a)

¹⁵(Board of Trade 1910a)

¹⁶(Immigration Branch, Department of Interior, Canada 1910a)

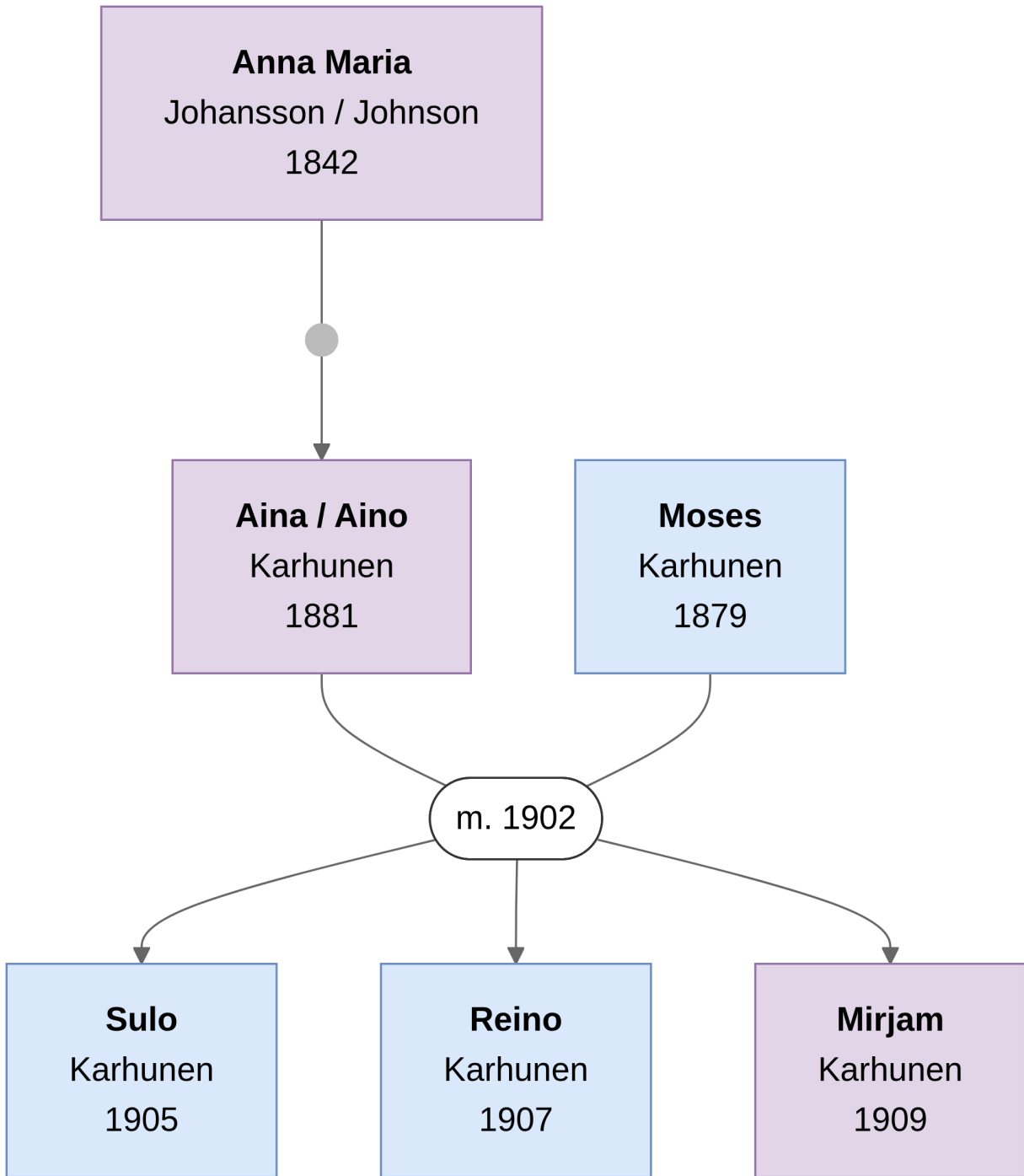
In May 1911, as the spring thaw softened a country the family had barely gained a foothold in, Aino was pregnant with the family's first Canadian-born child¹⁷. In the same season, a shadow fell over the household: the death registration would later record her mother, Anna Maria Johnson, as suffering six months of stomach cancer¹⁸—placing its onset around this spring.

Just as Aino's body began to nurture the family's future, her mother's body began to fail. If this was the same illness that had delayed the family's voyage a year before, it had now turned grave.

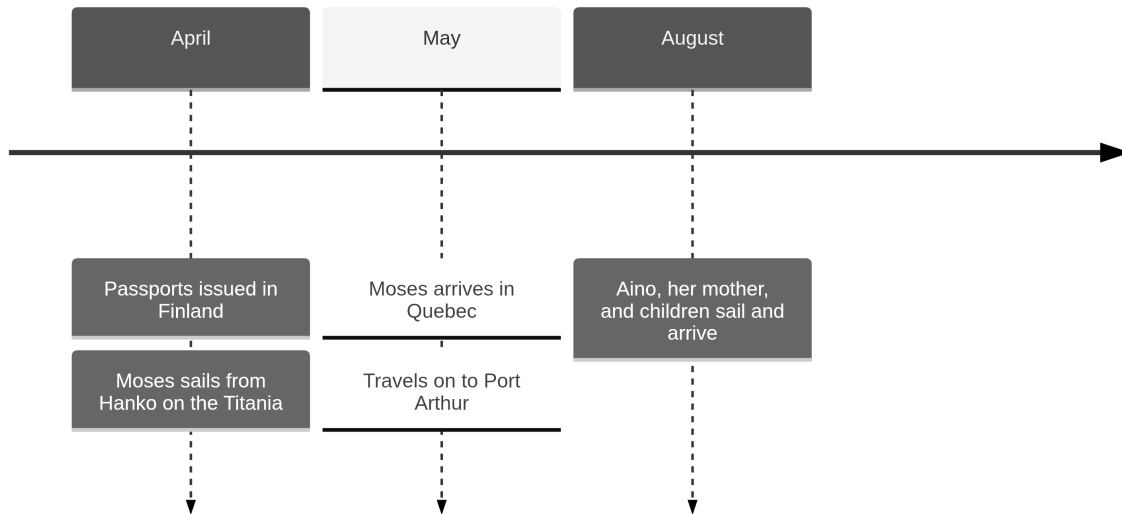
¹⁷(Registrar General of Ontario 1911b)

¹⁸(Registrar General of Ontario 1911a)

Family Tree



Moses' Voyage, 1910



Research

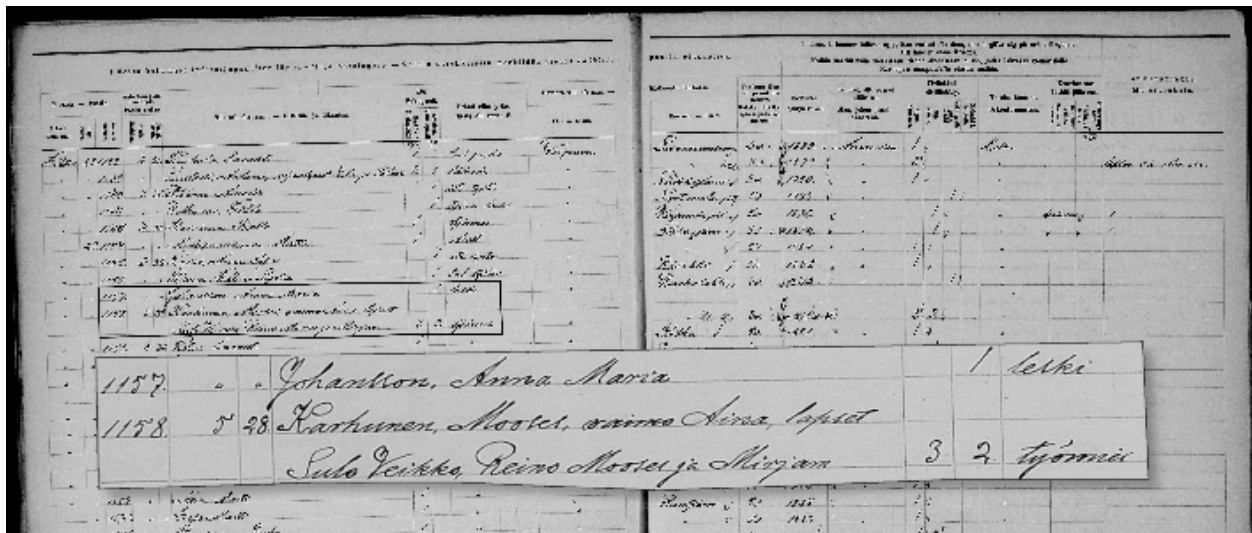


Figure 4: 1910 Finnish passport register (Aino's mother Anna Maria Johansson)

SUMMARY

This Finnish passport register shows that on April 25, 1910, passport number 1157 was issued to Aino's mother Anna Maria Johansson^a. Next it shows that passport number 1158 was issued to Karhunen, Mooses, *työmies* (labourer), *vaimo* (wife) Aina, *lapset* (children) Sulo Veikka, Reino Mooses and Mirjam for 5 marks, 28 pennies^b.

^a(Viipurin lääninhallitus (Provincial Government of Viipuri) 1910a)

^b(Viipurin lääninhallitus (Provincial Government of Viipuri) 1910b)

NOTE

Notice how the “j” in Mirjam looks like a “g.” During the family’s journey there were many spelling errors, mistranscriptions, and mistranslations because they could not speak English.

NAME OF SHIP *Pretorian* DATE OF DEPARTURE *7th May 1910* WHERE BOARDED *Lybeck, Montreal*

PORT OF DEPARTURE—**GLASGOW.** STEAMSHIP LINE—**ALLAN LINE.**

NAMES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF ALIEN PASSENGERS.

A.—TRANSMIGRANTS, that is, alien passengers (other than first-class passengers) who arrived in the United Kingdom, during its their passage, prepaid through tickets, and in respect of whose security has been given that they will proceed to places outside the United Kingdom.

Port of embarkation	Ticket Number	NAME OF PASSENGER	Class (Wholesale, Retail or Ship)	Profession, Occupation or Office of Passenger	Adults of 12 years and upward				Children between 1 and 12		Nationality (Country of birth, Origin or subject)	Arrival in United Kingdom		Port at which Passenger was contacted to land
					Admitted by	Admitted by	Admitted by	Admitted by	Males	Females		Males	Females		Port	Steaming Line
Glasgow	838	Lak Santelarij	1	Lab		19					Finland	Shell	Goulton	Shelton
	9	Juho Reino				17								
	8	M. S.												
	4	M. S.												
	870	M. S.												
	1	Fredrik Hallstrom				42								
	2	Maldemar Niskanen				19								
	3	Moses Karhunen				31								
	1789	M. S.				57	21				Finland	Shell	Amherst	Shelton

Figure 5: 1910 UK passenger leaving list for Moses Karhunen (ship Pretorian)

SUMMARY

This UK passenger leaving list shows that on May 7, 1910, Moses Karhunen boarded the ship *Pretorian* from Glasgow, UK to Canada, ticket number 873, lab[ourer], 31-year-old male, unaccompanied^a.

^a(Board of Trade 1910b)

SUMMARY

This UK passenger leaving list shows that on August 12, 1910, A[ino] Karhunen, her mother A[nn]a Johnson, and her children [Sulo], R[eino] and M[irjam] boarded the ship *Empress of Britain* from Glasgow, UK to Canada, ticket number 146959^a.

^a(Board of Trade 1910a)

NOTE

Notice the capital *S* for Sulo has been miswritten as a *J*. This is a common transcription error. Also Mirjam's age is 9 months and correctly under the female column (this will change later). She was actually 12 months old at this time. The discrepancy in age suggests they may have offered an incorrect age to secure a travel discount.

The image shows a scan of a 1910 Canadian passenger list. The document is titled "INSTRUCTIONS TO PURSERS" and "1910 Canadian Passenger List". It contains a table with columns for name, age, sex, and other details. Handwritten entries in cursive script are visible, including "Aino Karhunen" (age 70), "Ann Maria Johnson" (age 34), "Sulo" (age 4), "Reino" (age 3), and "Mirjam" (age 7/12). There are also handwritten notes and corrections, such as "156159" and "Aino Karhunen".

Figure 8: 1910 Canadian passenger list: Aino and family arrive

SUMMARY

This Canada passenger list shows that on August 18, 1910, A[ino] Karhunen, her mother Ann[a] Maria Johnson, and her children [Sulo], R[eino] and M[irjam] arrived in Quebec City from the ship *Empress of Britain*, ticket number 156159, headed for Port Arthur^a.

^a(Immigration Branch, Department of Interior, Canada 1910a)

NOTE

This is a great example of how difficult it can be to find ancestral records. Nobody in the family spoke English at the time and so we are dealing with misspellings, mistranscriptions, and mistranslations. Anna Maria is the most accurate record. She was widowed and her age is off by only a couple years. Here is what I think happened for the rest. In hasty cursive, the sequence of the lowercase letters 'i' and 'n' in *Aina* likely merged together to visually resemble the descending loop of a 'g', resulting in the transcription *Aga*. The decorative upper loop of the capital 'S' in *Sulo* was confused with a capital 'J', and a sloppy cursive loop on the 'l' made it look like 'h' leading the clerk to read it as "Juho" and then translate it to the Swedish form *Johan*. The handwriting for *Reino* was ambiguous enough that the clerk defaulted to the phonetically similar Swedish name *Ragni*, a known name that matched the

visual shape of the letters. The descending tail of the lowercase ‘j’ in the passport spelling of *Mirjam* was misread as a ‘g’, causing the clerk to transcribe the name as the Swedish variant *Magnil*. Another error you will notice is Mirjam’s age became 7 months and she was moved into the male column. 7s do look like 9s and they likely guessed the infant’s gender because of the language barrier. Even the ticket number is off by a couple of digits. But it’s the same ship they left the UK from and all of the important discriminating digits match.

Petter’s Voyage: *The Reinforcement*

By the summer of 1911, the Canadian experiment needed more than a pioneer; it needed hands. Moses had broken the ground, and it fell to the youngest of the brothers to follow. At twenty-one, Petter crossed not as a dreamer chasing free land but as a reinforcement called up to steady a position already under strain—and he crossed alone. He boarded the *Titania* from Hanko to the UK on June 21, 1911¹⁹; the *Tunisian* from Liverpool to Canada on June 30²⁰; and on July 9 he arrived in Quebec and rode the Canadian Pacific Railway west to Port Arthur to meet his brother²¹. The records barely caught him at all: the UK leaving list enters the young labourer as *Spin[ster]*, *female*—reducing the family’s newest worker to a slip of the pen before he had even landed²².

If Petter crossed expecting to join a thriving settlement, what greeted him instead was a home heavy with contradiction. He arrived in the Finlandia neighbourhood, the Finnish heart of Port Arthur, where the family had taken rooms on Foley Street. His sister-in-law Aino met him visibly pregnant with the family’s first Canadian-born child, while her mother, Anna Maria Johnson, was visibly fading from stomach cancer. The household Petter had been called to reinforce was keeping two opposite vigils at once—one for a coming birth, one for an approaching death. He took his own room nearby, likely in a boarding house—the one Port Arthur address later recorded for him is 28 Centre Street²³—and bent to the work he had come for. Where Moses had declared himself a *railway labourer* on his way to the rail-built Lakehead, Petter’s manifest named only a plain *labourer*²⁴—a fitting distinction, for he had been summoned to his brother’s homestead rather than the rail line, and labour was the plainest thing the family needed.

The cycle of life and death turned rapidly that autumn. On October 23, 1911, Aino gave birth to a son, Urho Olavi²⁵. What his arrival brought to those rooms, no record says—but joy and grief must have been hard to tell apart.

Anna Maria outlived the birth by only two weeks. On November 8, after two months of medical care, she died of heart failure²⁶. The infant Urho had arrived just in time to replace the matriarch. But as the family would soon discover, the Shield was not yet satisfied with the exchange.

¹⁹(Finland Steamship Company 1911)

²⁰(Board of Trade 1911)

²¹(Immigration Branch, Department of Interior, Canada 1911)

²²(Board of Trade 1911)

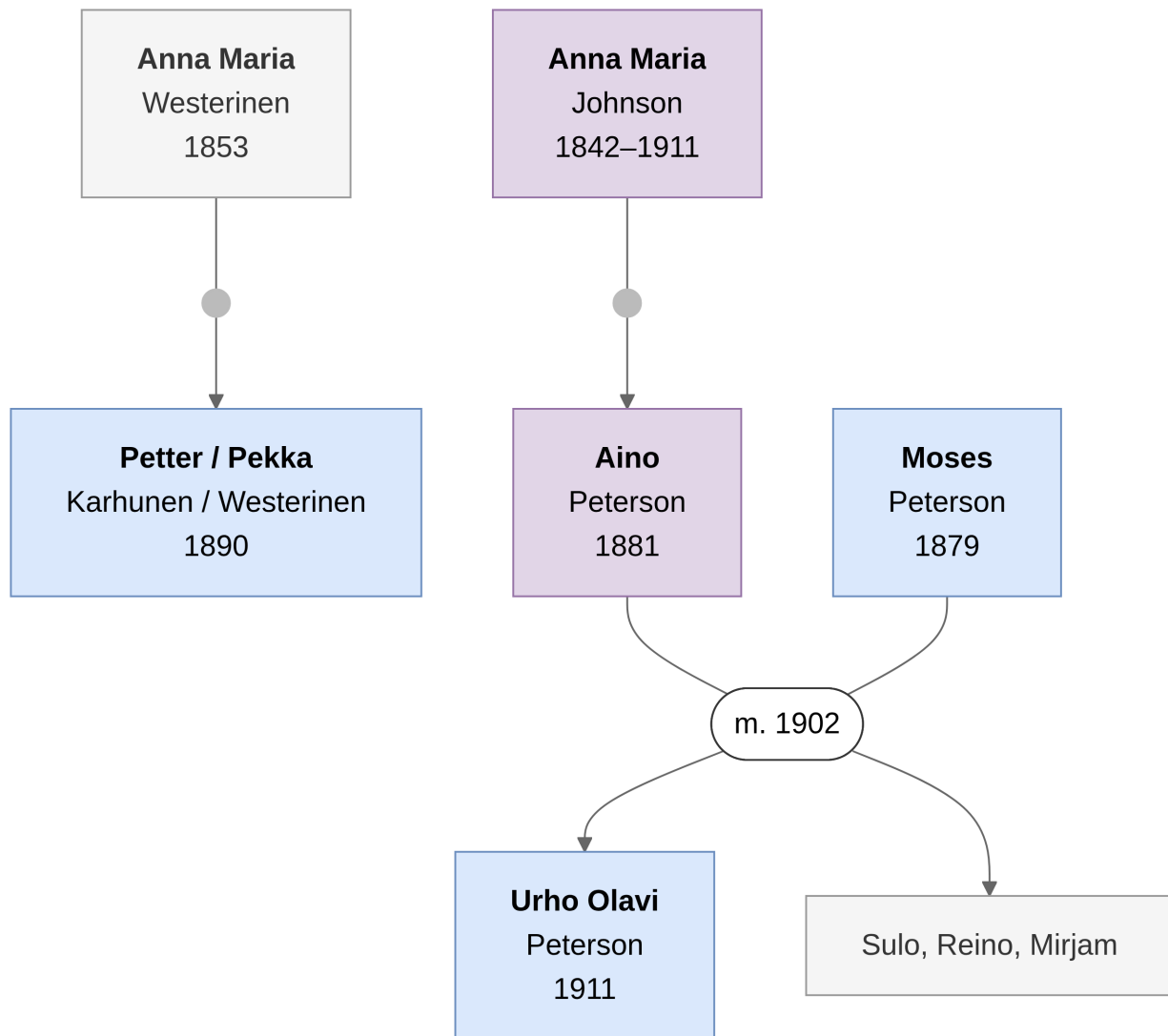
²³(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1916a)

²⁴(Immigration Branch, Department of Interior, Canada 1911)

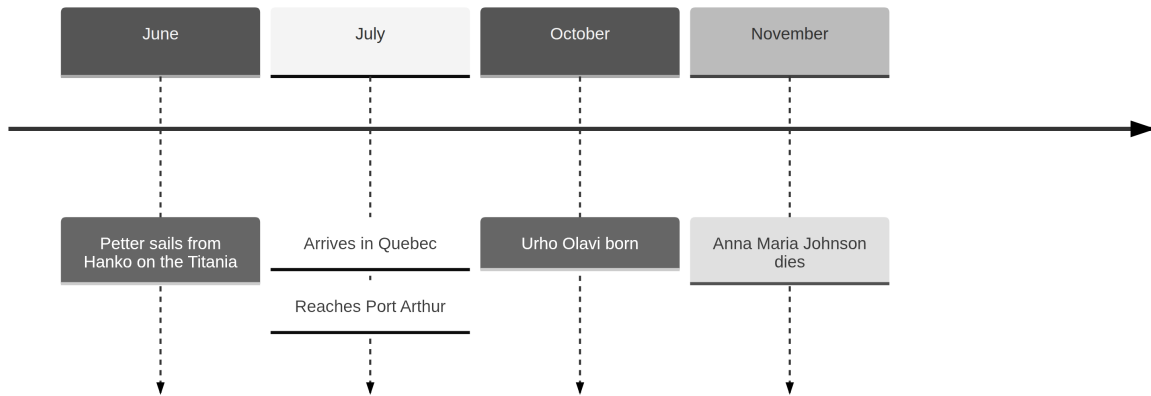
²⁵(Registrar General of Ontario 1911b)

²⁶(Registrar General of Ontario 1911a)

Family Tree



Petter's Voyage, 1911



Research

Figure 9: 1911 Finnish passport register for Petter Karhunen

SUMMARY

This Finnish passport register shows that on May 3, 1911, Petter Karhunen, male, *työmies* (labourer), of Ruokolahti, born 1890, Lutheran religion, destination *Amerikka* (America), was issued passport number 788 in Viipuri for 4 marks, 32 pennies^a.

^a(Viipurin lääninhallitus (Provincial Government of Viipuri) 1911)

NAMES OF SHIP		Tunisian	DATE OF DEPARTURE		30 JUN 1911	WHERE BOUND		QUEBEC MONTREAL				
PORT OF DEPARTURE		LIVERPOOL	STEAMSHIP LINE		ALLAN LINE							
NAMES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF ALIEN PASSENGERS												
A.—TRANSMIGRANTS, that is, alien passengers (other than first-class passengers) who arrived in the United Kingdom, having in their possession prepaid through tickets, and in respect of whose security has been given that they will proceed to places outside the United Kingdom.												
Date of Departure	NAMES OF PASSENGERS	Class	Profession, Occupation, or Calling of Passenger	Age of 12 years and upward						Arrived in United Kingdom		Port at which Transmigrants were discharged to land
				Single	Married	Single	Married	Single	Married	Port	Ship	
1911	141462 Ole Lometh	1	Lab	1								
	149615 Pekka Westerinen	1	Spin									QUEBEC
	179613 Pekka Westerinen	1	Lab									
	179614 Piija Kaaranoja	1										

Figure 10: 1911 UK leaving list for Pekka Westerinen (ship Tunisian)

SUMMARY

This UK passenger leaving list shows that on June 30, 1911, Pekka Westerinen boarded the ship *Tunisian* from Liverpool to Quebec, ticket number 149615^a.

^a(Board of Trade 1911)

NOTE

He was incorrectly noted as *Spin[ster]* / *female*. This was a typo. He should have been noted as *Lab[ourer]* / *male*.

INSTRUCTIONS TO PURSERS.—See page 100 for a card indicating the number of items and last card on which name last is found. Columns 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.										Page No.
NAME	AGE	SEX	IF BOB	COUNTRY OF BIRTH	RACE OR PEOPLE	LOCATION	WAS HE EVER DEPORTED FROM CANADA (IF CASE)	WAS HE EVER DEPORTED FROM OTHER COUNTRY (IF CASE)	IF RE-ENTRY	REMARKS
91813	26 ⁰⁰			Finland	Finnish	Quebec				Westerin Pekka 1911

Figure 11: 1911 Canadian passenger list: Pekka Westerinen arrives in Quebec City

SUMMARY

This Canadian passenger list shows that on July 9, 1911, Pekka Westerinen, 21-year-old, male, labourer, arrived in Quebec City from the ship *Tunisian*, ticket number 91813, to meet his brother in Port Arthur^a.

^a(Immigration Branch, Department of Interior, Canada 1911)

NOTE

While the ticket number doesn't match his record on the UK leaving list, it is the same ship.

532 Schedule B
 Record all still-births as births
 as well as deaths.

BIRTHS

District County of Thunder Bay Division of Port Arthur

	Surname first	Surname first	Surname first
What is the full name of child?	<u>Peterson Urho Olavi</u>	<u>Myllyla Louis Allan</u>	<u>Lorus Jannette Zeale</u>
When was the child born?	<u>October 23rd 1911</u>	<u>October 26th 1911</u>	<u>November 16th 1911</u>
Where was the child born? Street number or Concession and Lot.	<u>335 Foley St</u>	<u>181 River St</u>	<u>257 Wilson St</u>
Male or Female.	<u>male</u>		
Are the parents married?	<u>yes</u>		
Full name of Father.	<u>Peterson Moses</u>	<u>Myllyla Matt</u>	<u>Corrie Charles Hunter</u>
Occupation of Father?	<u>labourer</u>	<u>Fisherman</u>	<u>circulation mgr "Daily News"</u>
Full Maiden Name of Mother.	<u>Johnson Aino</u>	<u>Roskala Henrieta</u>	<u>Henry Jannette Stua</u>
If she has been more than once married give names of former husband, or husbands.	<u>049952</u>	<u>049953</u>	<u>049954</u>
Where were the parents married?	<u>Finland</u>	<u>Port Arthur</u>	<u>Port Arthur</u>
When were they married?	<u>November 19th 1903</u>	<u>December 8th 1899</u>	<u>July 21st 1906</u>
If not married give full Name of Mother.			
Is she single or a Widow? If a widow state name, occupation, and date of husband's death.			
What is her occupation?	<u>housewife</u>	<u>housewife</u>	<u>housewife</u>
Name of Physician attending.	<u>none</u>	<u>Oakus Dr. J. E.</u>	<u>Oakus Dr. J. E.</u>
Your relation to child.	<u>none</u>	<u>none</u>	<u>Father</u>
Were you in home at time of Birth?	<u>no</u>	<u>no</u>	<u>yes</u>
Certified by	<u>Wuori Rev. Peter</u>	<u>Wuori Rev. Peter</u>	<u>Corrie Chas H.</u>
Address	<u>Port Arthur</u>	<u>Port Arthur</u>	<u>237 Wilson St</u>
Date	<u>November 20th 1911</u>	<u>November 20th 1911</u>	<u>November 20th 1911</u>
Remarks			

I hereby certify the foregoing to be the true and correct contents of all Births returned to me for the quarter year ending December 31st 1911
 Given under my hand this 25th day of January A. D. 1912
J. M. O'Rourke Registrar

*N.B.—The reference numbers relate to those found in Form 2 or 3, and are for identification.

Figure 12: 1911 Port Arthur birth registration for Urho Olavi Peterson

SUMMARY

This Port Arthur, Thunder Bay District birth registration, number 049954, shows that on October 23, 1911, Urho Olavi Peterson, male, was born at 335 Foley Street to father Moses Peterson, labourer, and mother Aino Johnson, housewife, married in Finland on November 19, 1903^a. His birth was certified by Rev[erend] Peter Wuori in Port Arthur on November 20, 1911, who went on to serve as president of the National Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Finnish-American Lutheran body, from 1914 to 1918^b.

^a(Registrar General of Ontario 1911b)

^b(Austermann 1970)

NOTE

335 Foley Street may have been their residence, or it may have been where the Finnish residents of the Finlandia neighbourhood went to give birth.

The registration's "married in Finland on November 19, 1903" is the informant's slip. The Ruokolahti communion book records the marriage on October 19, 1902, and Urho Mauno's 1913 birth registration gives October 19, 1903. This book follows the communion book, the record made closest to the event.

DEATHS

City of Port Arthur Division of Port Arthur

REGISTRATION NO.	DECEASED	RESIDENCE	DATE OF DEATH	AGE	SEX	CAUSE OF DEATH	DATE OF BURIAL	PLACE OF BURIAL
030499	Johnson Annie Female November 8th 1911	70 yrs - Finland 349 Foley St Port Arthur housekeeper widow	November 8th 1911	70 yrs	Female	Cancer of stomach six months	November 10th 1911	Port Arthur
030500	Keplek Mary November 6th 1911	Chronic Indigestion	November 6th 1911		Female	Chronic Indigestion	November 6th 1911	Port Arthur
030501	Johnson Annie September 10th 1911	Cancer of stomach 24 hours	September 10th 1911		Female	Cancer of stomach 24 hours	November 15th 1911	Port Arthur

still-born
J.H. Jorgensen
Port Arthur

Figure 13: 1911 Port Arthur death registration for Annie Johnson

SUMMARY

This Port Arthur, Thunder Bay District death registration, number 030500, shows that on November 8, 1911, Annie Johnson, female, widow, housekeeper, died at 349 Foley Street, Port Arthur from heart failure that lasted 24 hours due to cancer of the stomach that lasted six months. From September 10 to November 8 she was attended by Dr. G[eorge] E. Eakins^a, who was president of the Thunder Bay Historical Society from 1933 to 1934 and president of the Thunder Bay Medical Society in 1915, 1925 and 1936^b.

^a(Registrar General of Ontario 1911a)

^b(Thunder Bay Museum 1872)

NOTE

It is because both this death and Urho's birth happened on Foley Street that suggests Moses and his family rented a house on this street or close by. This would situate them in the Finlandia neighbourhood of Port Arthur^a. 349 was also the address of Aino's brother Victor Johnson in later years. So perhaps the Johnsons rented the room in this boarding house together.

^a(Finlandia Neighbourhood 2009)

Kalle's Voyage: *The Rear Guard*

Having buried his first wife, Olga, in Finland just a year prior, Kalle gathered the remaining pieces of the family for the crossing. But this was not a journey of desperation; it was a journey of reunification.

From where Kalle stood, the "Canadian experiment" was working. His brother Moses had gone ahead to break ground, and Petter had arrived to assist. Most promising of all was the news from across the ocean: Moses and Aino had a healthy son, Urho, nearly a year old—and, though no letter could yet have carried it, another child was already on the way. To the family back in Finland, the news likely signalled that the Karhunen bloodline was successfully taking root in the new world.

On July 31, 1912, he boarded the *Arcturus* with his mother Anna Maria, son Lauri, and Petter's intended, Hilda, from Hanko, Finland²⁷.

They arrived in Hull, UK, and on August 4 boarded the *Royal George* from Bristol to Canada²⁸. On August 14, they arrived in Quebec City. But before they could get off the ship Anna and Hilda were detained²⁹.

While Kalle, as an able-bodied man, and his son, Lauri, were cleared to enter, Anna and Hilda needed to be sponsored by a resident to immigrate. Petter would be able to sponsor his mother Anna; for Hilda, his intended, it was enough for the family to come forward and vouch that she would not become a public charge. The manifest bears this out, recording the two women released to join the brother already settled at Port Arthur, with Hilda still entered as *Miss, spinster, domestic*. No wedding was required to free her, and none is recorded; Peter and Hilda would live as husband

²⁷(Finland Steamship Company 1912)

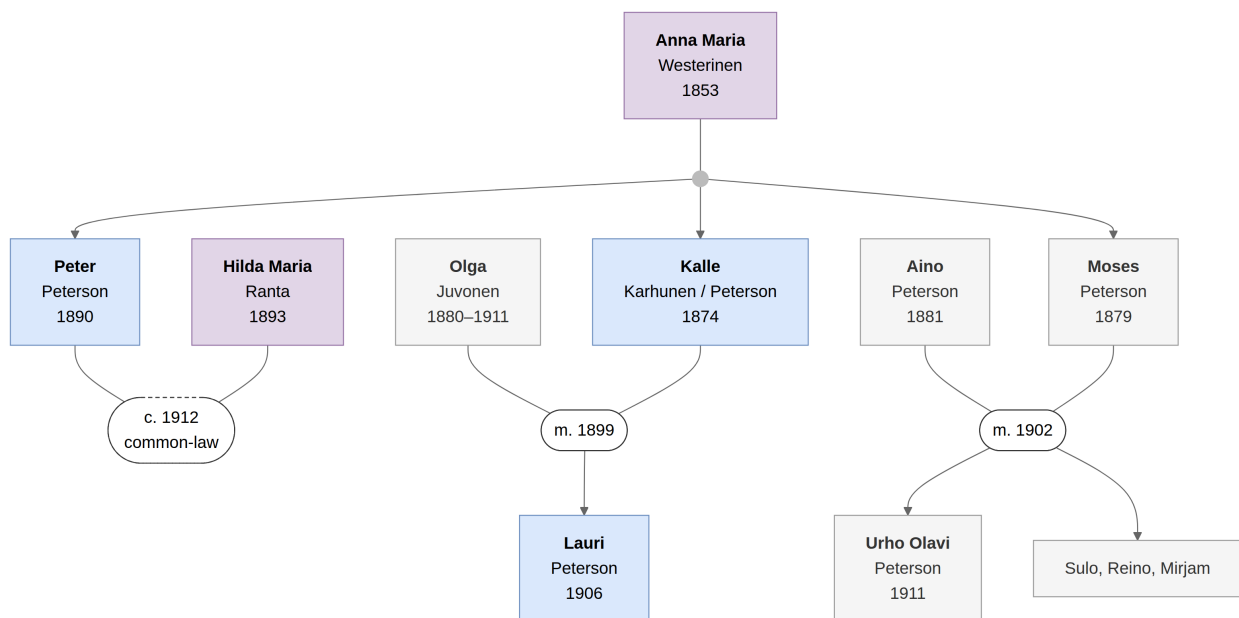
²⁸(Board of Trade 1912)

²⁹(Immigration Branch, Department of Interior, Canada 1912)

and wife in the manner of their Red Finn community, without a certificate to mark it³⁰. From Quebec, they rode the Canadian Northern Railway to Port Arthur to meet Moses³¹.

With the immigration hurdle cleared, the deployment was complete: the *Scouts* had gone ahead in 1910, the *Reinforcement* had followed in 1911, and now, in 1912, the *Rear Guard* had landed—the whole crossing accomplished in three staggered waves. The family turned their focus entirely to the land—and to the years of unrelenting labour that securing it would demand. Embracing a new identity along with their new country, they all became the Petersons³²—a name Moses had already been using on Canadian records since at least 1911—and Petter Westerinen became Peter Peterson.

Family Tree

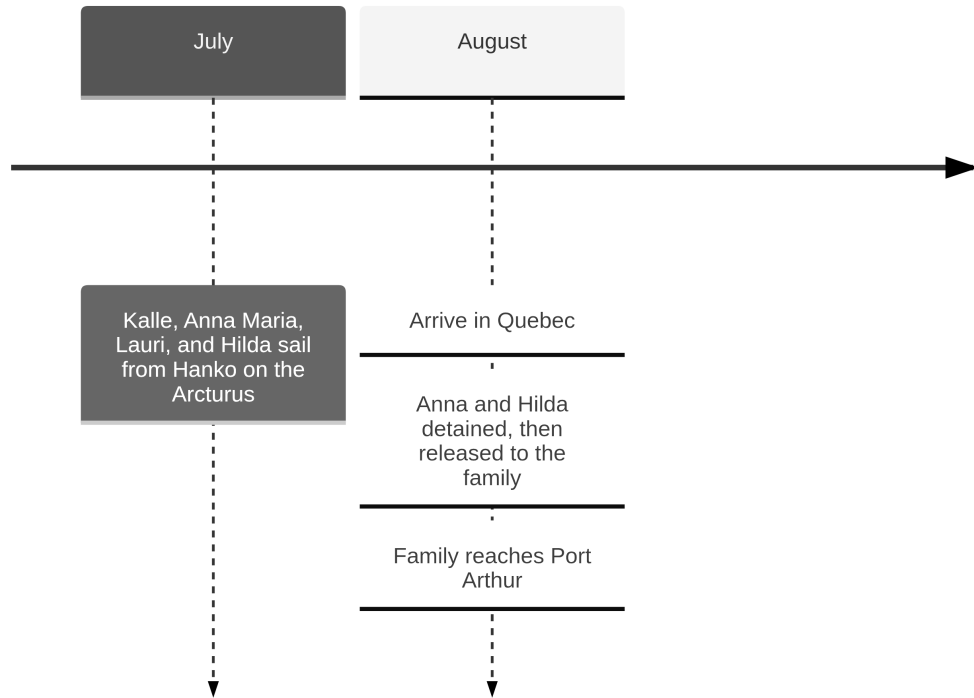


³⁰I have spent considerable time looking for a record of a marriage and have found none—not in Ontario, not in Finland, and not in the Montreal or Quebec City church registers where a wedding at the port would most likely have been entered. The genealogist I have corresponded with goes further and doubts there was ever a formal wedding at all, and the longer I have looked the more I have come to share his view. The 1912 manifest releases Hilda to a relative without any amendment to her single status, the one Lutheran parish that ought to hold a marriage record has none, and couples living as husband and wife without a certificate were common among the radical “Red Finns” who built Tarmola. I have therefore chosen to tell their story as an unsolemnized union rather than a port wedding; I weigh this against the later sworn records that treat them as married, and explain the choice in full in [The Question of Peter and Hilda’s Marriage](#).

³¹(Immigration Branch, Department of Interior, Canada 1912)

³²Peterson is the anglicization of Pekkanpoika (Peter’s son).

Kalle's Voyage, 1912



Research

Form 17 (1912) REVISED BY THE U.S. DEPT. OF COMMERCE

Name of Ship *Royal George* Date of Departure *August 1912* P.M. 24:
 Steamship Line *Royal Line* Where bound *Quebec / Montreal*

14

Bristol

NAMES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF ALIEN PASSENGERS EMBARKED AT THE PORT OF
 A.—TRANSMIGRANTS, that is alien passengers (other than first-class passengers) who arrived in the United Kingdom, having in their possession prepaid through tickets, and in respect of whom security has been given that they will proceed to places outside the United Kingdom.

(1) Contract Ticket Number.	(2) NAMES OF PASSENGERS	(3) CLASS 1st, 2nd or 3rd.	(4) Ports at which Passengers have contracted to land.	(5) AGES OF PASSENGERS								(6) Country of which Citizen or Subject.	(7) Arrived in United Kingdom.			
				Adults of 12 years and upwards.				Children between 1 and 12.					Infants.		Port.	Steamship Line.
				Accompanied by husband or wife.		Not accompanied by husband or wife.		Males.		Females.			Males.	Females.		
				Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.							
3774	Kalle Peterson	3rd ✓	Quebec	30								Finland	Hull	Finland Navigation		
	Anna	✓			49											
	Hilda	✓					20									
	Lauri	✓							6							
3775	Miel	✓			26											
3776	Mar	✓														
3777	Ben	✓														
3778	Sig	✓														
3779	John	✓												Wilson Line		
2554	Alc	✓												Amie et Co		
2556	Ras	✓														
	Anna	✓														

Figure 14: 1912 UK leaving list for Kalle, Anna, Hilda, and Lauri Peterson

SUMMARY

This UK passenger leaving list shows that on August 4, 1912, Kalle Peterson, male, 30, Anna Peterson, 49, female, Hilda Peterson, 20, female, and Lauri Peterson, 6, male, of Finland, arrived in Hull, UK, and then boarded the ship *Royal George* from Bristol to Quebec, ticket number 3774, 3rd class^a.

^a(Board of Trade 1912)

NOTE

It erroneously shows that Kalle and Anna are married. Anna was Kalle's mother. Hilda was Peter's future wife. Lauri was Kalle's son. The ages are off too: Kalle, born in 1874, was 38, not 30, and Anna Maria, born in 1853, was 59, not 49—one more record placing her birth a decade late (see the note on her death registration).

III. Land and Loss in Tarmola

Content Warning: Terminal Illness, Death, and Child Loss

Taking Root

The family established their homesteads in adjacent lots in the Tarmola settlement of Gorham Township, effectively surrounding themselves with kin. Peter and Hilda settled in Lot 6, Concession 4 to the north, while Moses, Aino, and the other Petersons moved into Lot 6, Concession 3 directly to the south. To the east of Peter, Aino's brother Victor Johnson had also claimed a parcel, widening the family's hold on the new land.

Taking up this land was itself the fruit of their first years in Canada. Moses had landed in 1910 and Peter in 1911, and only after establishing themselves—earning wages, learning the land, and choosing their parcels—could they commit. And they went in by different doors: Moses contracted with the Crown to buy his parcel outright at fifty cents an acre, while Peter, a year behind him, took the free-grant road and was located as a locatee—the tenant-in-waiting of Crown land he did not yet own. Either way, the long clock toward ownership began to run¹.

In August 1912, Kalle arrived with the “Rear Guard,” completing the family unit. For a brief moment, the family must have felt invincible. The brothers were reunited, and the house was full of life. But the land they had come for would feed a family, not pay one; to secure the cash that tools and taxes would demand, Peter and Kalle joined the crews of the Onion Lake Log Drive².

Aino was not only raising the toddler Urho, but she was also quietly carrying the future. Based on birth records, she would have been early in her pregnancy with her second Canadian-born child³. To Kalle, arriving from the old country, the scene must have looked like the ultimate proof of their success: a family not merely surviving the new world but growing in it.

The commitment came within weeks. On September 11, four weeks after the Rear Guard landed, Moses signed with the Crown for the family's first parcel. The ground was theirs to break at last.

Then, on October 26, just three days after his first birthday, Moses and Aino's son Urho died—three weeks of what the registration calls intestinal indigestion, four hours of heart failure at the end of it—at 335 Foley Street, in the house where he had been born⁴. The infant who had replaced the

¹The instruments carry the dates and the two routes: Moses took up the north half of Lot 6, Concession 3, by a Crown sale dated September 11, 1912—four weeks after the Rear Guard landed (Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1919); Peter was located on the south half of Lot 6, Concession 4, as a free-grant settler on October 8, 1913, under the new Public Lands Act of 1913 (Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1916a). Nothing older survives in the registry—the patents themselves are what let this history be dated backward.

²(Ranta 1976, 34)

³(Registrar General of Ontario 1913)

⁴(Registrar General of Ontario 1912)

matriarch was gone. And Aino was left to grieve the son she had lost while carrying the son who would replace him.

On March 19, 1913, that replacement arrived. Aino gave birth to Urho Mauno⁵. His birth was a defiant answer to the land that had taken his brother, but he was born into a house that now understood the precariousness of their tenure.

In order for the Crown land to become theirs in title, the land had to be proved—cleared and cultivated, a habitable house built, the family living on it; for Peter’s free grant the law set a three-year clock from the date of location before the patent could issue⁶. On the stubborn Shield that clock often ran longer.

On December 3, 1914, the ice of the Current River gave way. According to the *Port Arthur Daily News*, nine-year-old Sulo was skating with his sister Mirjam nine miles upriver, near the Paquette dam, when he stopped to test the ice—jumping on it where it had stretched from bank to bank—and broke through. Mirjam at once raised the alarm, but no rescue could be made; his body was recovered half an hour later⁷. For the family, the land had taken a second son’s life, and still the farm was not their own.

⁵(Registrar General of Ontario 1913)

⁶Peter’s own patent is the best witness to the rules as they stood: it recites that he was located on **October 8, 1913**, and it issued on November 15, 1916—three years and five weeks later—“under the authority of ‘The Public Lands Act,’” the 1913 consolidation that had by then absorbed the free-grant law (Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1916a). Ranta’s history of Tarmola remembers the same three-year term (Ranta 1976). The older Free Grants and Homesteads Act had demanded five years, with fifteen acres cleared, a house at least sixteen feet by twenty, and continuous residence (R.S.O. 1897, c. 29, s. 8; the Rainy River Act next door already allowed patents after three, c. 30, s. 9) (Ontario 1897)—by Peter’s day the northern terms had eased to three.

⁷(*Port Arthur Daily News* 1914)

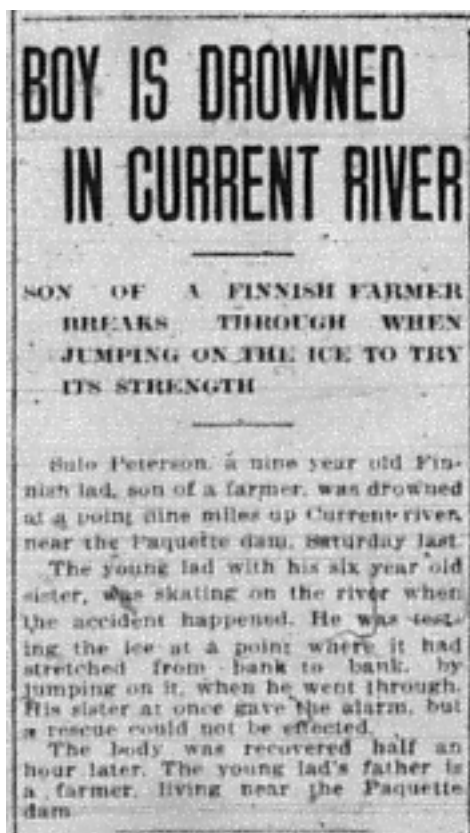


Figure 1: Sulo Peterson's 1914 death notice, Port Arthur Daily News

SUMMARY

Sulo's death notice from *Port Arthur Daily News* in 1914^a.

^a(*Port Arthur Daily News* 1914)

The land had a quieter weapon still. One year later, on November 25, 1915, the very water of the settlement turned against them. A typhoid outbreak struck the community, sending Moses to the hospital and forcing the settlement under a strict boil-water advisory⁸. Still recovering from the loss of a son, the family now feared for its patriarch.

This accumulation of tragedy and illness might have forced a retreat. Instead, their Sisu hardened; they buried their sorrow in the frozen soil and decided that the dream of independence was worth the terrible risk, committing fully to the homestead and the Tarmolan community.

To endure their harsh reality, the family turned to the sounds of their heritage. Aino, who was known to participate diligently in theatre activities, poured her energy into culture, playing the *kantele* (Finnish lap-harp) and directing plays for the community. Hilda stood by her side, assisting in these productions, while the boys found their own rhythm; Lauri and Reino played the violin or accordion to accompany the evening dances⁹. These gatherings were an act of defiance against the gloom, a way to keep the family's spirit alive.

⁸(*Canadian Utiset* 1915)

⁹(Ranta 1976, 34)

While Aino and the others lifted spirits with music, Moses turned his attention to the community's future. On August 31, 1916, he sent out an invitation for a school meeting¹⁰, a commitment to education that reached beyond his own farm. Moses, perhaps physically slowed by his hospitalization for typhoid in late 1915, invested his remaining energy in the collective good, whereas Peter poured himself entirely into the soil.

On November 15, 1916, Peter met the requirements and received his land patent¹¹. For the first time, the title, and not only the work, would pass down. The victory also marked a difference between the brothers: while Moses toiled under illness and the loss of a child, Peter—eleven years younger, still childless—worked with a heart the land had not yet broken.

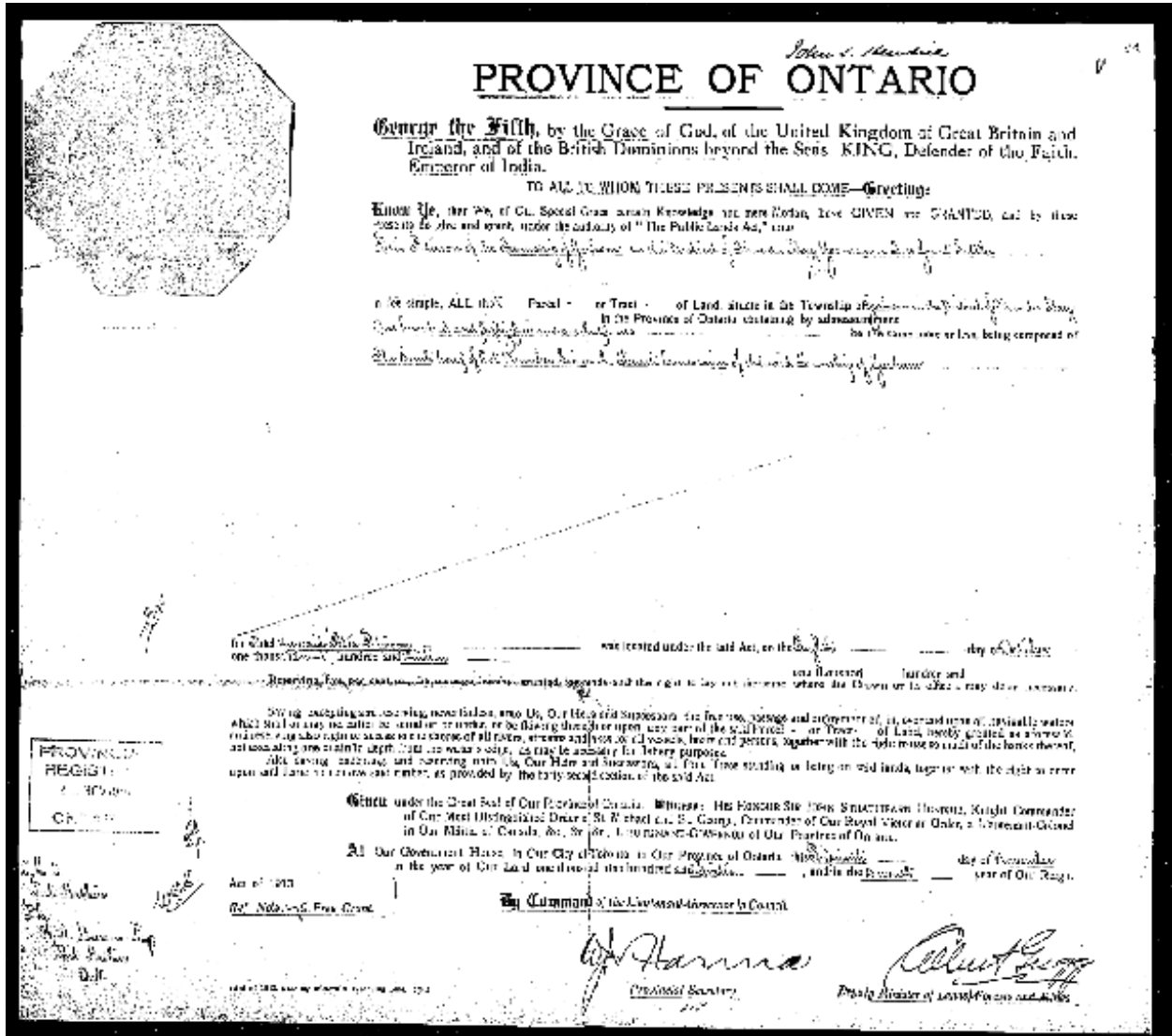


Figure 2: The 1916 land patent certificate Peter received

¹⁰(Canadian Uutiset 1916)

¹¹(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1916a)

SUMMARY

The patent certificate Peter received in 1916^a. It grants Peter Peterson of Gorham, *yeoman*, “a Free Grant Settler,” the south half of Lot 6, Concession 4—155½ acres “be the same more or less”—in fee simple under the authority of *The Public Lands Act* (the Act of 1913); recites that he was located on October 8, 1913; reserves five per cent of the acreage for roads and every pine tree to the Crown; and was signed at Toronto on November 15, 1916, and registered on November 22.

^a(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1916a)

After Peter received his land, both brothers applied for loans under the *Northern and North Western Ontario Development Act* to fund improvements and livestock. The benefits were uneven; while Moses received \$300 on February 10, 1917¹², Peter’s ownership status allowed him to secure a larger sum of \$500 the following week¹³. Despite this gap in resources, their ambition remained aligned, and with funds in hand, both Peter and Moses moved to take up additional parcels of land.

Peter’s first parcel had come to him as a *Free Grant* settler; Moses had bought his. For a second parcel there was an option called *Allowance for Purchase*, by which a settler could take a location ticket on neighbouring land and, if he met the conditions for developing it, buy it at a discounted price¹⁴. This is what Moses did, and at some point he acquired a neighbouring parcel as a locatee. But Peter had a different strategy.

On October 24, 1917, Peter’s next move was to transfer the entirety of his land to his wife Hilda for \$800¹⁵. After removing his land from his name, he applied for a new *Free Grant* location ticket on a neighbouring parcel and began to develop it. This land was much harder to work and he wasn’t twenty-one years old anymore, so it would take longer than five years to earn this next land patent¹⁶.

Peter’s ambition, however, wasn’t limited to his own acreage. Around 1917, he donated a portion of his land to the community for the construction of a gathering place. The neighbours rallied around this donation, coming together to build what would become the Tarmola Hall. It was a modest structure, lit only by the warm glow of coal oil lamps¹⁷, but it stood as a monument to their collective independence. From farm servants in the old country to owners of the new, their Sisu had seemingly paid off, carving a life out of the rock.

The Reckoning

But the Canadian Shield had not yet finished its accounting; it was merely waiting for the bill to come due. The government’s promise of “free land” was an illusion, and in 1918, the debt was collected not in currency but in health. The Spanish Flu pandemic spread around the world¹⁸ and found the Peterson family.

¹²(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1919)

¹³(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1917a)

¹⁴(Villemaire 2015)

¹⁵(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1917b)

¹⁶(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1924)

¹⁷(Ranta 1976, 34)

¹⁸(Parks Canada 2024)

In October 1918, the Spanish Flu breached the isolation of the Peterson homestead, carried into the Canadian Shield by the same railroads that had brought the family there¹⁹. It struck with terrifying specificity, bypassing the weak to hunt the strong; both Moses and his twelve-year-old nephew Lauri fell gravely ill. In a desperate bid for survival, they were transported to St. Joseph's Hospital in Port Arthur, a facility already overwhelmed by the pandemic. What the record gives is stark enough: neither of them left it.

On October 20, Moses succumbed to pneumonia²⁰, and the family lost its anchor. The tragedy was compounded just four days later when Lauri followed his uncle into the silence²¹, leaving Aino and Kalle to a grief as vast and hard as the land itself. Kalle now faced a fresh wave of tragedy, a blow similar to what his pioneering brother Moses had endured. Moses never lived to see the Crown land become his own. But more than that, he died intestate and left his wife Aino with a complicated estate²². And still there was no reprieve for Aino.

Before the grief for her husband could even settle, her son Urho Mauno was gone too. On April 10, 1919, after suffering from meningitis, he died at home in Gorham at the age of six.

Aino captured this loss in the obituary she prepared, where she included a poem of her own²³:

*I water your grave with tears
I have no other flowers.
Wait my dearest beloved
I want to come to you.*

¹⁹(Beaulieu et al., n.d.)

²⁰(Registrar General of Ontario 1918b)

²¹(Registrar General of Ontario 1918a)

²²(Ontario District Court, Thunder Bay District 1919)

²³(Peterson 1919)



Figure 3: 1919 newspaper death announcement for Urho Maunu Olavi Peterson

TRANSLATION

Hereby with sorrow I announce that my beloved son URHO MAUNU OLAVI, after suffering for a longer time from inflammation of the brain and spinal membranes [meningitis], slept into the sleep of death here at home in Gorham Township, Ont., Canada, on April 10, 1919, at the age of 6 years and 21 days, to the great sorrow of myself, [his] brother and sister, 2 uncles and father's mother, and a numerous circle of acquaintances. Aino Peterson.

Finnish (original)	English (translation)
<i>Kastan hautasi kyynelin</i>	<i>I water your grave with tears</i>
<i>Ei muita kukkia mulla.</i>	<i>I have no other flowers.</i>
<i>Vuota armaani rakkahin</i>	<i>Wait, my dearest beloved</i>
<i>Tahdon luoksesi tulla.</i>	<i>I want to come to you.</i>
Äiti.	Mother.

NOTE

The announcement spells his name **Maunu**, an older, more traditional form of *Mauno*—likely Aino's deliberate choice for her son's memorial. The civil records use *Mauno* (the death registration garbles it to *Mano*), and the narrative follows *Mauno*.

Aino was left on the farm with only her daughter Mirjam and son Reino.

Yet, the community gathered to help her bear the weight of this final blow. The day after he died, Urho Mauno was laid to rest in the Kivikoski Cemetery in a service described as “in all its modesty, solemn and touching.” Pastor J. Hirvi officiated, speaking words of comfort about the “hope of eternity” to a mother who had lost so much.

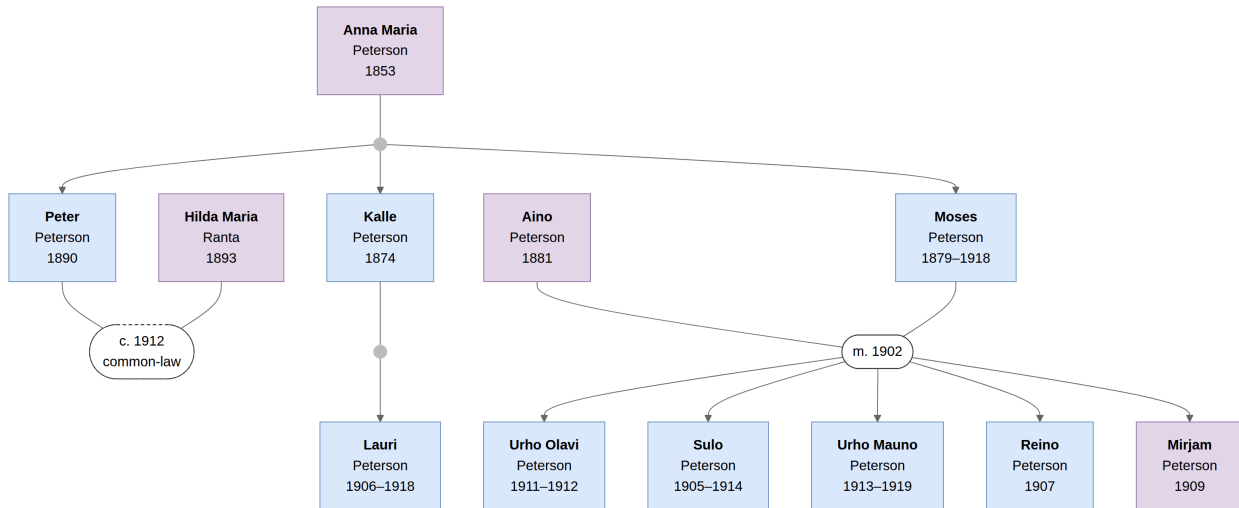
To deal with the overwhelming grief, Aino chose Hymn 157 for the service²⁴. In the hymnal of her day that number belonged to Luther’s *Varjele sanaas, Jumala*—“Lord, keep us steadfast in Thy Word”—not a hymn of mourning but a prayer for holding fast²⁵. The congregation sang the first verse and the last two, and the hymn closed at the graveside as a plea to the Comforter:

*O Holy Spirit, comfort us,
and lead us into peace;
in anguish grant relief,
and even in death, revival.*

Author’s Note

We must remember that the archives are silent on happiness. The archives do not hold receipts for laughter shared at Tarmola Hall or the relief of a successful harvest. We are left mostly with the dates of their departures, risking the illusion that their lives were nothing but sorrow. We know they lived fully, even if the paper trail only captures how they died.

Family Tree



²⁴(*Canadian Utiset* 1919a)

²⁵(*Suomalainen Virsikirja* (1886), n.d.)

TRANSCRIPTION

Fam.	Name	Rel.	Sex	Marital	Age	Imm.	Nat.	Occup.	Eng.	Read	Write
14	Chas. [Kalle] Peterson	head	male	married	(47)	1912	naturalized	farmer	no	no	no
14	Aino Peterson	wife	female	married	40	1910	naturalized	none	no	no	no
14	Ryeno [Reino] Peterson	son	male	single	12	1910	alien	student	yes	yes	yes
14	Mirjam Peterson	daughter	female	single	12	1910	alien	student	yes	yes	yes
15	Victor Johnson	head	male	married	(34)	1906	1910	miner	no	yes	no
15	Kate Johnson	wife	female	married	39	1908	naturalized	none	no	no	no
15	Reino Johnson	son	male	single	12	n/a	n/a	student	yes	yes	yes
15	Vino [Vieno] Johnson	daughter	female	single	9	n/a	n/a	student	yes	yes	yes
15	Tauno Johnson	son	male	single	7	n/a	n/a	student	yes	yes	yes
16	Peter Peterson	head	male	married	(32)	1911	1914	farmer	yes	yes	yes
16	Hilda Peterson	wife	female	married	27	1913	naturalized	none	no	no	no

(*Read* and *Write* record literacy in English or French.)

NOTE

Interestingly, Peter was the only adult of the families who could speak, read and write in English. Hilda actually immigrated with Kalle in August 1912. Perhaps she misremembered and gave 1913. Chas. is the abbreviation of Charles, which is the Anglicization of Kalle (in Swedish it is Karl). They were all neighbours in a lot / concession grid, with Peter Peterson and Victor Johnson on Concession 4 (Lots 6 and 5) and Kalle Peterson on Lot 6 of Concession 3. The census's own cells wobble: Reino's "12" runs behind (he was thirteen or fourteen at the June 1921 count), Mirjam's "12" a year ahead (she was eleven), and Peter's "(32)" a year over (he was thirty-one).

DEATHS					
County of <i>Thunder Bay</i>		Division of <i>Port Arthur</i>			
4		4			
<p>Residence of Deceased <i>Peterson</i></p> <p>Usual Place <i>Urho Olavi</i></p> <p>Sex <i>male</i></p> <p>Age <i>1 year 3 days</i></p> <p>Date of Death <i>October 26th 1912</i></p> <p>Date of Birth <i>October 23rd 1911</i></p> <p>Place of Birth, Country <i>33 1/2 2 day St. Post Arthur</i></p> <p>Occupation <i>infant</i></p> <p>Single or Married <i>single</i></p> <p>Name of Father <i>Peterson Moses</i></p> <p>Address Name of Mother <i>Johnson Ans</i></p> <p>Cause of Death (Lawyer) <i>Heart failure</i></p> <p>Name of Physician with attendance <i>Eakins Dr.</i></p> <p>Name of Burialist <i>Wood Collin</i></p> <p>Address <i>Port Arthur</i></p> <p>Date of Return <i>Oct. 26/12</i></p>	<p>Residence of Deceased <i>Peterson</i></p> <p>Usual Place <i>Urho Olavi</i></p> <p>Sex <i>male</i></p> <p>Age <i>1 year 3 days</i></p> <p>Date of Death <i>October 29th 1912</i></p> <p>Date of Birth <i>October 27th 1912</i></p> <p>Place of Birth, Country <i>88 Ontario St. Post Arthur</i></p> <p>Occupation <i>—</i></p> <p>Single or Married <i>—</i></p> <p>Name of Father <i>Strawson Richard</i></p> <p>Address Name of Mother <i>Sleet Lillian</i></p> <p>Cause of Death (Lawyer) <i>Stillborn</i></p> <p>Name of Physician with attendance <i>Eakins Dr.</i></p> <p>Name of Burialist <i>Wood Collin</i></p> <p>Address <i>Port Arthur</i></p> <p>Date of Return <i>Oct. 28/12</i></p>	<p>Residence of Deceased <i>Peterson</i></p> <p>Usual Place <i>Urho Olavi</i></p> <p>Sex <i>male</i></p> <p>Age <i>1 year 3 days</i></p> <p>Date of Death <i>October 31/12</i></p> <p>Date of Birth <i>October 13/11</i></p> <p>Place of Birth, Country <i>217 August St. P.</i></p> <p>Occupation <i>infant</i></p> <p>Single or Married <i>single</i></p> <p>Name of Father <i>Rosenthal Ott</i></p> <p>Address Name of Mother <i>Helow Ann</i></p> <p>Cause of Death (Lawyer) <i>Premature birth</i></p> <p>Name of Physician with attendance <i>Laurie Dr.</i></p> <p>Name of Burialist <i>Wood Collin</i></p> <p>Address <i>236 Arthur St. C</i></p> <p>Date of Return <i>October 3/12</i></p>	<p>Physician's Return of Death</p> <p>Name of Deceased <i>Peterson</i></p> <p>Christian Name <i>Urho Olavi</i></p> <p>Date of Death <i>October 26th 1912</i></p> <p>Place of Death <i>Intestinal Indigestion</i></p> <p>Duration <i>three weeks</i></p> <p>Time of Day of Death <i>Heart failure</i></p> <p>Duration <i>4 hours</i></p> <p>Name of Physician <i>Eakins Dr. Geo E.</i></p> <p>Address <i>Port Arthur</i></p> <p>Date of Return <i>Oct. 26th 1912</i></p>	<p>Physician's Return of Death</p> <p>Name of Deceased <i>Strawson</i></p> <p>Christian Name <i>(stillborn)</i></p> <p>Date of Death <i>October 29th 1912</i></p> <p>Place of Death <i>stillborn</i></p> <p>Duration <i>—</i></p> <p>Time of Day of Death <i>—</i></p> <p>Duration <i>—</i></p> <p>Name of Physician <i>Eakins Dr. Geo E.</i></p> <p>Address <i>Port Arthur</i></p> <p>Date of Return <i>Oct. 28/12</i></p>	<p>Physician's Return of Death</p> <p>Name of Deceased <i>Rosenthal</i></p> <p>Christian Name <i>Murvine Ed</i></p> <p>Date of Death <i>Oct. 31/12</i></p> <p>Place of Death <i>Premature birth</i></p> <p>Duration <i>—</i></p> <p>Time of Day of Death <i>Exhaustion</i></p> <p>Duration <i>—</i></p> <p>Name of Physician <i>Laurie Dr. M.</i></p> <p>Address <i>Port Ar.</i></p> <p>Date of Return <i>Nov. 1/12</i></p>
<p>Please certify the deceased to be the true and correct name of all Deaths returned, & use for the quarter ending <i>December 31st 1912</i></p> <p><i>J. F. [Signature]</i> Registrar <i>Port Arthur</i></p>					

Figure 5: 1912 Port Arthur death registration for infant Urho Olavi Peterson

SUMMARY

This Port Arthur, Thunder Bay District death registration, number 030734, shows that on October 26, 1912, Urho Olavi Peterson, male, infant, 1-year-3-days old, with father Moses Peterson, and mother Aino Johnson, died at 335 Foley Street, Port Arthur due to heart failure that lasted 4 hours due to intestinal indigestion that lasted 3 weeks. He was attended by Dr. Geo[rge] E. Eakins. Collin Wood was the informant^a.

^a(Registrar General of Ontario 1912)

NOTE

335 Foley Street being the same address Urho was born in lends to the theory that that is the house they rented at the time.

BIRTHS

County of Thunder Bay Division of Port Arthur, Ont.

Serial No.	Parents First	Parents Last	Parents Surname
1	Louhinen Mauno	Clavi	Mauno Clavi
2	April 18th 1913	March 10th 1913	April 18th 1913
3	335 Foley St. Port Arthur	335 Foley St. Port Arthur	228 St. James St. Port Arthur
4	Male	Male	Female
5	Yes	Yes	Yes
6	Louhinen Mauno	Johnson Aino	Mauno Aino
7	Labourer	Labourer	Labourer
8	Mother: Ida	Jennan Aino	Mauno Aino
9	057176	057177	057178
10	Wanganon Ill. U.S.A.	Finland	Port Arthur, Ont.
11	April 25th 1889	October 10th 1905	October 26th 1912
Peterson Urho Mauno Clavi			
12	Housewife	Housewife	Housewife
13	None	None	None
14	Nothing	Nothing	Nothing
15	Yes	No	No
16	Louhinen M.	Mauno Clavi	Mauno Clavi
17	Port Arthur, Ont.	Port Arthur, Ont.	Port Arthur, Ont.
18	May 21st 1913	May 21st 1913	May 21st 1913

I hereby certify the foregoing to be the true and correct copies of all Births registered to me for the quarter from midnight June 30th 1913.

Given under my hand this Seventh day of July A.D. 1913.

J. F. Eakins
Deputy Registrar of Births

Port Arthur

* R. H. - The reference numbers relate to Table Form 10 Form 2, 4, 5, or 6, as applicable to corresponding.

Figure 6: 1913 Port Arthur birth registration for Urho Mauno Olavi Peterson

SUMMARY

This Port Arthur, Thunder Bay District birth registration, number 057177, shows that on March 19, 1913, Urho Mauno Olavi Peterson, male, with father Moses Peterson, labourer, and mother Aino Johnson, housewife, married in Finland on October 19, 1903, was born at 265 Bay Street, Port Arthur. His birth was certified by Rev. Peter Wuori on May 21, 1913^a.

^a(Registrar General of Ontario 1913)

DEATHS			
For Registration of DEATHS other than those occurring within the Municipality (Division) of <u>Port Arthur</u> , County of <u>Thunder Bay</u> for which Certificate of Registration of Death (Burial Permit) has been granted.			
Mark the first registered name where to be entered on the Notice of Burial Form which are reserved for Deaths occurring WITHIN the Municipality (Division).			
Municipality	1 Port Arthur	2 Port Arthur	3
County	4 Thunder Bay	5 Thunder Bay	6
FULL NAME of Deceased	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> Peterson, Sulo Vaiko (Surname first) </div>		
Sex and Race	7 Male, Finlander	8	9
Date of Birth	10 December 3rd, 1914	11 December 30th, 1914	12
Place of Birth	13	14	15
Age at Date of Death	16 9 yrs. 4 mos.---Finland.	17 about 35 yrs.---Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.	18
Place of Death	19 9 miles up Current River.	20 Blank Bay, Ont.	21
Occupation	22 Schoolboy	23 Fisherman	24
Marital Status	25 Single	26 Single	27
Full Name of Father	28 Peterson, Monno	29 Miller, John	30
Place of Birth of Father	31 Finland	32	33
Probable Cause of Death	34 Johnson, Rino	35 Not known	36
Length of Illness	37	38	39
Name of Physician who attended Deceased	40 Laurin, Dr. G.N. (Coroner)	41 Laurin, Dr. G.N. (Coroner)	42
City of Residence	43 Port Arthur, Ont.	44 Port Arthur, Ont.	45
Date	46 Dec. 9/14	47 Dec. 28, 1914	48
Signature	49 Medical Certificate of Death. I hereby certify that I attended the deceased.	50 Medical Certificate of Death. I hereby certify that I attended the deceased.	51 Medical Certificate of Death. I hereby certify that I attended the deceased.
Name	52 Peterson, Sulo, Vaiko	53 Miller, John	54
Sex	55	56	57
Age	58	59	60
Date of Death	61	62	63
Date the Death occurred	64 December 3 1914	65 December 28th 1914	66
CAUSE OF DEATH	67 Drowned in Current River.	68 Valvular disease of the heart.	69
Diagnosis	70	71	72
Diagnosis	73	74 Over exertion	75
Diagnosis	76	77 Ischaemia.	78
Physician who attended Deceased	79 Laurin, Dr. G.N. (Coroner)	80 Laurin, Dr. G.N. (Coroner)	81
Address	82 Port Arthur, Ont.	83 Port Arthur, Ont.	84
Date	85 December 5th, 1914	86 December 28th, 1914	87
Remarks	88	89	90

I hereby certify the foregoing to be the true and correct entries of the Death, after full examination within the Municipality, by the City Coroner of Registration of Death.

Burial Permits have been issued for use for the ensuing year ending December 31, 1914.

Observe under my hand this 5th day of January A.D. 1915.

J. F. Miller
 District Registrar of Port Arthur

Figure 7: 1914 Port Arthur death registration for Sulo Vaiko Peterson (drowning)

SUMMARY

The Port Arthur, Thunder Bay District death registration, number 038275, shows that on December 3, 1914, Sulo Vaiko Peterson, male, 9-years-4-months old, schoolboy, with father Moses Peterson and mother [A]ino Johnson, all of Finland, drowned 9 miles up the Current River. His father Moses and Dr. C. N. Laurie, coroner, certified his death on December 9^a.

^a(Registrar General of Ontario 1914)

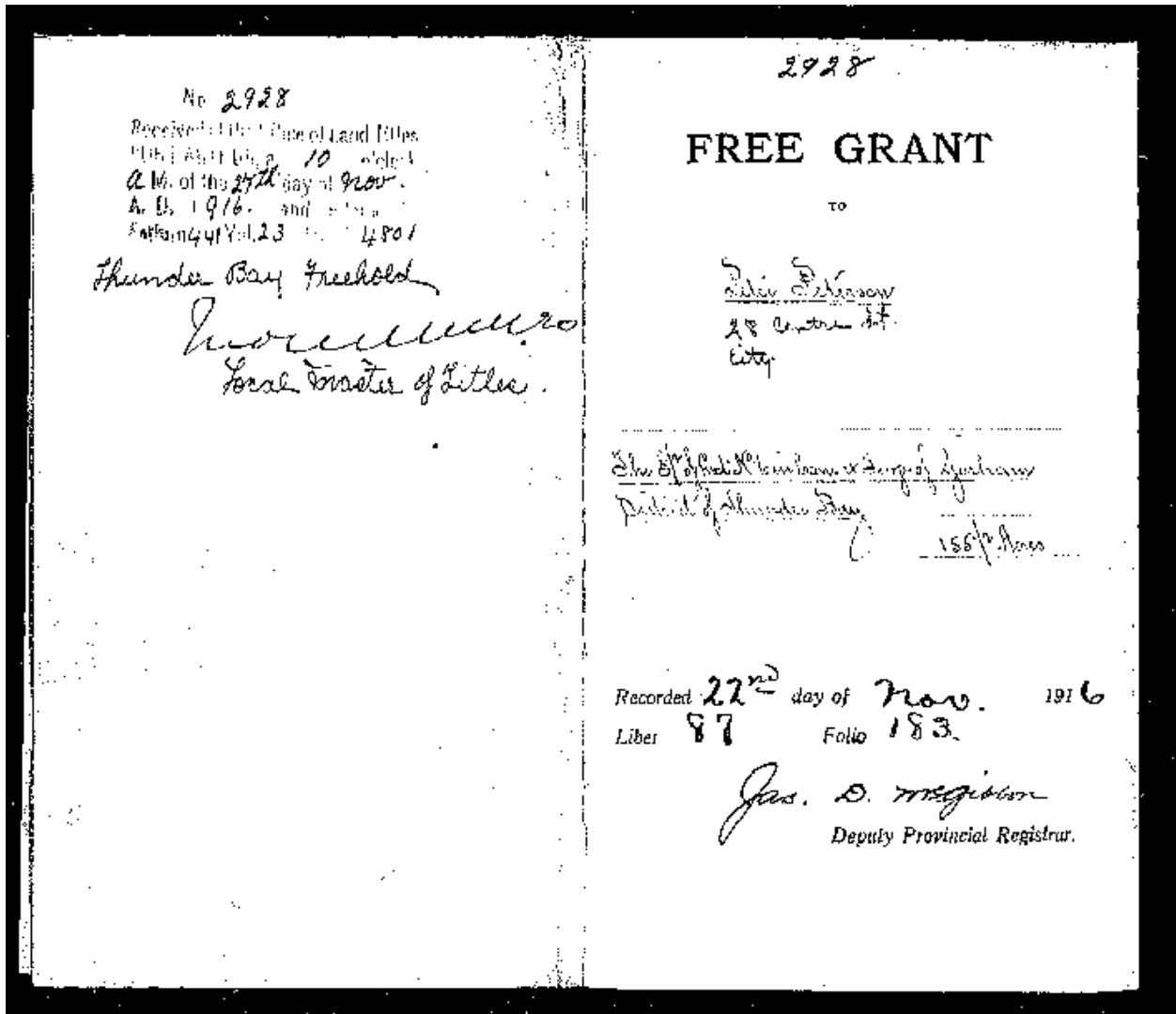


Figure 8: First page of Peter's free-grant land patent (28 Centre St)

SUMMARY

This first page of Peter's free grant patent shows he lived at 28 Centre St^a.

^a(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1916a)

NOTE

Today, there is no Centre Street in the area previously known as Port Arthur. This likely was a boarding house in the Finlandia neighbourhood where he would have rented a room.

DEATHS

City of Port Arthur Division of Port Arthur

	Peterson, Moses	Johnston	Tanner
Full Name	Peterson, Moses	Johnston	Tanner
Sex	Male	Female	Female
Age	39 years 11 mos.	47 years	47 years
Date of Death	Oct. 21st. 1918	Oct. 18th. 1918	Oct. 18th. 1918
Place of Birth	Port Arthur, Ont.	Wisland	England
Place of Death	410 Ambrose St., Port Arthur	St. Joe Hospital, Port Arthur	91 Hill St. E. Port Arthur
Place of Burial	Port Arthur, Ont.	Port Arthur, Ont.	Port Arthur, Ont.
Occupation	.....	Farmer	Housewife
Marital Status	..... 023614	Married	Married
Name of Physician	D. Mahoney	.....	..... 023616
Medical History	.....	.....	.....
Cause of Death	Stillborn	Lobar Pneumonia	Cerebrosepsis
Physician's Return of Death	Dr. Chas. Jewell	Dr. G. E. Makins	Dr. E. Bryan
Name of Burial	A. Morris	A. Morris	A. Morris
Address	Port Arthur, Ont.	Port Arthur, Ont.	Port Arthur, Ont.
Date of Return	Oct. 21st. 1918	Oct. 21st. 1918	Oct. 18th. 1918
Physician's Return of Death	Mahoney	Peterson	Johnston
Medical History	"Stillborn"	Measles	Typhoid
Date of Death	Oct. 21st. 1918	Oct. 20th. 1918	Oct. 18th. 1918
Cause of Death	Stillborn	Lobar Pneumonia following Spanish Influenza	Cerebrosepsis
Duration	.....	3 days	Two years
Medical History	.....	.....	Gradual constriction of chest
Duration	.....	.....	Gradual
Physician's Name	Dr. Chas. Powell	Dr. G. E. Makins	Dr. E. Bryan
Address	Port Arthur, Ont.	Port Arthur, Ont.	Port Arthur, Ont.
Date of Return	Oct. 21st. 1918	Oct. 21st. 1918	Oct. 18th. 1918

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of all the information furnished to me by the medical officer of health of the City of Port Arthur, Ontario, on the 21st day of October, 1918.

J. J. Miller

Figure 9: 1918 Port Arthur death registration for Moses Peterson (Spanish flu)

SUMMARY

This Port Arthur, Thunder Bay District death registration, number 039615, shows that on October 20, 1918, Moses Peterson, male, 39-years-11-months old, of Finland, farmer, married, died in St. Joseph's Hospital, Port Arthur of lobar pneumonia following Spanish influenza that lasted 3 days. He was attended by Dr. G[eorge] E. Eakins and his informant was A. Morris. He was buried in Port Arthur^a.

^a(Registrar General of Ontario 1918b)

NOTE

The registration's "39-years-11-months" runs a year ahead: born on November 21, 1879, Moses was 38 years and 11 months old.

DEATHS

City of **PORT ARTHUR** Division of **PORT ARTHUR**

	Peterson	Lauri Anteri	Bell
Full Name of Deceased	Peterson	Peterson Lauri Anteri	Bell
Christian Name		Lauri Anteri	Ray
Sex		Male	Male
Age		18 years	
Date of Death	Oct. 31st, 1918	Oct. 24th, 1918	Oct. 30th, 1918
Place of Birth	Port Arthur, Ont.	Finland	
Place of Death	628 High St., Port Arthur	St. Joe. Hospital, Port Arthur	St. Joe. Hospital, Port
Place of Burial	Port Arthur	Port Arthur, Ont.	Port Arthur, Ont.
Occupation	Infant 039626	School-boy	Timber Contractor
Marital Status		Single	Widow
Name of Mother	Est. Klecki	Mrs. Peterson	
Name of Father	Tekla Bolnar		
Cause of Death	Scarlet Fever	Spanish Influenza	Spanish Influenza
Name of Physician	Dr. R. McFarrish	Dr. G. E. Eskine	Dr. G. E. Eskine
Name of Informant	Ulf Klecki	A. Morris	A. Morris
Address	628 High St. Port Arthur	Port Arthur, Ont.	Port Arthur, Ont.
Date of Death	Oct. 31st, 1918	Oct. 24th, 1918	Oct. 31st, 1918
	Physician's Return of Death	Physician's Return of Death	Physician's Return of Death
Name of Informant	Klecki	Peterson	Bell
Sex	Male	Lauri Anteri	Ray
Date of Death	Oct. 31st, 1918	Oct. 24th, 1918	Oct. 30th, 1918
Cause of Death	Scarlet Fever	Spanish Influenza	Spanish Influenza
Duration	Three weeks	7 days	Ten days
Character of Death	Nephritis	Lobar Pneumonia	General Paralysis with Pneumonia
Duration	4 days	5 days	
Name of Physician	Dr. R. McFarrish	Dr. G. E. Eskine	Dr. G. E. Eskine
Address	Fort William, Ont.	Port Arthur, Ont.	Port Arthur, Ont.
Date of Death	Oct. 31st, 1918	Oct. 24th, 1918	Oct. 31st, 1918
Remarks			

I hereby certify the foregoing is to the best of my knowledge and belief a true and correct copy of all deaths registered in this city during the quarter ending **January 31st, 1919**
 J. J. Miller, Registrar of Port Arthur

Figure 10: 1918 Port Arthur death registration for Lauri Anteri Peterson

SUMMARY

This Port Arthur, Thunder Bay District death registration, number 039627, shows that on October 24, 1918, Lauri Anteri Peterson, male, 12-years-old, of Finland, schoolboy, with father Moses Peterson [sic], died from lobar pneumonia that lasted 3 days caused by Spanish influenza that lasted 7 days. He was attended by Dr. G[eorge] E. Eakins and his informant was A. Morris. He was buried in Port Arthur^a.

^a(Registrar General of Ontario 1918a)

NOTE

It's likely that Moses and Lauri were quarantined away from the rest of the family at the time and so the informant, A. Morris, may have been under the impression that they were father and son, but this wasn't actually true. Moses was Lauri's uncle and Lauri's father was Kalle.

Peterson		Male	Female
Given Name	Mauno Urho Oliva	Mauno Urho Oliva	Kukka
Sex	Male	Male	Female
Age	4 yrs. 4 mos.	6 yrs. 21 days	42 years
Date of Death	Jan 10th. 1919	April 10th. 1919	Jan 11th. 1919
Place of Death	Port Arthur, Ont.	Port Arthur, Ont.	Finland
Place of Birth	Hokkapaaja, Ont.	Gorham, Ont.	Seipigon, Ont.
Place of Death	Port Arthur, Ont.	Sivikkokö, Ont.	Port Arthur, Ont.
Occupation	Infant	Child	Cook
Single, Married or Widowed	.....	.....	Single
Name of Father	William Oestrik	Mauno Peterson	.....
Name of Mother	.....	Aino Johnson	.....
Cause of Death	Influenza	Meningitis	Influenza
Name of Physician who Attended	Dr. C. W. Burns	Dr. H. Bryan	Dr. W. B. Robertson
Name of Informant	A. Morris	Aino Peterson	A. Morris
Address	Port Arthur, Ont.	Port Arthur, Ont.	Port Arthur, Ont.
Date of Birth	Jan 10th. 1919	April 10th. 1919	May 11th. 1919
Source of Record	Physician's Return of Death	Physician's Return of Death	Physician's Return of Death
Official Name	Gemin	Peterson	Mykalla
Date of Death	Jan 10th. 1919	April 10th. 1919	Jan 11th. 1919
ICD-9 CAUSING DEATH	Influenza 10	Meningitis 61	Influenza 10
Duration	Three days	Three weeks	.....
Final Cause of Death	.....	Sums	.....
Duration	.....	.....	.....
Physician's Name	Dr. C. W. Burns	Dr. H. Bryan	Dr. W. B. Robertson
Address	Hokkapaaja, Ont.	Port Arthur, Ont.	Seipigon, Ont.
Date of Report	Jan 10th. 1919	April 10th. 1919	April Jan. 11th. 1919
Remarks			

Figure 11: 1919 Port Arthur death registration for Mauno Urho Olavi Peterson

SUMMARY

This Port Arthur, Thunder Bay District death registration, number 033319, shows that on April 10, 1919, Mano Urho Oliva Peterson, male, 6-years-21-days-old [sic], with father Moses Peterson, and mother Aino Johnson, died at home in Gorham from meningitis that lasted 3 weeks. He was attended by Dr. H. Bryan. He was buried in the Kivikoski Cemetery^a.

^a(Registrar General of Ontario 1919b)

NOTE

The Kivikoski Cemetery is a cemetery dedicated to the Finnish pioneers of the Lakehead region. Several of the Petersons are buried there or are present on a plaque dedicated to them^a. Be careful when researching this cemetery. There is a Roots Web page by Jude Mitchell which is insufficiently researched and has at least one incorrect date.

^a(“Kivikoski Cemetery,” n.d.)



— **Hautajaiset.** Mauno Olavi Petersonin viime syksynä lentämaan kuolleen Mooses Petersonin ja hänen vaimonsa Aino 6 v. ja 21 p. ikäisenä aivo- ja selkäydin kalvotulehdukseen t.k. 10 p. kuollut poika haudattiin Kivikoskella viime perjantaina. Tilaisuus oli kaikessa vaatimattomuudessaan juhlallinen ja liikuttava. Pienokaisen äidin valitsemasta virrestä 157 laulettiin aluksi ensimmäinen ja 2 viimeistä värsyä, jonka jälkeen past. J. Hirvi puhui muutamia sanoja siitä lohdutuksesta mitä iäisyystoivo tällaisissakin tapauksissa antaa. Siinä uskossa, että iäisyyden päivän sarastaessa saadaan jälleen kohdata, kätettiin pienen vainajan maalliset jäännökset paikkakunnan suomalaisten yhteiseen kalmistoon.

Figure 12: Newspaper funeral notice for Mauno Olavi Peterson

TRANSLATION

— *Funeral. Mauno Olavi Peterson, the son of Mooses Peterson (who died of the flu last autumn) and his wife Aino, who died at the age of 6 years and 21 days on the 10th of this month from cerebrospinal meningitis, was buried in Kivikoski last Friday. The occasion was, in all its modesty, solemn and touching. From Hymn 157, chosen by the little one’s mother, the first and the last two verses were sung at the beginning, after which Pastor J. Hirvi spoke a few words about the comfort that the hope of eternity provides even in cases like this. In the faith that when the day of eternity dawns we will meet again, the earthly remains of the small deceased were laid to rest in the local Finns’ common cemetery^a.*

^a(*Canadian Uutiset* 1919a)

Hymn 157

TRANSCRIPTION

Verse 1 Varjele sanaas, Jumala, ja niiden voima masenna, jotk’ yrittävät alati kukistaa valtaa Poikasi!

Verse 4 Ain’ anna heidän tuntea, ett’et sä laumaas unhota, mut tahdot auttaa, vahvistaa, kun hätä sitä ahdistaa!

Verse 5 O Pyhä Henki, lohduta, ja rauhaan meitä johdata, tuskissa anna huojennus ja kuolossakin virvoitus!^a

^a(*Suomalainen Virsikirja* (1886), n.d.)

TRANSLATION

Preserve your Word, O God, and crush the power of those who ceaselessly strive to overthrow the rule of your Son. Let them always know that you do not forget your flock, but will help and strengthen it when distress besets it. O Holy Spirit, comfort us, and lead us into peace; in anguish grant relief, and even in death, revival.

NOTE

The funeral notice says only “Hymn 157,” and an earlier draft of this book quoted No. 157 of the *modern* hymnal—Hemminki of Masku’s *Maailma täynnä turhuuttaan* (“The world, full of its vanity”), which entered the hymnal at that number only with the 1938 revision^a. In April 1919 the congregation sang from the 1886 hymnal, and there No. 157 is Luther’s *Varjele sanaas, Jumala* (*Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort*, known in English as “Lord, keep us steadfast in Thy Word”)^b. The notice’s “first and the last two verses” fits the five-verse hymn as verses 1, 4, and 5, transcribed above; the closing verse is a prayer to the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. The English rendering is the book’s own.

^a(“Virsi 157 - Maailma täynnä turhuuttaan” 2017)

^b(*Suomalainen Virsikirja* (1886), n.d.)

IV. Replanting

Content Warning: Terminal Illness, Death, and Child Loss

Moses died without having written a will. Settling the estate was a complicated procedure, but Aino was eventually appointed administratrix and took over her late husband's parcels. In 1919 she completed the purchase Moses had begun in 1912—\$86.50, the full fifty cents an acre for its 173 acres—and finally received the land patent^{1, 2}. The second parcel would remain unpatented for decades³.

¹(Ontario District Court, Thunder Bay District 1919)

²(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1919). The patent, issued May 29, 1919, tells the story in its own words: it grants “Aino Peterson, Administratrix,” widow of Moses Peterson, the north half of Lot 6, Concession 3—173 acres—for exactly \$86.50, fifty cents an acre, completing the purchase Moses had contracted on September 11, 1912. It also carries Moses' debt on its face: the title is made subject to the Crown's charge for his \$300 loan of February 10, 1917 under the Northern and North Western Development Act, 1916, at six per cent—interest only for two years, then eight equal annual instalments. The land came to Aino with her husband's loan still riding on it.

³(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1962)



Figure 1: 1940 survey map of the Peterson lots in Gorham Township

SUMMARY

The Peterson lots in Gorham Township shown on the Phillips & Benner O.L.S. Survey done in 1940. The dangerous Current River is shown running through the middle of their lands^a.

^a(Phillips & Benner 1940)

Her management of his affairs extended beyond the farm's borders. On August 10, 1919, a petition was circulated to establish a formal school in Tarmola, and notably, Moses' signature appears on the document⁴—nearly a year after his death. It was Aino who likely signed on behalf of his estate,

⁴(Ranta 1976, 35)

ensuring his voice remained present in the community. He had been a champion for education during his life, and through Aino, his name continued to help build the institutions the settlement needed.

Maintaining this public continuity required securing the family's survival. Holding the weight of the community's future at the same time as running their homestead would have been an unimaginably heavy burden. This is where Kalle stepped in.

Aino's words in her son's obituary make it hard not to fear the family was at risk of losing her, too. On July 24, 1919, only nine months after her husband's death, Aino married Kalle⁵. Homestead life made the union an immediate necessity; it reads, too, as an act of stewardship—Kalle preserving what remained of his brother's family.



Figure 2: The National Evangelical Lutheran Church in Port Arthur

SUMMARY

The National Evangelical Lutheran Church in Port Arthur^a hosted the Peterson weddings that left a record—Kalle and Aino's in 1919, and Peter and Lyyli's in 1928.

^a(Archives & Digital Collections at Lakehead University Library early 1900s)

⁵(Registrar General of Ontario 1919a)

— **Häitä** on viikon ajalla ollut ainakin kahdet suomalaisessa pappilassa, Kalle Peterson ja Aino Peterson, tunnettu maanviljelijä Gorhamista ja hänen velivainajansa leski, vihittiin viime torstaina ja Mr. Frank Wester-

Figure 3: Newspaper notice of Kalle and Aino Peterson's wedding

TRANSLATION

— *Weddings have taken place at least twice within the week at the Finnish parsonage. Kalle Peterson and Aino Peterson, a well-known farmer from Gorham and his late brother's widow, were wed last Thursday, and...*^a

^a(*Canadian Uutiset* 1919b)

The Peterson family integrated themselves, as well-known farmers, into the Finnish community of Port Arthur. Two neighbours they would often deal with were Erkki Smolander and John Pursiainen.

In 1920, Hilda sold 23 acres of their land to Erkki⁶. And in 1921, Peter's informal gift of the hall land was put on paper at last: the parcel—standing, like the rest of the farm, in Hilda's name—was formally transferred to Kalle, Erkki, and John Pursiainen⁷, extending its use to be for Local 28 meetings with the Finnish Organization of Canada⁸.

The Petersons appeared together with Smolander and Pursiainen in the annual Christmas greetings of the Finnish-Canadian communist newspaper *Vapaus*. This appearance suggests they maintained friendly relations with the “Red Finn” faction of the community, listing themselves among neighbours wishing for “energy in action” of the coming year.

⁶(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1916b)

⁷(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1921b)

⁸(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1928)

TARMOLA
Reino, Kirsti, Maiju ja
E. Smolander

Wiljo Palo
Wilho, Heikki, Emma ja
J. Palo
Martta, Ate, Ulla ja
J. Pursiainen
Mirja, Reino, Aino ja
K. Peterson
Arvo, Hilma ja Niilo
Hietapakka
Kalle Luhtala perheineen
Hilda ja Peter Peterson

Figure 4: December 1921 Vapaus clipping listing the Peterson family in Tarmola

SUMMARY

This December 17, 1921, clipping from the newspaper *Vapaus* lists Hilda and Peter Peterson residing in Tarmola, Ontario (Gorham Township) along with Mirjam, Reino, Aino and K[alle], where they joined neighbours in a collective “Red Finn” holiday greeting wishing “*energy in action*” for the year 1922^a.

^a(*Vapaus* 1921)

TARMOLA, ONT.
Hertta, Taisto, Yrjö ja
K. Luhtala
Matti Menonen
Elvi Hilda ja Hilma
Peterson
Reino, Maija ja E.
Smolander

Figure 5: December 1922 Vapaus Christmas greeting from the Peterson women

SUMMARY

Published on December 21, 1922, in *Vapaus*, this Tarmola, Ontario clipping lists Elvi, Hilda, and Hilma Peterson under the socialist slogan “*Merry Christmas 1922, energy in the struggles of 1923!*” indicating the family’s continued presence in the community and the recent birth of daughter Elvi^{a, b}.

^a(*Vapaus* 1922)

^bPeter, Kalle and Aino are notably missing. Perhaps they were away for work. Who “Hilma” was is uncertain at this time; it is unlikely she carried the Peterson name—perhaps she simply lived with the family.

Yet, their life on the homestead was driven by more than just politics; it was still driven by the urgent need to secure a future. In the midst of making social connections with the “Red Finns,” Hilda ensured the legal transfer of her assets, signing a will in 1921 that bequeathed everything to Peter⁹. It was a practical measure, but it also signalled a new chapter of stability.

By 1922, both couples were expecting children in the same year. Peter and Hilda had their first child, Elvi Elina¹⁰; in the same season, on July 18, Kalle and Aino welcomed a son, Aaro. For the first time in a decade, the family seemed to be outpacing its dead.

But the reprieve was brief. On July 31, just thirteen days after he was born, Aaro died¹¹. The joy of the dual births was severed at once, returning Kalle and Aino to a grief they already knew. The “Replanting” phase had been breached; while Peter and Hilda nurtured Elvi, Kalle and Aino were forced to bury yet another son in the hard Gorham soil.

⁹(Ontario District Court, Thunder Bay District 1926)

¹⁰Elvi was born in 1922 as evidenced by Elvi appearing in the 1922 *Vapaus* Christmas greeting. Her full name and death are fixed by the notice to creditors for her estate—“ELVI ELINA PETERSON, late of the Improvement District of Red Rock. . . who died on or about the 16th day of August, 1959” (*Port Arthur News-Chronicle* 1959b)—and by her obituary, which remembers the Port Arthur-born secretary-stenographer, dead in hospital at thirty-seven (*Port Arthur News-Chronicle* 1959a).

¹¹(*Canadian Utiset* 1922)

— **Hautaus.** Tiistai-iltana tällä viikolla saatettiin haudan lepoon Mr. ja Mrs. Kalle Petersonin pienokainen Aaro Kivikosken suomalaiseseen hautausmaahan. Pienokainen oli syntynyt 18 p. heinäkuuta ja kuoli 31 p. Pastori J. Hirvi toimitti hautauksen.

Figure 6: Newspaper funeral notice for infant Aaro Peterson

TRANSLATION

— *Funeral.* On Tuesday evening of this week, Mr. and Mrs. Kalle Peterson's little one, Aaro, was laid to rest in the Kivikoski Finnish cemetery. The infant was born on July 18th and died on the 31st. Pastor J. Hirvi officiated the burial.

While the earth of the cemetery was still fresh over Aaro's grave, the community of Tarmola refused to stagnate in its grief. Life in the settlement pressed forward, driven by the very future of education Moses had fought for before his death. That legacy now bore fruit. While the permanent structure was being finalized, the Tarmola Hall served as a temporary classroom during the winter of 1921 to 1922¹².

For the children, this progress offered a rhythm of normalcy. Mirjam, who had been steadily advancing through her grades¹³, continued her education alongside her brother Reino. When the new schoolhouse, *S.S. No. 3 Gorham*, finally opened its doors, it became a family affair; both Reino and Mirjam attended, joined by Aino's niece, Vieno, and nephews, Reino and Tauno Johnson¹⁴. On September 19, 1924, the schools of Gorham Township gathered for the "vegetable exhibition," and against the neighbouring settlements of Kivikoski and Lappi the students of Tarmola took first place for their plants and running events¹⁵. For one afternoon, the settlement rang with the cheers of children.

This hunger for connection extended beyond the schoolyard. In September 1923, the adults of Tarmola joined a massive convergence of the regional Finnish sections, travelling to Kivikoski and Fort William for a three-day festival that left the halls packed to capacity. Seats were scarce; the

¹²(Ranta 1976, 35)

¹³(Dufault 1920)

¹⁴(Ranta 1976, 36)

¹⁵(H 1924)

air was thick with amateur theatre, the speeches of agitators like Sanna Kannasto, and dances that lasted until dawn. It drew the rural families out of the backwoods into a shared solidarity.

At the centre of this cultural outpouring was a poetry recitation competition, where “Mrs. Peterson of Tarmola”—almost certainly Aino—stood before the crowded room at the Fort William Pirtti, a year after burying her infant son, and recited verses that earned her a prize alongside women from Kivikoski and Intola¹⁶. Her performance was more than a display of the artistic spirit she had long nurtured in the community; it was a public act of endurance.

Surviving on the Canadian Shield required more than just community spirit; it demanded a dangerous kind of pragmatism. By the mid-1920s, the political fault lines in Port Arthur between the “Red Finns” (socialists) and “White Finns” (conservatives) had deepened into a chasm. The division was so severe that in 1924, one local man was reportedly tyrannized to the point of suicide over suspicions of his political alignment back in Finland¹⁷. Navigating this landscape was not just a matter of social standing, but of safety and economic survival.



Figure 7: Vapaus newspaper clipping: the Peterson family greeting their comrades

The Peterson family, perhaps out of necessity, appear to have played both sides of this volatile divide. On one hand, they maintained strong ties with the socialist faction; the land for the Tarmola Hall had come from Peter’s farm, made over to the community to host meetings for Local 28 of

¹⁶(*Vapaus* 1923)

¹⁷(*The Montreal Star* 1924)

the Finnish Organization of Canada¹⁸, and the family appeared in the “Red” newspaper *Vapaus* to wish their comrades “energy in action.”

Peter, meanwhile, operated as a shrewd capitalist. He used *Canadian Uutiset*, the “White” capitalist newspaper, to advertise his livestock¹⁹, and in December 1924 he purchased another parcel of land only to flip it five months later for a profit²⁰. He continued this streak in 1926 with a calculated victory, repurchasing the northern portion of the family’s original land from a neighbour for only \$200²¹. It was significantly less than the \$500 Aino had sold it for five years prior²². He held the two in a delicate balance: appearing as a comrade in the hall while working the land registry to his advantage, doing whatever was necessary to keep the farm and family alive.

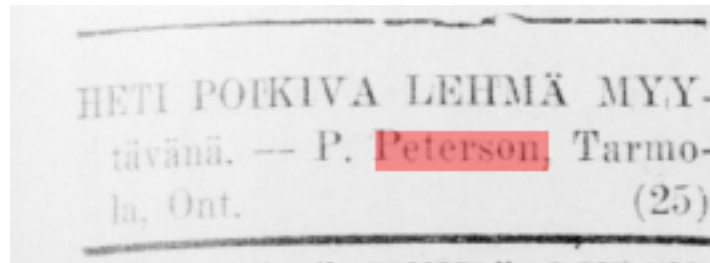


Figure 8: Canadian Uutiset classified ad: ‘Cow due to calve for sale’ by P. Peterson

TRANSLATION

Cow due to calve immediately for sale. — P. Peterson, Tarmola, Ont^a.

^a(Peterson 1922)

While Peter successfully threaded the political needle between the “Red” and “White” factions, he found himself defenceless against something far older than any faction. By 1925, with little Elvi only three years old, the harsh reality of life on the rock began to tell on their bodies. Shadows of illness crept into both households in the same season; Hilda began showing the early signs of tuberculosis, while Aino received a diagnosis of esophageal cancer. For over a year, the families were pulled two ways at once—struggling to wring a living from the farm and winter bush while tending to their failing wives.

Hilda’s fight ended in the spring of 1926. In March she was taken into hospital for a month of treatment; when it had done what it could, she came home—to the farm that was, on paper, still hers. She died there on May 12, thirty-two years old²³. She was buried in the Kivikoski Cemetery four days later, and on the death registration the informant’s line holds the plainest record of that week we have: *Peter Peterson, her husband*. Aino endured through one final, dark winter, subjected to painful medical interventions until she too died on January 21, 1927²⁴. Her obituary in *Vapaus*

¹⁸(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1921b)

¹⁹(Peterson 1922)

²⁰(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1925)

²¹(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1926)

²²(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1921a)

²³(Registrar General of Ontario 1926)

²⁴(Registrar General of Ontario 1927a)

remembered her as more than a mother: a comrade who had given her voice to the cause, and her years to the community's stage²⁵.

Kuollut. Mrs. Kalle Peterson, asunut Tarmolan farmiperukalla Gorhamissa, kuoli Port Arthurissa sairaalassa t.k. 21 päivän illalla. Mrs. Peterson sairasti pitemmän aikaa syöpätautia, kuolema viimein tulen pelastajaksi. Suremaan häntä jäi leski Kalle Peterson sekä yksi tyttö ja yksi poika sekä laaja tuttavapiiri.

Mrs. Peterson otti osaa puolueen toimintaan ahkerasti näyttämöllä y.m. entisaikoina, vaikka hän nyt viimeiset pari vuotta on ollut pois toiminnasta, johon on voinut olla sairauskin tekijänä. — J.

Figure 9: Newspaper death notice for Mrs. Kalle (Aino) Peterson

TRANSLATION

Death. Mrs. Kalle Peterson, who lived at the Tarmola farm settlement in Gorham, died in the Port Arthur hospital on the evening of the 21st of this month. Mrs. Peterson suffered for a long time from cancer, death finally coming as a savior. Left to mourn her were her widower Kalle Peterson as well as one girl and one boy, and a wide circle of acquaintances. Mrs. Peterson also participated diligently in the party's activities on the stage [theatre] etc. in earlier times, although she has been away from the activities for the last couple of years, for which illness may have been a factor. — J.^a

^a(Vapaus 1927)

On October 10, 1927, the land title quietly reverted to Peter from Hilda, owing to their preparations²⁶, but the farm felt hollow. The deaths of Aino and Hilda resonated far beyond the walls of their homesteads; Tarmola itself had been silenced. The community had lost its artistic soul in Aino, the poet and playwright who had breathed life into their stage, and lost her steadfast assistant in Hilda. Peter and Kalle were left as widowers on a landscape that demanded partnership to survive, their homes stripped of the warmth and culture that had once defined them.

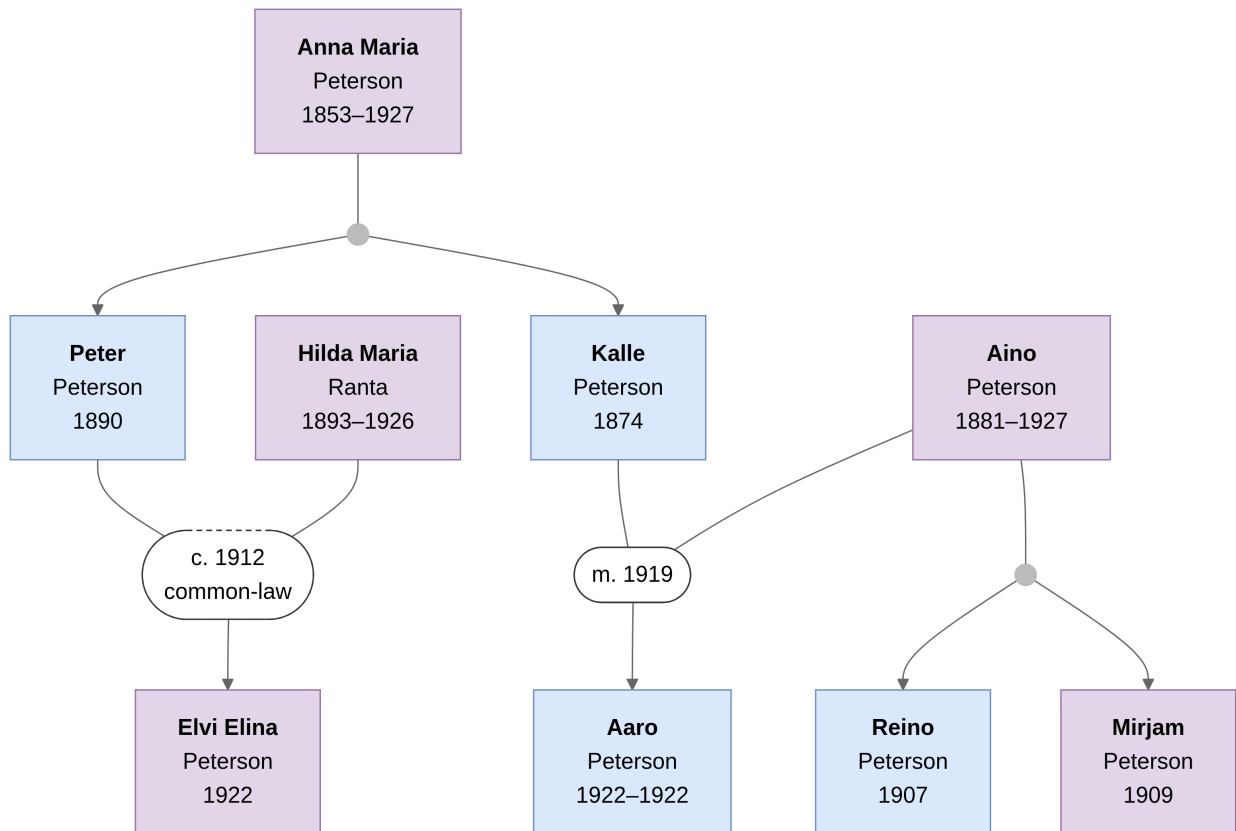
²⁵(Vapaus 1927)

²⁶(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1927b)

Trying to fill the void left by the others, their mother, Anna Maria, drove her seventy-four-year-old body hard. The death registration records only a cerebral hemorrhage, after six days in hospital²⁷. What finally brought it on, no record says—perhaps the strain of an overworked body, perhaps nothing more than a breath of cold air. She died on November 30, 1927.

With Anna Maria went the last matriarch, and a silence where three generations of women had once stood. The brothers' paths diverged. In a year that had taken both Aino and his mother, Kalle decided the land's price was too high and abandoned the homestead²⁸. Peter refused to yield: he would stay on the farm, and he would find a new partner to make it work.

Family Tree



²⁷(Registrar General of Ontario 1927b)

²⁸(*The Daily Times-Journal* 1953)

SUMMARY

This Ontario marriage affidavit shows that on July 24, 1919, Carl [Kalle] Peterson, 45-years-old, widower, farmer, of Port Arthur, born in Finland to father Peter Peterson and mother Anna Westerinen, and Aino Peterson, 39-years-old, widow, of Port Arthur, born in Finland to father Frederick Johnston and mother Anna Mary Carlson, were married by Rev. J. Hirvi, of 262 Wilson Street, in the Lutheran denomination. Their witnesses were Victor Johnson, of 349 Foley Street, and Sophia Hirvi of 262 Wilson Street^a.

^a(Registrar General of Ontario 1919a)

NOTE

Victor Johnson was Aino's brother. His address, 349 Foley Street, is where his mother Anna Maria Johnson died in 1911, suggesting that it was the Johnson residence while 335 Foley Street, where Urho Olavi was born in 1911, was the Peterson residence. Rev. Jacob Hirvi was pastor of the National Evangelical Lutheran Church in Port Arthur. His wife was Sophia^a. The affidavit's ages wobble by a year: Aino, born March 17, 1881, was 38, not 39 (Kalle's 45 is exact).

^a(Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1921d)

SUMMARY

This Port Arthur, Thunder Bay District death registration, number 033017, shows that on May 12, 1926, Hilda Maria Peterson, female, Finnish, married, 32-years-10-months-old, housewife, born in Ruokolahti, Finland, July 12, 1893, to mother Eva Ranta, died at home of pulmonary tuberculosis that lasted 1 year. She was attended by Dr. J. I. Pratt from March 15 to April 15. Peter Peterson, her husband, was the informant. She was buried in the Kivikoski Cemetery on May 16^a.

^a(Registrar General of Ontario 1926)

SUMMARY

This Port Arthur, Thunder Bay District death registration, number 031928, shows that on January 21, 1927, Aino Peterson, female, Finnish, married, 45-years-old, born in Finland on March 17, 1881, to father John Johnson, died at St. Joseph's Hospital due to a gastrostomy that lasted 13 days due to esophageal cancer that lasted 1 year and 6 months. She was attended by Dr. Bellantyne from January 8 to 21. M[irjam] Peterson, her daughter, 125 South Court Street, was her informant. She was buried in Riverside Cemetery on January 24, 1927, by undertaker L. Sargent & Son^a.

^a(Registrar General of Ontario 1927a)

NOTE

A gastrostomy is a surgical procedure where an opening is created into the stomach from the abdominal wall.

DEATHS		No. 254		No. 255		No. 256	
Surnames of Deceased		PETERSON		PETERSON		HALLIE	
Full given Name		MARY		MARY		CATHERINE	
Place of death, street and number or In, Out, St. David Lodge, St. Paul, Wisconsin		St. Joseph's Hospital		St. Joseph's Hospital		54 Front St.	
Age		32		65		65	
Sex		Female		Female		Female	
Race		Finnish		Finnish		Finnish	
Marital Status		Married		Married		Widowed	
Date of Birth		1895		1862		1862	
Place of Birth		Finland		Finland		Finland	
Trade or Occupation		Housewife		Housewife		Rooming House Proprietress	
Kind of Industry							
Place from which or within employed							
Length of Residence		10 years		4 days 15 yrs.		40 years 40 years 40 yrs	
Name of Father		ATYKEN, JOHN		KARHUNEN, PETER		Not known	
Birthplace of Father		Scotland		Finland		Finland	
Maiden Name of Mother		DUNNIN, ANNE		Not known		Not known	
Birthplace of Mother		Quebec		Finland		Finland	
Name of Physician		Spence, Dr. C. E.		Macgillivray, Dr. T. D.		Harold, Dr. R. L.	
Address		Fort William, Ont.		Fort Arthur, Ont.		Fort Arthur, Ont.	
Name of Informant		Lalonde, Mary		Peterson, Pete		Shaw, Mrs. J. K.	
Address		228 Tupper St.		Gardner Township, Ont.		54 Front St.	
Relation to Deceased		Husband		Son		Daughter	
Place of Burial		St. Andrew's Cemetery		Kivikooki, Ont.		Riverside Cemetery	
Date of Burial		Dec. 6, 1927.		Dec. 4, 1927.		Dec. 7, 1927.	
Name of Undertaker		Everest-Thomson Co.		L. Sargent & Son.		Everest-Thomson Co.	
Address		Fort Arthur, Ont.		Fort Arthur, Ont.		Fort Arthur, Ont.	
Cause of Death (If not Physician attended)							
Date of Death		Dec. 4, 1927.		Nov. 30, 1927.		Dec. 5, 1927.	
Name of Deceased		MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH LALONDE, MARY		MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH PETERSON, MARY		MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH HALLIE, CATHERINE	
Date of Death		Dec. 4, 1927.		Nov. 30, 1927.		Dec. 5, 1927.	
Date from which to which Physician attended Deceased		From Aug. 14/27 to Dec. 4, 1927		From Nov. 26, 1927, Nov. 30, 1927		From Dec. 1, 1927 to Dec. 5, 1927	
Primary Cause of Death		Arterio sclerosis		Cerebral hemorrhage		Cerebral hemorrhage	
Secondary Cause of Death		Cerebral hemorrhage					
Date of Death		Dec. 4, 1927.		Nov. 30, 1927.		Dec. 5, 1927.	
Name of Physician		Spence, Dr. C. E.		Macgillivray, Dr. T. D.		Harold, Dr. R. L.	
Address		Fort William, Ont.		Fort Arthur, Ont.		Fort Arthur, Ont.	
Date of Report		Dec. 6, 1927.		Dec. 16, 1927.		Dec. 22, 1927.	
Date received by District Registrar		Dec. 6, 1927.		Dec. 16, 1927.		Dec. 22, 1927.	
I certify that the foregoing are correct registrations of Deaths made to me during the month of <u>December</u> 19 <u>27</u>							
T. F. Milne				Port Arthur, Ont.			
D.R. or Sub-Registrar				Address			

Figure 13: 1927 Port Arthur death registration for Mary Peterson

SUMMARY

This Port Arthur, Thunder Bay District death registration, number 032429, shows that on November 30, 1927, Mary Peterson, female, Finnish, married [sic], 75-years-old, housewife, born in 1852 to father Peter Karhunen, died at St. Joseph's Hospital from a cerebral hemorrhage that lasted 6 days. She was attended by Dr. T. D. Macgillivray from November 26 to 30. Pete[r] Peterson, her son, of Gorham Township, was the informant. She was buried in Kivikoski Cemetery on December 4, 1927, by undertaker L. Sargent & Son^a.

^a(Registrar General of Ontario 1927b)

NOTE

The Karttula communion book gives her exact birth as March 15, 1853, which makes her 74 at her death—not 75—and puts the “1852” here a year out. (The “father Peter Karhunen” is also confused: that was her late husband's name, supplied by their son Peter, the informant.) Such slips are routine across her records: her son Petter's 1890 birth register put her age at 27 when she was 36, and the household *lastenkirja* recorded her birth year as 1855. The communion book, which records the day itself, is the most precise of the four and is the date this book follows^a.

^a(Karttulan seurakunta (Karttula Parish) 1890c). The Karttula communion book (*rippikirja*) for 1881–1890, page 626, farm No. 11 Nurkkala, records her birth as March 15, 1853.

V. The River's Grasp

Content Warning: Child Loss

Lyyli Ingrid Kahila was born on March 3, 1905, in Parkano, a parish in western Finland, the daughter of the *itsellinen* (landless lodger) Julius Kahila¹. On August 3, 1927, she sailed from Helsinki on the *Oberon*², reaching Hull; on August 12, the *Montcalm* out of Liverpool³; on August 20 she landed at Quebec City, alone, with servant's work already waiting⁴—possibly with Peter's family, which would explain why no sponsor was needed at the port.

In Port Arthur she found an established Finnish community, and soon found her way into the orbit of Peter's household and his daughter Elvi.

On December 6, 1927, Peter once again borrowed \$500 under the Northern and North Western Ontario Development Act⁵. The loan was for the farm—though it is tempting to wonder whether a little of it also went toward hiring Lyyli, or impressing her.

On July 21, 1928, Peter and Lyyli married⁶. It is hard not to read it as a pragmatic choice—a practical measure to re-establish the stability that the years of illness and death had stripped away.

But as the couple settled into their new life, the world around them was slowing. By 1930 the Great Depression had reached the timber settlements of Gorham, and that October a writer in the local Finnish newspaper *Vapaus* described the conditions plainly: “Although nowadays it looks as if life is ending here, with no hope of living visible nor any means to get through the winter⁷.”

The pulpwood industry, which had been the financial lifeline for farmers like Peter and Kalle to earn cash wages, had come to a “complete standstill.” With no timber being bought, the “hope of living” from logging income was gone. To make matters worse, the local dairy in Port Arthur had fallen into ruin due to poor management, cutting off another critical stream of revenue for the farmers.

The infrastructure of the settlement also became a battleground. The roads, already scarce and poor, were now being actively blocked. The *Vapaus* article noted that the road to Onion Lake had been obstructed, with locks placed on its bridges “by whose orders... Lord knows.” For Peter, this

¹(Parkanon seurakunta (Parkano Parish) 1905). The Parkano birth-and-baptism register (1897–1916, p. 310) records Lyyli Ingrid, born March 3, 1905, and baptized March 13, daughter of the *itsellinen* (landless lodger) Julius (Eliaksenpoika) Kahila of Alaskylä; her 1928 marriage affidavit names her parents as Julius Kahila and Wilhelmina Heinämäki.

²(Finland Steamship Company 1927)

³(Board of Trade 1927)

⁴(Immigration Branch, Department of Interior, Canada 1927)

⁵(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1927a)

⁶(Registrar General of Ontario 1928)

⁷Translation of: “Vaikka nykyään näyttää kuin elämä loppuisi tähän, ei mitään elämisen toivoa näy eikä keinoa millä talven yli pääsee” (Valittu 1930).

was likely happening on his doorstep; the bridge in question crossed the Current River right beside his farm.

Yet, even as the economy collapsed and roads were barred, the community's heart continued to beat within Tarmola Hall. On October 11, 1930, the hall hosted a social evening featuring poems, singing, and the play *At Life's Turning Point* (*Elämän käännteessä*⁸). It was a continuation of the cultural legacy Aino had helped build. The Depression could stop the flow of money, but not the spirit of the community.

Against this backdrop of blocked bridges and vanished wages, Peter held his ground. On August 29, 1930, while others faced “starvation” and ruin, he finished paying off the \$500 loan he had taken nearly three years earlier⁹.

While Peter secured the farm's finances, Lyyli was securing the family's future. Through the darkening autumn of 1930, she was well into her pregnancy, carrying a new hope that would soon defy the gloom of the Depression.

On December 6, 1930, they had their first child together, Leo Armas¹⁰. His name, Armas, means “beloved” in Finnish—the measure of the hope the family poured into him after a decade of loss.

On January 14, 1931, Peter and Lyyli made a private deal with their neighbour Erkki Smolander—perhaps for logging—registering a caution (a legal claim) against the part of their property east of the Current River¹¹. Two years later Erkki lifted the caution, and on April 27, 1933, they sold that eastern portion outright to Aatu Pitkanen for \$675¹². It was land the family did not work, and with Lyyli pregnant again, the money mattered more than the acres.

It was in this year, 1933, that *Karelian Fever* most affected the Finns of Tarmola. From 1931 to 1934, there were recruitment campaigns targeted at the ‘Red’ Finns for them to move to Soviet Karelia and build a socialist utopia. Jaded by the lack of progress on labour rights within Canada, many left Tarmola to join the movement, including Peter's neighbour Erkki¹³. Stalin would eventually turn on this community and by 1937 they became the primary targets for arrests and executions¹⁴.

Later that year, Peter and Lyyli were expecting their second child together¹⁵, another companion for Elvi and a true sibling for Leo. Two young children running through the Gorham homestead: it is easy to imagine the reward that promised for their endurance. Yet the calm did not hold.

On the morning of October 10, after his sister Elvi had left for school, Leo—not yet three—ventured out of his house in search of his mother. She was in the barn milking the cows. Crossing a bridge over the creek on their farm—a small tributary of the Current River—he fell into the chickens' watering pond and drowned^{16, 17}. His body was likely discovered by Lyyli, who—as the Tarmola history remembered it—never recovered from the shock¹⁸. Like Moses' son Sulo and Kalle's son

⁸(Valittu 1930)

⁹(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1927a)

¹⁰(Registrar General of Ontario 1933b)

¹¹(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1931)

¹²(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1916b)

¹³(Ranta 1976, 38)

¹⁴(Saramo 2014, 1)

¹⁵(Registrar General of Ontario 1933a)

¹⁶(*The Daily Times-Journal* 1933)

¹⁷(*Auttaja* 1933)

¹⁸(Ranta 1976, 32)

Lauri, Peter's first son was taken by the cold grip of the river. Twenty years of "taming" had changed nothing.



Figure 1: Leo Peterson's 1933 death notice, *The Daily Times-Journal*

SUMMARY

Leo's death notice from *The Daily Times-Journal*^a in 1933.

^a(*The Daily Times-Journal* 1933)

On December 21, only ten weeks later, their daughter Miriam Ingrid was born¹⁹. They also had another daughter, Linnea Hilda, whose birth date is uncertain²⁰. Miriam and Linnea were born into a house heavy with the shadow of death and economic hardship. They would never see the Sisu that built Tarmola Hall, or the hope that had carried their parents across an ocean; they knew only the mother and father this era had made—a mother scarred by the shock of that loss, a father broken by the past.

¹⁹(Registrar General of Ontario 1933a)

²⁰Linnea's dates are the least documented in the family. Ontario's birth registrations open to the public only after roughly a century, so hers is not yet available; she was certainly not born before Leo—his December 1930 birth is on the registered record—and it is unlikely she was born between Leo and Miriam, hence the "c. 1935" in the family tree, which the opening of the records should sharpen within a few years. Her death is family memory alone: a relative recalled that she had died "about 10 years ago"—hence "c. 2015."

This fracture in Peter's spirit reached the farm's finances too. On April 5, 1938, perhaps out of financial desperation, Peter and Lyyli sold a roughly 20-acre portion of the land to David Nikkola for \$100²¹. At \$5 an acre—against the nearly \$17 an acre of the 1933 sale—it was the price of a family selling under duress.

Despite the selling off of assets, Peter made another land deal, purchasing 80 acres of land for \$40²². The amount in consideration suggests he was locatee on an *Allowance for Purchase*, like his brother Moses over twenty years earlier, which he was obligated to buy. But perhaps he couldn't afford the full 160 acres at the time and split it with a neighbour.

As financial instability gnawed at the homestead from within, geopolitical forces began to tear at the community from without. During World War II, Finnish-Canadians found themselves in a precarious situation. On June 5, 1940, Justice Minister Ernest Lapointe announced to the House of Commons that sixteen organizations had been outlawed by Order-in-Council under the *Defence of Canada Regulations* of the *War Measures Act*; the Finnish Organization of Canada (FOC) stood on the same list as the Communist Party of Canada and the foreign organization of the Nazi Party²³. Membership itself became an offence—a man who attended an outlawed organization's meetings, spoke for it, or passed out its literature was presumed a member unless he could prove otherwise—and the FOC's property was seized by the Custodian of Enemy Property²⁴. Tarmola Hall, built on the very land Peter had given the community, was part of this confiscation. This hall had been the heart of their social lives—where his late sister-in-law Aino, first wife Hilda, and nephew Lauri had performed on stage and where the families had gathered for music and sports. Although the property was returned in 1944, the damage was done; the custodian never paid property taxes, and the land was ultimately lost to the Crown for nonpayment of arrears in 1945²⁵.

The price of Peter's homestead was a debt he could no longer pay. By the early 1940s, the Shield's ledger was finally full.

And the living were leaving. Kalle had long since given the homestead up for town; Erkki and so many others had been drawn away—and destroyed—by *Karelian Fever*; and the seizure of Tarmola Hall took what remained of the world they had built. It was the last of the long string of losses that turned Peter from his land.

²¹(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1938)

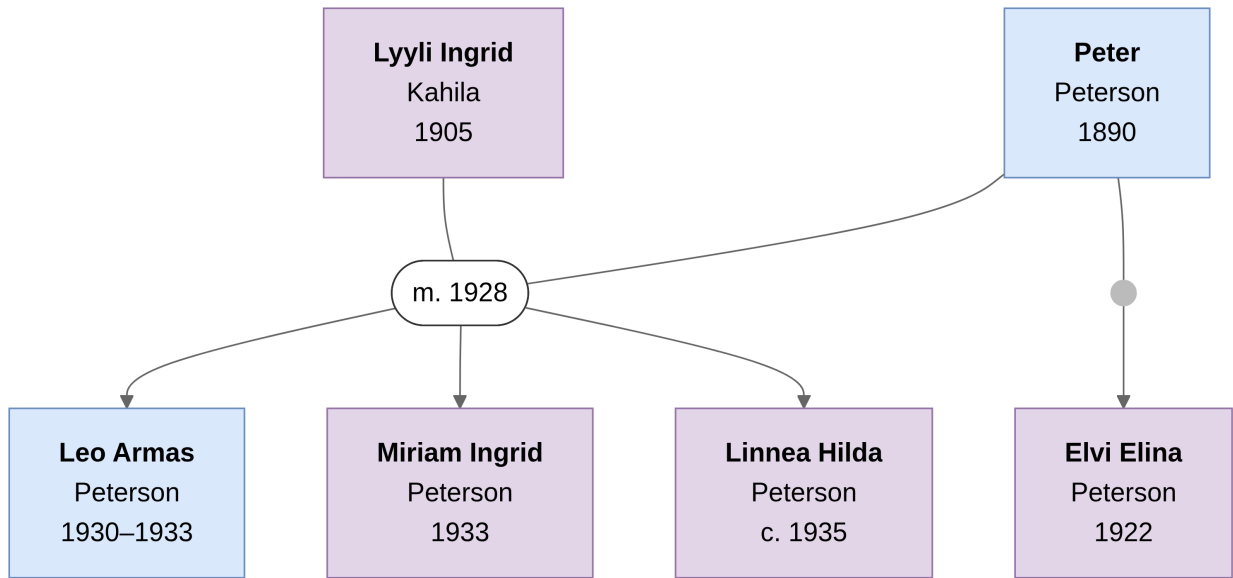
²²(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1939)

²³(Beamish 1940)

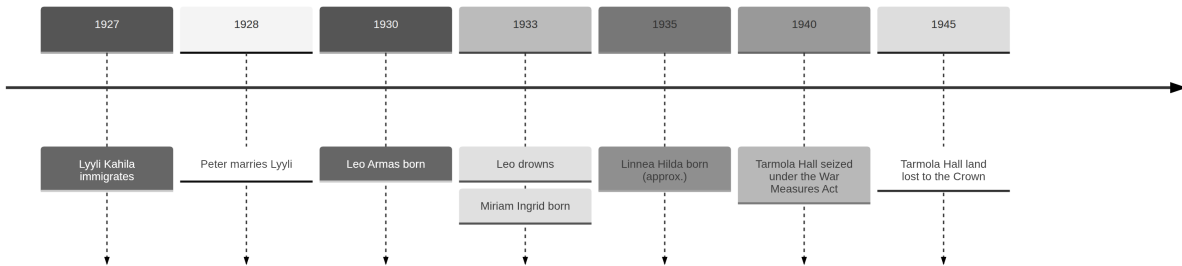
²⁴(Lindström, n.d.)

²⁵(Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1945)

Family Tree



The River's Grasp



Research

Affidavit required by Section 28 of The Marriage Act before License is granted.

REGISTRAR GENERAL
 HONORABLE
 JUL 28 1928
 ONTARIO

Instructions to Person Solemnizing Marriage: Special Attention is Directed to the Excerpts From the Marriage Act Set Forth at the Right of Affidavit Herein.

EXCEPT as in The Marriage Act provided, any person who solemnizes a marriage earlier than the third day after the day of the date of this License shall be guilty of an offence and shall incur a penalty of not more than \$100.

After solemnizing the marriage, fill in all the blank spaces below, and forward this LICENSE FORTHWITH to the REGISTRAR-GENERAL, TORONTO

1121976

I Certify that I solemnized the marriage of—

Groom: Peter Peterson
 Bride: Lyyli Kahila

Witness: Sophia Hirvi
Port Arthur, Ont.
 Witness: Tyenne Johnson
167 Ruttan St. Port Arthur
 in the City of Port Arthur in the Province of Ontario

That I solemnize this as an officary, unconsecrated, priest, or minister of the Gospel, or as a duly qualified person to her or his like the solemnization of the marriage, and

That the contents and facts herein are to the best of my knowledge, information and belief, true in every particular.

NAME OF GROOM	<u>Peter Peterson</u>	<u>Lyyli Kahila</u>
OCCUPATION	<u>Farmer</u>	<u>Farmer's daughter</u>
AGE AND SEX	<u>38</u> — <u>Widower</u>	<u>23</u> — <u>Spinster</u>
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION	<u>Lutheran</u>	<u>Lutheran</u>
RESIDENCE	<u>Gorham Tp.</u>	<u>Gorham Tp.</u>
PLACE OF BIRTH	<u>Finland</u>	<u>Finland</u>
INTERVIEW PLACE OF WEDDING	<u>Port Arthur</u>	

Sworn before me at the CITY OF PORT ARTHUR on the 21 day of July 1928 at Port Arthur in the County of Thunder Bay by Peter Peterson and Lyyli Kahila (Signature of Groom and Bride)

By J. S. [Signature] Minister of Marriage License of Port Arthur (Signature of Minister)

For statistical purposes, please furnish the following information:—

Birthplace of Groom's Father: Finland
 Birthplace of Bride's Father: Finland
 Can Groom read: yes write yes
 Can Bride read: yes write yes

Can I solemnize the marriage: yes write yes
 Can I divide read: yes write yes

Small print at bottom: (1) If the affidavit is made by both parties, sign both the name, address and occupation of the other party. Where both the parties to the intended marriage both stated before the licentiate and each of them make the affidavit required in subsection 1, the licentiate may in his discretion dispense with the affidavit required by subsection 1. (2) If either of the parties is under the age of 21 years, the consent in writing, verified by affidavit, of the person whose consent is required, must be given with the license for transmission to the Registrar-General. (The Marriage Act last Session 12 and 24.) (3) If either of the parties has resided in Ontario for 12 days immediately preceding the date of this affidavit, and the intention to marry has not been duly advertised, a Permit to give License must be obtained from the Provincial Secretary. A fee of \$2.00 is charged for each Permit.

Figure 2: 1928 Ontario marriage affidavit for Peter Peterson

SUMMARY

This Ontario marriage affidavit shows that on July 21, 1928, Peter Peterson, farmer, 38-years-old, widower, of Gorham, born to father Pekka Peterson and mother Maria Karhunen, and Lyyli Kahila, farmer's daughter, 23-years-old, spinster, of Gorham, born to father Julius Kahila and mother Wilhelmina Heinämäki, were married by [Rev.] Jacob Hirvi in the Lutheran denomination. Their witnesses were Sophia Hirvi and Tyenne Johnson, of 167 Ruttan Street^a.

^a(Registrar General of Ontario 1928)

NOTE

Tyenne Johnson may have been related to Aino given their shared last name. She was a member of the same Lutheran Church^a.

^a(Port Arthur Daily News 1965)

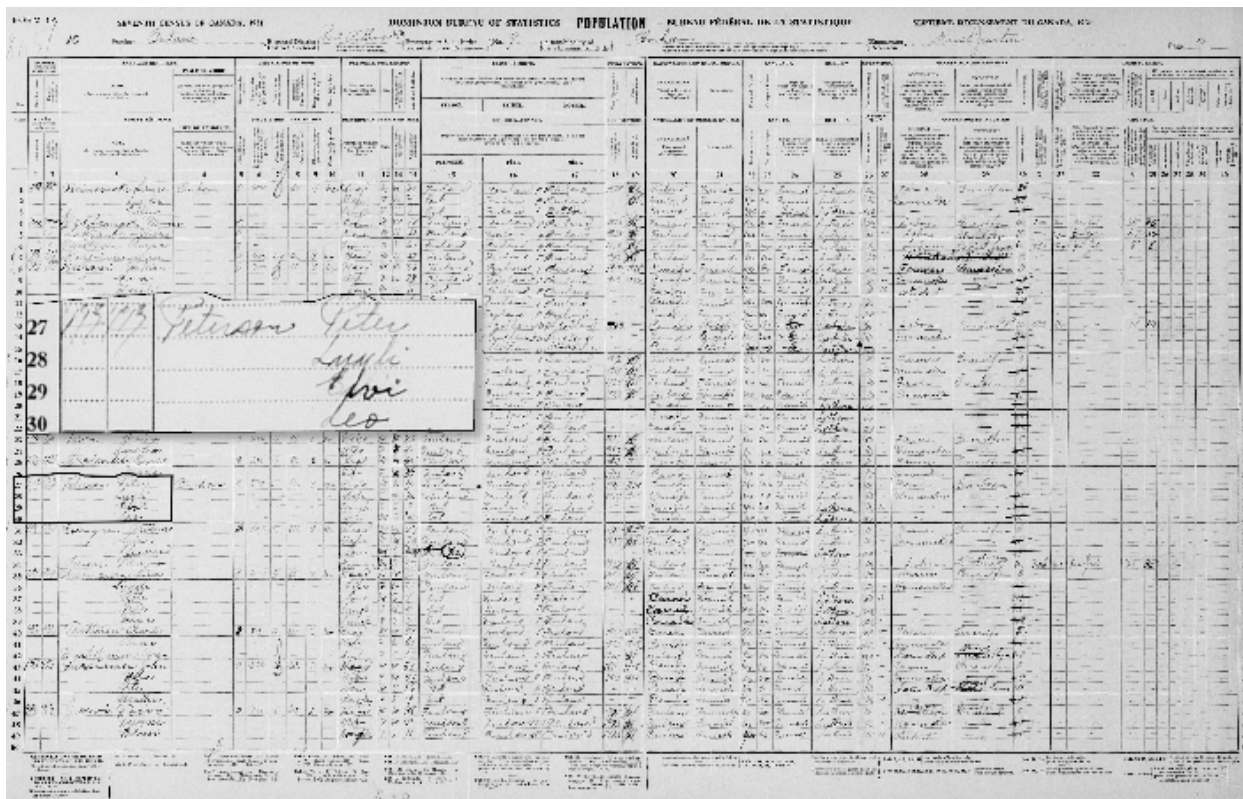


Figure 3: 1931 Census of Canada records for the Peter Peterson family

SUMMARY

These 1931 Census of Canada records show the Peter Peterson family, number 108^a, as well as the families of his neighbours with whom he transacted land: Eric [Erkki] Smolander, number 107^b, and John Pursiainen, number 112^c.

^a(Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1931b)

^b(Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1931a)

^c(Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1931c)

TRANSCRIPTION

Fam.	Name	Relationship	Age	Immigrated	Speak English	Occupation
107	Eric Smolander	head	45	1911	no	farmer
107	Maria Smolander	wife	39	1913	no	homemaker
108	Peter Peterson	head	41	1911	yes	farmer
108	Lyly Peterson	wife	26	1927	no	homemaker

108	Elvi Peterson	daughter	9		yes	
108	Leo Peterson	son	1/12		no	
112	John Pursiainen	head	53	1911	no	farmer
112	Ulla Pursiainen	wife	47	1913	no	homemaker
112	Ate Pursiainen	son	16		yes	farm help
112	Martha Pursiainen	daughter	9		yes	

NOTE

For some strange reason, the enumerator put “no” across the board for “Can read or write” on this page. Peter was capable of reading and writing English and the children certainly were too. Leo’s age is another slip: entered as “1/12”—one month—though, born on December 6, 1930, he was about six months old at the June 1931 count.

This form if placed in an envelope, marked "Dominion Statistics—Free, penalty for improper use, \$300," and properly addressed will pass through the Mail "FREE".

FORM 6 PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION OF DEATH 032129 426

1. PLACE OF DEATH: County of Thames Bay Township of Gorham
 If in City, Town or Village Frankton Street Paterson House No. _____

2. NAME OF DECEASED: Peterson Leo Armas
 Residence: Lot 4, Con. 6, Gorham Township

3. Sex: male 4. Race or origin: Finland 5. Single, Married, Widowed or Divorced: single

6. BIRTHPLACE: Canada

7. DATE OF BIRTH: Dec 6 1930

8. AGE OF DECEASED: Years 2 Months 10 Days _____ If less than one day old _____ hrs. or _____ min.

9. OCCUPATION OF DECEASED: Student

10. LENGTH OF RESIDENCE (in years and months): (a) At place of death not applicable (b) In province _____ (c) In Canada (if an immigrant) _____

11. Name of father: Peter Peterson

12. Birthplace of father: Finland

13. Maiden name of mother: Lily Kahila

14. Birthplace of mother: Finland

15. Name of Informant: Peter Peterson
 Address: Frankton
 Relation to Deceased: father

16. PLACE OF BURIAL: Kivikoski Date of Burial: Oct 12 1933

17. Name of Undertaker: none Address: _____

18. Filed at 4:15 p.m. this 19 day of Dec 1933
 Division Registrar only: 94 Melne

BURIAL PERMIT was issued by: PA Date: Dec 19/33

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

16. DATE OF DEATH: Oct 10 1933

17. I HEREBY CERTIFY that I attended deceased from _____ to _____ and last saw him _____ live on _____

THE CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows:
accidentally drowned in creek near his home
 (duration of) _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ days

CONTRIBUTORY CAUSE: _____
 (duration of) _____ yrs. _____ mos. _____ days

18. Where was disease contracted if not at place of death? _____

Did an operation precede death? no Date of: _____
 Reason for operation: _____

Was there an autopsy? no
 (Signed) Charles Powell M.D.
 Address: Frankton
 Date: Oct 10 1933

State the disease causing death, or in death from violent causes, state (1) Means and Nature of Injury, (2) whether Accidental, Suicidal or Homicidal. In case of stillbirths write "born dead".

Figure 4: 1933 Ontario death registration for Leo Armas Peterson (drowning)

SUMMARY

This Ontario death registration certificate, number 032129, shows that on October 10, 1933, Leo Armas Peterson, of Lot 4 Con. 6, Gorham, 2-years-10-months-old, male, born in Canada on December 6, 1930, to father Peter Peterson, of Finland and mother Lily Kahila, of Finland, accidentally drowned in the creek near his farm. The coroner was [Dr.] Charles Powell. His father, Peter Peterson, was the informant. He was buried in Kivikoski Cemetery on October 12^a.

^a(Registrar General of Ontario 1933b)

NOTE

The registration's "Lot 4 Con. 6" is the registrar's transposition: the farm was Lot 6, Concession 4, and no other record places the family anywhere else.

VI. Room 13

Content Warning: Alcoholism and Death

The cumulative tragedy had finally broken Peter. The Shield, having taken his family, his Sisu, and his sanctuary, claimed the man himself. Unable to cope with the shadows that haunted his house, he left his family behind. What filled those final years the family records do not say; but the manner of his death—the “alcoholic confusion” the coroner would note, with a blood-alcohol reading of 0.23%—reads backward as a man who had, by the end, come to lean hard on drink.

Sometime between 1940¹ and 1945², he left for British Columbia.

Author’s Note

No record says what Peter did for work in British Columbia; his death registration calls him only a “labourer.” The timing tempts a guess. The wartime aviation industry was desperate for Sitka spruce—the clear, straight-grained wood that framed the World War II Mosquito bomber^a—and that work called on exactly the kind of elite bushman Peter, a veteran of the Onion Lake Log Drive, had once been. But that is a guess, not a finding. What the record shows is not a man hired so much as a man fleeing the unpayable debt he owed to the Canadian Shield.

^a(Turner 1997)

The separation was absolute. The silence between him and his kin was so complete that when his brother Kalle died in 1953, the family back in Port Arthur still believed Peter was alive in Vancouver³.

Peter’s final home, 767 East Georgia Street⁴, was a refuge for the drifters and the unlucky. Rented by-the-week⁵, the address was chaotic and well known to the police, housing men like Herbert Going, a sixty-five-year-old beggar ordered to “keep off the Skidroad”⁶, and John Banek, who returned to the rooming house with 27 stitches after a bottle brawl⁷. Residents like Mike Filip were easy targets for petty thieves⁸. This was the transient world Peter had resigned himself to.

On his death certificate, the only identifying personal detail was the name of the wife he had left behind: “Lily Ka[h]ila”⁹. Even in the end, the identity he had tried to outrun was the one thing

¹(Canada, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer 1940c)

²(Canada, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer 1945b)

³(*The Daily Times-Journal* 1953)

⁴(British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency 1951)

⁵(*The Vancouver Sun* 1949)

⁶(*The Vancouver Sun* 1951)

⁷(*The Province* 1952)

⁸(*The Vancouver Sun* 1950)

⁹(British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency 1951)

that named him—though who gave the clerk that name, the record never says.

On March 1, 1951, the landlord of International Rooms¹⁰, Yee Sun, grew concerned and called the Vancouver Police to Room 13. When the police arrived, they found the door locked from the inside. They had to force their way in, the wood splintering as they breached Peter’s final sanctuary.

Inside, the room contradicted the streets. The walls were papered in a delicate floral pattern; the furnishings were sparse and makeshift—a simple table covered with a cloth, a coffee pot sitting on a cardboard box.

The instrument of his death was a mundane object sitting on the table: a two-burner gas plate. A tin of Fry’s Cocoa stood nearby, suggesting a simple, final intention: perhaps he just wanted to make a warm drink. The Coroner’s report concluded that in his “alcoholic confusion,” with a blood alcohol level of 0.23%, Peter had turned the burner on fully but neglected to light it. He had not intended to die; he had simply made a mistake¹¹.

The Canadian Shield’s relentless attack was a war waged on two fronts: the soil and the air. It began by rejecting the family’s roots, denying the two Urhos a hold in the stone. Then, it turned to the taking of breath. In the river and its creeks, the Shield first suffocated his nephew Sulo and then his son Leo by drowning. It had seized the breath of Moses, Lauri, and Hilda through the lungs. It even claimed his mother Anna Maria, wearing down an old, overworked body until a vessel in her brain finally gave way.

In the end, Peter’s defeat was a quiet, invisible suffocation in Room 13, far from the rocks of Gorham. The Shield had won, not by taking his land, but by stealing the breath of his life and extinguishing his Sisu.

¹⁰(B.C. Directories Limited 1951)

¹¹(British Columbia Coroners Service and Whitbread 1951)

THE DOMINION ELECTIONS ACT, 1938

RURAL PRELIMINARY LIST of ELECTORS

Electoral District of Port Arthur.

Rural Polling Division No. 32, Gorham North

Comprising that portion of the Township of Gorham lying North of Concession 3 and including the west half of the Township of Jacques from a line produced between Lots 7 and 8 in said Township of Jacques.

1 Anderson, Eino, farmer, Box 219, Port Arthur	53 Laaks, Arvo, farmer, Lappe
2 Freisting, Sam, farmer, Box 510, Port Arthur	54 Laitinen, Toivo, farmer, Lappe
3 Freisting, Mrs. Sam, Box 510, Port Arthur	55 Miettinen, Lauri, farmer, 144 Secord St., Port Arthur
67 Peterson, Peter, farmer, Box 154, Port Arthur	
68 Peterson, Mrs. Peter, Box 154, Port Arthur	
9 Hietapakka, Arvo, farmer's son, Box 473, Port Arthur	61 Pursiainen, John, farmer, Box 510, Port Arthur
10 Heinaaho, Mrs. Kalle, widow, Lappe	62 Pursiainen, Mrs. John, Box 510, Port Arthur
11 Heinaaho, Vaino, farmer's son, Lappe	63 Pursiainen, Aate, farmer's son, Box 510, Port Arthur
12 Heinaaho, Walter, laborer, Lappe	64 Pursiainen, Abel, farmer, Box 510, Port Arthur
13 Heinaaho, Mrs. Walter, housewife, Lappe.	65 Pursiainen, Mrs. Abel, Box 510, Port Arthur
14 Hendrickson, Jalmar, farmer, Lappe	66 Pursiainen, Miss Malmi, home girl, Box 510, Port Arthur
15 Hendrickson, Mrs. Jalmar, Lappe	67 Peterson, Peter, farmer, Box 154, Port Arthur
16 Hanson, Allan, farmer, Lappe	68 Peterson, Mrs. Peter, Box 154, Port Arthur
17 Hoxell, Oscar, farmer, Lappe	69 Ranta, Kalli, farmer, Lappe
48 Larin, Arthur, farmer, Lappe	103 Rttiaho, Miss Hilda, home girl, Lappe
51 Linna, Mrs. Arthur, Lappe	104 Rttiaho, Uuno, farmer's son, Lappe
52 Loney, Irene, teacher, Lappe	

I hereby certify that the foregoing is the printed preliminary list of electors for rural polling division No. 32, of the electoral district of Port Arthur, as prepared by the appropriate enumerator for use at the pending election.

Dated at Port Arthur, this 26th day of February, 1940.

GEORGE McFARLANE,
Returning Officer.

Printed by Stanworth Commercial Printers, whose address is Lorne Street, Port Arthur, Ont.

Figure 1: 1940 voter list showing Peter and Mrs. Peterson together

SUMMARY

This 1940 Voter List shows Peter^a and Mrs. [Lyyli] Peterson^b lived together as well as John Pursiainen^c who helped buy the land for Tarmola Hall with Erkki and Kalle.

^a(Canada, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer 1940c)

^b(Canada, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer 1940b)

^c(Canada, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer 1940a)

NOTE

The Smolanders were absent, suggesting they never returned from Karelia.

The Dominion Elections Act 1938 10013

Rural Preliminary List of Electors

Electoral District of Port Arthur

Rural Polling Division No. 38, Gorham North

Comprising that portion of the Township of Gorham lying north of concession 3, and lying west of Current River and including the west half of the Township of Jacques, from a line produced between Lots 7 and 8 in the said Township of Jacques.

1 Anderson, Eino, soldier, Box 215, Port Arthur.	52 Lehtonen, Vaino, farmer, Lappe.
12 Heinaaho, Kalle, farmer, Lappe.	53 Niemi, Michael, farmer, Lappe.
72 Peterson, Mrs. Peter, housewife, Box 154, Port Arthur.	
16 Hendrickson, Jalmer, farmer, Lappe.	67 Pursiainen, Mrs. John, widow, Box 510, Port Arthur.
17 Hendrickson, Mrs. Jalmer, Lappe.	68 Pursiainen, Aste, farmer, Box 510, Port Arthur.
18 Hanson, Allan, farmer, Lappe.	69 Pursiainen, Abel, farmer, Box 510, Port Arthur.
19 Hoxell, Oscar, farmer, Lappe.	70 Pursiainen, Miss Maimi, housekpr., Box 510, Pt. Arthur.
20 Heinaaho, Mrs. Kalle, housewife, Lappe.	71 Pursiainen, John, farmer's son, Box 510, Port Arthur.
21 Inkinen, Uno, farmer, Lappe.	72 Peterson, Mrs. Peter, housewife, Box 154, Port Arthur.
22 Inkinen, Mrs. Uno, Lappe.	73 Ranta, Kalle, farmer, Lappe.
43 Kuvilainen, Mrs. Eino, Lappe.	96 Yrttiaho, Miss Anna, home girl, Lappe.
50 Lehtonen, David, farmer, Lappe.	101 Yrttiaho, Uno, soldier, Lappe.
51 Lehtonen, Mrs. David, Lappe.	102 Ylikoski, Walter, farmer, Lappe.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is the printed preliminary list of electors for rural polling division No. 38, of the electoral district of Port Arthur, as prepared by the appropriate enumerator for use at the pending election.

Dated at Port Arthur, this 4th day of May, 1945.

JOSEPH L. McCORMACK,
Returning Officer.

Printed by Stanworth Commercial Printers, whose address is Lorne Street, Port Arthur.

Figure 2: 1945 voter list showing Peter's absence

SUMMARY

This 1945 Voter List shows the absence of Peter which sets an upper bound on when he left the family^a.

^a(Canada, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer 1945b)

NOTE

It also shows that his friend John Pursiainen's wife was widowed^a in the same time period Peter went missing, adding another layer to Peter's grief.

^a(Canada, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer 1945a)

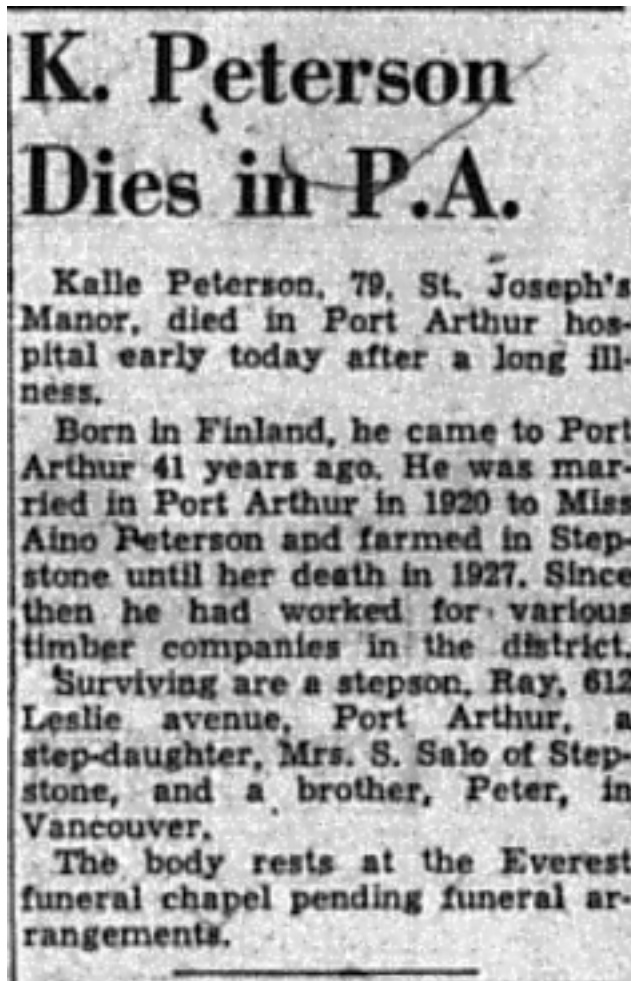


Figure 3: Kalle's 1953 obituary, Fort William Daily Times-Journal

SUMMARY

Kalle's obituary from the Fort William *Daily Times-Journal* in 1953 mentioned Peter *surviving* his brother Kalle in Vancouver^a.

^a(*The Daily Times-Journal* 1953)

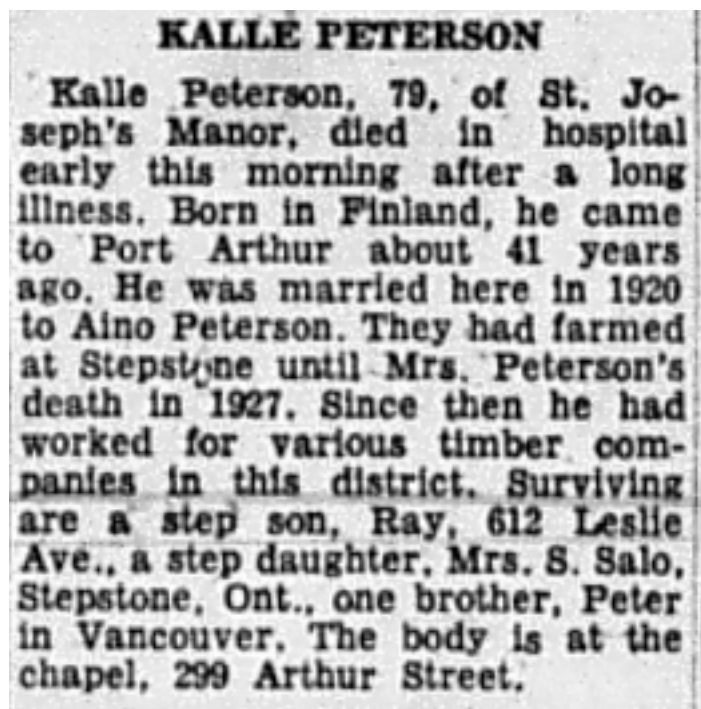


Figure 4: Kalle's obituary, Port Arthur Daily News

SUMMARY

Kalle's obituary from the *Port Arthur Daily News*^a.

^a(*Port Arthur Daily News* 1953)

Both obituaries also mention Kalle leaving Stepstone in 1927 after Aino died, which certainly made life harder for Peter. If you look up Stepstone on Google Maps, that is almost exactly where their homesteads were and is the centre point of what was previously known as Tarmola. It is most likely that Reino (Ray)¹² or Mirjam (Mrs. S[ulo] Salo)¹³ wrote these obituaries and they didn't know Peter had already died. Peter may have kept in touch with Kalle but it's unlikely considering how close Reino and Mirjam were to their step-father.

¹²(*Port Arthur News-Chronicle* 1971)

¹³(*Port Arthur News-Chronicle* 1965)

GEORGIA EAST - (Cont'd)

728*Bobychawk W -HA4075Y
733 Vacant
738*Jones C -HA4487L
743*Glebovich M -HA2857L
744*Sanfills C
747*Sam T -HA7106R
750 Harasmania D
750*Svetee J
751*Johnson Mrs T -HA5549L
754*Graziano D -HA6188R
757*Kinsky N -HA7619R
758*Colos A -HA0487L
763 Vacant
764 Haywarden A
767*Intl Rooms -HA2565
767 Sun T Y -HA2565
772*Olszewski A -HA4821L
773*Louie W -HA6173R
775 Perreault Mrs M -HA8775Y
776*BC Grinding & Saw Filing Wks -HA7661
776*Rossetti A -HA7661L
782 Litwina S -HA0372L
784 Chow J
783*Burk Mtg -HA4822

Figure 5: 1951 B.C. city directory: International Rooms, 767 East Georgia Street

SUMMARY

This 1951 B.C. City Directory clipping shows that International Rooms was at 767 East Georgia Street, Vancouver. Sun T Y, the landlord, appears on the next row^a.

^a(B.C. Directories Limited 1951)

NOTE

The building no longer exists today.

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND WELFARE - DIVISION OF VITAL STATISTICS REGISTRATION OF DEATH

51-09-002651

1. PLACE OF DEATH Name of City or place: Vancouver, B.C. Name of Municipality (if any): ... Dead on arrival at Vancouver General Hospital ... 2. LENGTH OF STAY In Municipality where death occurred: unknown In Province: unknown In Canada (if immigrant): unknown

3. PRINT FULL NAME OF DECEASED: Peterson, Peter (Surname or family name) (All given or Christian names in full)

4. PERMANENT RESIDENCE OF DECEASED: Name of City or place: Vancouver, B.C. Name of Municipality (if any): ... Street or road: East Georgia St. House No.: 737

5. SEX: male 6. CITIZENSHIP: Unknown 7. RACIAL ORIGIN: Finnish 8. Single, Married, Widowed or Divorced: married 9. BIRTHPLACE: Finland

10. Date of Birth: Unknown 11. AGE: about 50

12. (a) Trade, profession or kind of work as logger, farmer, office clerk, etc. laborer (b) Kind of industry or business, as logging, fishing, boat, etc.

13. Date deceased last worked at this occupation: unknown 14. Total years spent in this occupation: unknown

15. If married, widowed or divorced give name of husband or maiden name of wife of deceased: Kapila, Lily

16. Name of father: Peterson, Unknown

17. Maiden name of mother: unknown

18. Birthplace - Father: Finland Mother: Finland

19. I certify the foregoing to be true and correct in the best of my knowledge and belief. Given under my hand at Vancouver, B.C. this 5th day of March 1951. Signature of informant: Vancouver Social Service Dept. none Address of informant: 16 East Hastings St. Vancouver, B.C.

20. Burial, Cremation or Removal: Cremation Date: March 12th 1951 Place of Burial: Vancouver, B.C. Name of Crematory: Vancouver Crematorium

21. Undertaker: Canadian Funeral Home, Ltd. Address: 302 West Broadway, Vancouver.

22. DATE OF DEATH: March 1 1951 23. I HEREBY CERTIFY that I HAVE INQUIRED ON March 9th 1951

CAUSE OF DEATH: 8900 / Asphyxia due to Tarbae (due to 100% absorption of) Maudsley poison. 968A / in alcoholism

24. If a woman, was the death (a) Associated with pregnancy? (b) Date of operation: ... (c) Was there a delivery? ...

25. (a) Was there recent surgical operation? (b) Date of operation: ... (c) State findings of coroner: ...

26. If death was due to external cause (trauma) fill in also the following: (a) Accident, suicide or homicide: Accidental (b) Date of injury: March 1st (c) Nature of vehicle involved: ... (d) Nature of vehicle: ... (e) Nature of accident: ...

27. Signed by: [Signature] Designation: M.D., Curator Address: ... Date: ...

28. Print name of M.D., Curator, etc., whose signature appears above: Jno. Whitbread.

29. I hereby certify that the above entry was made to me at: VANCOUVER, B.C. MAR 10 1951

30. District Registration No. 875 Signature of District Registrar: [Signature]

MARGIN RESERVED FOR BINDING. WRITE PLAINLY, WITH UNFADING INK. THIS IS A PERMANENT RECORD. CITIZENSHIP (NATIONALITY) is defined in terms of the country to which the person owes allegiance. The term "Canadian" should be used as descriptive of a person who was born in Canada or who has rights of Citizenship in Canada, unless he or she has subsequently become the citizen of another country. RACIAL ORIGIN is defined in terms of the people or race to which the person - traced through the father - belongs, whether English, Irish, Scottish, French, German, Russian, Canadian, etc. The terms "Canadian" or "American" should not be used for RACIAL ORIGIN, as they express CITIZENSHIP (NATIONALITY).

DO NOT WRITE BELOW DOUBLE LINE OFFICE USE ONLY

In case of death first consult coroner - file before making out certificate.

Figure 6: 1951 British Columbia death registration for Peter Peterson

SUMMARY

This British Columbia death registration, number 51-09-002651, shows that on March 1, 1951, Peter Peterson, male, Finnish, of 767 East Georgia Street, about 50-years-old, labourer, with wife Lily Kapila [sic], was dead on arrival at Vancouver General Hospital due to asphyxia due to carbon monoxide poisoning due to alcoholism. His death was certified by the coroner, J.D. Whitbread. His informant was the Vancouver Social Services Department. He was cremated at Vancouver Crematorium on March 12^a.

^a(British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency 1951)

NOTE

J.D. Whitbread held an inquiry which is a very basic investigation into the cause of death. It provided more information but unfortunately did not reveal how the informant knew his wife's name^a. With the Vancouver Social Services Department as the informant, it paints a clear picture of Peter being poor and homeless at the time.

^a(British Columbia Coroners Service and Whitbread 1951)

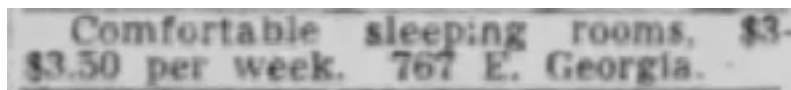


Figure 7: Newspaper clipping about 767 East Georgia Street (1 of 4)

Going Isn't Getting Going Fast Enough

Herbert Going has been given one more chance to get going.

"I'll give you one more chance. If you come back here you'll have to go to jail," Magistrate W. W. B. McInnes told Going, 65, of 767 East Georgia, who appeared in Police Court today on a charge of begging.

"You'd better keep off the Skidroad," Mr. McInness told the accused.

"I'd like to get out of town altogether," replied Going.

A second man charged with begging, Joseph Burns, 40, no fixed address, didn't fare so well. Mr. McInness gave him three months in Oakalla.

Figure 8: Newspaper clipping about 767 East Georgia Street (2 of 4)

8 Hurt in Brawls As New Year Arrives

Eight persons were treated at Vancouver hospitals after minor outbreaks of New Year's Eve violence.

Mr. and Mrs. Sam Lonew, 725 West Eighth, told police a bellicose celebrant attacked them outside their home at 2:45 a.m. Tuesday while they were returning from a party.

He punched Mrs. Lonew in the face, smashing her glasses, and knocked her husband to the ground when he attempted to interfere.

Mr. Lonew said the man, who had apparently been drinking heavily, was about 20, 5 feet 8 inches tall and weighed 150 pounds.

Police today were trying to establish the facts in an attack with a bottle on John Banek, an Indian from Kitsequade Reserve, Skeena Crossing, now staying at 767 East Georgia, who suffered head wounds which required 27 stitches to close.

He was reported to have made his way to St. Paul's Hospital for treatment Tuesday night. Hospital authorities got in touch with police. Banek was unable to say what happened.

A man identified only as Thomas West, 38, was treated at General Hospital for a deep stab wound in the arm Monday night. He left after treatment and gave his address as a Skid Road hotel. Police said, however, that hotel

officials claim they've never heard of him.

Clifford Kosterling, no fixed address, came to police headquarters to report that a soldier struck him on the head with a bottle in a downtown hotel. He couldn't remember which hotel. Police took him to General Hospital where he was treated for a scalp wound.

Seaman G. H. Gobb, on leave from HMCS Naden, Victoria, told police "several" men attacked him during a party in the Ambassador Hotel. He suffered cuts and bruises.

P. Obedekoff, 2305 Alberta, was the object of an elaborate "ambush." He told police he met a girl in the Broadway Hotel and went to a room around the corner with her for a drink. As soon as they got in, two youths broke in, threw him to the floor and took \$40 from his wallet. The girl left when the fight started.

Gustav Mann, 14 West Cordova, suffered a cut nose when he was attacked by three unknown assailants at Columbia and Powell.

Figure 9: Newspaper clipping about 767 East Georgia Street (3 of 4)

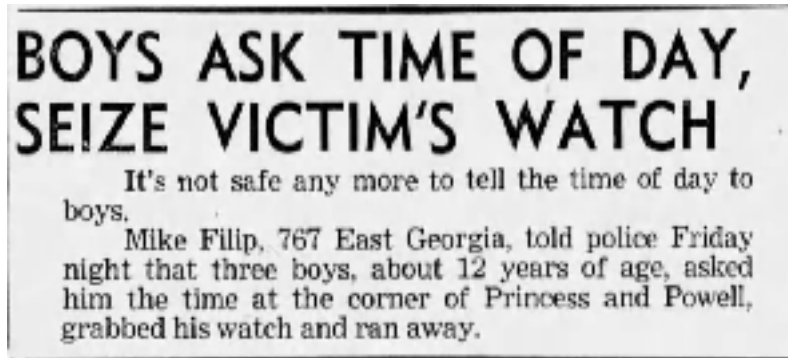


Figure 10: Newspaper clipping about 767 East Georgia Street (4 of 4)

The above newspaper clippings provide us with some insight into the kind of property 767 East Georgia Street was¹⁴, ¹⁵, ¹⁶, ¹⁷.

¹⁴(*The Vancouver Sun* 1949)

¹⁵(*The Vancouver Sun* 1951)

¹⁶(*The Province* 1952)

¹⁷(*The Vancouver Sun* 1950)

Epilogue

The End of Sisu

The story of Sisu ended with Peter. It was the force that drove the family to the Shield, but it was also the stubbornness that refused to let go until the cost became too high. Peter's defeat marked the limit of what endurance alone could achieve.

Miriam and Linnea were left behind by their father, but not by their mother, Lyyli, who remained to pick up the pieces. For them, and the generations that followed, survival would no longer be about battling the landscape with brute force. The cycle of trauma required a different remedy than the one Peter knew. It would take time, but eventually the family would learn what endurance alone could not teach them, breaking the cycle that had claimed so many.

Afterword

The Question of Peter and Hilda's Marriage

Throughout this book I have written about Peter and Hilda as husband and wife, but I have stopped short of giving them a wedding. That is a deliberate choice, and not an obvious one, so it deserves a frank accounting. Despite a good deal of searching, I have never found a marriage certificate for them—not in Ontario, not in Finland, and not in the Quebec or Montreal church registers where a port wedding would most likely have been entered. A fellow genealogist I have corresponded with goes further and wonders whether there was ever a wedding at all—and over time I have come to think he is probably right. Because this question sits so close to the heart of the story, it deserves a full accounting of what we know, what we don't, and why I made the choice I did.

There are really three possibilities, and the surviving evidence pulls in more than one direction.

Option One: A Wedding at the Port

The first possibility, and the one earlier drafts of this book weaved into the narrative, is that Peter married Hilda at Quebec City in August 1912, in the days surrounding her detention. The logic is practical rather than romantic. Hilda boarded the *Royal George* as a “spinster” and a “domestic,” travelling under the borrowed surname Peterson but with no legal claim to it. The Immigration Act of 1910 made “persons likely to become a public charge” a prohibited class, and an order-in-council that May required every arriving immigrant, “male and female,” to land with at least twenty-five dollars¹. A penniless domestic was exactly the sort of arrival the inspectors were instructed to stop—and an unaccompanied woman was scrutinized far more closely than a man, her character and her likelihood of needing “charitable assistance” weighed in ways an able-bodied man's were not². So while Kalle passed through on his own merit, Anna and Hilda were held: sent to the civil detention quarters at Quebec to be judged by a three-member Board of Inquiry whose decision no court could overturn³.

To be released, a detained woman had to satisfy that board—most often by a resident stepping forward to claim her and guarantee she would not become a public charge. Peter could do this for his mother as her son; for Hilda, the most decisive proof of the bond was simply to make her his wife. A marriage would convert her in a single stroke from an unsponsored single woman into the wife of a settled homesteader. If that is what happened, the record would most likely sit in a Montreal or Quebec City church register—exactly where I have searched without success.

¹(Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, n.d.-a)

²(Belshaw, n.d.)

³(Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, n.d.-b)

Option Two: A Quiet Marriage Elsewhere

The second possibility is that they married, but not at the port—either earlier, in Finland, before the crossing, or later, once the family had taken root in Tarmola. The manifests argue against a marriage in Finland: Hilda is recorded as “Miss,” a “spinster,” travelling as a single woman, which is not how a wife of two years would ordinarily have been entered. A later marriage in Ontario is harder to dismiss, and here I have to be careful about what “no record” actually means. The searchable indexes of Ontario marriages are built from the sworn affidavit—the return that spells out the couple’s names—not from the marriage licence that often sits one frame before it on the microfilm. A couple who took out a licence but whose affidavit was never filed, or never indexed, would leave a record that no name search could surface⁴. My empty searches therefore rule out an indexed affidavit; they do not rule out a licence-only record, or a return mis-filed in the Thunder Bay district films, waiting to be found by reading frame by frame.

The likeliest local register, though, has now been checked at the source. The keeper of Epiphany Lutheran Church’s Finnish Lutheran records in Thunder Bay—the books that hold other entries for this family—confirms that the church has no marriage record for Peter and Hilda⁵. That is a meaningful silence: the family was Lutheran, and Peter himself would marry in this very church in 1928. But it is the church’s silence, not the province’s. A civil marriage, or a licence resting in a separate and unindexed series, would leave no trace in a parish book at all.

Option Three: No Marriage at All

The third possibility, and the one the same genealogist also presses, is that there was never a formal wedding at all. This becomes easy to imagine once Peter and Hilda are placed in their actual community. Nominally the family were Lutherans, as the ship’s manifest records, but among the radical, socialist “Red Finns” who built the Tarmola settlement the church held little authority. As one history of Finnish Canada observes, though nearly all Finns left Europe as Lutherans, “many abandoned religion altogether for humanistic socialism or other philosophies”⁶; and even among those who kept the Lutheran name, only a minority took an active part in the church⁷. In that world a couple might simply live together as husband and wife, and be taken as married, without ever standing before a clergyman or a clerk.

This was not a rare or furtive arrangement but a recognized one—and a near-exact precedent lived in their own community. Sanna Kannasto, the foremost organizer of the Finnish-Canadian socialist movement, settled in Port Arthur in 1907 with her partner J. V. Kannasto; she took his surname although the two were never married, “living together without marriage” being, as her biographers put it, “a common habit among radical Finns in North America”⁸. That is almost precisely Hilda’s situation—a woman carrying the Peterson name onto a ship’s manifest with no certificate behind

⁴I owe this distinction to a fellow genealogist, who, in conversation through Geni, raised the possibility that a licence without a filed affidavit might exist for Peter and Hilda. In Ontario’s filmed marriage records the sworn affidavit is the indexed document; the licence is usually the unindexed frame immediately before it, reachable only by browsing.

⁵The keeper of the parish’s Finnish Lutheran records, Epiphany Lutheran Church (Thunder Bay), email to the author, 2026.

⁶(Beaulieu et al. 2018)

⁷(*The Canadian Encyclopedia*, “Finnish Canadians”)

⁸(*Wikipedia*, “Sanna Kannasto”)

it. Under this reading, every later document that calls Hilda Peter’s “wife” is recording a lived relationship rather than a licensed one.

The Weight of the Sworn Records

Against the absence of a wedding certificate sits a body of later evidence that consistently treats them as married—and much of it was set down under oath. The earliest of that evidence rises from the land itself. When Peter transferred his homestead to Hilda in October 1917, the transfer was supported by an affidavit sworn by their Tarmola neighbour Erkki Smolander, attesting that the two were husband and wife⁹; the register duly recorded the parcel passing “to his wife Hilda.” The 1921 census enumerated Hilda plainly as Peter’s “wife.” When Hilda died in 1926, the death registration records her as “married” and names Peter, her husband, as the informant¹⁰. And in 1928, swearing the affidavit for his second marriage to Lyyli Kahila, Peter described himself not as a bachelor but as a “widower”¹¹.

It is the bookends that weigh on me most: a neighbour swearing in 1917 that they were married, and Peter swearing in 1928 that he was widowed. A man who had only ever lived common-law would have had little reason to call himself a widower under oath, and a neighbour little reason to swear to a marriage that had never happened. And yet I hold even this loosely. None of these records is a marriage certificate, and a long, openly acknowledged common-law union could have produced every one of them: to a neighbour, to a census-taker, and to Peter himself, a couple who had lived as man and wife for years simply *were* married. The sworn records prove that Peter and Hilda were taken to be a married couple; they do not, by themselves, prove that a ceremony ever took place.

Why I Tell It Without a Wedding

So why, given the sworn records, have I chosen to tell the story without a wedding? Because it is the reading that asks the least of the evidence. Three things decided me. First, the document closest to the event—the 1912 manifest—releases Hilda from detention not as a new wife but as a single woman vouched for by her family: the heavy ink of the disposition sends the two women “to [the] Brother” at Port Arthur and leaves Hilda entered, in the same breath, as “Miss,” “spinster,” “domestic.” Had a marriage been the instrument of her release, this is the page that should show it, and it does not. Second, the one Lutheran parish that ought to hold a marriage record has none, though it holds the family’s other entries and would host Peter’s own wedding in 1928. Third, the world Peter and Hilda actually lived in—the Red Finn settlement of Tarmola—had little use for the church, and couples like the Kannastos, who lived as husband and wife without a certificate, offered a precedent close to home.

⁹Erkki (Eric) Smolander’s affidavit forms part of the 1917 instrument transferring Peter’s homestead to Hilda (Ontario Land Registry Office 55 1917b). Smolander was a Tarmola neighbour who recurs in these pages—he later bought land from Hilda and helped acquire the ground for Tarmola Hall. The Act suggests why the registry wanted a sworn statement of the couple’s status: for twenty years from the date of location no deed of free-grant land was valid unless the locatee’s wife joined in it, and a widow succeeded to the locatee’s whole interest (R.S.O. 1897, c. 29, ss. 20, 24) (Ontario 1897)—who was married to whom was a fact the land system itself had to know.

¹⁰(Registrar General of Ontario 1926)

¹¹(Registrar General of Ontario 1928)

This is not a certainty, and I hold it as a judgement rather than a finding. The sworn “wife” of 1917 and the sworn “widower” of 1928 are real, and they are the strongest reason to hesitate. But they are precisely what a long, openly acknowledged common-law union would have produced in any case: to a neighbour, to a census-taker, and to Peter himself, a couple who had lived as man and wife for years simply *were* married. I once placed a wedding at the port because it asked the least of the reader; I have come to think it asked too much of the record—inventing a ceremony to explain a silence that the manifest, the parish, and the community already explain between them. I have chosen, then, to honour their union as they most likely lived it: real, lasting, and unsolemnized—married only in the way that mattered to them and to their neighbours, and never in a way that left a certificate to find.

Archetypes

I found these archetypes to be a great way to understand each of Peter’s relatives.

Peter: *The Broken*

- Born with Sisu as a required “survival mechanism” from his first moments, he was ultimately dismantled by the “cumulative tragedy” of the Canadian Shield. Unable to cope with the loss of his family, he withdrew into estrangement, and—as his death would attest—into drink, until the Shield finally “won... by stealing the breath of his life and extinguishing his Sisu.”

Anna Maria (Johnson): *The Canary*

- She was the first of the family to succumb to the new world, dying of heart failure in 1911, little more than a year after her arrival. Just as a canary in a mine stops singing to warn miners of toxic air, her death cast a heavy shadow over the new life, serving as the first grim warning that the Canadian Shield was a hostile environment that would exact a heavy toll on them all.

Moses: *The Pioneer*

- He was the catalyst for the migration, jumping on the opportunity in 1910 to travel ahead of his family to establish the homestead and break ground. Though he died early, his grit secured one thing—the land—successfully transforming the family status from farm servants to landowners.

Anna Maria (Peterson): *The Bedrock*

- Having lost her husband early, she was the foundation that held the family together through illegitimacy and migration. Even at 74, she pushed her body to the absolute limit to fill the void left by others; her death created an acute crisis of stability, proving she was the pillar the family leaned on.

Kalle: *The Steward*

- He defined his life by taking on the burdens of continuity, marrying his brother’s widow, Aino, in a cold calculus of homestead survival to keep the farm going. He raised his niece and nephew as his own, ensuring the family line survived despite his own personal losses.

Aino: *The Spirit*

- She represented the cultural vitality of the family, participating diligently in “party’s activities on the stage” in the Finnish community theatre. Her presence in newspaper greetings wishing for “energy in action” highlights her role in maintaining the family’s social spirit before her illness.

Lyyli: *The Stabilizer*

- Arriving alone from Finland, she entered the family as a “pragmatic choice” to “re-establish the stability” that years of death had stripped away. She stepped in to mother Peter’s daughter Elvi and attempted to rebuild a future with Peter before further tragedy struck.

Elvi: *The Survivor*

- She represents the life that persisted amidst the “shadows that haunted his house.” While her brother Leo and cousins Sulo and Lauri were “claimed” by the river and disease, she survived the “cumulative tragedy” of her childhood, becoming the bond between Peter and his second wife, Lyyli.

Sulo, Leo, & Lauri: *The Cost*

- Sulo and Leo were claimed by the river, while Lauri was taken by the pandemic; the text frames their deaths as the price demanded by the land. With the deaths of Leo and Lauri, the Shield’s ledger was full, marking the terrible toll paid for the family’s survival.

Miriam & Linnea: *The Forsaken*

- Born into a home already “haunted” by shadows, they never knew the resilient pioneer, only the broken man the Shield had defeated. They are the family Peter left behind when he fled to British Columbia to escape the “unpayable debt” of his grief, grappling with the legacy of a father who had already been defeated.

Urho & Urho: *The Seedlings*

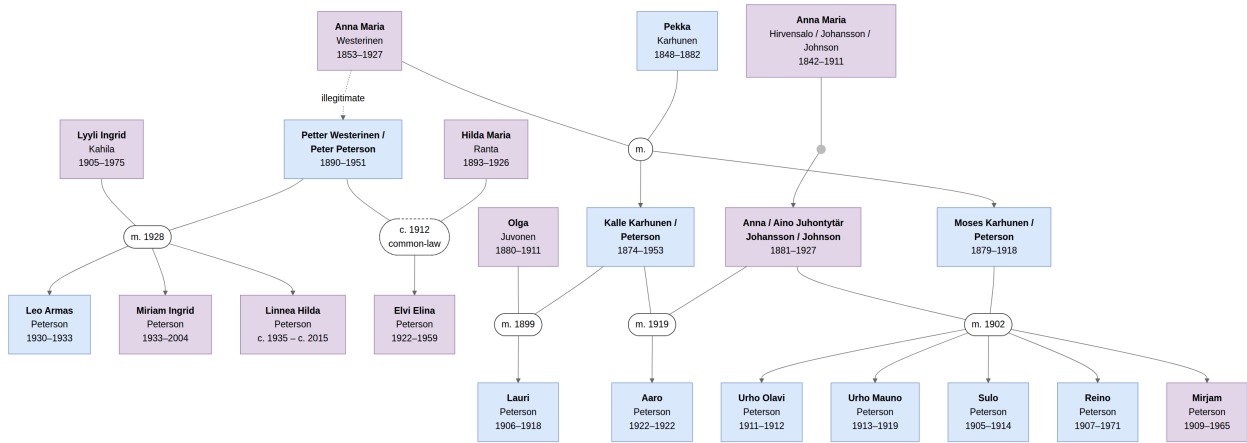
- They were the family’s first attempts to plant a new generation in Canadian soil. Urho Olavi arrived to replace the matriarch, and Urho Mauno arrived to replace him. But the Shield found the roots too shallow; Urho Olavi succumbed to the physical hardships of the new life, and Urho Mauno was taken by disease. Their deaths were the land’s first clear rejection, proving that the Peterson bloodline had not yet found purchase in the stone.

Reino & Mirjam: *The Transplants*

- They were saplings dug up from the Old World and forced to strike new roots in the thin, acidic soil of the Shield. Hardier than the brothers lost to sickness and the ice, they survived the shock of migration, yet they remain forever marked by the transition. They bridge the gap between Karttula and Gorham, carrying the unique burden of remembering the home they left while watching this new land consume their siblings, proving that only those with the toughest bark could endure the transplant.

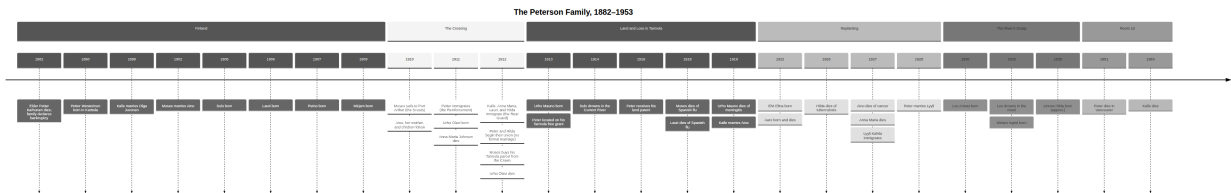
Family Tree

This abridged family tree can help visualize how Peter related to each person in his story.



Timeline

The family trees show *who* the characters were; this timeline shows *when* the events of their lives unfolded. It gathers the births, deaths, marriages, and migrations recorded throughout the story into a single chronological view.



Bibliography

- Archives & Digital Collections at Lakehead University Library. early 1900s. “Finnish National Evangelical Lutheran Church.” Archive. early 1900s. Accessed January 1, 2026. <https://digitalcollections.lakeheadu.ca/items/show/2580>.
- Asikkalan seurakunta (Asikkala Parish). 1881. “Syntyneet Ja Kastetut 1880–1885 (MKO76-83) — Aina, b. March 17, 1881.” Suomen Sukuhistoriallinen Yhdistys (SSHY). Accessed July 3, 2026. <http://www.sukuhistoria.fi/sshy/sivut/jasenille/paikat.php?bid=16024&pnum=61>.
- Austermann, Harold. 1970. “A History of the National Evangelical Lutheran Church to Merger with the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod.” Bachelor of Divinity research paper, Concordia Seminary. Accessed July 3, 2026. <https://scholar.csl.edu/bdiv/773>.
- Auttaja* (Ironwood, Michigan). 1933. “Suomalainen Lapsi Hukkui Pieneen Puroon Kotinsa Lähellä Gorhamissa.” October 26, p. 1.
- B.C. Directories Limited. 1951. “Intl Rooms, 767 Georgia East.” Address Book Record. B.C. Directories Limited. British Columbia City Directories 1860-1955; 1951 Vancouver and New Westminster City Directory, p. 272; Reel 980037. Vancouver Public Library. Accessed February 4, 2026. https://bccd.vpl.ca/title/1951/Vancouver_and_New_Westminster_City_Directory.html.
- Beamish, Roy. 1940. “Red-Tinged Bodies Banned Along With ‘Cultural’ Societies | FASCISTS ALSO | 16 Groups Held to be Illegal.” *The Globe and Mail* (1936-) (Toronto, Ontario, Canada), June 6, p. 1–2. ISSN 03190714. Accessed January 29, 2026. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/1356011217/abstract/772697CB61C4490DPQ/1>.
- Beaulieu, Michel S., David K. Ratz, and Ronald N. Harpelle, eds. 2018. *Hard Work Conquers All: Building the Finnish Community in Canada*. UBC Press.
- Beaulieu, Michel S., David Ratz, Thorold Tronrud, and Jenna Kirker. n.d. *Thunder Bay and the First World War, 1914-1919*. Thunder Bay Museum. Accessed July 3, 2026. <https://www.thunderbaymuseum.com/product/thunder-bay-and-the-first-world-war-1914-1919/>.
- Belshaw, John Douglas. n.d. “Female Immigrants and the Canadian State, 1860s Through the 20th Century.” In *Canadian History: Post-Confederation*. BCcampus Open Education. Accessed June 27, 2026. <https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation/chapter/5-10-female-immigrants-and-the-canadian-state-1860s-through-the-20th-century/>.
- Board of Trade. 1910a. “A Karhunen.” Passenger Leaving UK. FindMyPast, August 12. BT 27; Board Of Trade: Commercial And Statistical Department And Successors: Outwards Passenger

- Lists; Passenger Lists Leaving UK 1890-1960; Canadian Pacific “Empress of Britain”; Ticket 169202. The National Archives; database with images, FindMyPast. Accessed December 21, 2025. <https://www.findmypast.co.uk/transcript?id=TNA%2FBT27%2F0662000052%2F00698>.
- Board of Trade. 1910b. “Moses Karhunen.” Passenger Leaving UK. FindMyPast, May 7. BT 27; Board Of Trade: Commercial And Statistical Department And Successors: Outwards Passenger Lists; Passenger Lists Leaving UK 1890-1960; Allan Line “Pretorian”; Ticket 873. The National Archives; database with images, FindMyPast. Accessed December 21, 2025. <https://www.findmypast.co.uk/transcript?id=TNA%2FBT27%2F0646000013%2F00100>.
- Board of Trade. 1911. “Pekka Westerinen.” Passenger Leaving UK. FindMyPast, June 30. BT 27; Board Of Trade: Commercial And Statistical Department And Successors: Outwards Passenger Lists; Passenger Lists Leaving UK 1890-1960; Allan Line “Tunisian”; Ticket 149615. The National Archives; database with images, FindMyPast. Accessed December 21, 2025. <https://www.findmypast.co.uk/transcript?id=TNA%2FBT27%2F0708000050%2F00905>.
- Board of Trade. 1912. “Kalle Peterson.” Passenger Leaving UK. FindMyPast, August 7. BT 27; Board Of Trade: Commercial And Statistical Department And Successors: Outwards Passenger Lists; Passenger Lists Leaving UK 1890-1960; Royal Line “Royal George”; Ticket 3774. The National Archives; database with images, FindMyPast. Accessed December 21, 2025. <https://www.findmypast.co.uk/transcript?id=TNA%2FBT27%2F0742000033%2F00517>.
- Board of Trade. 1927. “Lyyli Kahila.” Passenger Leaving UK. FindMyPast, August 12. BT 27; Board Of Trade: Commercial And Statistical Department And Successors: Outwards Passenger Lists; Passenger Lists Leaving UK 1890-1960; Canadian Pacific “Montcalm”; Ticket 169202. The National Archives; database with images, FindMyPast. Accessed December 28, 2025. <https://www.findmypast.co.uk/transcript?id=TNA%2FBT27%2F1158000020%2F00594>.
- Britannica. 2025. “Canadian Shield.” Encyclopedia. November 7. Accessed December 29, 2025. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Canadian-Shield>.
- British Columbia Coroners Service, and J.D. Whitbread. 1951. “B.C. Coroner’s Inquiry. Peter Peterson.” Coroner’s Inquiry. Vancouver, B.C., March 3. C-81-4-89. British Columbia Archives.
- British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency. 1951. “Peter Peterson.” Death Registration. British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency, March 1. Reg. No. 1951-09-002651; Film B13207; GSU Film 2032699. British Columbia Archives. Accessed December 28, 2025. https://search-collections.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/Genealogy/Results?as.type_death=true&as.registration_num=1951-09-002651.
- Canada, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer. 1940a. “John Pursiainen.” Voter List. Ancestry.com. RG113-B (R1003-6-3-E); Electoral District of Port Arthur, Rural Polling Division No. 32, Gorham North, image 117 of 215. Row 61. Library and Archives Canada; database with images, Ancestry.com. Accessed January 3, 2025. <https://www.ancestry.ca/search/collections/2983/records/28970184>.
- Canada, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer. 1940b. “Mrs. Peter Peterson.” Voter List. Ancestry.com. RG113-B (R1003-6-3-E); Electoral District of Port Arthur, Rural Polling Division No.

- 32, Gorham North, image 117 of 215. Row 68. Library and Archives Canada; database with images, Ancestry.com. Accessed January 3, 2025. <https://www.ancestry.ca/search/collections/2983/records/28970184>.
- Canada, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer. 1940c. "Peter Peterson." Voter List. Ancestry.com. RG113-B (R1003-6-3-E); Electoral District of Port Arthur, Rural Polling Division No. 32, Gorham North, image 117 of 215. Row 67. Library and Archives Canada; database with images, Ancestry.com. Accessed January 3, 2025. <https://www.ancestry.ca/search/collections/2983/records/28970184>.
- Canada, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer. 1945a. "Mrs. John Pursiainen." Voter List. Ancestry.com. RG113-B (R1003-6-3-E); Electoral District of Port Arthur, Rural Polling Division No. 38, Gorham North, image 120 of 248. Row 67. Library and Archives Canada; database with images, Ancestry.com. Accessed January 3, 2025. <https://www.ancestry.ca/search/collections/2983/records/28970184>.
- Canada, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer. 1945b. "Mrs. Peter Peterson." Voter List. Ancestry.com. RG113-B (R1003-6-3-E); Electoral District of Port Arthur, Rural Polling Division No. 38, Gorham North, image 120 of 248. Row 72. Library and Archives Canada; database with images, Ancestry.com. Accessed January 3, 2025. <https://www.ancestry.ca/search/collections/2983/records/28970184>.
- Canadian Utiset* (Port Arthur, Thunder Bay District, Ontario, Canada). 1922. "Hautaus." Paikkakunnalta. August 3, p. 7. ISSN 0008-2775. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed January 15, 2026. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/2786485?page=7>.
- Canadian Utiset* (Sudbury). 1915. "Lavantautia Tarmolassa." November 25, p. 5. ISSN 0008-2775. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed January 15, 2026. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/2781281?term=Tarmolan&page=5>.
- Canadian Utiset* (Sudbury). 1916. "Koulukokous." August 31, p. 2. ISSN 0008-2775. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed January 15, 2026. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/2781326?term=Tarmolan&page=2>.
- Canadian Utiset* (Sudbury). 1919a. "Hautajaiset: Urho Mauno Olavi." April 17, p. 7. ISSN 0008-2775. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed December 31, 2025. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/2786025?page=7>.
- Canadian Utiset* (Sudbury). 1919b. "Paikkakunnalta: Häitä." July 31, p. 7. ISSN 0008-2775. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed December 31, 2025. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/2786018?page=7>.
- Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21. n.d.-a. "Immigration Act, 1910." Halifax, Nova Scotia. Accessed June 27, 2026. <https://pier21.ca/research/immigration-history/immigration-act-1910>.
- Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21. n.d.-b. "Port of Precedence: A History of Immigration at the Port of Quebec." Halifax, Nova Scotia. Accessed June 27, 2026. <https://pier21.ca/research/immigration-history/port-precedence-history-quebec-1>.

- Dominion Bureau of Statistics. 1921a. "1921 Census of Canada: Family 14, Chas. Peterson." Census Record. Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, June 1. RG 31; Reel T-25833; Image e003029549; Census Place: District 120, Port Arthur and Kenora, Subdistrict 10, Gorham Township (Ware), Ontario; Page: 2; Line 18. Library and Archives Canada. Accessed December 27, 2025. <https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/home/record?app=census&IdNumber=64984717&ecopy=e003029549>.
- Dominion Bureau of Statistics. 1921b. "1921 Census of Canada: Family 15, Victor Johnson." Census Record. Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, June 1. RG 31; Reel T-25833; Image e003029549; Census Place: District 120, Port Arthur and Kenora, Subdistrict 10, Gorham Township (Ware), Ontario; Page: 2; Line 22. Library and Archives Canada. Accessed January 23, 2026. <https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/home/record?app=census&IdNumber=64984721&ecopy=e003029549>.
- Dominion Bureau of Statistics. 1921c. "1921 Census of Canada: Family 16, Peter Peterson." Census Record. Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, June 1. RG 31; Reel T-25833; Image e003029549; Census Place: District 120, Port Arthur and Kenora, Subdistrict 10, Gorham Township (Ware), Ontario; Page: 2; Line 27. Library and Archives Canada. Accessed December 27, 2025. <https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/home/record?app=census&IdNumber=64984726&ecopy=e003029549>.
- Dominion Bureau of Statistics. 1921d. "1921 Census of Canada: Family 48, Jacob Hirvi." Census Record. Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, June 1. RG 31; Reel T-25833; Image e003029640; Census Place: District 120, Port Arthur and Kenora, Subdistrict 17, Port Arthur City - Second Ward, Ontario; Page: 4; Line 43. Library and Archives Canada. Accessed January 24, 2026. <https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/Home/Record?app=census&IdNumber=64987290&ecopy=e003029640>.
- Dominion Bureau of Statistics. 1931a. "1931 Census of Canada: Family 107, Eric Smolander." Census Record. Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, June 1. Image e011672189; Census Place: District 144B, Port Arthur-Thunder Bay, Subdistrict 9, Gorham and Jacques (Townships), Ontario; Page: 10; Line: 25. Library and Archives Canada. Accessed December 27, 2025. <https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/Home/Record?app=census&IdNumber=81315112&ecopy=e011672189>.
- Dominion Bureau of Statistics. 1931b. "1931 Census of Canada: Family 108, Peter Peterson." Census Record. Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, June 1. Image e011672189; Census Place: District 144B, Port Arthur-Thunder Bay, Subdistrict 9, Gorham and Jacques (Townships), Ontario; Page: 10; Line: 27. Library and Archives Canada. Accessed December 27, 2025. <https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/Home/Record?app=census&IdNumber=81315114&ecopy=e011672189>.
- Dominion Bureau of Statistics. 1931c. "1931 Census of Canada: Family 112, John Pursiainen." Census Record. Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, June 1. Image e011672189; Census Place: District 144B, Port Arthur-Thunder Bay, Subdistrict 9, Gorham and Jacques (Townships), Ontario; Page: 10; Line: 43. Library and Archives Canada. Accessed December 27, 2025. <https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/Home/Record?app=census&IdNumber=81315130&ecopy=e011672189>.

- Dufault, Harriet. 1920. "Gorhamissa, Tarmolan koululla No. 3, ovat tutkinnon suorittaneet seuraavat oppilaat ja ylennetty luokilla." *Canadian Uutiset* (Sudbury), July 1, p. 7. ISSN 0008-2775. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed December 31, 2025. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/2786051?page=7>.
- Finland Steamship Company. 1910a. "Anna Maria Johnson." Passenger List Record. Migration Institute of Finland, August 3. List 82, Page 46. Åbo Akademi University Library, Manuscript Collections. Accessed January 22, 2026. https://siirtolaisrekisteri.siirtolaisuusinstituutti.fi/passenger_list/15047896/.
- Finland Steamship Company. 1910b. "Moses Karhunen." Passenger List Record. Migration Institute of Finland, April 27. List 77, Page 96. Åbo Akademi University Library, Manuscript Collections. Accessed January 22, 2026. https://siirtolaisrekisteri.siirtolaisuusinstituutti.fi/passenger_list/15035456/.
- Finland Steamship Company. 1911. "Pekka Westerinen." Passenger List Record. Migration Institute of Finland, June 21. List 95, Page 12. Åbo Akademi University Library, Manuscript Collections. Accessed December 1, 2025. https://siirtolaisrekisteri.siirtolaisuusinstituutti.fi/passenger_list/15078518/.
- Finland Steamship Company. 1912. "Kalle Peterson." Passenger List Record. Migration Institute of Finland, July 31. List 86, Page 79. Åbo Akademi University Library, Manuscript Collections. Accessed December 18, 2025. https://siirtolaisrekisteri.siirtolaisuusinstituutti.fi/passenger_list/14423214/.
- Finland Steamship Company. 1927. "Lyyli Kahila." Passenger List Record. Migration Institute of Finland, August 3. List 122, Page 54. Åbo Akademi University Library, Manuscript Collections. Accessed December 28, 2025. https://siirtolaisrekisteri.siirtolaisuusinstituutti.fi/passenger_list/15136339/.
- Finlandia Neighbourhood. 2009. "The Neighbourhood." Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada. Accessed January 21, 2026. <http://www.finlandianeighbourhood.com/neighbourhood.html>.
- H, T. 1924. "Kivikoski, Ont." *Canadian Uutiset* (Sudbury), October 2, p. 6. ISSN 0008-2775. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed January 15, 2026. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/2795790?term=Tarmolan&page=6>.
- Harris, Cole. 2010. "The Spaces of Early Canada." *Canadian Historical Review* 91 (4): p. 753. Accessed December 29, 2025. <https://research-ebSCO-com.barrie.idm.oclc.org/linkprocessor/plink?id=1c5680ca-ae01-3cf6-b771-15d2f752d677>.
- Hellström, Wilh. 1882. "Kauppapalwelia Petter Karhusen Karttulassa konkurssipesän." *Savo* (Kuopio, Finland), July 4, p. 3. ISSN 1458-655X. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed February 5, 2026. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/450085?term=Petter%20Karhusen&page=3>.
- HisKi Project, Genealogical Society of Finland. 1842. "Kastetut — Anna Maria, b. May 19, 1842, baptized May 21, Paaso, Hirvensalo; father tp. Carl Andersson, mother Hedvig Johansdotter."

Accessed July 3, 2026. <https://hiski.genealogia.fi/hiski?en+t1303757+2754404357+-1678796047>.

Immigration Branch, Department of Interior, Canada. 1910a. "Aga Karhunen." Passenger List Record. FamilySearch, August 18. Canada, Passenger Lists, 1881-1922; Microfilm T-4770; DGS: 004542873; Image: 476; Quebec "Empress of Britain"; Page 11; Ticket 156159. Library and Archives Canada; database with images, FamilySearch. Accessed January 26, 2026. <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:2HLM-14F>.

Immigration Branch, Department of Interior, Canada. 1910b. "Moses Karhunen." Passenger List Record. FamilySearch, May 16. Canada, Passenger Lists, 1881-1922; Microfilm T-4766; DGS: 004542746; Image: 214; Quebec "Pretorian"; Page 19; Ticket 873. Library and Archives Canada; database with images, FamilySearch. <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:2H25-91N>.

Immigration Branch, Department of Interior, Canada. 1911. "Pekka Westerinen." Passenger List Record. FamilySearch, July 9. Canada, Passenger Lists, 1881-1922; Microfilm T-4778; DGS: 004543097; Image: 466; Quebec "Tunisian"; Page 94; Ticket 91813. Library and Archives Canada; database with images, FamilySearch. <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:2HL8-B5C>.

Immigration Branch, Department of Interior, Canada. 1912. "Kalle Peterson." Passenger List Record. FamilySearch, August 14. Canada, Passenger Lists, 1881-1922; Microfilm T-4790; DGS: 004543957; Image: 96; Quebec "Royal George"; Ticket 3774. Library and Archives Canada; database with images, FamilySearch. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:2HLT-7J8>.

Immigration Branch, Department of Interior, Canada. 1927. "Lyyli Kahila." Passenger List Record. Ancestry.com Operations Inc, August 20. Passenger Lists, 1865-1935; Series: RG 76-C; Roll: T-14737; Quebec, 1927, 08, Image: 499; Quebec "Montcalm"; Page 28; Ticket 22. Library and Archives Canada; database with images, Ancestry.com. <https://www.ancestry.ca/search/collections/1263/records/2573196>.

Johanneksen seurakunta (Johannes Parish). 1880. "Syntyneiden ja kastettujen luettelot 1866–1903 (I C:6), tiedosto 94 — Olga, b. December 3, 1880, Pukkisaari." Johanneksen seurakunnan arkisto, I Väestörekisteriarkisto, I C Syntyneiden ja kastettujen luettelot, I C:6. Kansallisarkisto (National Archives of Finland).

Karttulan seurakunta (Karttula Parish). 1882. "Petter Karhunen." Death Record. Karttula, Finland, August 3. *Kuolleet 1850-1897 (Deaths 1850-1897)*; Signum: AP I F:3; Page 135 (image 71). Kansallisarkisto (National Archives of Finland); digital images, SSHY (Finnish Family History Association). Accessed December 29, 2025. https://www.sukuhistoria.fi/sshy/sivut_eng/jasenille/paikat.php?bid=39969&pnum=71.

Karttulan seurakunta (Karttula Parish). 1890a. "N11. Nurkkala. Petter Karhunen vaimo Anna Maria Vesterinen." Children's Book Record. Karttula, Finland, March 9. *Lastenkirja 1880-1890 (Children 1880-1890)*; Signum: AP_2 I Ab:13; Page 626 (image 296). Kansallisarkisto (National Archives of Finland); digital images, SSHY (Finnish Family History Association). Accessed January 25, 2026. <https://www.sukuhistoria.fi/sshy/sivut/jasenille/paikat.php?bid=39871&pnum=296>.

Karttulan seurakunta (Karttula Parish). 1890b. "Petter Westerinen." Birth & Baptism Record.

- Karttula, Finland, February 13. *Syntyneet ja Kastetut 1880-1890 (Born and Baptized 1880-1890)*; Signum: AP I C:4; Page 783 (image 189). Kansallisarkisto (National Archives of Finland); digital images, SSHY (Finnish Family History Association). Accessed December 29, 2025. <https://www.sukuhistoria.fi/sshy/sivut/jasenille/paikat.php?bid=39892&pnum=189>.
- Karttulan seurakunta (Karttula Parish). 1890c. “Rippikirja 1881–1890, Karttula 11 Nurkkala — Anna Maria Westerinen (b. March 15, 1853).” Communion Record. Karttula, Finland. Rippikirja 1881–1890; Signum MKO59-93; Page 626 (image 628). Kansallisarkisto (National Archives of Finland); digital images, SSHY (Finnish Family History Association). Accessed June 28, 2026. <http://www.sukuhistoria.fi/sshy/sivut/jasenille/paikat.php?bid=15486&pnum=628>.
- Karttulan seurakunta (Karttula Parish). 1910. “Pekka Karhunen.” Communion Record. Karttula, Finland. *Rippikirja 1901-1910 (Communion 1901-1910)*; Vol. 5 of 6; Signum: AP_4 I Aa:24; Page 1914 (image 235). Kansallisarkisto (National Archives of Finland); digital images, SSHY (Finnish Family History Association). Accessed December 29, 2025. <https://www.sukuhistoria.fi/sshy/sivut/jasenille/paikat.php?bid=39838&pnum=235>.
- Kielitoimiston Sanakirja. 2024. “Loinen.” Dictionary. Kotimaisten kielten keskus ja Kielikone Oy. Accessed February 7, 2026. <https://www.kielitoimistonsanakirja.fi/#/loinen>.
- “Kivikoski Cemetery.” n.d. *CanadaGenWeb’s Cemetery Project*. Accessed January 24, 2026. <https://cemetery.canadagenweb.org/cem-details/>.
- Kysy kirjastonhoitajalta (Ask a Librarian). n.d. “Koska juhannus siirtyi viikonlopuksi, niin että aatto on pe jne.” Kirjastot.fi. Accessed July 3, 2026. <https://www.kirjastot.fi/kysy/koska-juhannus-siirtyi-viikonlopuksi-niin>.
- Lindström, Varpu. n.d. “History of Finland-Canada Relations.” Finland Abroad: Canada. Accessed January 11, 2026. <https://finlandabroad.fi/web/can/history-of-finland-canada-relations>.
- N., Ennis D. 1895. “Matkustakaa aurinkorikkaaseen Canadaan ja tulkaa rikkaaksi!” *Rauman Lehti* (Finland), January 5. 2nd ed., p. 4. ISSN 1458-2643. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed December 29, 2025. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/556868?page=4>.
- Ontario. 1868. “Free Grants and Homesteads.” In *Statutes of the Province of Ontario*. Queen’s Printer.
- Ontario. 1897. “An Act respecting Free Grants and Homesteads to Actual Settlers on Public Lands (The Free Grants and Homesteads Act), R.S.O. 1897, c. 29; and An Act respecting Free Grants and Homesteads to Actual Settlers on Public Lands in the District of Rainy River, c. 30.” In *The Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1897, Vol. I*. L.K. Cameron.
- Ontario District Court, Thunder Bay District. 1919. “Estate of Moses Peterson.” Probate Record. Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada. Image Group Number 008445271, images 2055-2068 of 2923. FamilySearch. Accessed January 2, 2026. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3MZ-KTPN>.

- Ontario District Court, Thunder Bay District. 1926. "Estate of Hilda Maria Ranta Peterson." Probate Record. Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada. Image Group Number 008445277, images 197-209. FamilySearch. Accessed January 2, 2026. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3MZ-P42V>.
- Ontario Land Registry Office 55. 1916a. "Free Grant (Peter Peterson)." Land Registry Instrument. OnLand, November 22. LRO 55; Document; Instrument PPA2928. ServiceOntario; OnLand. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/55/documents/instrument>.
- Ontario Land Registry Office 55. 1916b. "Parcel 4801." Land Register. OnLand. LRO 55; Abstract/Parcel Register Book; Book 13; Thunder Bay; Freehold Parcel 4695 to 4803; Page 368; Vol. 23 (Freeholds). ServiceOntario; OnLand. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/55/books/78263/viewer/755971?page=368>.
- Ontario Land Registry Office 55. 1917a. "Notice of Government Loan (Peter Peterson, \$500)." Land Registry Instrument. OnLand, February 23. LRO 55; Document; Instrument 14306 (Notice of Loan); Parcel 4801. ServiceOntario; OnLand. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/55/books/78263/viewer/755971?page=368>.
- Ontario Land Registry Office 55. 1917b. "Transfer (Peter Peterson to Hilda Maria Ranta Peterson, \$800)." Land Registry Instrument. OnLand, November 5. LRO 55; Document; Instrument 14936 (Transfer); Parcel 4801. ServiceOntario; OnLand. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/55/books/78263/viewer/755971?page=368>.
- Ontario Land Registry Office 55. 1919. "Parcel 5126." Land Register. OnLand. LRO 55; Abstract/Parcel Register Book; Book 16; Thunder Bay; Freehold Parcel 5031 to 5137; Page 273; Vol. 24 (Freeholds). ServiceOntario; OnLand. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/55/books/76151/viewer/581473050?page=201>.
- Ontario Land Registry Office 55. 1921a. "Transfer (Aino Peterson to Lauri Waananen, \$500)." Land Registry Instrument. OnLand, July 26. LRO 55; Document; Instrument 16655 (Transfer); Parcel 5126 to Parcel 5320. ServiceOntario; OnLand. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/55/books/76151/viewer/581473050?page=201>.
- Ontario Land Registry Office 55. 1921b. "Transfer of Tarmola Hall Land (Hilda Peterson to Kalle Peterson, John Pursiainen & Erkki Smolander)." Land Registry Instrument. OnLand, April 20. LRO 55; Document; Instrument 16473 (Transfer); Parcel 4801 to Parcel 5291. ServiceOntario; OnLand. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/55/books/78263/viewer/755971?page=368>.
- Ontario Land Registry Office 55. 1924. "Parcel 5650." Land Register. OnLand. LRO 55; Abstract/Parcel Register Book; Book 21; Thunder Bay; Freehold Parcel 5589 to 5698; Page 201; Vol. 27 (Freeholds). ServiceOntario; OnLand. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/55/books/76151/viewer/581473050?page=201>.
- Ontario Land Registry Office 55. 1925. "Transfer (Peter & Hilda Peterson to Ivor Wilgren, \$650)." Land Registry Instrument. OnLand, April 23. LRO 55; Document; Instrument 18305 (Transfer); Parcel 5650. ServiceOntario; OnLand. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/55/books/76151/viewer/581473050?page=201>.

- Ontario Land Registry Office 55. 1926. “Transfer (Lauri Waananen to Peter Peterson, \$200).” Land Registry Instrument. OnLand, January 26. LRO 55; Document; Instrument 18617 (Transfer); Parcel 5320. ServiceOntario; OnLand. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/55/books/76161/viewer/563712025?page=225>.
- Ontario Land Registry Office 55. 1927a. “Notice of Government Loan (Peter Peterson, \$500, 1927).” Land Registry Instrument. OnLand, December 10. LRO 55; Document; Instrument 11445 (Notice of Loan); Parcel 4801. ServiceOntario; OnLand. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/55/books/78263/viewer/755971?page=368>.
- Ontario Land Registry Office 55. 1927b. “Transmission (Hilda Peterson, Deceased, to Peter Peterson).” Land Registry Instrument. OnLand, November 12. LRO 55; Document; Instrument 19417 (Transmission); Parcel 4801. ServiceOntario; OnLand. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/55/books/78263/viewer/755971?page=368>.
- Ontario Land Registry Office 55. 1928. “Transfer (Kalle Peterson, John Pursiainen & Erkki Smolander to Finnish Organization of Canada).” Land Registry Instrument. OnLand, January 5. LRO 55; Document; Instrument 19467 (Transfer); Parcel 5291. ServiceOntario; OnLand. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/55/books/76161/viewer/833323817?page=121>.
- Ontario Land Registry Office 55. 1931. “Caution (Erkki Smolander, Parcel 4801 East of Current River).” Land Registry Instrument. OnLand, July 11. LRO 55; Document; Instrument 20996 (Caution); Parcel 4801. ServiceOntario; OnLand. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/55/books/78263/viewer/755971?page=368>.
- Ontario Land Registry Office 55. 1938. “Transfer (Peter & Lyyli Peterson to David Nikkola, \$100).” Land Registry Instrument. OnLand, April 20. LRO 55; Document; Instrument 25253 (Transfer); Parcel 4801 to Parcel 7408. ServiceOntario; OnLand. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/55/books/78263/viewer/755971?page=368>.
- Ontario Land Registry Office 55. 1939. “Free Grant (Peter Peterson, Parcel 7275, \$40).” Land Registry Instrument. OnLand, September 20. LRO 55; Document; Instrument 4664 (Free Grant Patent); Parcel 7275. ServiceOntario; OnLand. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/55/books/76041/viewer/850100251?page=102>.
- Ontario Land Registry Office 55. 1945. “Notice of Forfeiture to the Crown (Parcel 5291).” Land Registry Instrument. OnLand, October 29. LRO 55; Document; Instrument 29878 (Notice of Forfeiture); Parcel 5291. ServiceOntario; OnLand. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/55/books/76161/viewer/833323817?page=121>.
- Ontario Land Registry Office 55. 1962. “Parcel 13072.” Land Register. OnLand. LRO 55; Abstract/Parcel Register Book; Book 67; Thunder Bay; Freehold Parcel 12901 to 13100; Page 202; Vol. 62 (Freeholds). ServiceOntario; OnLand. <https://www.onland.ca/ui/55/books/76202/viewer/545821498?page=202>.
- Parkanon seurakunta (Parkano Parish). 1905. “Syntyneet Ja Kastetut 1897–1916, Parkano — Lyyli Ingrid Kahila (b. March 3, 1905).” Birth & Baptism Record. Parkano, Finland. Syntyneet ja kastetut 1897–1916; Signum AP I C:4; Page 310 (March 1905, no. 1). Kansallisarkisto (National

- Archives of Finland); digital images, SSHY (Finnish Family History Association). Accessed June 28, 2026. <http://www.sukuhistoria.fi/sshy/sivut/jasenille/paikat.php?bid=31070&pnum=158>.
- Parks Canada. 2024. “The Spanish Flu in Canada (1918-1920) National Historic Event.” July 4. Accessed December 27, 2025. <https://parks.canada.ca/culture/designation/evenement-event/grippe-espagnole-spanish-flu>.
- Peterson, Aino. 1919. “Kuollut: Urho Mauno Olavi.” *Canadian Uutiset* (Sudbury), April 17, p. 7. ISSN 0008-2775. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed December 31, 2025. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/2786025?page=7>.
- Peterson, P. 1922. “HETI POIKIVA LEHMÄ MYYTÄVÄNÄ.” *Canadian Uutiset* (Sudbury), June 15, p. 7. ISSN 0008-2775. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed January 2, 2025. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/2786462?page=7>.
- Phillips & Benner. 1940. “Crown Land Plan. Gorham. Thunder Bay District.” Ontario Land Survey. Patent Plans Collection. Ontario Archives. Accessed December 29, 2025. <https://maps.library.utoronto.ca/datapub/Ontario/PatentPlans/PatentPlansOntario/PP.html#gorham>.
- Port Arthur Daily News* (Port Arthur, Thunder Bay District, Ontario, Canada). 1953. “Kalle Peterson.” December 4, p. 3. Thunder Bay Public Library.
- Port Arthur Daily News* (Port Arthur, Thunder Bay District, Ontario, Canada). 1965. “Mrs. T. Johnson Dies at Age 81.” November 27, p. 3. Thunder Bay Public Library.
- Port Arthur Daily News* (Port Arthur). 1914. “Boy is Drowned in Current River.” December 10, p. 1. Thunder Bay Public Library.
- Port Arthur News-Chronicle*. 1959a. “Miss E. Peterson.” Deaths. August 17, p. 3. Port Arthur Daily News / Port Arthur News-Chronicle Obituary Index, 1906–1972.
- Port Arthur News-Chronicle*. 1959b. “Notice to Creditors — estate of Elvi Elina Peterson.” November 9, p. 20. Port Arthur Daily News / Port Arthur News-Chronicle, 1906–1972.
- Port Arthur News-Chronicle*. 1965. “Mrs. Sulo Salo Dies at Age 56.” November 15, p. 3. Port Arthur Daily News / Port Arthur News-Chronicle Obituary Index, 1906–1972.
- Port Arthur News-Chronicle*. 1971. “PETERSON—Ray (Reino).” Vital Statistics: Deaths. January 4, p. 3. Port Arthur Daily News / Port Arthur News-Chronicle Obituary Index, 1906–1972.
- Raiskila, Erja. 2018. “The Sisu Within You: The Finnish Key to Life, Love and Success.” Blog. *This Is FINLAND*, March 8. Accessed December 29, 2025. <https://finland.fi/arts-culture/sisu-within-finnish-key-life-love-success/>.
- Ranta, Martha. 1976. “Tarmola.” In *A Chronicle of Finnish Settlements in Rural Thunder Bay*, edited by Gordon Burkowski. Canadian Uutiset.
- Registrar General of Ontario. 1911a. “Annie Johnson.” Death Record. FamilySearch, November

8. Canada, Ontario, Deaths, 1869-1937 and Overseas Deaths, 1939-1947; Thunder Bay, Port Arthur, No. 030500; Microfilm 1854825; DGS: 004176378; Image: 1421; Batch: B04593-2. Archives of Ontario; database with images, FamilySearch. Accessed December 27, 2025. <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:JXHD-SYR>.
- Registrar General of Ontario. 1911b. "Urho Olavi Peterson." Birth Record. FamilySearch, October 23. Canada, Ontario, Births, 1869-1912; Thunder Bay, Port Arthur, No. 049952; Microfilm 2424652; DGS: 004530267; Image: 1482; Batch: C05683-0. Archives of Ontario; database with images, FamilySearch. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FMH1-BYW>.
- Registrar General of Ontario. 1912. "Urho Olavi Peterson." Death Record. FamilySearch, October 26. Canada, Ontario, Deaths, 1869-1937 and Overseas Deaths, 1939-1947; Thunder Bay, Port Arthur, No. 030734; DGS: 004171745; Image: 1471. Archives of Ontario; database with images, FamilySearch. Accessed December 27, 2025. <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:JXXZ-XYC>.
- Registrar General of Ontario. 1913. "Urho Mauno Olavi Peterson." Birth Record. Ancestry.com, March 19. Series: Registrations of Births and Stillbirths, 1869-1913; Reel: 244; Record Group: RG 80-2; Thunder Bay, Port Arthur, No. 057177; Thunder Bay, 1910-1913, Image: 220. Archives of Ontario; database with images, Ancestry.com. Accessed December 29, 2025. https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/8838/images/32915_258596-00394?pid=2579461.
- Registrar General of Ontario. 1914. "Sulo Vaiko Peterson." Death Record. FamilySearch, December 3. Canada, Ontario, Deaths, 1869-1937 and Overseas Deaths, 1939-1947; Thunder Bay, Port Arthur, No. 038275; Microfilm 1861981; DGS: 004170219; Image: 1187 Batch: B04589-9. Archives of Ontario; database with images, FamilySearch. Accessed December 27, 2025. <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:J61P-Q8Z>.
- Registrar General of Ontario. 1918a. "Lauri Anteri Peterson." Death Record. FamilySearch, October 24. Canada, Ontario, Deaths, 1869-1937 and Overseas Deaths, 1939-1947; Thunder Bay, Port Arthur, No. 039627; Microfilm 1862886; DGS: 004170890; Image: 1216; Batch: B04547-9. Archives of Ontario; database with images, FamilySearch. Accessed December 27, 2025. <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:JDJH-L58>.
- Registrar General of Ontario. 1918b. "Moses Peterson." Death Record. FamilySearch, October 20. Canada, Ontario, Deaths, 1869-1937 and Overseas Deaths, 1939-1947; Thunder Bay, Port Arthur, No. 039615; Microfilm 1862886; DGS: 004170890; Image: 1212; Batch: B04547-9. Archives of Ontario; database with images, FamilySearch. Accessed December 27, 2025. <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:JDJH-LPL>.
- Registrar General of Ontario. 1919a. "Carl Peterson & Aino Peterson." Marriage Affidavit. FamilySearch, July 24. Canada, Ontario, Marriages, 1869-1927; Thunder Bay, Port Arthur, C 57394 025170; Microfilm 002210761; DGS: 005309569; Image: 1049. Archives of Ontario; database with images, FamilySearch. Accessed December 27, 2025. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:27D7-9DM>.
- Registrar General of Ontario. 1919b. "Mano Urho Oliva Peterson." Death Record. FamilySearch, April 10. Canada, Ontario, Deaths, 1869-1937 and Overseas Deaths, 1939-1947; Thunder Bay,

- Port Arthur, No. 033319; Microfilm 1862970; DGS: 004170910; Image: 281; Batch: B04555-9. Archives of Ontario; database with images, FamilySearch. Accessed December 31, 2025. <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:JDLV-KZB>.
- Registrar General of Ontario. 1926. "Hilda Maria Peterson." Death Record. FamilySearch, May 12. Canada, Ontario, Deaths, 1869-1937 and Overseas Deaths, 1939-1947; Thunder Bay, Port Arthur, No. 033017; DGS: 004171425; Image: 1028. Archives of Ontario; database with images, FamilySearch. Accessed December 27, 2025. <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:JFP3-9QY>.
- Registrar General of Ontario. 1927a. "Aino Peterson." Death Record. FamilySearch, January 21. Canada, Ontario, Deaths, 1869-1937 and Overseas Deaths, 1939-1947; Thunder Bay, Port Arthur, No. 031928; DGS: 004000398; Image: 287. Archives of Ontario; database with images, FamilySearch. Accessed December 27, 2025. <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:JKWK-4MP>.
- Registrar General of Ontario. 1927b. "Mary Peterson." Death Record. FamilySearch, November 30. Canada, Ontario, Deaths, 1869-1937 and Overseas Deaths, 1939-1947; Thunder Bay, Port Arthur, No. 032429; DGS: 004000398; Image: 534. Archives of Ontario; database with images, FamilySearch. Accessed December 27, 2025. <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:JKWK-CYZ>.
- Registrar General of Ontario. 1928. "Peter Peterson & Lyyli Kahila." Marriage License & Marriage Affidavit. Ancestry.com, July 21. Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826-1943; Thunder Bay, F3186 6141; Year 1928; Images: 751-752. Archives of Ontario; database with images, Ancestry.com. Accessed December 29, 2025. https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/7921/images/32916_258625-02001.
- Registrar General of Ontario. 1933a. "Birth Certificate of Miriam Peterson." Birth certificate. Ontario, Canada, December 21. Registration No. 33-05-111363; Private Collection of Eric Porter. Office of the Registrar General.
- Registrar General of Ontario. 1933b. "Leo Armas Peterson." Death Record. FamilySearch, October 10. Canada, Ontario, Deaths, 1869-1937 and Overseas Deaths, 1939-1947; Thunder Bay, Port Arthur, No. 032129; Microfilm 2358845; DGS: 004530363; Image: 1827; Batch: V01362-0. Archives of Ontario; database with images, FamilySearch. Accessed December 28, 2025. <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:JKXK-9XZ>.
- Ruokolahden seurakunta (Ruokolahti Parish). 1909. "Rippikirja 1900–1909 (MKO277-295), sivu 872, Siitola no 4 — Juho Fredrik Juhonpoika, Anna Maria Kaarlentytär & Aina Juhontytär." Suomen Sukuhistoriallinen Yhdistys (SSHY). Accessed July 3, 2026. http://www.sukuhistoria.fi/sshy/sivut_eng/jasenille/paikat.php?bid=15465&pnum=237.
- Ruokolahden seurakunta (Ruokolahti Parish). 1910. "Siitola 8. Moses Karhunen." Communion Record. Ruokolahti, Finland. *Rippikirja 1900-1909 (Communion 1900-1909)*; Vol. 3 of 3; Signum: MKO296-298; Page 37 (image 37). Kansallisarkisto (National Archives of Finland); digital images, SSHY (Finnish Family History Association). Accessed December 29, 2025. <https://www.sukuhistoria.fi/sshy/sivut/jasenille/paikat.php?bid=15466&pnum=37>.

- Ruokolahden seurakunta (Ruokolahti Parish). 1912a. “Siitola 11. Pekka Anna Marianpoika Karhunen ennen Vesterinen.” Communion Record. Ruokolahti, Finland. *Rippikirja 1909-1919 (Communion 1909-1919)*; Vol. 2 of 3; Signum: AP_II I Aa:27; Page 1090 (image 491). Kansallisarkisto (National Archives of Finland); digital images, SSHY (Finnish Family History Association). Accessed December 29, 2025. <https://www.sukuhistoria.fi/sshy/sivut/jasenille/paikat.php?bid=30346&pnum=491>.
- Ruokolahden seurakunta (Ruokolahti Parish). 1912b. “Siitola 8. Kalle Pekkanpoika Karhunen.” Communion Record. Ruokolahti, Finland. *Rippikirja 1909-1919 (Communion 1909-1919)*; Vol. 3 of 3; Signum: AP_III I Aa:28; Page 1731 (image 533). Kansallisarkisto (National Archives of Finland); digital images, SSHY (Finnish Family History Association). Accessed December 29, 2025. http://www.sukuhistoria.fi/sshy/sivut_eng/jasenille/paikat.php?bid=30347&pnum=533.
- Saramo, Samira S. 2014. *Life Moving Forward: Soviet Karlia in the Letters & Memoirs of Finnish North Americans*.
- Suomalainen Virsikirja (1886). n.d. “Virsi 157: Varjele sanaas, Jumala (Suomalainen Virsikirja, 1886).” Koraali.fi. Accessed July 3, 2026. <https://www.koraali.fi/1886/157.html>.
- Suomen Höyrylaiva Osakeyhtiö. 1895. “Kanada.” *Keski-Suomi* (Finland), April 30. 50th ed., p. 4. ISSN 1457-4640. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed December 29, 2025. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/524295?page=4>.
- The Canadian Encyclopedia*. n.d. “Finnish Canadians.” Accessed June 27, 2026. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/finns>.
- The Daily Times-Journal* (Fort William, Thunder Bay District, Ontario, Canada). 1953. “K. Peterson Dies in P.A.” December 4, p. 2. Thunder Bay Public Library.
- The Daily Times-Journal* (Fort William). 1933. “Lad of Three is Drowned in Creek on Farm.” October 10, p. 1. Thunder Bay Public Library.
- The Montreal Star* (Montreal, Quebec, Canada). 1924. “Reds Tyrannising Finn Immigrants.” February 1, p. 2. newspapers.com. Accessed January 3, 2026. <https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-montreal-star-reds-tyrannising-finn/187969188/>.
- The Province* (Vancouver, B.C.). 1952. “8 Hurt in Brawls As New Year Arrives.” January 2, p. 17. newspapers.com. Accessed January 2, 2026. <https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-province-8-hurt-in-brawls-as-new-yea/187900983/>.
- The Vancouver Sun* (Vancouver, B.C.). 1949. “Comfortable sleeping rooms.” October 24, p. 30. newspapers.com. Accessed January 2, 2026. <https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-vancouver-sun-comfortable-sleeping-r/188052583/>.
- The Vancouver Sun* (Vancouver, B.C.). 1950. “Boys Ask Time of Day, Seize Victim’s Watch.” February 11, p. 17. newspapers.com. Accessed January 2, 2026. <https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-vancouver-sun-boys-ask-time-of-day/187901016/>.

- The Vancouver Sun* (Vancouver, B.C.). 1951. "Going Isn't Getting Going Fast Enough." May 7, p. 17. newspapers.com. Accessed January 2, 2026. <https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-vancouver-sun-going-isnt-getting-go/187900656/>.
- Thunder Bay Museum. 1872. "George E. Eakins Fonds." Series A 52. Thunder Bay Museum. Accessed January 23, 2026. <https://www.thunderbaymuseum.com/wp-content/uploads/George-E-Eakins-fonds.pdf>.
- Turner, Bob, Marianne Quat, Mark Smyk, Ruth Debicki, and Phil Thurston. 2015. *Thunder Bay: Geology of the Lakehead region*. GeoTours Northern Ontario. Natural Resources Canada, Ontario Geological Survey & Laurentian University. Accessed December 29, 2025. <https://files.ontario.ca/ndmnr-geotours-3/ndmnr-geotours-thunder-bay-en-2021-12-13.pdf>.
- Turner, Robert D. 1997. "Railways in the Queen Charlotte Islands." *Canadian Rail*. Wayback Machine. Accessed January 29, 2026. https://web.archive.org/web/20200725083243/https://www.exporail.org/can_rail/Canadian%20Rail_no457_1997.pdf.
- Uusi Aura* (Finland). 1900. "Waroitus siirtymästä Kanadaan." February 1. 25th ed., p. 3. ISSN 1458-0543. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed December 29, 2025. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/744180?page=3>.
- Valittu. 1930. "Tarmolan ja Kivikosken perukoilta." Naisten Osasto. *Vapaus* (Sudbury), October 7, p. 4. Newspapers, p. 4. Simon Fraser University. Accessed January 15, 2026. <https://newspapers.lib.sfu.ca/vapaus2500-55710/page-4>.
- Vapaus* (Sudbury, Ontario, Canada). 1921. "Hauskaa joulua, tarmoa toiminnassa v. 1922. Ontario, Tarmola." December 17, p. 1. ISSN 0839-2145. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed December 17, 2025. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/2765533?page=1>.
- Vapaus* (Sudbury, Ontario, Canada). 1922. "Hauskaa Joulua 1922, tarmoa taistoissa 1923! Ontario, Tarmola." December 21, p. 3. ISSN 0839-2145. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed December 21, 2025. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/2765506?page=3>.
- Vapaus* (Sudbury). 1923. "Port Arthur, Fort William ja ymparisto." September 11, p. 3. Newspapers, p. 3. Simon Fraser University. Accessed January 27, 2026. <https://newspapers.lib.sfu.ca/vapaus2500-64308/page-2>.
- Vapaus* (Sudbury). 1927. "Port Arthurin uutisia: Kuollut (Mrs. Kalle Peterson)." January 26, p. 4. Newspapers, p. 4. Simon Fraser University. Accessed December 29, 2025. <https://newspapers.lib.sfu.ca/vapaus2500-61092/page-4>.
- Viipurin lääninhallitus (Provincial Government of Viipuri). 1910a. "Anna Maria Johansson." Passport Register No. 1157. Kansallisarkisto (National Archives of Finland), April 25. Finland, Passport Registers, 1900-1920, image 115, record 1157. FamilySearch. Accessed December 21, 2025. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:6J2M-58H7>.
- Viipurin lääninhallitus (Provincial Government of Viipuri). 1910b. "Mooses Karhunen." Passport Register No. 1158. Kansallisarkisto (National Archives of Finland), April 25. Finland, Passport

- Registers, 1900-1920, image 115, record 1158. FamilySearch. Accessed December 21, 2025. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:6J2M-58HW>.
- Viipurin lääninhallitus (Provincial Government of Viipuri). 1911. "Petter Karhunen." Passport Register No. 788. Kansallisarkisto (National Archives of Finland), May 3. Finland, Passport Registers, 1900-1920, image 115, record 1157. FamilySearch. Accessed December 21, 2025. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:6JPP-RRLC>.
- Villemaire, Tom. 2015. "How Immigrants and Others Were Enticed to Build Farms from the Forests." Newspaper. The Sarnia Observer, November 23. Accessed January 8, 2026. <https://www.theobserver.ca/2015/11/23/how-immigrants-and-others-were-enticed-to-build-farms-from-the-forests>.
- "Virsi 157 - Maailma täynnä turhuuttaan." 2017. *Virsikirja.fi*, December 8. Accessed January 27, 2026. <https://virsikirja.fi/virsi-157-maailma-taynna-turhuuttaan/>.
- Wiipuri* (Viipuri, Viipuri, Finland). 1899a. "Kirkollisia ilmoituksia. Wiipurin kaupungissa. Awioliittoon kuulutettuja." June 4, p. 1. ISSN fk14883. Page 1; Column 1, p. 1. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed February 6, 2026. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/737373?term=Kalle%20Karhunen&page=1>.
- Wiipuri* (Viipuri, Viipuri, Finland). 1899b. "Kirkollisia ilmoituksia. Wiipurin kaupungissa. Awioliittoon kuulutettuja." July 9, p. 1. ISSN fk14883. Page 1; Column 1, p. 1. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed February 6, 2026. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/737412?term=Kalle%20Karhunen&page=1>.
- Wiipuri* (Viipuri, Viipuri, Finland). 1899c. "Muuttokirjaa owat anoneet." August 13, p. 1. ISSN fk14883. Page 1; Column 1, p. 1. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed February 6, 2026. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/737452?term=Kalle%20Karhunen&page=1>.
- Wiipuri* (Viipuri, Viipuri, Finland). 1899d. "Wihittyjä." July 16, p. 1. Kansalliskirjaston digitaaliset aineistot. Accessed July 3, 2026. <https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/737420?page=1>.
- Wikipedia*. 2025. "Kutsuntalakko." February 27. Accessed December 30, 2025. <https://fi.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Kutsuntalakko&oldid=23063405>.
- Wikipedia*. n.d. "Sanna Kannasto." Accessed June 27, 2026. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanna_Kannasto.