

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

THE FINNISH SAUNA IN MANITOBA:
A STUDY OF ETHNIC ARCHITECTURE AND
CULTURAL ADAPTATIONS

By
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ABSTRACT

"Sauna is the Finnish word for a wood-lined and insulated room, heated by a special stove containing stones, and erected specifically to create the right environment for a certain kind of dry heat bath. The word does not refer to the activity itself, but to the building in which it takes place. One does not take a sauna - one goes to the sauna" (Konya 1973:9).

The word "sauna" (pronounced sow-na) is perhaps the only word of Finnish incorporated into the English language.

This report briefly traces the old country origin of the sauna and its development in Manitoba. It was compiled on the basis of a field work by the author from the summer of 1976 until 1978. An attempt was made to survey the present areas of Finnish settlement in Manitoba and to place the use of the sauna in a social and historical context. Such an approach allowed for a two-part focus, first a study of the evolution of the actual physical building in which the sauna bath occurred and secondly, an analysis of the changing social meaning of the sauna among the Finns in Manitoba. These two major themes are developed for all the Finnish communities in the province. The general conclusion is that the sauna is an evolving cultural form and serves as a reliable index of Finnish culture change.

Finns who came to Manitoba before 1930 and settled in rural areas have in most instances maintained the sauna tradition. Those who came to Winnipeg before 1930 gave up the sauna mainly as a result of strong assimilative pressures. The most recent immigrants who have arrived since 1950 and have settled in urban areas have been strong advocates of the sauna.

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INTRODUCTION

In a discussion of the lack of ethnic studies in the United States it is claimed that:

both folklorists and ethnologists in America have failed to make adequate systematic studies of the material culture and customs of the dominant white groups, mostly of European origin (Thompson 1953:592 quoted in Kolm 1974:60).

Similarly, sociologists are taken to task as:

the historians of the future will be astonished that American sociologists, the product of this gathering in the nations, could stand in the midst of such an astonishing social phenomenon and take it so much for granted that they would not bother to study it (Greeley n.d. 4-5, quoted in Kolm 1974:60).

These criticisms, until just recently, could be levelled at the Canadian academic establishment, particularly anthropologists.

For an ethnically differentiated society, in which ethnic issues have been almost continuously at the centre of political and social life, there is little to contribute to the analysis of multi-ethnic societies (Breton 1975:1-2).

In keeping with its academic bias, the main focus of anthropological research in Canada has been the native peoples. Anthropology developed in Canada as a branch of the American academic establishment, with the first department established at the University of Toronto in 1927 under Thomas McIlwraith. Anthropologists such as Edward Sapir and Vilhjalmur Stefansson received their training in the United States in the early 20th century when anthropology on this continent was concerned with

documenting the rapidly disappearing native communities. Since the mid 1960s anthropology has grown rapidly in Canadian universities. This rapid growth necessitated the influx of foreign academics as there were few Canadian schools granting post-graduate degrees. As a result the anthropology departments across Canada have over 60% non-Canadian staff, largely American and have been strongly criticised for not focusing research on Canadian topics. The Symons' report, To Know Ourselves: The Report of the Commission on Canadian Studies, strongly advocates that teaching and research in anthropology contribute to the understanding of Canadian culture and more specifically that anthropology contribute to the field of ethnic studies (Symons 1975:81).

For example, the period of mass migration to Western Canada by Europeans has attracted the interest of few scholars, even though this immigration has been one of the largest components of Western Canadian population growth. The influx of tens of thousands of new settlers annually in the late 19th and early 20th centuries had a profound effect on the development of Western Canadian society. Similarly the social conditions and new environments which the immigrants encountered altered the cultural traditions carried over from the homeland. Thus as a frontier society evolving into an agricultural and more recently a modern urban industrial society, Western Canada has undergone rapid change in social, economic and political terms. The intent of this study is to examine an aspect or set of behaviours associated with an immigrant group in Manitoba, the sauna and sauna bathing as practised by emigrants from Finland.

Ethnic studies is a field which has had limited academic interest until recently. Early pioneering works by Dawson (1936), England (1936),

and Morton (1938) looked at ethnic communities as part of the settlement process. A few works such as Young's 1931 classic, The Ukrainians: A Study in Assimilation examined the process of culture contact and the effects upon an ethnic group. A number of "histories" of ethnic groups have appeared over the years. A few such as Turek (1967), Yuzyk (1953), Kristjanson (1965), Epp (1975), and Francis (1955) present a critical analysis of the history of the groups. These authors were members of the ethnic groups about which they were writing and they were able to combine their in-group perceptions with sound academic research and writing to produce powerful documents. The vast majority of ethnic historians unfortunately present their histories as a listing of famous people, their great achievements and contributions to Canadian society. Many are written from biased political and religious viewpoints and as such are not reliable sources.

Within the last ten years there has been a marked interest in ethnic history, multiculturalism and Canadian identity. During and after the Canadian Centennial in 1967, hundreds of museums were started throughout the country and numerous celebrations were held to pay tribute to our heritage. Besides this awakening of public consciousness, the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism published one of the most important documents regarding the social fabric of Canadian society, Book IV: The Cultural Contribution of Other Ethnic Groups (Canada 1969). Since this publication the Canadian government has given legitimacy to the concept of multiculturalism which encompasses ethnic studies, financial support for ethno-cultural activities, multicultural centres, etc. by making it a Federal government policy (Burnet 1973). Academics have responded similarly. The Canadian Ethnic Studies Association was organ-

ized in 1971 and serves as a national forum for ethnic studies, publishing a regular journal and organizing conferences. To date the most active members of this group have been historians and sociologists. The output of literature in the 1970s on ethnic studies has been overwhelming (Sutyla 1976). The theoretical concerns of those doing ethnic studies are wideranging. There have been major studies on ethnicity and social class, cultural pluralism, ethnic identity, ethnic boundaries, immigrants and ethnicity, bilingualism, multilingualism, ethnic organizations, inter-ethnic relations, multiculturalism, religion and ethnicity, settlement patterns, folklore, ethnic architecture and a variety of other topics (Breton et al 1975).

On reviewing these varied interests in the literature two major gaps are evident. First, the lack of good ethnographic descriptions of the ethnic communities in Canada and second, little analysis of these ethnic groups and the change that they have undergone from a holistic cultural perspective. In short, the perspectives of the cultural and social anthropologist have not been applied. Some of this void is due to the primarily American training of anthropologists in Canada and their interest in the American academic scene. It is also partly due to the traditional focus of the discipline being the small, isolated, preliterate and often distant peoples of the world. In spite of Greeley, as previously quoted, there has been a renewed interest in ethnic studies in the United States in the past two decades. Much of this work has developed from earlier racial and minority studies and focuses on Blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans and other 'disadvantaged' groups. Michael Novak (1972) in The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics: Politics and Culture in the Seventies strongly challenges the "melting pot" theory of the gradual

assimilation of immigrants into the American mainstream culture and rediscovers pockets of ethnic groups vying for power in the political arena. But in many respects, American ethnic studies are suffering from a lack of anthropological input just as they are in Canada. It requires a rethinking and redirection of the future role of anthropology in North America to have it focus on the components and changes of the urban industrial society of which it is a part.

This does not mean that there should be a rush to do immediately relevant and problem-solving anthropological research. But rather, the strengths, techniques and unique theoretical approaches of the discipline should be used to document and analyze the ethnic groups comprising Canadian society. In many respects this means going back to the basics of ethnographic techniques for recording cultural data. Not enough is known about how the various groups came to Canada, established their homes and communities, managed to learn a new language, and raised their children to become Canadians, albeit hyphenated Canadians. It is the intent of this study to provide some of this type of information about Finnish-Canadians in Manitoba.

FINNISH-CANADIAN STUDIES

As with most small ethnic groups in this country there has been little research on people of Finnish origin in Canada until recently. Early studies which discussed immigrants in general would occasionally have a small section on the Finns comparing their work habits, politics and "national character" with members of other groups (Bradwin 1928: 114-116; Gibbon 1938:249-263). Provincial histories might also have discussion of Finns in relation to specific communities where they were represented in large numbers (Hawkes 1924, Vol. 2:pp. 698-705).

Church and denominational histories have similar passages on Finnish churches, which were until the recent rise of Pentecostal groups almost exclusively Lutheran (Eylands 1945:260-267). Occasionally a traveller from Finland through Canada would write about his experiences, but such travel accounts are of limited value (Pälsi 1927).

One aspect of Finnish-Canadian history has been of academic interest for several decades, that being the communal utopian settlement of Sointula, "The place of harmony" on an island off the north-east tip of Vancouver Island, started in 1901 by Matti Kurikka. This experimental community eventually collapsed due to poor economic management and internal bickering. The utopian dream intrigued the eminent American-Finnish historian, John Kolehmainen (1941) and has attracted others more recently (Wilson 1974).

The first attempt to present an overview of Finnish-Canadian history in English was by Rev. A. Heinonen with Finnish Friends in Canada (1930). The thrust of this work was to explain the background history of Finland to people who knew Finnish-Canadians. Being a United Church clergyman, Heinonen sharply criticized socialist tendencies amongst certain Finns. His treatment of Finnish-Canadians settlements was very superficial. A more recent work by Rev. Raivio (1975), in Finnish, while broader in scope than the previous writer, failed to give a balanced national coverage, and had some of the same religious bias as did Heinonen. The Department of the Secretary of State has recently commissioned a study, national in scope, on the history of Finns in Canada, but it will be several years before publication.

One difficulty that deters many potential scholars in the field of Finnish-Canadian studies is the fact that much of the original document-

ation, newspapers and books are in the Finnish language. This is also a drawback in field work as many of the early settlers who are in their late 70's and 80's speak little or no English. Lakehead University at Thunder Bay and Laurentian University in Sudbury are attempting to lessen this barrier by offering university level Finnish courses, to complement those offered in their public schools. Lakehead also maintains a large Finnish library and archives and is promoting itself as a Finnish-Canadian research centre. Project Bay Street (1976) has been gathering historical data on Thunder Bay and surrounding Finnish communities for several years. Local histories throughout the country are also useful sources for Finnish-Canadian studies (Tantallon History Committee 1973; Burnt Lake History Society 1977).

There have been several isolated reports which are valuable contributions to Finnish ethnic studies. The geographer, Eugene Van Cleef, took a field trip through Canada visiting Finnish communities and published his findings (Van Cleef 1952). Saarinen (1967) did a general overview of Finnish settlements paying particular attention to political developments. Allen (1954) wrote a thesis focusing upon a community study of Copper Cliff. From an anthropological perspective this is a useful work as the author presents a detailed analysis of the evolution of this Finnish settlement.

As previously mentioned, Finns settled the Utopian community of "Sointula". Their involvement in radical politics and the labour movement in Canada has resulted in their inclusion in studies in political history and labour studies. Avakumovic (1975), in his study of the Communist Party of Canada notes that the Finns accounted for a disproportionate percentage of the membership. Hill (1952) documents their

involvement in the lumber workers' union. Repo (1975) reports how the tailors in the "Big Shop" in Toronto played a prominent role in organizing the Socialist Party of Canada. In a recent article, Wilson (1977) documents the difficulty that J. W. Ahlquist had in convincing the federal government of the legitimacy of the activities of the outlawed Finnish Socialist Organization of Canada.

Recording the process of Finnish immigration to Canada and the United States has been a major project of the History Department of the University of Turku in Finland. They have microfilmed church and club records throughout North America and combining them with Finnish passport records, interviews, letters home and various archival materials, have begun to produce some excellent studies (Kero 1974, 1975, 1976). Closer to home, the Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies, a division of the National Museum of Man, has sponsored several projects on Finns in Canada; Salo on Folklore (1973) and Folk Crafts (1972), Maranda on the Sauna in British Columbia (1974) and the author's work (Sutyla 1977).

In summation, the situation regarding Finnish-Canadian studies is poor to date. The number of studies are few and are on a variety of topics. There is need for a systematic coverage of local and regional history as well as specialized studies on such topics as the Finnish language in the Canadian context, the image of Finns in the larger Canadian society, and the conflict between the left and right political factions on a local, national and international level. The settlement patterns of Finnish communities need further research as well as Finnish involvement in the lumbering, mining, fishing and agricultural industries. In short, the field of Finnish-Canadian studies is almost untouched, but unless research is begun soon, many older and potential informants will be dead and a significant portion of early history will be lost.

The reasons for doing a study of the Finnish sauna follow from the latter statements. The Finnish community in Manitoba has never been studied in depth, and the community here is an active part of the larger Finnish ethnic network across Canada. The sauna tradition was and still is one aspect of the home culture that is common to all Finnish emigrants. The intent of this research is to document what happened to the sauna in Manitoba and how migrants at different times utilized and modified the sauna building and their bathing practices. This will be a relevant contribution specifically to Finnish-Canadian studies and to ethnic studies in general as the process of culture change will be examined. It is also a return to the anthropological approach advocated by Franz Boas, that being a strong emphasis on recording ethnographic detail, an approach not generally found in ethnic studies done by historians and sociologists. It is important to understand the common everyday life of immigrants in Canada and this study attempts to record an aspect of that life in detail.

ETHNIC ARCHITECTURE

The study of material culture has a long history in European ethnology with a strong emphasis on folklore and folk art traditions (Viies 1976). Similarly early anthropological work in North America emphasized ethnographic collections. Boas and his contemporaries addressed research problems and did fieldwork with the intent of describing and collecting examples of the material culture used by the people they were studying. Recent theoretical developments have been such however, that with the odd exception few contemporary anthropologists are attempting to document the material items that people make and use (Fenton 1974).

Ethnic architecture is one small aspect of material culture studies, focusing upon the buildings and structures put up by a particular group

of people. It has also been called folk or vernacular architecture as opposed to formal architecture designed by professional architects. The intent is to study what is common or as the folklorist, Henry Glassie (1974:177) states "most of most buildings built in most places during most times." From such an approach certain patterns and regularities become evident and the scholar is able to put forth generalizations about culture in time and space. It is at this juncture where different academic fields emphasize their particular approaches and interpretations develop along different lines. The folklorists may emphasize particular detailed motifs and patterns developing from historic sources. The geographer may be concerned with ethnic architecture as part of the human modification of the landscape or as a transfer of material culture and its spatial distribution (Schlichtmann 1977). The anthropologist would be more concerned with the behaviour involved in constructing the building and its utilization as a manifestation of social and cultural life of a particular group of people.

For the purposes of this study an ethnic group may be defined as people sharing a common "ethnicity" or identity based upon origin in a specific region and similarity of culture. Over time the cultural content may change and evolve but the shared ethnic identity serves as the cultural bond. The ethnic group is part of a larger culturally differentiated or plural society which exerts pressures on the group. The ethnic group may respond in a variety of ways succumbing to the pressures and assimilating or resisting and maintaining its identity. People of Finnish origin are the subject of this study and as immigrants in Canada they will be treated as relatively culturally homogeneous even though in Finland there are discernable linguistic, regional and cultural differences.

The concept of ethnic architecture implies a certain cultural tradition and continuity of technique in building design, construction and use. Within that continuity, however, the individual builder instills unique and novel features which are within the range of acceptable forms.

Action within tradition need not be viewed as static replication, and change need not be conceptualized as accidental or as a response to external influences. Variation within tradition may present an evolutionary or degenerative impression but neither notion accounts for the variety observable in folk objects. The nature of tradition seems to come from an adherence to a traditional base concept - specific structure of components and an employment of a traditional set of rules that prescribe a range of additive and subtractive variation. It is in the nature of man to innovate (Glassie 1974:231).

The variety of sauna types in Manitoba, while all incorporate the essential physical features and eliciting the appropriate social behavior from Finnish sauna goers, supports this concept of individual variety within ethnic tradition.

Studies of ethnic architecture in Canada have mainly recorded examples of architecture of the original immigrant generation. This has happened because only a few groups like the Hutterites have maintained distinctive architectural forms beyond the first generation. In most instances, especially in the rural areas, the immigrant generation transferred the old country designs and techniques of construction to Canada and this is what has been recorded. One of the difficulties in analyzing the architectural changes is that few authors have had knowledge of ante-

cedent forms or pre-migration conditions of the group. Studies by Lehr (1976) of Ukrainian Vernacular Architecture in Alberta and Mannion (1974) of Irish Settlements in Eastern Canada are particularly useful as they do trace the architectural origins back to Europe and use that as the base for discussing the changes in Canada. Schlichtmann (1976, 1977) presents a general overview of the present status of ethnic architectural research in Western Canada.

Except for the work of the geographer Matti Kaups (1971, 1972, 1976) out of the University of Minnesota (Duluth), there are few scholars who have given Finnish architecture more than a passing reference. Salo (1972) briefly discusses the saunas in a larger study of Finnish Folk Crafts in Canada. He describes the physical characteristics of the building and the bathing practice but does not carry his analysis one step further in relating the sauna to its function in a specific community. Maranda (1974) contains many sauna descriptions but once again the community and ethnic context is lacking and as such the data is of limited use. Kaups' work, particularly his study of the savusauna (1976) and the riihi (1972) focus on the Finnish origin or antecedent forms and the subsequent changes in Minnesota. Each paper discusses one particular building and its history in the family and community. This case study approach illuminates how the study of change in a small area can contribute to broader understanding of cultural dynamics.

The Finnish sauna is a distinctive form of ethnic architecture and may be one of the only "ethnic" structures which have been adopted by larger Canadian society. This aspect, however, is peripheral to the main focus of this study which is to analyze the sauna building and sauna bathing as it relates to the Finnish people who brought it to Canada.

METHODOLOGY

This study is the result of several years of close professional and social contact with the Finnish-Canadian community in Manitoba and limited contact with similar communities in Saskatchewan and Alberta. My first meeting with Canadians of Finnish origin was in the spring of 1975 as part of an ethnic artifact research project for the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, called the Multicultural Collections Inventory. The objective was to produce an ethnic profile or compilation of known resource material on a small ethnic group, in this case Finnish-Canadians. I continued meeting with the Finns after the inventory report was completed. Meanwhile I obtained a permanent position at the museum as Curator of Multicultural Collections. Many Finnish people were very pleased that the museum was interested in their heritage and gladly donated artifacts and photographs, and related their life histories. There were some particularly well informed individuals who had been active in club and church affairs since they immigrated in the 1920s and they volunteered much information on organizational matters. I was invited and attended Midsummer, Independence Day and Kalevala Celebrations, church services, bake sales, and spent many weekends visiting people at their cottages. I tried to attend as many social gatherings as possible where I knew that the Finns would congregate.

An exhibit of Finnish artifacts was displayed at the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature in the winter of 1976, in conjunction with a service commemorating Finnish Independence Day. Since then several Finnish social activities have occurred in the museum auditorium and classrooms. In the spring of 1976 I negotiated a small research contract with the Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies of the National Museum of Man to

do a survey form of several pages (Appendix A) and set about visiting Finnish communities throughout the province and recording data about most of the saunas in the older rural Finnish settlements and several urban saunas.

For some months I studied the Finnish language with a tutor in order to communicate easier with the older members of the community, many of whom were not very articulate in English.

In the summer of 1978 I spent five weeks in Finland. During the first three weeks I attended a "language and culture" course and the last two weeks were spent visiting close to thirty museums and research institutions. The result was a better understanding of Finland as a country and the social and historical factors which effected immigration to Canada. Impressions of Finnish museums and their approach to ethnographic research and presenting material culture for public education is contained in a recent article (Sutyla 1979).

The methodology that I have used in this study is similar to the "personal approach" as described by Honigmann (1976). In the simplest terms it is the observation of events and then the interpretation of them in a manner which seems to the observer, logical and consistent. As such the previous listing of author's contact with the local Finnish community is important as it traces the development of his interest in the group. Along the way, factual information, interpretation of events, the reading of written and archival materials, personal contacts and the collecting of artifacts and archival photos have accumulated to the point where certain interpretations are to the author accurate descriptions of cultural change amongst the Finns. These conclusions are personal and probably not subject to replication for their reliability.

For Making Vapour

"Yonder the gods above,
The earth-mothers down below,
Have baths that are heated up,
New rooms that give forth whirls of smoke;
May water on the fire be thrown,
May vapour here be given off,
A steam from the furnace-stones,
Hot steam from the bath-house moss,
As ointment for the injuries,
As embrocation for the wounds."

(J. Abercromby 1898, Vol. 2. pp. 172)

FROM FINLAND TO CANADA

The search for the origin of the Finnish people leads to the area of central Russia, between the Volga River and the Ural mountains. Contemporary ancestors of these early Finn-speaking groups are still resident here though it is believed that in prehistoric times their range extended much further north and east. The language of these people belongs to the Uralic family, of which there are less than 20 million speakers, and is divided into two main branches, Samoyed and Finno-Ugric. The Samoyed presently encompasses scattered tribes across northern Russia and Asia. The Finno-Ugric branch is comprised of three major groups, the Finns, Estonians and Hungarians, and several minor groups. The Finn and Estonian languages are mutually understandable and these people have many cultural and racial ties besides language while Hungarian is very distantly related. The Uralic language group is a completely different linguistic group from the Indo-European languages spoken by the majority of Europeans and in some ways is responsible for the cultural isolation of groups speaking these tongues. For example, in Finland the language of the government and educated classes was Swedish for several hundred years. The majority of Finns could not communicate with these groups in their native language, and thus were forced to become bilingual or to remain isolated.

From this area in central Russia the proto-Finnic stock, being nomadic hunters and fishermen, migrated north and west, arriving in what is now Finland in the second or third century B.C. On route, this group was in long contact with the Balts and to a lesser extent the Slavs. With their northern migration the Baltic Finns pushed the Lapps northward and these reindeer herders eventually adopted a Finno-Ugric tongue.

The immigrant proto-Finns also interbred with the other prehistoric peoples of the area. By this time the Finns were familiar with agriculture and combined this with exploitation of the forests and waterways for wood and furs. (For a discussion of Finnish origins consult Vuorela 1964, Geipel 1969:82-88, Sirelius 1925 and Kivikoski 1967).

Throughout the following centuries and into recent historical times the Finns were in close contact with the Scandinavian peoples, being almost a province of Sweden from 1200 to 1800 and then an autonomous Grand Duchy under Russia from 1809 to the 1917 Independence of Finland.

Christianity was introduced in Finland in 1000 A.D. and the population presently is 95 per cent Lutheran with pockets of Orthodoxy in the eastern area (Karelia) as a result of Russian influence.

Between the years 1800 and 1900 the population of Finland increased from about 900,000 to 3,000,000. The basis of living was still largely agricultural with the average farm size from five to twenty-five acres. This rapid population increase could not be absorbed by the home communities and the result was a mass migration of the population to urban areas like Helsinki and Tampere, to other regional centres and out of the country. Finland, during the mid and late 19th century, was undergoing a period of rapid population growth and industrialization similar to what had occurred in north-west Europe and Scandinavia several decades earlier. In this respect, mass emigration from Finland in the late 19th and early 20th century was similar to that of east European Slavs who emigrated at the same time for many similar reasons.

Reino Kero (1974:56) in discussing this period of Finnish history attributes the rapid population growth to four factors, first, legislation designed to encourage population growth, second, a lessening of

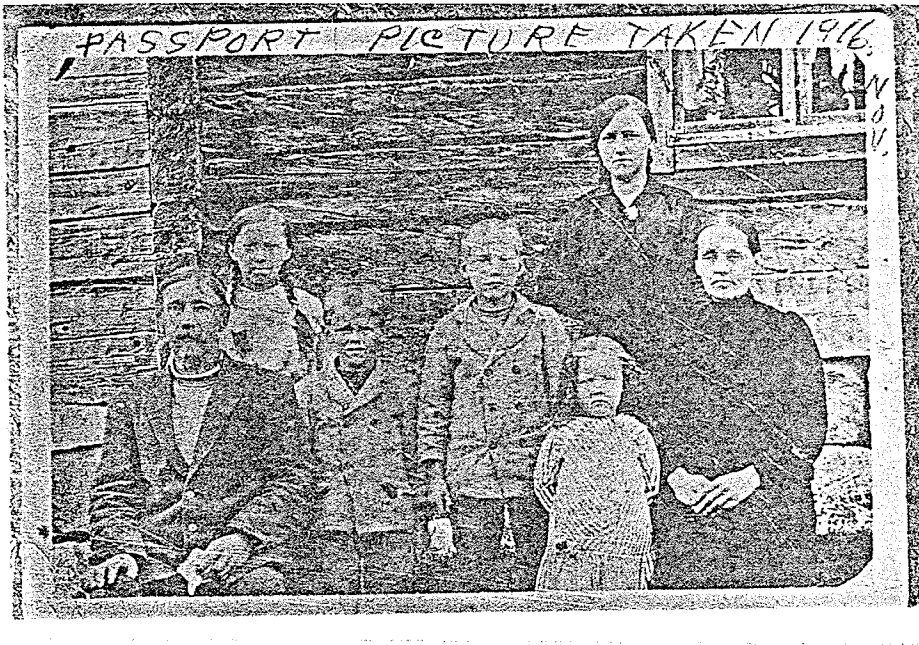


Figure 1.

Passport photo of a Finnish family from near Oulu, Finland in 1916. They eventually immigrated to Meadow Portage, Manitoba via the United States.



Figure 2.

On the boat from Finland to Canada in 1925. This family was following the father who had come to Elma, Manitoba a year earlier.

wars and famines, third, the development of health care which reduced infant mortality and increased lifespan, and fourth, progress in agricultural techniques.

One of the main responses to this transformation of an agricultural society to an industrial society was the transitional phenomenon of emigration. This was closely connected with internal phenomena such as the "birth of a landless rural proletariat (due to) the fact that farms were normally left to only one heir" (Kero 1974:56-57). People's perception of themselves was changing and there were demands for a better standard of living, with the casting off of the old attitudes of social and economic fatalism.

The decision to emigrate is based on both social and personal factors. Finland at the beginning of the 20th century was undergoing social and political upheaval. There was opposition to the relationship with Russia which was embodied in the nationalist political movement. This ideology began in 1830's with the striving for the use of the Finnish language at the University of Turku, developed momentum with the publication of Elias Lönnrot's epic poem Kalevala, based on the local folklore, and was dramatically reinforced in 1899 by the performance of Sibelius's musical composition Finlandia which "so expressed the national feeling of the Finns that it was for some time banned by the Russian authorities" (Bacon 1970:102). The Russian response to this little country's display of nationalism was that Finland...

must be Russified, with Russians serving in the administration, Russian taught in the schools, Russian money replacing Finnish money and the Russian army absorbing the Finnish one. In the same year the Czar - Nicholas II - signed a manifesto

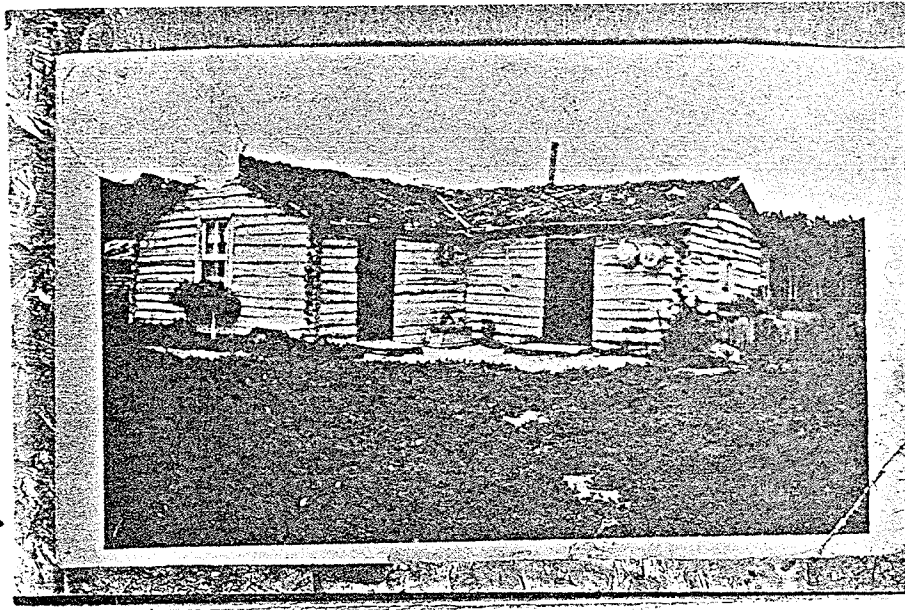


Figure 3.

For many Finn families life was too difficult in marginal areas such as Meadow Portage so they sold the farm, auctioned off their belongings and left for greener pastures. c. 1930.

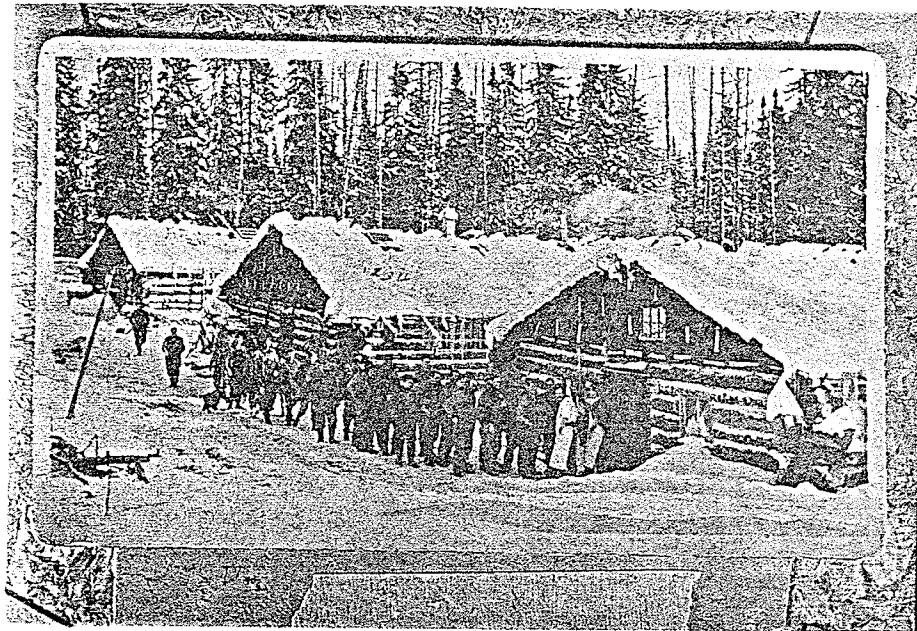


Figure 4.

Some Finnish men had to leave their families every winter and capitalize on their skills as lumberjacks as did several fellows from Meadow Portage in the 1920's. This camp in north-west Ontario employed almost all Finns. Here they are lining up to go into the cook shack.

establishing Imperial Russian legislation over the heads of the Finns, and in 1901 he abolished the Finnish army and authorized the conscription of Finns into Russian units, including those outside Finland...When the conscription orders were issued 60 per cent of the men affected refused to report, and many emigrated" (Bacon 1970:102-103).

Such political difficulties continued until Finnish Independence in 1917. During the time preceding the First World War, Kero (1974:78-79) estimates that between 1874-93, almost 70,000 emigrants left Finland, while between 1894-1913 about 260,000 emigrated overseas. In comparison to other Nordic and West European countries most of these Finnish emigrants left from agricultural areas, while in the former many were from the industrial sector. The destination of these Finns before 1920 was primarily the United States of America.

That year, a new immigration law introduced the so-called quota system, which limited the number of immigrants from Finland to approximately 560 per annum. The main flow, although greatly reduced, was now directed to Canada (Aaltio 1969:65).

From 1920 until the beginning of the depression in 1930, when immigration came to a virtual halt, Canada experienced the greatest influx of Finnish immigrants in its history. Kero (1976:13) estimates the number of Finns coming directly to Canada, from passenger lists as the following for the years listed: pre 1891 - 902, 1905 - 948, and 1913 - 3,508.

There was, however, indirect immigration of Finns from the northern United States, primarily Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and North Dakota. Bjork (1974:17-19) estimates that Finns heading from the United States to Canadian prairies between 1904 and 1912 totaled 8,920. (See Table 1).

Table 1

Finnish Immigrants on the Canadian Prairies
from the United States, 1904-1912

1904-05	1,323
1906	1,103
1907-08	2,047
1008-09	669
1910-11	2,132
1911-12	<u>1,646</u>
Total	<u>8,920</u>

(Source: Bjork 1974:17-10).

There was great mobility amongst the Finns at this time, so even though their destination may have been the Prairies, upon leaving the United States, they may not have settled there permanently. Canadian sources have summarized the Finnish immigration, from all departure points, as listed in Table 2.

Table 2

Finnish Immigrants to Canada

pre 1911	3,523
1911-20	3,087
1921-30	12,771
1931-40	1,026
1941-45	94
1946-51	1,534

(Canada 1951 Census Vol. V, pp. 26-1).

1946-50	900
1951-55	6,000
1960	800
1961	131

(Source: Kalbach 1970:428).

1969	772
1970	694
1971	452

(1971 Immigration Statistics Tables).

The previous cited figures reveal two major cycles of Finnish immigration, the first wave from 1880-1930 (29,000 immigrants) with the peak years between 1920-1930, and the second, the post-war wave (18,224 immigrants) beginning in 1946 and lasting until the present. This second wave peaked in 1951-53, when over 7,600 Finns came to Canada (Kalbach 1970:424). The social and cultural orientation of Finns who came to Canada in these two main periods will be discussed later.

Table 3

Finnish Population in Winnipeg, Manitoba and Canada

	<u>Winnipeg</u>	<u>Manitoba</u>	<u>Canada</u>
1901		76	2,502
1911	31	1,080	15,497
1921	36	506	21,494
1931	179	1,013	43,885
1941	239	808	41,683
1951	221	821	43,745
1961	617	1,070	59,436
1971	710	1,455	59,215

(Sources: Censuses of Canada).

It is obvious from the above figures that the majority of Finns in Canada reside outside the province of Manitoba. The main areas of Finnish settlement elsewhere are Port Arthur (Thunder Bay), Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie, Toronto and Vancouver.

The first attempt to recruit Finns to Canada was by Colonel Hans Mattson, a Swedish-American immigration agent residing in Minnesota. In 1874, the Finnish papers Uusi Suometar and Sanomia Turusta published glowing reports of Canada.

However the names of no Finns going to Canada can be found in the passenger lists for 1874, so it appears that

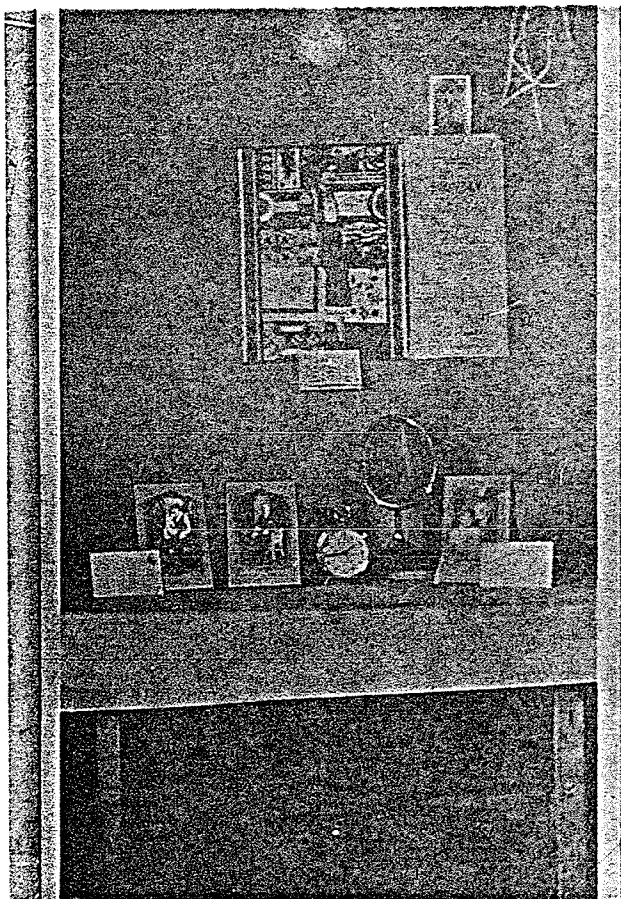
Figure 6.

"First Christmas" of a Finnish girl who came to Winnipeg alone in 1927 to work as a domestic.



Figure 7.

"Finnish shrine" in the corner of the room of another Finnish girl who came to Winnipeg in 1928, also to work as a domestic.



this recruiting attempt was wholly without results (Kero 1974:166-167).

Mattson, in his reminiscences (1891:136, 162) claims to have wanted to locate a Finnish colony in Manitoba similar to that of the Icelandic settlement started at that time.

It was in 1883 that the first Finnish emigrant bought a ticket to Winnipeg, Manitoba. During the period 1883-91, 178 emigrants had a ticket to that same place. Winnipeg has not been among the most important localities for Finns in Canada...If the emigration of the 1880's to Manitoba is compared with that of the year 1904 we find that in 1905 the number of Finnish emigrants to Manitoba was smaller than in the peak years of the 1880's. In 1905 only twenty-three Finnish emigrants had their place of destination in Manitoba (Kero 1976:14-15).

Kero is right in his analysis of Finnish immigration to Winnipeg in the early days being for employment purposes, usually outside the city. Before 1900 about 80 per cent of the Finn immigrants were men. It was primarily after they had worked on the railroads, bush camps and in the mines and saved some cash that the women came. Then homesteads were taken out and permanent settlements begun. There are very few records of single Finn men taking out homesteads.

The pre 1900 immigration of Finns to Winnipeg resulted in no permanent Finnish community in this city (See Table 3) at that time. It was only during the late 1920's that the Finn population grew and stabilized somewhat. One Finnish lady remarked that when she came to Winnipeg in 1905 she met only one Finnish-Swedish family who had arrived

Figure 8.

Taimi (Seedlings) Club,
A Finnish girls' athletic
group organized in Winnipeg
in 1930. This, along with
a similar men's club evolved
into the Winnipeg branch of
the Loyal Finns in Canada in
1932 with 35 members.



Figure 9.

In 1939 the Loyal Finns had a going-away party for one of the men who went to fight in the Winter War between Russia and Finland.



Figure 10.

Group of Finnish men near Elma c. 1910. Their spotted clothes indicate that they were perhaps engaged in plastering or whitewashing. Note the man in the back row holding a brush.



Figure 11.

Church group gathering at home of a local Finn in Elma c. 1915, upon the occasion of the visit of a Lutheran minister from New Finland, Saskatchewan. Note the dove tail corners on this two-storey log house.

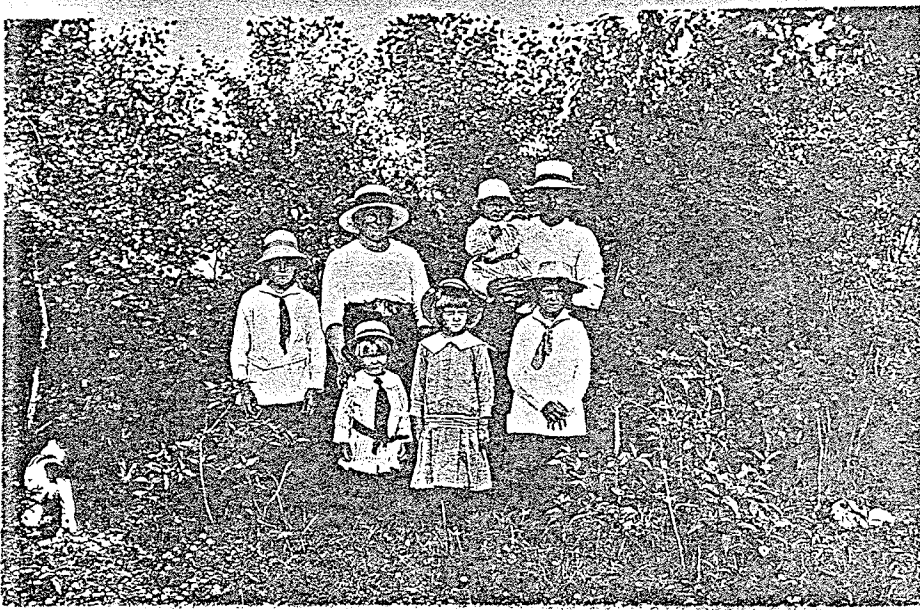


Figure 12.

Finnish family in Elma, Manitoba c. 1920



Figure 13.

A Juhannus or Midsummer Day picnic in June at the Riento hall near Elma in the 1920's. In later days it was the custom to have a picnic and sports day as opposed to the old country custom of giant bonfires throughout the night.



Figure 14.

Returning from a meeting of the Finnish Organization of Canada in the Riverland area, c. 1939. Note the home made skis worn by the woman on the left.

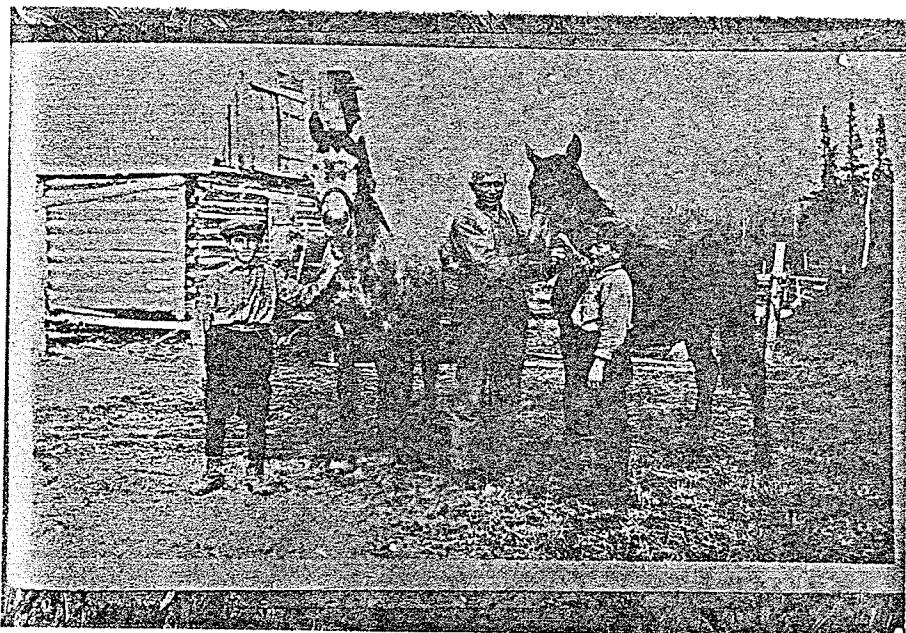


Figure 15.

A Finnish farmer and his two sons proudly displaying their horses in the Newcomb area, c. 1925. Note the log barn in the background.



Figure 16.

A predominately Finnish work gang preparing the railway track bed to Pointe du Bois, Manitoba, c. 1928. The contract was held by N. K. Johnson, a Finn from the Pointe, who brought several men over from Finland to work for him.



Figure 17.

Finnish men at their bunk-house in Pointe du Bois, c. 1928. After the railline was completed many stayed on to work at a variety of jobs for N. K. Johnson and then for Winnipeg Hydro servicing the town and dam site.



Figure 18.

A birthday party c. 1930. of one of the first Finn couples to settle permanently at Pointe du Bois, Manitoba. This property was purchased in the late 1960's by a Winnipeg Finn who uses it as a summer cottage. The original sauna is described under the heading of Kusti P.



Figure 19.

The above property as viewed from a rock on the Winnipeg River in 1976. The building in the centre is the original house. The building in back of the double doored boat house on the left is the original sauna.

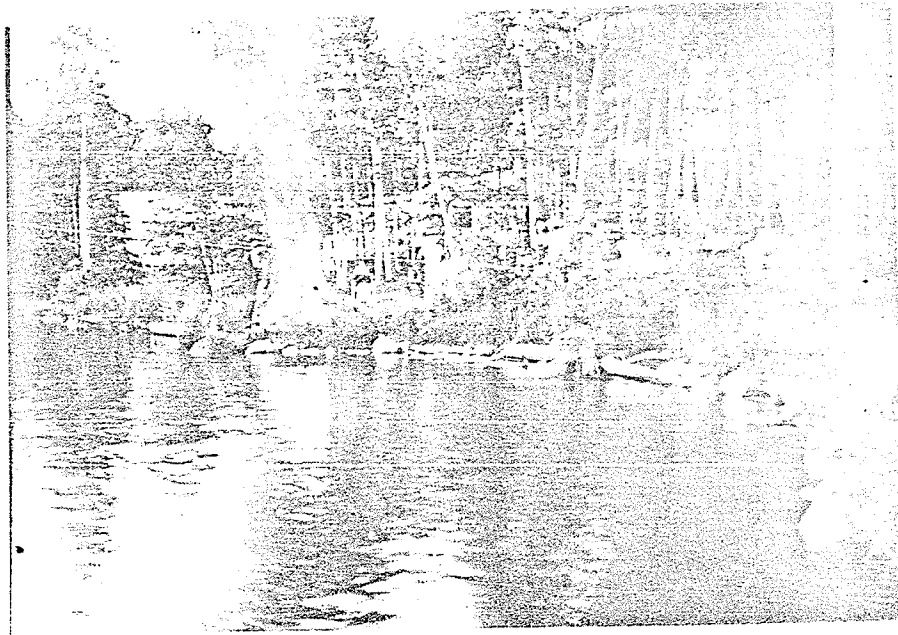


Figure 20.

Juhannus or Mid Summer Celebration in Pointe du Bois, Manitoba, June, 1975. This group of about fifty people were predominately Finnish Pentecostals from Winnipeg. Note the traditional late evening bonfire along the shore.



Figure 21.

A mime game at Juhannus performed by one of the two Finnish-Lapp women in Winnipeg. Note the traditional costume worn and guitar used to sing both religious and folk songs.

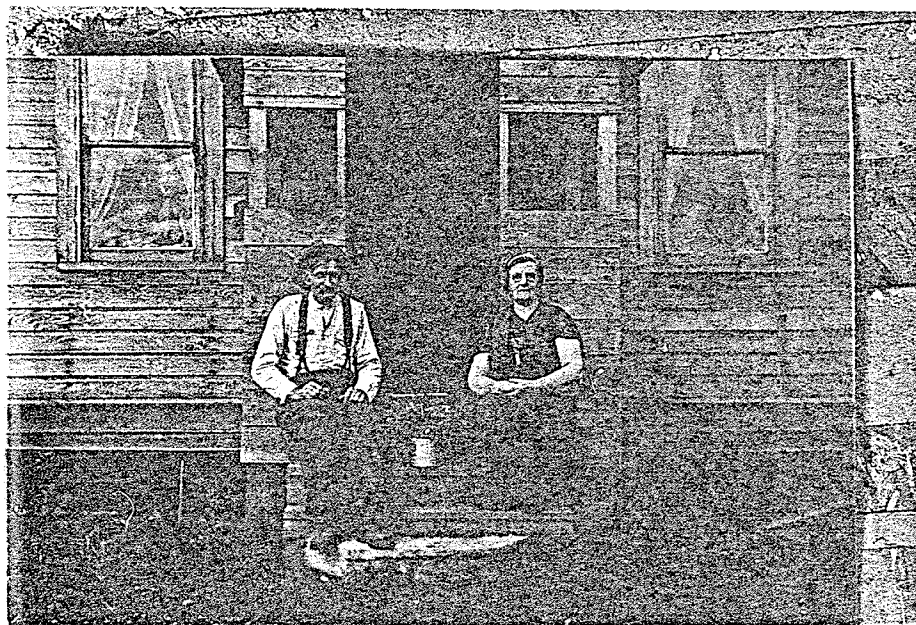


Figure 22.

A Finnish couple in front of their home in the Mulvihill area of Manitoba c. 1925. They came about 1912 and moved to British Columbia during the Depression.

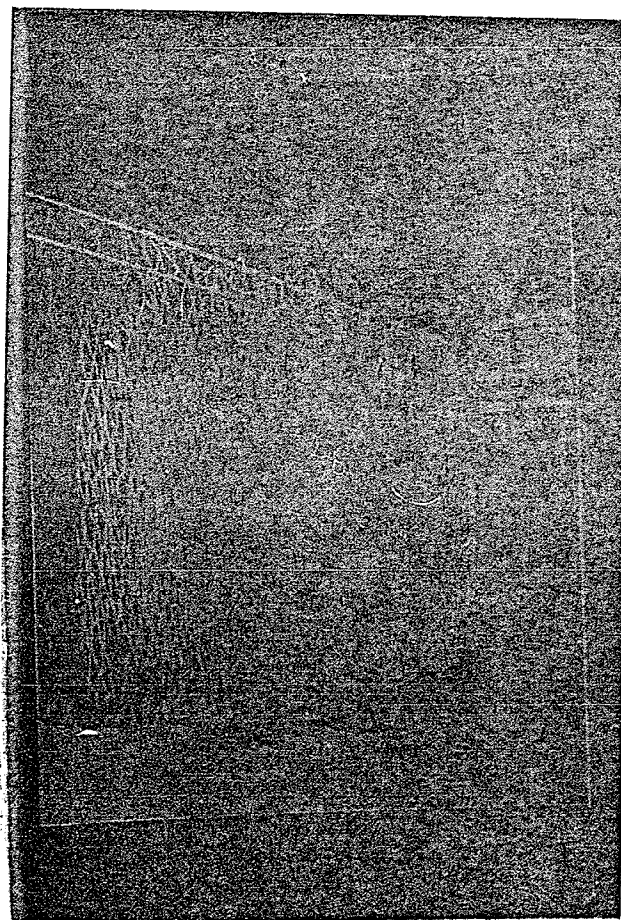


Figure 23.

Mrs. Martti K. repairing fishing nets at home, west of Eriksdale, Manitoba, c. 1945. Mr. K. fished in Lake Manitoba which was within a couple of miles of their farm.



Figure 24.

Fourth of July Picnic in Belden, North Dakota c. 1917. Amongst this group of Finns are several who settled in Rorketon, Manitoba.

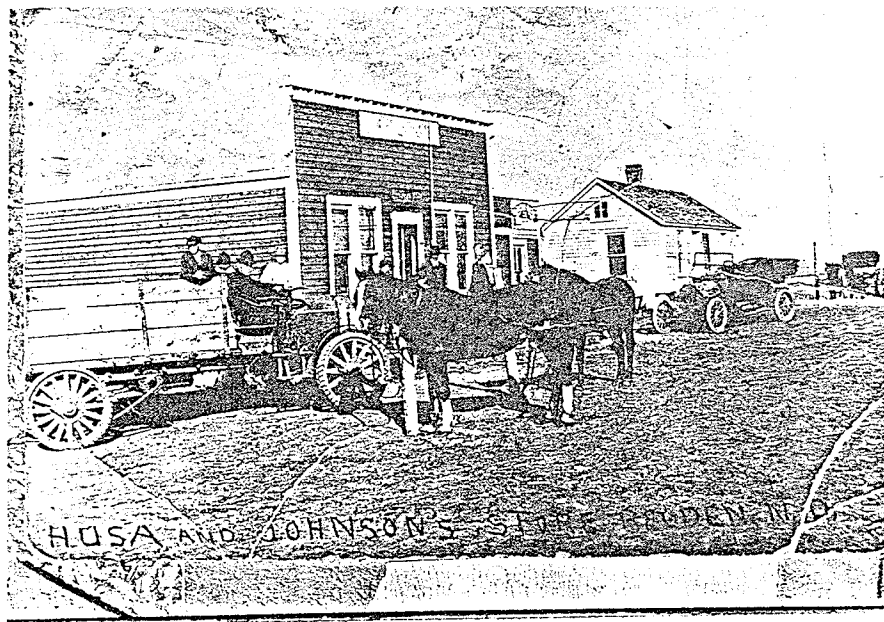


Figure 25.

"Husa and Johnson's Store," Belden, North Dakota. Paul Johnson, a Finnish business man took up farming in Rorketon, Manitoba in 1918. His son is presently the only business man of Finnish origin in Rorketon, the other Finns being engaged in farming.

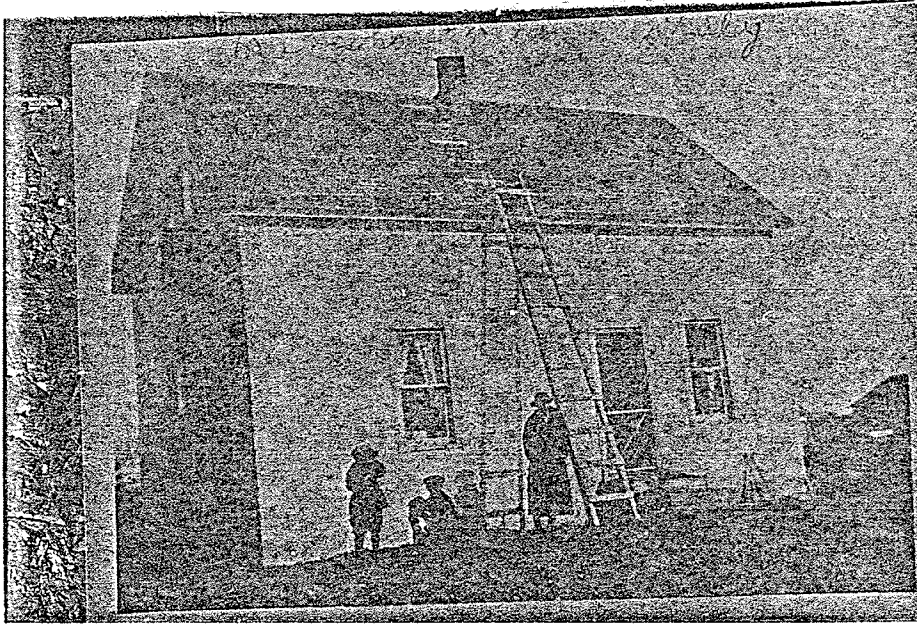


Figure 26.

The Paul J. home near Rorketon, Manitoba c. 1930. Note the ladder to the roof. This was a safety feature to aid in putting out any fire that might start in chimneys connected to wood burning stoves and is typical of Finnish homes.

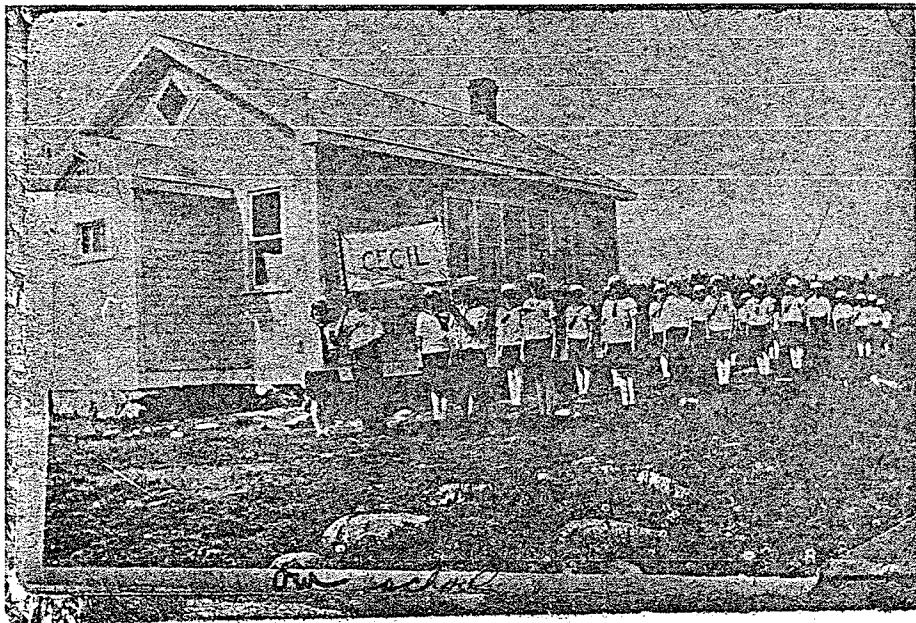


Figure 27.

Cecil School field day near Rorketon, Manitoba c. 1930. Almost all the students were Finnish. Note the white caps which are reminiscent of the senior students in Finland who wear similar caps for May Day and graduation.

Figure 28.

Finnish granary in the Meadow Portage area, c. 1925. The bottom floor was for storage, while in summer the children slept in the cool upper story. This old country style building was the only one like it in the area, and has been converted to a house.



Figure 29.

Members of the Meadow Portage chapter of the Finnish Organization of Canada outside their hall, c. 1930.

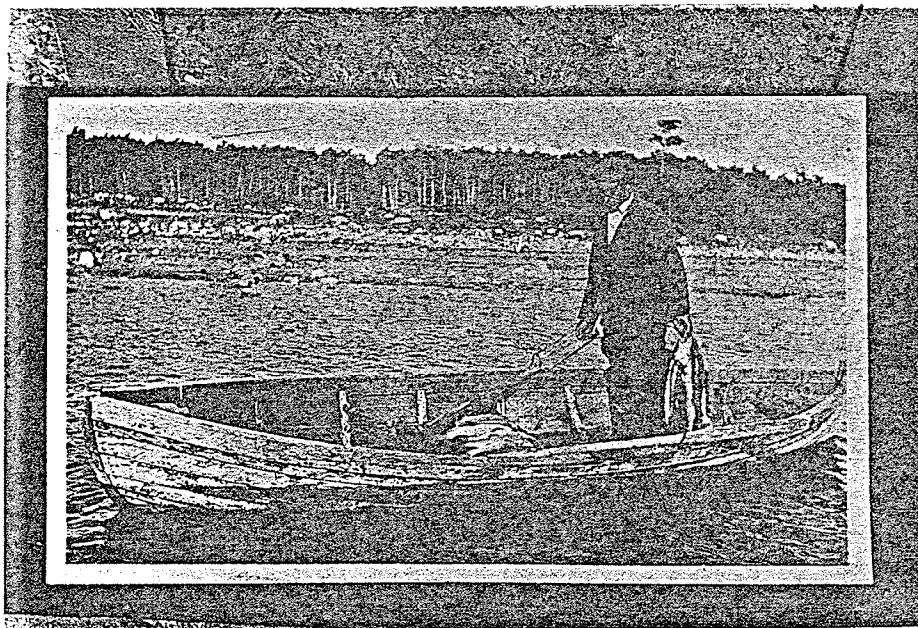


Figure 30.

A Finnish man returning from fishing on Lake Manitoba. This fellow made his own boat as was typical of many of the men who fished the lake out of Meadow Portage, Manitoba, c. 1930.

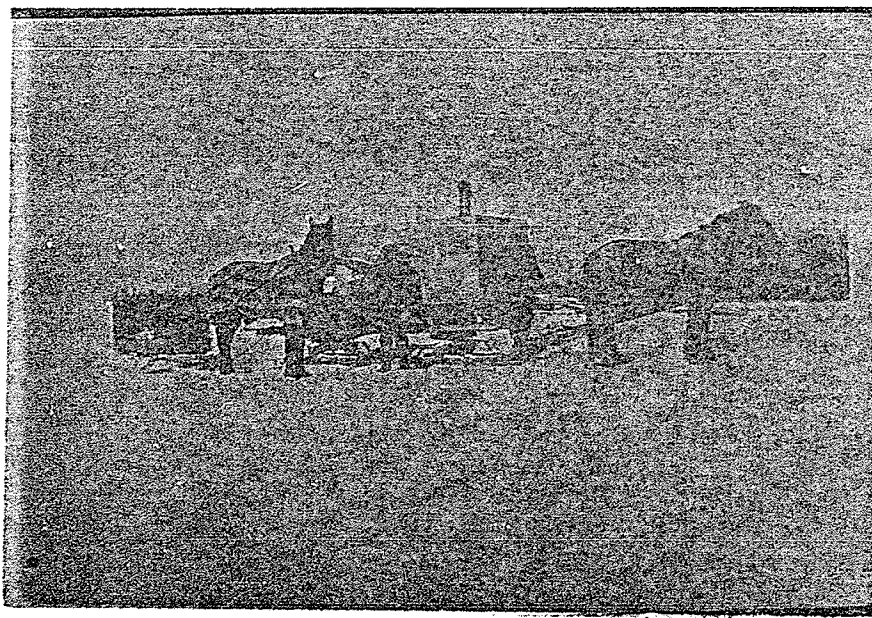


Figure 31.

Finnish men from Rorketon winter fishing on Lake Manitoba.

there before her (C. M. Sutyla:notes). It was in the late 1920's and early 1930's that the Finnish organizations in Winnipeg were established and this coincided with the population increase. From about 1930 until 1945 Finnish cultural activity was at its height in the city. Two athletic clubs had been organized which later amalgamated into the Loyal Finns in Canada. There was a resident Finnish United Church minister in the city for a few years, and a communist group was active at this time.

Paralleling the growth of the Finnish community in Winnipeg was the establishment of seven small settlements in rural Manitoba (See Figure 5).

1. Elma

About 60 miles east of Winnipeg, began about 1895, in an area settled by Ukrainians, Poles and Germans. Primarily along the Whitemouth River which is surrounded by marsh and muskeg. A mixed farming area, with the Finns initially engaged in logging and trapping. There were about thirty Finn families in this area in 1920. A Finn Hall "Riento", built in the 1920's was the extent of formal organizations in the community. There is only one original pioneer Finn residing near Elma, with about thirty people of Finnish origin in the area.

2. Riverland-Newcomb

About 90 miles north-east of Winnipeg, along the Winnipeg River, opposite the town of Lac du Bonnet. A rugged Canadian shield landscape, where the Finns established small farms amongst the rock, bush, and marsh-land, alongside a larger Swedish community. About twelve families in 1916, this has dwindled to about six at present. A chapter of the Finnish Organization of Canada was active between 1935-1937.

3. Pointe du Bois

This area, about 15 miles down the road from Riverland is a similar landscape. The Pointe is the site of a power dam for Winnipeg Hydro and was developed in the 1920's. The Finns first came into the area as labourers, building the railroad under the local contractor, N. K. Johnson. About fifteen families were there at that time and many decided to settle in the Pointe. Employment was associated with supporting the dam and small town, and with mining and cutting timber. A few of the old families are still left, but many homes of the old pioneers have been purchased by Winnipeg Finns who use them as summer cottages and then for their retirement. (The implications of this for the sauna will be discussed later). The Pointe is presently the most homogeneous and vibrant Finn centre in Manitoba. In summer the Finn language is very common, it is the site of the Midsummer Celebration, and there are several Finns bidding on any property which comes up for sale.

4. Eriksdale, Macross and Mulvihill

This area, about 80 miles north of Winnipeg, just east of Lake Manitoba saw the Finns settle amongst the Icelanders and Swedes from about 1912 onwards. There were about fifteen families in the early 1920's engaged in mixed farming, some fishing and cutting timber. There is only one known instance of this group of Finns ever coming together and that was for a Midsummer Celebration in about 1931 when twenty people gathered at one farm for a party. The only Finn name in Manitoba, Kalevala Lakes, is just east of the Mulvihill Post Office which was operated by a Finn for several years, Ernest "Kalevala" Norman. There are presently about sixty people of Finnish origin in this area, but with the passing of one of the

last two original pioneer settlers in January, 1977, the language and traditions are gone. All the others of "Finn" origin are children of mixed marriages where one of the parents is Finn, usually Canadian born.

5. Meadow Portage-Rorketon

These two settlements are over 200 miles north-west of Winnipeg, Rorketon being just east of Lake Dauphin and Lake Manitoba, and Meadow Portage about 15 miles north on a narrow strip of land between Lake Manitoba and Lake Winnipegosis. Rorketon is a mixed farming area, while Meadow Portage is very marshy and fishing plays a prominent role in the local economy. There is a large French, Indian, Ukrainian and Polish population in the area. The Finns in Meadow Portage and Rorketon came to these areas via the United States, leaving the area of Belden and Rolla, North Dakota in 1918. Some also came from New Finland, Saskatchewan. Upon coming to the area they established a hall in each community and were local rivals and very active branches of the communist Finnish Organization of Canada. The United States settlement route and the radical politics of these settlements make these communities very different from all other Finn settlements in Manitoba. In 1920 there were about forty-five Finn families in these two settlements, with Rorketon being slightly larger. By 1971 this number was reduced to about sixty individuals. The intervening years saw a mass exodus of young people due to lack of local employment opportunities and the very poor productivity of the land until recently. It is a very difficult area to develop economically due to the heavy bush, muskeg and isolation. (For a good dramatic presentation of the area see Gabrielle Roy's novel, Where Nests the Water Hen).



6. The Pas

Between 1970 and 1971 a concentrated effort to bring young skilled European paper manufacturing workers to operate the kraft paper mill resulted in twenty-three Finnish men and their families and two bachelors immigrating to The Pas. The men received a good wage by local standards and once they learned English, several moved into supervisory and management positions. Very few of the original group have moved away as they are very specialized workers and would have difficulty finding comparably high paying jobs elsewhere. In 1971 there were about 75 people of Finnish origin in The Pas and this number has remained fairly constant. The origins of these Finnish immigrants are from all parts of Finland as the Canadian jobs were advertised in national papers and hundreds of applications were received. Their common background relates more to their jobs as all were paper workers, and their marital status, in most cases married with young families. The intent was to hire a skilled, stable work force and to date that goal has been achieved with the Finns. They are a small minority in the paper related work force of over 1,000 people. As The Pas Finnish group migration is very recent all the adults speak Finnish as do the children. Finnish food is the typical fare and in 1976 the Finn Cafe opened, serving Finnish style food. The Finns organized a local ski club in 1973 that now has several hundred members. Several are active in a small Finnish Pentecostal church group linked with the Winnipeg congregation. Even though there have been some personal adjustment difficulties, especially with the women living at home in this isolated region, most of The Pas' Finns enjoy a fairly high standard of living.

The earliest emigrants from Finland (pre 1900) were primarily from the western provinces of Vaasa and Oulu, but by the time settlement had begun in Manitoba migration was established from other areas as well.

...Finns who have immigrated here (Winnipeg) came from all parts of Finland, but more correct still, if I said that almost all the provinces in Finland are represented here. We have nine provinces in Finland, and out of these there are eight quite equally represented. From the Vaasa region, we do not have many representatives, but I have heard that many of the Wapella (Saskatchewan) Finns came from there (Draft of letter of M. Norlen to E. Van Cleef October, 1950).

Most of these first immigrants, however, were from agricultural areas. The major influx of 1950 immigrants included many from Karelia in eastern Finland which had been seized by Russia in 1944. This group was very different culturally from other Finlanders, having been much influenced by their Russian neighbors to the east. Their dialect, foods, clothing and customs were very distinctive. Thus, the political, generational differences between the young 1950s immigrants and the pioneers of the 1920s, along with the urban-industrial skills of the 1950s group resulted in much conflict and eventual splitting of the Finnish group into "old timers" and "newcomers" in Manitoba.

THE SAUNA TRADITION IN FINLAND

Sauna is the Finnish word for a wood-lined and insulated room, heated by a special stove containing stones, and erected specifically to create the right environment for a certain kind of dry heat bath. The word does not refer

to the activity itself, but to the building in which it takes place. One does not take a sauna - one goes to the sauna (Konya 1973:9).

The sauna was the original and still is the most common bathing form in Finland. It is uniquely Finnish, having spread in popularity to other Scandinavian countries and throughout Europe. In 1970 about 85 per cent of Finland's 1.4 million households were without a fixed bath or shower, second highest in Europe except for Greece. This occurred even though 47 per cent of the homes had piped water (Bartholomew 1974:63). There are, however, approximately one million saunas (Konya 1974:14) for the 4.7 million population. There is a strong emphasis on cleanliness in the country:

The significance of the sauna, however, lies in what it represents: It's a symbol of cleansing as well as cleanliness, of the attainment of newness and purity. This emphasis on both cleanliness and newness is very strong in Finland: The country looks and is hygenic (Bacon 1970:203).

A. Early Accounts

The origin of the sauna, like that of many other cultural institutions, is almost impossible to determine. The best that can be done is to document from historical sources, folklore, and extrapolations from the ethnographic present, the distribution and origin of this type of bathing.

One of the earliest accounts of the sauna is in Nestor's Chronicle (c. 1100) by the Russian Missionary, St. Andrew, who wrote...

I saw bath houses of wood. When they have been heated to a very high temperature, people undress themselves completely



Figure 32.

"Sauna Ladies," a modern wood carving from Finland.

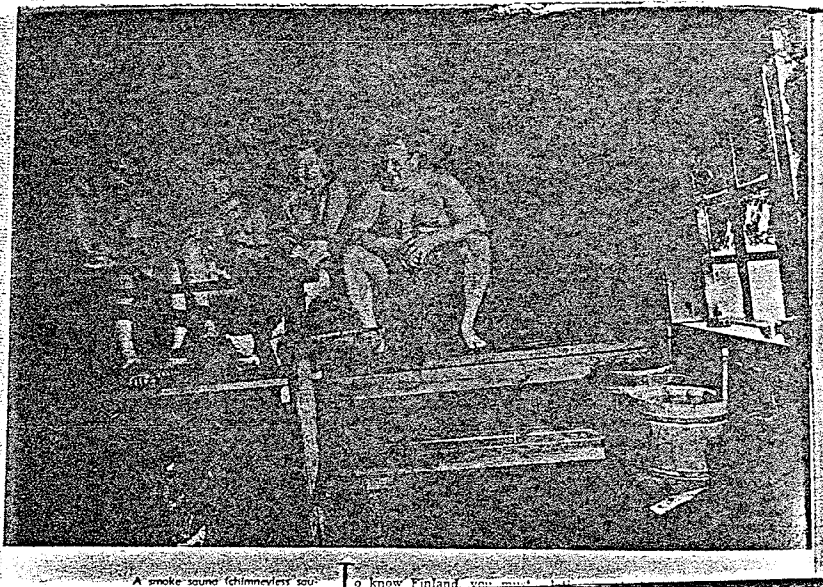


Figure 33.

Men in the sauna. Note the water buckets on the right and the man holding the vihta or bath whisk for striking the body. (Photo from Liuhala 1963).

and go inside. They pour tepid water on the back of their necks, take a bunch of fresh birch branches in their hands, and lash themselves to the point of exhaustion. Then they pour water on their bodies and are thus quite refreshed. They do this every day quite voluntarily. They go of their own free will, to have a bath, and not at all to torture themselves (as quoted in Viherjuuri 1972:19-20).

Thus, over 800 years ago the sauna was not appreciably different from that of today. The importance of the sauna amongst the Finns was recognized by one of the heads of the Church of Finland, Mikael Agricola, Bishop of Turku who was responsible for the first books to be published in Finnish. In the Prayer Book (1544) he instructs the people about hygiene, and "recommends the use of the sauna the whole year round" (Viherjuuri 1972:16).

In the early 19th century the physician Elias Lönnrot began to collect hundreds of folk runos from singers in eastern Finland. He compiled these ancient folksongs into an epic poem, the Kalevala which is Finland's masterpiece of literature (Honko 1969:46-52). Contained within the poem are many references to the sauna. While the historical accounts are often questioned as to authenticity, the cultural detail is remarkably accurate. The heroes of the poem are described as ardent bathers, the sauna is used for making malt and as a means of driving away evil. One passage instructs the bride as to readying the sauna...

When the evening bath is wanted,
Fetch the water and the bath-whisks,
Have the bath-whisks warm and ready,
Fill thou fill with steam the bathroom.

Do not take too long about it,
Do not loiter in the bathroom,
Lest thy father-in-law should fancy,
Or thy mother-in-law imagine,
You were lying on the bath-boards,
On the bench your head reclining.
When the room again you enter,
Then announce the bath is ready:
'O my father-in-law beloved,
Now the bath is full ready:
Water brought, and likewise bath-whisks,
All the boards are cleanly scoured.
Go and bathe thee at thy pleasure,
Wash thou there as it shall please thee,
I myself will mind the steaming
Standing underneath the boarding.

(Kirby 1970, Vol. 1, pp. 273-274)

Similarly the concluding runo of the Kalevala describes how the new King of Karelia is born to the virgin Marjatta. Cast out from her home she tried to "Find a bath near reed-fringed brooklet, but instead was directed

To the stable in the pinewood,

And the stall on hill of Tapio.

...where a horse aided her, breathing a "vapour bath" to raise the heat, and the child was born (Kirby 1970, Vol. 2, pp. 266-267).

It was common practise to give birth in the saunas before the availability of hospitals in the 20th century. Saunas were very anti-septic due to the cleansing effect of extremely high dry heat alternating

with steam. There was hot water available for washing, the room was warm, and private from the rest of the family.

The sauna was extremely well known amongst foreign travellers to Finland and the subject of scientific and personal investigation. The Italian, Guiseppe Acerbi, in the 18th century recorded this account of his mischievous activities.

Almost all the Finnish peasants have a small house built on purpose for a bath...Men and women use the bath promiscuously, without any concealment of dress, or being in the least influenced by any emotions of attachment. If, however, a stranger opens the door, and comes on the bathers by surprise, the women are not a little startled at his appearance, for besides his person, he introduces along with him, by opening the door, a great quantity of light, which discovers at once to the view their situation, as well as their forms...I often amused myself with surprising the bathers in this manner, and once or twice tried to go in and join the assembly; but the heat was so excessive that I could not breathe, and the space of a minute at most, I verily believe must have suffocated. I sometimes stepped in for a moment, just to leave my thermometer in some proper place, and immediately went out again, where I would remain for a quarter of an hour, or ten minutes, and then enter again and fetch the instrument to ascertain the degree of heat. My astonishment was so great that I could scarcely believe my sense, when I found that those people remain together, and amuse themselves for a space of half an hour, and sometimes a whole hour, in the same chamber, heated

to the 70th or 75th degree of Celsius. The thermometer, in contact with these vapours, became so hot that I could scarcely hold it in my hands... (as recorded in Mather and Kaups 1963:496).

A British traveller remarks of the ...'sauna' standing a little apart. Often in the evening dense clouds of steam may be seen proceeding from every crevice of some little building, and the traveller is tempted to think it may be on fire. But it is only the family enjoying its bath after the labour of the day. The Finnish bath consists of vapour, which is created by throwing water over the stove or great boulders, which have been heated red hot. The heat of the bath is well-nigh intolerable to one who has not been accustomed to it, but the Finns enjoy it, and beat their bodies with little bunches of birch twigs to increase the perspiration (Scott 1913:86).

An amusing and adventurous account of a variety of Finnish baths, including the sauna, is recorded in Mrs. A. Tweedie's Through Finland in Carts (1913). She devotes an entire chapter to her experiences, bathing not with the

...peasants themselves, however, (that) being impossible, we arranged the extraordinary pleasure at a friend's house, where we could be duly washed by one of her own servants; for, be it understood, there is always one servant in every better-class establishment who understands the bastu (sauna), and can, and does wash the family... (Tweedie 1913:65).

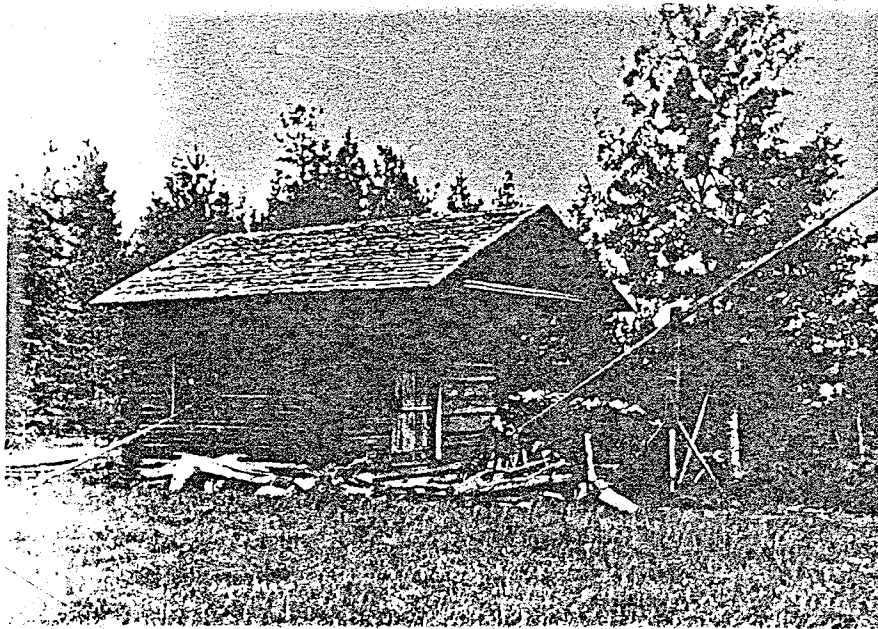


Figure 34.

One-room savusauna or chimneyless smoke sauna in Finland. Note the well sweep on the right.

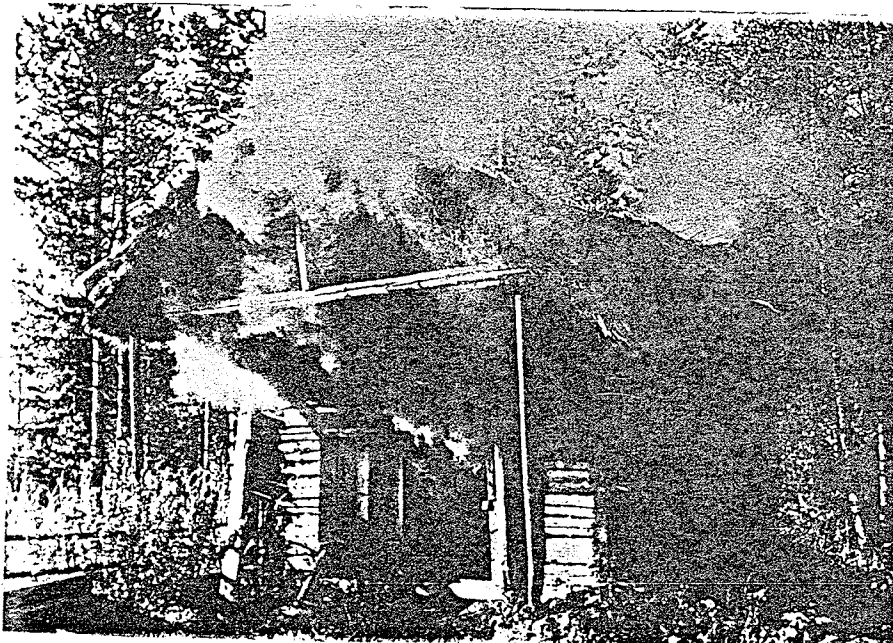


Figure 35.

Heating up the savusauna. The door is left opened and the fire burns for about two hours and then is allowed to go out before the bathers enter. (Photo from Vuorela 1964).

Mrs. Tweedie's bath progressed from undressing in the outer change room of the small log sauna and entering into the sauna room where the heat was like plunging "into volcanic fires at once...The steam ascended in volumes, and the temperature went up...Then the washmaid, or kylvettaja, using soap, a rough hemp cloth, and a pail of hot water

made a lather with the soap, and, taking up limb after limb, scrubbed hand and long-scrubbed until my skin tingled, and in the damp mysterious heat I began to wonder how much of my body would emerge from the ordeal.

This was followed by a vigorous beating with a "great bundle of birch leaves" and a final dousing with a pail of cold water. A glass of mjod was drunk and the author claims...

I slept splendidly - the first time after weeks of anxiety and grief - and felt fit next morning for any amount of hard work, even for a journey to Russia through Finland (Tweedie 1913:66-70).

In one of the few academic studies of the steam bath Ivan Lopatin (1960:978) states that the sauna-type bath from the very beginning has been an artificial type of bath evidently invented in a northern country. It has been common only in countries with long cold winters and much later was diffused to warm countries. Today it is very common among Great Russians, Swedes, Norwegians, people of Finland, the Estonians and Latvians and among certain agricultural Finns...It seems probable that the vapour bath originated from the direct fire sweat bath. If so we may point a chronology and an evolution, the water vapor bath representing the second step of this evolution.

Even as late as the early 20th century there existed in isolated areas of Finland homes which were small, low, chimneyless, one-roomed log buildings, heated by a loosely-piled stone hearth in one corner. Such dwellings were dark because of soot blackened walls. They resembled what is presently known as the savusauna or smoke sauna. These types of buildings were known throughout Finland in earlier times, and served three functions: as a dwelling, a threshing barn and sauna (Vuorela 1964:26). The chimneyless dwelling was the most common building until the 16th century when additional rooms were added and separate outbuildings were constructed. It was only in the 18th century, however that chimneys and glazed windows were introduced into dwellings (ibid.:28). It was much later that they became part of the sauna building.

B. Variants of the Sauna Among Other Related and Adjacent Groups

The counterpart to the savusauna is the Russian vapor bath or bania.

The architecture of the Russian vapor bathhouse is extremely simple. It is a very small one-room log cabin, the door being as small as possible and the people enter it by stooping. In a corner is a hearth (kamenka), semi-spherical in shape, made of common cobblestones. No cement is used. There are two holes between every two stones and therefore smoke easily goes through them. The structure of the hearth is so simple that it would not be an exaggeration to say that the kamenka is a pile of stones. There is no chimney for the hearth and, therefore the smoke comes out of both the opening of the hearth and the small holes between the individual cobblestones of which the hearth is made, fills all the room,

and then escapes through a small hole in one of the four walls or through the open door if the hole is lacking. The process of heating is carried on until all the cobblestones are hot enough to produce steam if water is thrown onto them... No furniture is in the bathhouse except two benches, one low for washing and the other (polok) for taking a steam bath (Lopatin 1960:979-980).

The architectural similarity and parallel social usage of the Russian bania and the Finnish sauna, point to either a common origin of this phenomenon, independent invention and/or diffusion from one of the groups to the other. It is impossible to say which of these occurred, but it is quite likely that the sauna existed in an early form while the proto-Finns were still located in Central Russia. The Finns took it west with them, just as other Finno peoples maintained it in their own regions.

The Zyryans, a Finno-Ugrian people residing east and southeast of Archangel in the far north, followed until very recently a shifting slash-and-burn type of agriculture, supplemented with hunting, fishing and some reindeer herding. This is the type of subsistence, except for reindeer herding, that was also followed by the proto-Finns when they resided immediately south of the present Zyryan territory many centuries earlier. The Zyryans were active sauna users and

on regular hunting trails, cabins or bathhouses were built near rivers at a distance from each other of about 10 miles. These cabins could also be used on fishing trips or tree-felling expeditions and during harvesting on nearby watery meadows (Vuorela 1964:291).

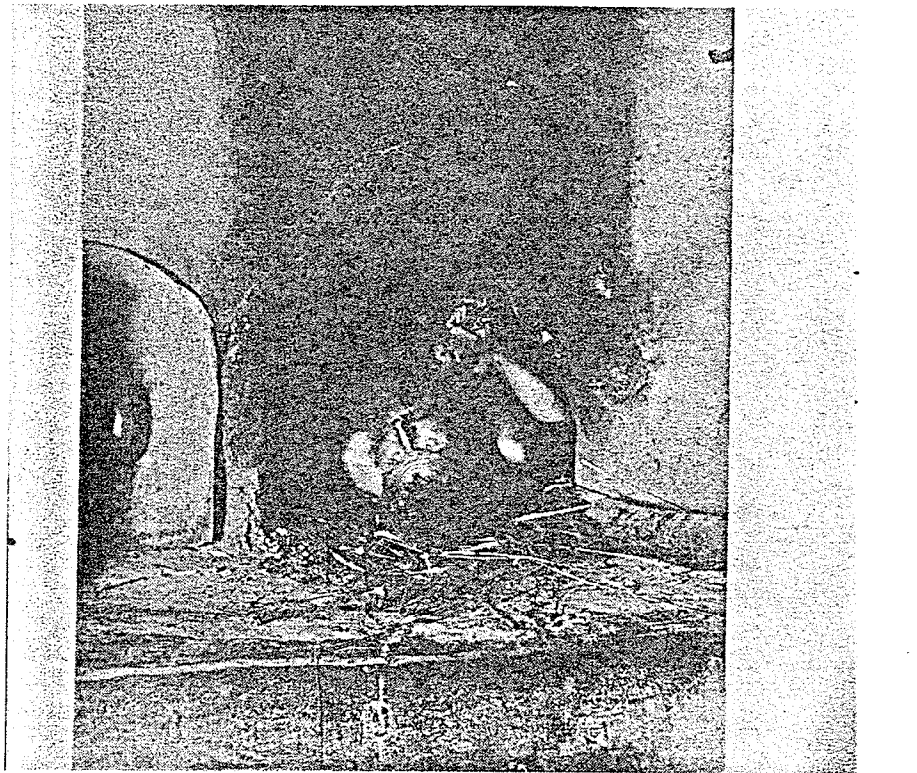


Figure 36.

Copy of illustration from Vuorela
(1964) showing a Vepsian bathing
in an oven.

Thus, it appears that the sauna is not a condition of permanent settlement, but has been maintained by groups with a semi-permanent or shifting settlement pattern until very recent times.

Toiva Vuorela, in his classic study, The Finno-Ugric Peoples (1964), has recorded the sauna amongst almost all the Finno branch of this language family with very minor differences amongst them. The Finns (ibid.:26028), Carelians (ibid.:129), Vots (ibid.:152, 154), Livonians (ibid.:213), Mordvinians (ibid.:225, 227-228), Cheremis (ibid.:245), Votyaks (ibid.:269-270), Zyryans (ibid.:22, 291), Estonians (ibid.:187), and Lapps (ibid.:67) all use the sauna in some form or other. The use of the sauna by the Lapps is a recent example of cultural borrowing from the Finns, common only since permanent Lapp settlements have been formed (Lopatin 1960:987).

A bizarre form of steam bathing is practised amongst the Vepsians who live north of Moscow, just south of the Carelians.

In the centre of the living-room was a large oven. This was generally kept warm all day. In the morning bread would be baked inside it and broths cooked in the earthenware vessels. In winter the broad seat by the oven made a pleasant place to sleep. The sauna (kylbet) was not common amongst Southern Vepsians and in winter they would even bathe inside the oven. Straw was then spread on the floor of the oven and the bather would squeeze inside draw the cover over the entrance and beat the wall with a bunch of wet twigs, thus producing steam. Finally he would swill himself in a wooden trough of water placed on the floor. A similar way of bathing was known to Carelians of Viena, Tver Carelians, Ingrians and Russians. (Vuorela 1964:137).

Dunn and Dunn (1967:61) report that in 1963 the "custom of steaming oneself on the top of the stove is no longer practicable (due to changed tastes and internal household arrangements)," amongst Russian peasants and that private and public saunas or banias are rare, resulting in a serious lack of adequate bathing facilities.

The sauna spread from its Finn-Russian origin to medieval Germany (Lopatin 1960:986) where it later died out and was reintroduced during World War Two (Mather and Kaups 1963:496). It was also known throughout Scandinavia in the 13th century, but did not survive there (Vuorela 1964:28). The Russians, in their conquest of Siberia introduced the bania to scattered tribes in this vast territory. On the Kamchatka Peninsula on the Pacific Ocean, Kennan records an experience 50 years earlier, in the "black baths", which is almost identical to that of Mrs. Tweedie's several thousand miles to the west.

Taking a steam-bath was a very mild sort of dissipation; and if it were true that 'cleanliness was next to godliness', the bath-house certainly should precede the church. I had often heard Dodd speak of the 'black baths' of the Kamtchadals; and without knowing definitely what he meant, I had a sort of vague impression that these 'black baths' were taken in some inky fluid of Kamtchatkan manufacture, which possessed peculiar deterrent properties. I could think of no other reason than this for calling a bath 'black'. Upon entering the 'black bath', however, at Kloochay, I saw my mistake, and acknowledged at once the appropriateness of the adjective. Leaving our clothes in a little crude entry, which answered the purposes without affording any of the conveniences of a dressing-room,

we stooped to a low fur-clad door and entered the bath-room proper, which was certainly dark enough and black enough to justify the gloomiest, murkiest adjective in the language. A tallow candle, which was burning feebly on the floor, gave just light enough to distinguish the outlines of a low, bare apartment, about ten feet square, built solidly of unhewn logs, without a single opening for the admission of air or light. Every square inch of the walls and ceiling was perfectly black with a sooty deposit from the clouds of smoke with which the room had been filled in the process of heating. A large pile of stones, with a hollow place underneath for a fire, stood in one end of the room, and a series of broad steps, which did not seem to lead anywhere, occupied the other. As soon as the fire had gone out, the chimneyhole had been closed and hermetically sealed, and the pile of hot stones was now radiating a fierce dry heat, which made respiration a painful duty, and perspiration an unpleasant necessity. The presiding spirit of this dark, infernal place of torture soon made his appearance in the shape of a long-haired, naked Kamtchadal, and proceeded to throw water upon the pile of red-hot stones until they hissed like a locomotive, and the candle burned blue in the centre of a steamy halo. I thought it was hot before, but it was a Siberian winter compared with the temperature which this manoeuvre produced. My very bones seemed melting with fervent heat. After getting the air of the room as nearly as possible up to 212 degrees, the native seized me by the arm, spread me out on the lowest of the flight of steps, poured boiling suds over my face and feet with

reckless impartiality, and proceeded to knead me as if he fully intended to separate me into my original elements. I will not attempt to describe the number, the variety, and the diabolical ingenuity of the tortures to which I was subjected during the next twenty minutes. I was scrubbed, rolled, pounded, drenched with cold water and scalded with hot, beaten with bundles of birch twigs, rubbed down with wads of hemp which scraped like brick-bats, and finally left to recover my breath upon the highest and hottest step of the whole stairway. A douse of cold water finally put an end to the ordeal and to my misery; and groping my way out into the entry, I proceeded, with chattering teeth, to dress. In a moment I was joined by the Major, and we resumed our walk, feeling like disembodied spirits.

Owing to the lateness of the hour, we were compelled to postpone indefinitely our visit to the church; but we had been sufficiently amused for one day, and returned to the house satisfied, if not delighted, with our experience of Kamtchatkan black baths (Kennan 1871:73-74).

The sauna is very much a Baltic cultural characteristic as well as the Finns, the sauna is common among the Estonians and the Latvians. The Estonians are very closely related to the Finns linguistically and culturally, and their use of the sauna is almost identical. The Latvians along with the Lithuanians, speak an Indo-European language which is unrelated to Finnish and Estonian and have a somewhat different cultural tradition. But for the Latvians the steam bath-house or pirts is very much in the Finnish style.

The bath-house is one of the smallest and most primitive structures of the farmstead. Its purpose is to preserve the bodily cleanliness and health of the farm people. However, it was also connected with ancient beliefs and cult, practised in connection with childbirth and attendance to the dead, which took place in the bath-house. For this reason this building is often mentioned in folklore. As a rule, the pirts was erected outside the farm-yard on a location in proximity of water. Some trees or shrubbery usually concealed it from view. Many samples have been preserved of one-room bath-houses with stoves made of piled-up small boulders or rocks. When heated, the smoke stayed inside the room which had a ceiling. This room did not differ greatly from other smoke-rooms. After getting the smoke out of the bath-house, the heated stove-boulders kept the heat for a long time and turned the water poured on them into steam. The bathers lay down on shelf-like benches along the wall and started perspiring which they intensified by lashing themselves with whisks of leafed birch twigs. This type of bath-house was used by the Baltic peoples, the Finno-Ugrians (the "sauna" of the Finns) and the ancient Slavs. In a western direction it expanded in later times, also reaching Scandinavia.

The roof of the one-room bath-house was later extended over the front end to form an open porch and sometimes supported by posts. This porch was gradually converted into a vestibule-changing room by closing it in with walls. Also the stove underwent modifications. In the loft of the bath-house quite

often malt was spread to dry, and in certain poor farmsteads even sheaves of grain were dried there before the threshing. There were cases where the bath-house adjoined the nams (cook-house). In emergency circumstances the bath-house was used as a temporary dwelling and turned into a permanent one when a heated room was added. It was then often used by the hired farm-workers.

The bath-house was regularly used on Saturday evenings. In cases of childbirth, it was heated when needed. The bathing procedure was a kind of ritual and performed without fuss. Very often, after the bath, the young men jumped into a pond or dipped into a close-by stream to cool off, and in winter even rolled about in the snow.

Special traditions were connected with childbirth, the treatment of the sick with popular methods, and attendance to the dead. Therefore, the bath-house had acquired, as it were, the character of "sanctuary" (Kundzins 1974:438-439).

C. Basic Characteristics of the Sauna

The previous discussion of sauna distribution was included primarily to orient the reader to the variety of form in this cultural practice among groups other than the Finns. The broad similarity of sauna tradition can be summarized as follows to give the basic characteristics of the sauna:

1. It is a small low room.
2. A heat source raises the temperature of the rocks.
3. An alternating hot-dry and hot-steam method is used to increase perspiration.

4. Steam is generated by throwing water on the hot rocks.
5. Birch whisks or vihtas are used to encourage circulation.
6. The body is washed, followed by cooling.
7. Associated therapeutic behavior such as massage and blood-letting may occur in the sauna.

The foregoing characteristics are part of all saunas and sauna bathing, but the specific form and combination has evolved over time from the earliest dwelling-sauna to the modern home electric types. Some of these combinations, not necessarily in evolutionary sequence, are listed below.

The sauna may take the form of a:

1. Dwelling-threshing room-sauna building with no chimney;
2. Dwelling-sauna with chimney;
3. Separate outbuilding, consisting of a one room, chimneyless smoke sauna (savusauna);
4. Smoke-hole and/or vented port smoke sauna, a variety of the savusauna;
5. Chimney over rock pile sauna, another variety of the savusauna;
6. Room with a fire box and chimney (no internal smoke);
7. Separate change room, attached to the heat room;
8. Village sauna (commercial);
9. Room with a non-wood burning heat source (electric, gas, oil, etc.) or a
10. Private sauna in home, often in the basement.

The statement that if anyone wanted to invade Finland, it should be on Saturday night, has more than a grain of truth to it. This is the

traditional time to heat up the sauna and have a bath, after the week's labor and before Sunday church. Depending upon the seasonal activities a sauna bath could be taken much more frequently, for example, at harvest time the sauna might be used every night. There is much regional variety, and in some areas of Finland the entire family bathes together, while in other areas there is a strict rule of men bathing first, in the hottest heat, followed by women and young children.

The ritual of the sauna actually begins several hours before the bathing. In the late afternoon the fire is started and fed until the internal heat of the room is between 90 degrees C. and 110 degrees C. By this time the fire is out in a smoke-type sauna, and the heat has been transferred to the stones which radiate this warmth for several hours, cooling very slowly. The advantage of a chimney style stove, gas or electric heater is the ability to "feed the fire" while in the steam room and thus maintain a high, even temperature for several hours which is long enough to accommodate many groups of bathers. The bathers now come, having removed their clothes either in the home and walking naked or with a robe, or change in the small room outside the steam room.

The bathers then enter the steam room and ascend the two or three tiered benches along one wall. They generally sit or lie there for several minutes, until perspiration begins, before one of a series of small ladles of water is thrown on the rocks. This causes

löyly, the almost untranslatable word meaning the very hot, slightly humid wave of air produced when a little warm water is thrown over the stove stones (and) is an important active ingredient of the sauna. The air suddenly seems hotter and

envelopes the bather with an invisible glowing cloud, pleasantly stinging the skin (Konya 1973:16).

The bather then takes his birch whisk (vihta or vasta), dips it in hot water heated by a container on the stones, lays it briefly on the hot stones and proceeds to briskly strike the leafy twigs over his body. The vihtas are made in spring by tying together young birch twigs, with their leaves, into a tight bundle about 20 inches long and left hanging to dry. Two dozen would be enough for a small family for a year, each vihta being used several times. The soaking and heating of the vihtas before use restores a resiliency to the leaves and releases a refreshing fragrance of birch which permeates the room.

Several minutes in the hot-room is followed by a short period of four or five minutes cooling off in the change room if one is available, or by a brief plunge in a nearby lake or river. During this interval a cool refreshment may be drunk to restore to the body some of the water that was lost by sweating. The process of heating and cooling the body may be repeated several times. Before leaving the hot-room for the last time it is customary to wash with soap and warm water. This is followed by cooling down and resting, and perhaps by a plunge into the water, a shower, or, during the winter, rolling into the snow or jumping through a hole in the ice (avanto). This latter technique is only recommended for the strong of heart!

The sauna bath is followed by a light evening meal and a quiet visit with those present.

D. Benefits of the Sauna Bath

The popularity of the sauna is no doubt due to the legion of benefits attributed to it, some accurate, some inaccurate. What happens

physiologically to the body is a rising of the normal body temperature due to the intense heat of the sauna room. This change in body temperature is said to aid skin problems, eliminate body odour, improve blood circulation, reduce the stiffness in muscles and joints, and create "favorable preconditions for applying massage and exercise therapy" (Konya 1973:22-23). The sauna is not an effective means of permanent weight reduction as the water that is lost through perspiration is soon regained. An old proverb states that

If spirits, tar and the sauna are of no avail, there is no cure (Konya 1973:12).

Pine tar was a cold remedy, administered by drinking a glass of water containing diluted pine tar while in the sauna, or by sprinkling the tar on the hot sauna stones and inhaling the vapour (Kaups 1976:19).

While there are direct physical benefits from the sauna besides cleanliness the main reason for the great popularity of the sauna is the sense of well-being and relaxation that follows afterward. A visit to the sauna is enjoyable and mentally invigorating. The peaceful nature of the sauna has attracted the awareness of politicians and it is not uncommon for the Finnish cabinet to convene there to resolve difficult problems (Liuhalala 1963:25).

THE SAUNA IN CANADA

The succeeding pages describe the saunas in Manitoba recorded by the author during the summer of 1976. Some of these buildings were first noticed in the winter of 1975-76 and consequently some winter scenes were photographed. The descriptions and cultural data are grouped into sections which correspond geographically to the Finnish settlements in

Figure 37.

A Finnish woman from Winnipeg making vihtas during a visit to Elma, Manitoba, c. 1935.

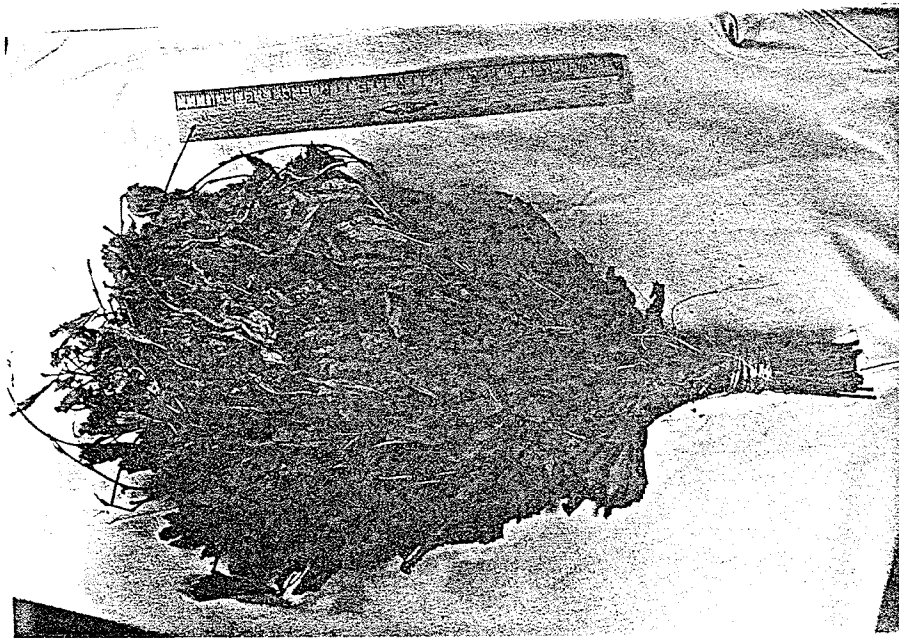


Figure 38.

Close-up of a well used birch vihta from Pointe du Bois, Manitoba.

Figure 39.

Finnish young people resting outside of the sauna. Note the sod roof on the sauna; two homes in Meadow Portage also had sod roofs. c. 1935.

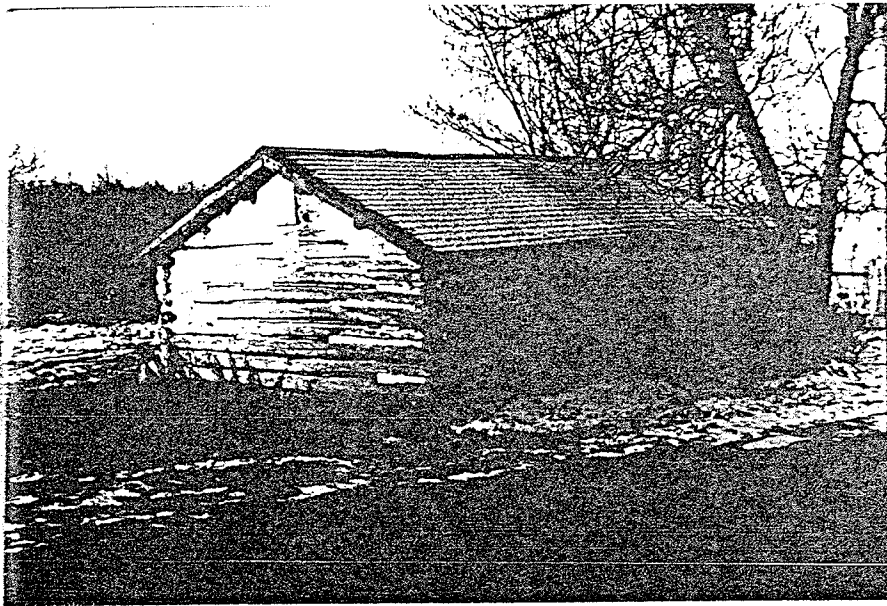
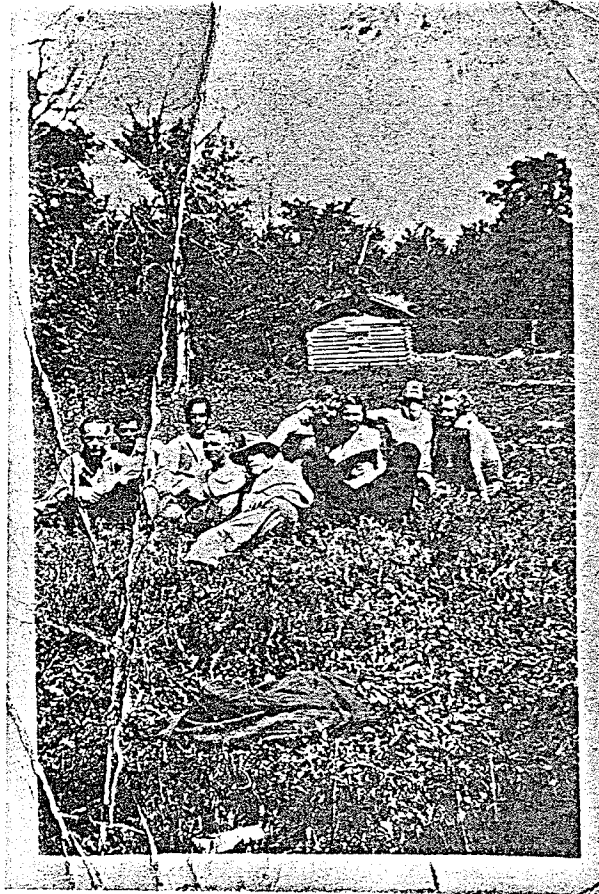


Figure 40.

Ben H.'s sauna as it was in fall of 1975. This building, the last of the saunas in Meadow Portage, was torn down in spring of 1976.

Manitoba. The concluding section discusses the distribution of the sauna and the bania among the Estonians and Doukhobors, respectively.

Detailed description of the log building techniques and the people who built and used the sauna are included for a variety of reasons. A number of the buildings described will be gone within a few years, due to a natural decay or clearing away of unwanted or unused buildings by their owners. This has already occurred with the tearing down of the last sauna in Meadow Portage. It is also important to establish the role of the sauna in the social context of each local community. The Finns are not a majority in any of these areas and their style of life is a mixture of transferred old world cultural attributes and new world influences. The theoretical implications of cultural change amongst the Finns will be the subject of the next chapter. The point to make, however, is that the Finnish sauna has been and is still undergoing change in Manitoba and by studying this change general statements can be made about the Finnish people in Manitoba and the nature of our pluralistic society.

Meadow Portage

The last sauna in Meadow Portage was torn down in the spring of 1975. This building was constructed by Ben H.'s father-in-law, Nick K. in 1924 and was later moved to H.'s fishing camp where it was in use for many years by the family and guests (See Figure 40). In the early settlement period every Finnish farm had a sauna, usually a savusauna. The H. sauna was moved because the original homestead where it was located was without water and life was too difficult there. Two other Finnish families in Meadow Portage have been without a sauna for years. Both of these families consist of Finnish men married to Metis women. Ben H.'s son lives on the same property as his father and is also without a sauna.

In the days when there was a large Finnish population at Meadow Portage (late 1920s), the sauna was very much a part of normal life. Mrs. W., who is a spry 90 years old and retired in Rorketon, gave birth to four of her seven children in their sauna in Meadow Portage in the 1920s without the aid of a doctor or nurse. This was part of the family tradition as she, as well as all of her brothers and sisters, had been born in the sauna at home in Rovaniemi, Finland. Mrs. W. is the only recorded person to have given birth in the sauna in Manitoba, but this practise was not uncommon in similarly isolated Finnish settlements in other parts of Canada and the United States.

Another tradition associated with the sauna was cupping with horns and blood letting for therapeutic purposes, the tradition of healer or tietaja (See Salo 1973 for a detailed discussion). There was one healer in Meadow Portage during the 1930s but he later moved to Thunder Bay and died there. It is not known if his role was restricted to that of blood letting or extended into such things as prescribing medicines and setting bones as was the traditional role of such individuals in Finland.

It appears that the sauna tradition in Meadow Portage is soon to be forgotten. Ben H. and his wife, Tina are the last example of Finn to Finn marriage and had maintained many Finn customs and were very active in local activities. No saunas have been built since the pioneer generation of Finns have died and no one has plans to do so.

Rorketon

In the summer of 1976 there were eight Finn saunas in the Rorketon area, and one in the basement of a non-Finn. Of the eight Finn saunas three were abandoned and no longer in use, four were in use on farms, and

one was in use in the town of Rorketon. All three of the abandoned saunas were of the old style of savusaunas. The characteristics of these eight saunas can be summarized as follows:

Table 4

Sauna Number	Abandoned	Savu-sauna	Con-verted	Stove	One Room	Two Room	Detailed Description
1*	x	x			x		
2*			x	x		x	
3	x	x				x	x
4	x	x				x	x
5			x	x		x	x
6			x	x		x	
7			x	x		x	x
8**						x	

* On the same farm

** Not seen

All of the above saunas are separate small structures, built especially for bathing. All are log except for No. 4, which is log frame and No. 7 which is a 2" X 4" frame building. Every one of these sauna, except for No. 8 which was not examined by the author, was originally a savusauna or smoke sauna. The three abandoned saunas, Nos. 1, 3, and 4, are in their original "in-coming-smoke" state while the rest have been converted to some type of stove and chimney structure. Many of the converted saunas have new interior walls put up to cover the old blackened walls of the savusauna days (No. 7). In one instance the log walls were painted (No.5). Several of the two-room saunas were originally one room, but as part of the modernizing trend a small change room was added onto the front. Following are detailed descriptions of saunas Number 3, 4, 5 and 7.

Willie S.'s Sauna (No. 3)

John S. emigrated from Vaasa, Finland to the United States in 1897. He worked in several jobs and then went to Hibbing, Minnesota where he

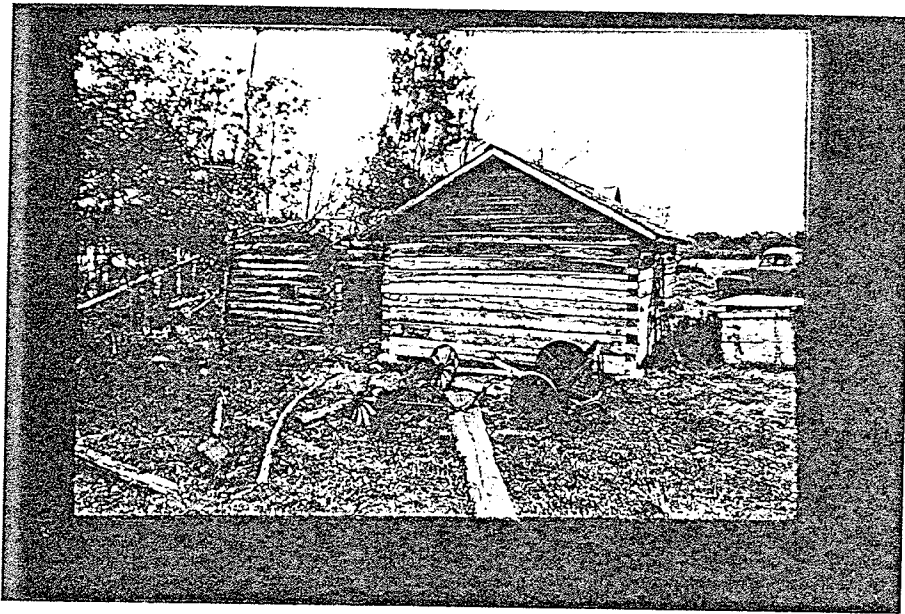


Figure 41.

Rorketon sauna No. 1 (left) and No. 2 (right). Both were savusaunas, but No. 2 has been modified with a stove and chimney and is still in use. No. 1 is a simple pioneer sauna, while No. 2 is the sign of an established farmer.

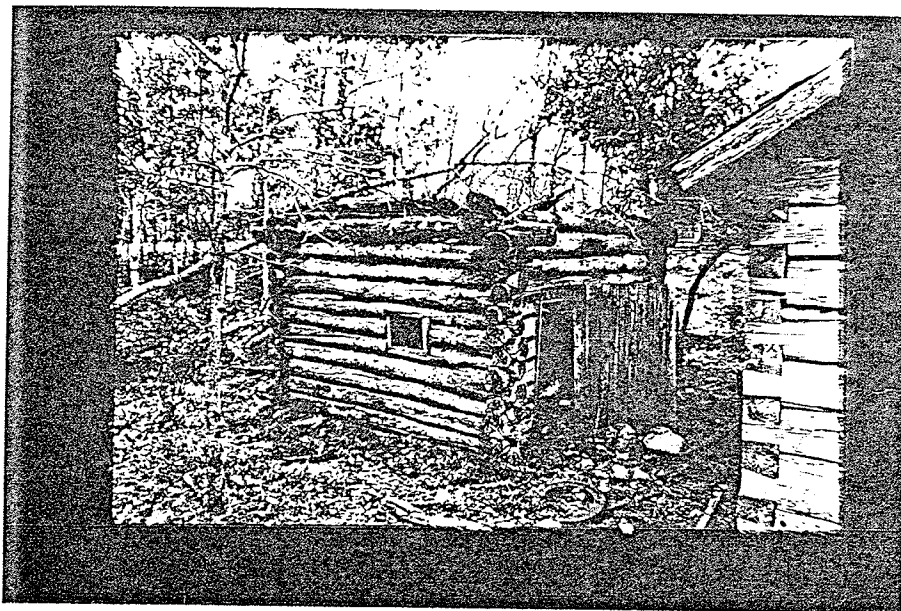


Figure 42.

Rorketon sauna No. 1 is the only one-roomed savusauna still standing. c. 1918. It was about 6' square and 6' high with a flat log roof. Entrance was via a low door on south wall. There was one window on the west side, a low bench along the north wall and a kias in the south-east corner.



Figure 43.

A two-room converted sauna (No.6) in Rorketon, Manitoba. This sauna is about 100 yards in the bush from the house and is in poor condition and rarely used. Two previous saunas on this farm burned down.



Figure 44.

The change room which was added on to what was originally a one roomed savusauna of the above building (No. 6). The shovel on the right is used for removing the ashes from the kiuas.

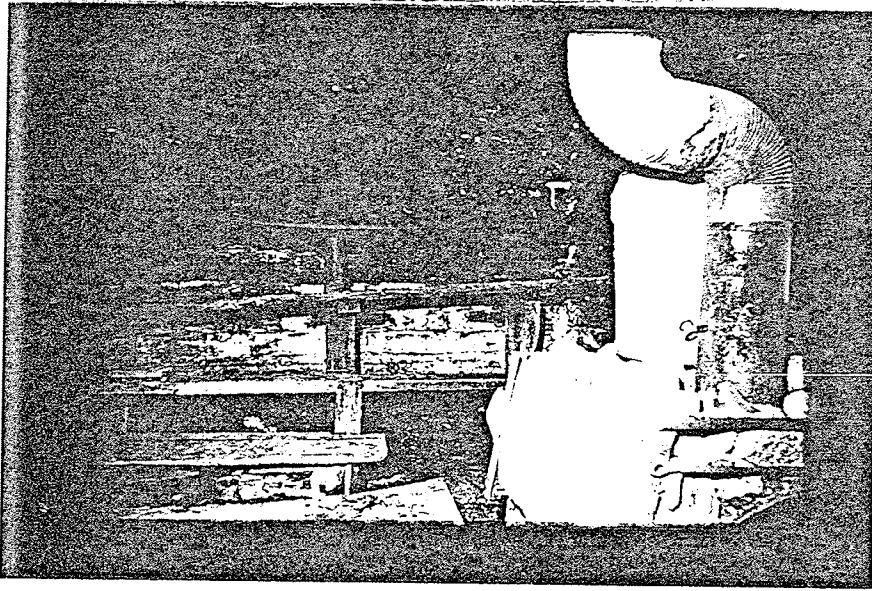


Figure 45.

The three-tiered bench in the sauna room (No. 6) in Rorketon, Manitoba. Note the smoke-blackened walls from the savusauna days and the kluas on the right.

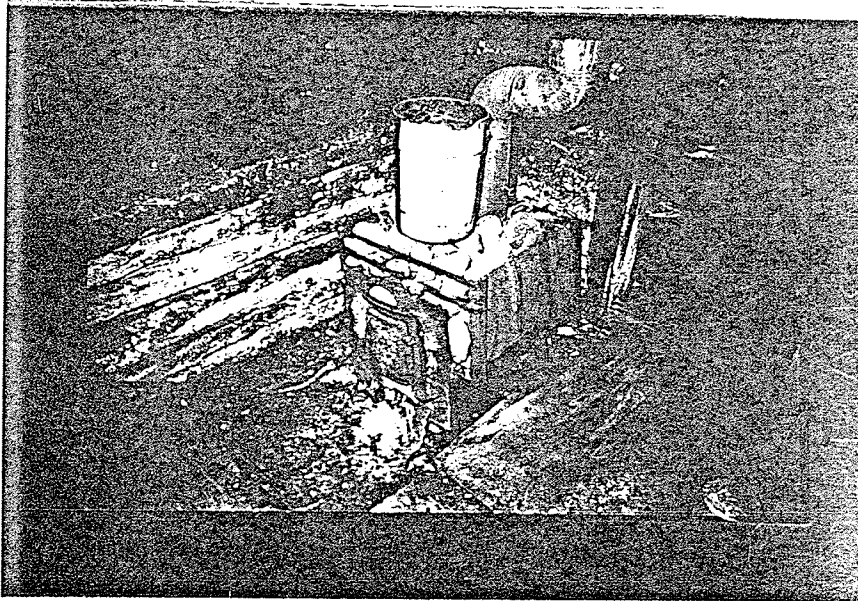


Figure 46.

Kluas with chimney of sauna (No. 6) in Rorketon, Manitoba. Note bare earth beneath the stove and the water can on top of the stove.

met and married Mary, a Finnish girl, and later moved to Stanley, North Dakota. They decided to leave North Dakota because of bad drought which made attempts at farming very difficult. In 1918 they took the Canadian National Railway train up to Ochre River, Manitoba and then travelled by horse and wagon around the south end of Lake Dauphin to a farm two miles west of Rorketon. John and Mary S. and their family shared the same house for two years with three or four other Finnish families they had known in North Dakota. This building, which had been vacant before they arrived, came to be known as the "Company House" and is remembered with great amusement by the local Finns. It is quite likely that there was a sauna at the "Company House", but no one remembers one for certain. Communal living as was practised in Rorketon was not uncommon amongst Finns elsewhere. There is a long history of co-operative ventures in Finland and in North America and even one attempt at forming a utopian society in Sointula, British Columbia (Kercher 1941:Wilson 1974). The families from the "Company House" were also very active in the local Finn hall.

John and Mary S. eventually took out a homestead east and north of Rorketon along what is now highway 276 where they raised their six children. Besides farming, John fished to supplement the family income and for food for personal use.

Only one person is residing on the farm now, their son Willie S., a 53 year old bachelor. In September, 1977 Willie gave up farming and took the first salaried job in his life on a road repair crew. He has rented out his land for pasture and his barns are empty of cattle and silent for the first time in 50 years. The author was present when Willie got his first pay cheque and Willie was amazed at how easy it was to earn what was to him a very large sum of money. He vowed then to give up farming forever.

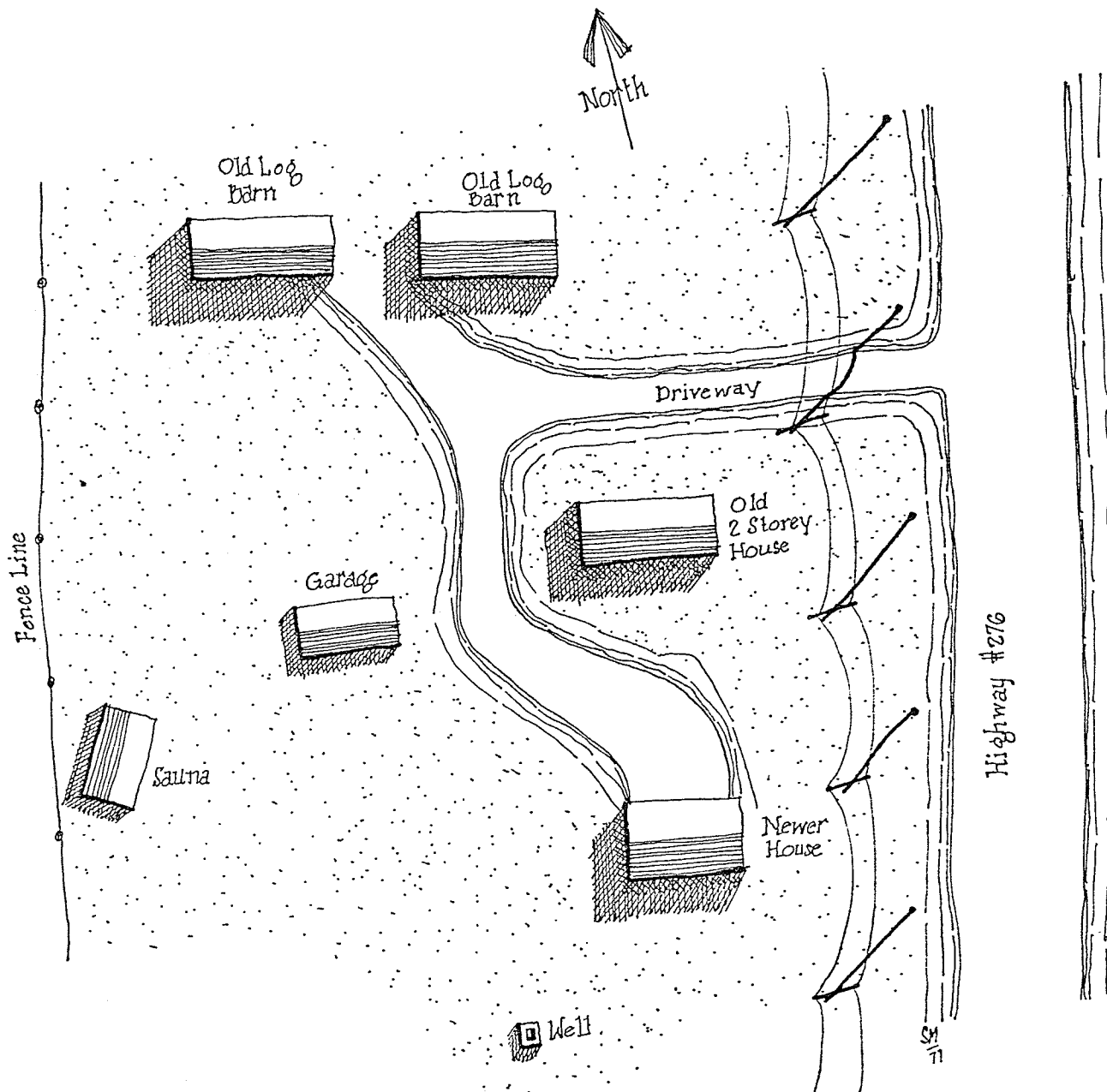


Figure 47.

Willie S.'s sauna in Rorketon, Manitoba.

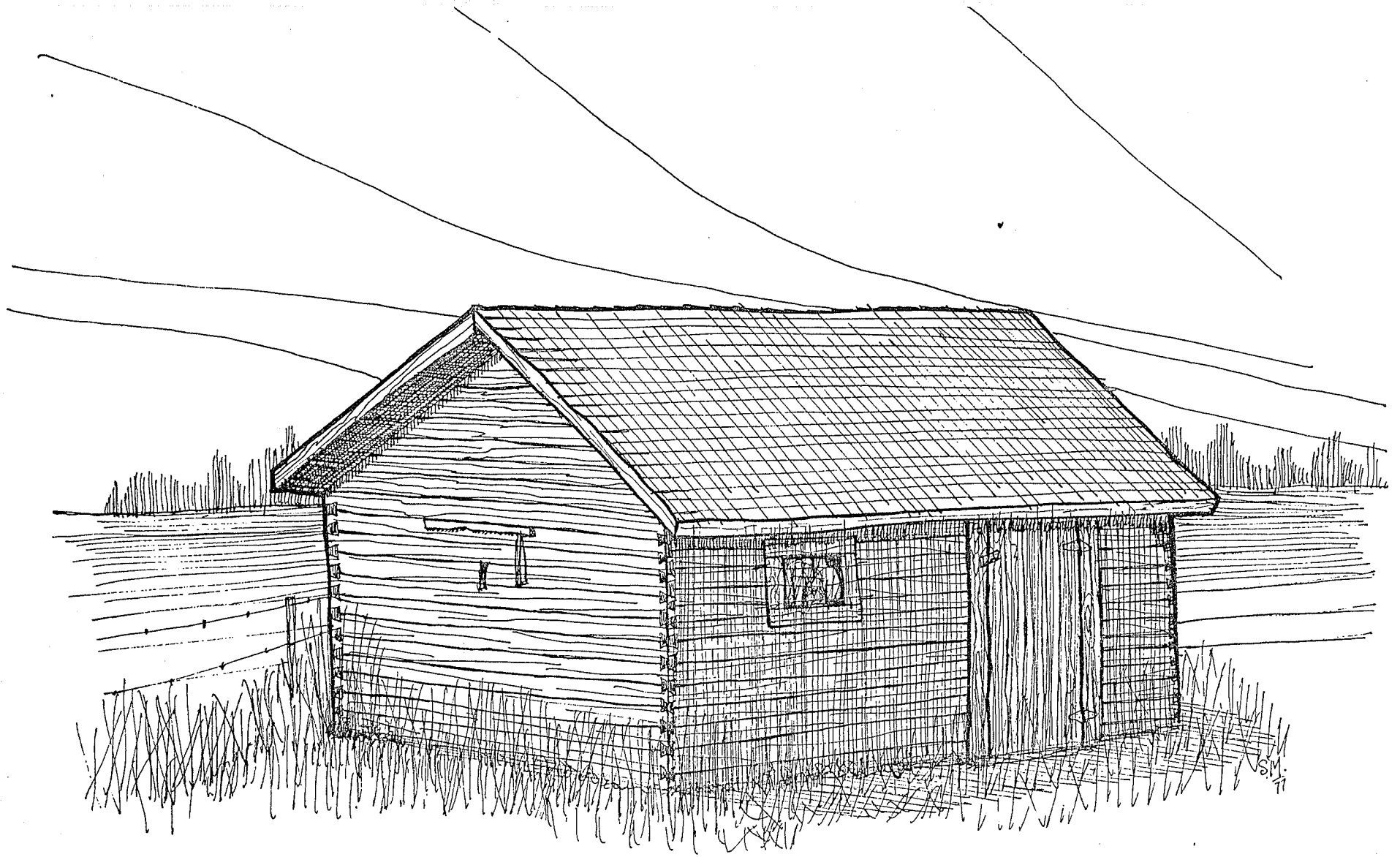
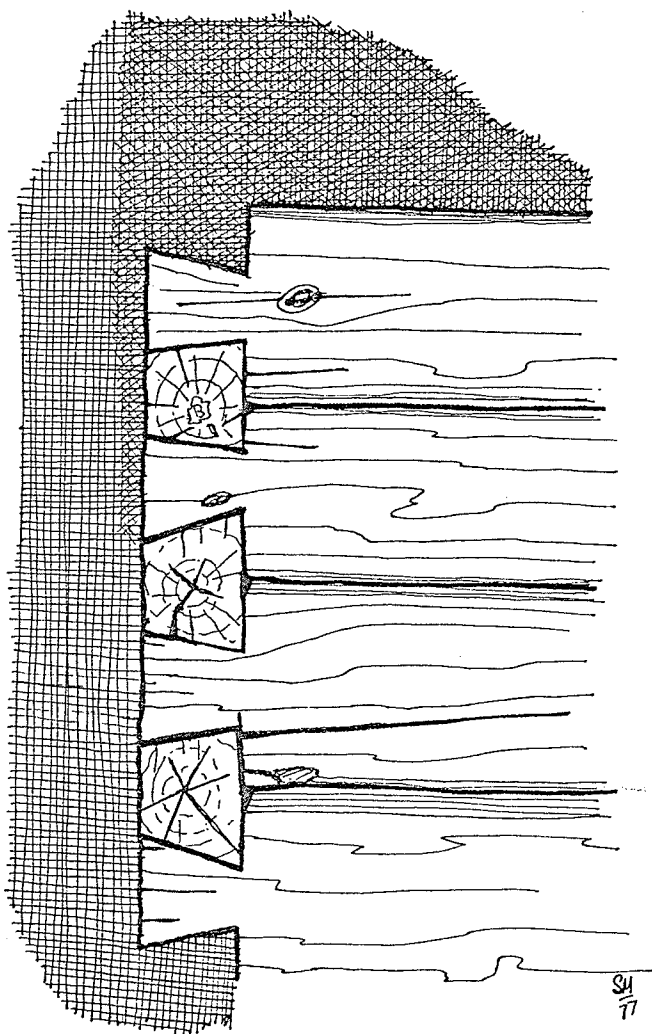


Figure 48.

Willie S.'s sauna (No. 3) in Rorketon, Manitoba



Typical Corner Assembly

Figure 49.

Willie S.'s sauna (No. 3) in Rorketon, Manitoba.

There are seven buildings on the S. farm and except for the "new" house and garage all are log. The two barns, the old house and shed were made from spruce logs hauled over the ice on sleds in winter from Twin Islands, about 40 miles north in the middle of Lake Manitoba. They had to travel this distance as the standing timber on the farm was not of sufficient size for good log construction, nor was suitable wood available any closer. The Finns are regarded as superb axe handlers and they set exacting standards for themselves. They were not in favour of chinking or plastering their buildings like the Ukrainians in the local area and elsewhere (Lehr 1976), but preferred instead to build tight fitting walls and corner joints using logs 10 inches or larger in diameter. Clemson (1974:64) recounts the story of an old Finn who was still very unhappy with a seemingly perfect looking log wall that he constructed 50 years earlier! The Finns were also widely sought after in the lumber camps for their great skill in wielding the broad axe.

In order to get horizontally stacked logs to fit tight, which is important for heat retention, a vara or hand forged scribe is used to mark the logs for trimming (See Figure 49). The horizontal contour of the top of the log is traced onto the bottom of the log which is to be placed upon it. This bottom surface is then hewed out with a broad axe resulting in lengthways parallelism between the two logs. The natural roundness of the upper part of the log is left and the bottom of the log to be placed upon it is carved out to accommodate this hump. The result of this when viewed in cross-section, is a series of logs whose bottom is concave and top in convex which fit snugly together. This concave-convex or vara joint requires no chinking, unless shrinking or settling opens the seam, and allows no water to settle on the logs. The varas or

scribers were made by the local blacksmith. Sophisticated interlocking corner joints such as dove-tailed notching, the toothed notch and the double vertical notch added to the structural stability of the walls. Long pegs were pounded into holes augered vertically through the logs to stabilize unnotched areas, such as around doors, windows and gables. The vara technique was used for building the savusauna as well as the other buildings on this farm.

A sauna was put up on the S. farm at the same time as the other buildings, but it burnt down in the late 1920s and was quickly replaced by the building described below, built by son John, Jr. This second sauna has not been used for bathing since the mid 1960's. Willie goes to his close friend Bill W.'s sauna (No. 7) in Rorketon for his regular sauna bath every Saturday night. This old savusauna stands abandoned. Willie used to smoke fish there but rarely does so now. It was common practice to smoke fish and/or meat in the sauna. A hard wood was used, usually oak and the fish (pickerel, whitefish or tullibee) or meat (bacon, beef and occasionally deer or moose) would be suspended above the slow smoking fire for about eight hours. Several informants remarked that after a bath in a savusauna the bathers came out smelling a little smoked themselves.

Environmental relationship: (See Figure 47 for layout of farm).

The sauna is well back from the other buildings about 200 yards from the old home, and 100 yards from the new home, and 150 yards from the well. The entire yard is bare of tree and the sauna is clearly visible from the house and road. The building is in fair shape, but the roof is beginning to leak and the base logs are rotting.

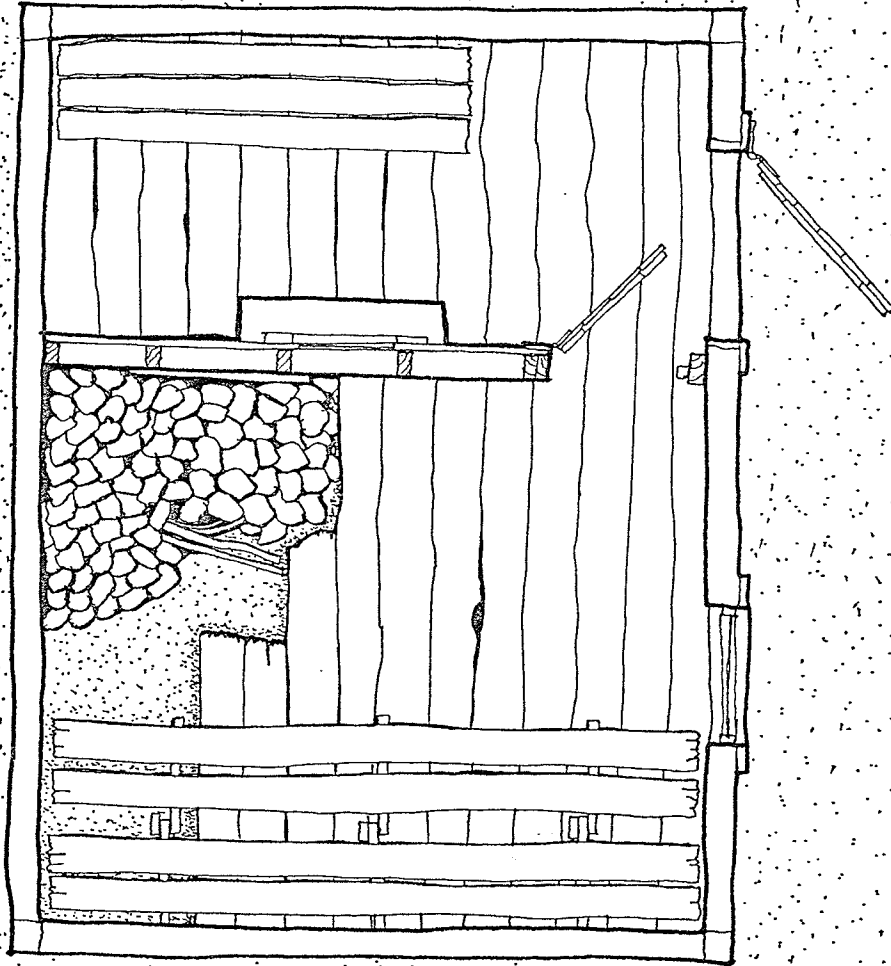


Figure 50.

Willie S.'s sauna (No. 3) in Rorketon, Manitoba.

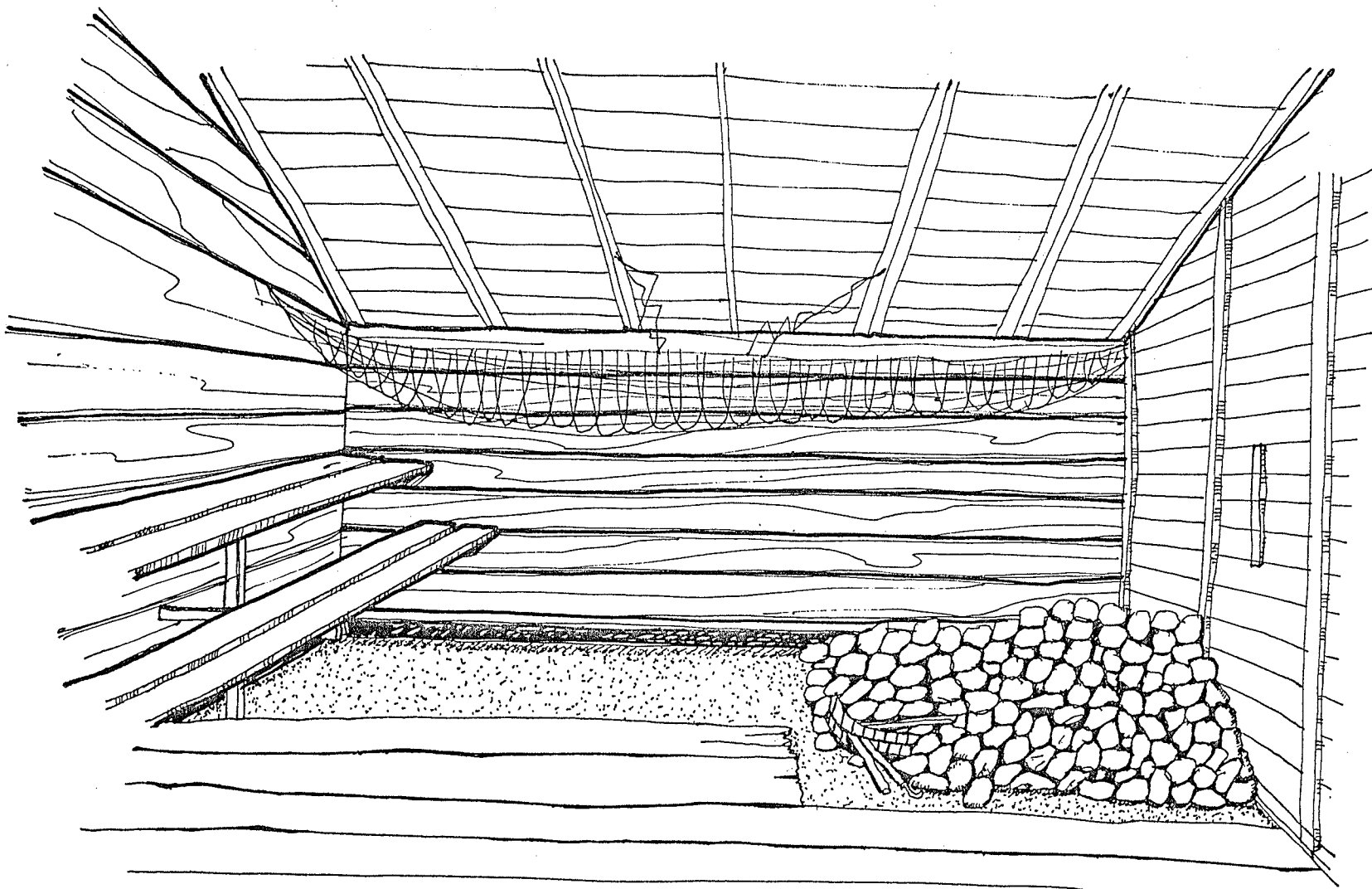


Figure 51.

Willie S.'s sauna (No. 3) in Rorketon, Manitoba.

Exterior dimensions:

The overall size of the building is 12'4" X 16'4". The height of the wall is 5'10" with a gable rise of 3'6". The walls are horizontal, constructed of spruce logs about 6" to 10" high, hewed with an axe to a thickness of 6". The logs run the length and width of the building except for cut outs for the door and windows. The logs are vara-jointed and dovetailed at the corners. Due to shrinkage, some of the upper logs have been chinked with cloth. The lower logs rest on a foundation of corner rocks and soil has been banked up against the base logs.

The roof is gabled, with no attic. The interior frame is of 3" X 3" log posts, covered with 1" X 8" rough planking running north-south. On top of the planking, on the exterior, are hand split shingles, now worn thin. There is no insulation under the roof, nor interior ceiling. On the west slope of the roof, the old chimney hole is covered with an old blanket, held in place by a wood pallet.

A low door 31" X 54" made of 1" X 6" tongue and groove planking nailed vertically on a horizontal Z-shaped frame is located on the north-east corner of the building and opens outward. The door is locked and unlocked by a piece of wood nailed through its centre which is revolved on this axis. The upper exterior portion of the door is blackened from the smoke. A window 23" X 12" is located on the east side of the building, looking into the sauna room. One of the two panes of glass is broken and this hole is covered by loose boards and straw, and is held in place by three strands of barbed wire.

Change room:

Coming in through the exterior door, one enters a change room 5'3" X 11'6". This room is black from smoke. It has one low bench 7'6" long X 1'5" wide along the north wall. The floor is 1" X 8" planking running north-south. The dividing wall between this room and the sauna room runs to the top of the gable, and is made of 1" X 6" on a 2" X 4" frame. This is covered by heavy paper held in place by $\frac{1}{2}$ " X $2\frac{1}{4}$ " wood strips nailed vertically. This wall is also black. There is a 8" X 12" window on the dividing wall with a small ledge upon which a lantern can be placed to throw light into the steam room.

Sauna room:

The interior of the sauna room, 9'10" X 11'6", consists of the stove or kiuas in the north-west corner and benches along the entire length of the south wall. The walls consist of the inside surface of the logs and the room is soot-black from the smoke. The floor is a continuation of the 1" X 8" from the change room. The ceiling is the inside of the gabled roof. The height of the lower bench from the floor is 27" while the second bench is 45" off the floor and 63" below the gable peak. The top bench is 22" wide, which is enough for the bathers to lie upon, while the lower bench is 13" wide.

The entrance door to the sauna room is the same type of wood and style of construction as the exterior door, vertical tongue and groove planking on a Z-shaped frame. The door size is 32" X 62". This door opens out into the change room.

The stove or kiuas of this sauna consists of a pile of rocks 5'10" X 5'5" which rises to a height of 40" near its center. The stones are carefully piled on steel bars under which is a fire hole which can be stoked from the south side, just in front of the benches. The rock is large, heavy, roundish stone, about 14" to 18" in diameter, and is igneous or metamorphic in origin. An old smoke hole directly over the rock pile has been nailed up from the outside. Suspended above the rock pile, about 3' wide and running north-south the length of the room is a piece of chicken wire used by the owner to hold fish, and/or meat during smoking.

The present owner of this sauna said that when the sauna was in regular use a filled water tub was left on the rock pile to heat up. Vihtas were also used by the family. This sauna would take two or more hours to heat up, during which time the doors were left open to increase ventilation and to allow the smoke to escape. When the fire had gone out the ashes were removed with a shovel and then the bathers would enter.

Leonard T.'s Sauna (No. 4)

Leonard T., a bachelor, came north from Belden, North Dakota and settled a half mile east and two miles north of Rorketon about 1920. He moved a house onto the farm and built the granary, chicken coop and sauna. All the buildings are still standing, but have been deserted since T. went east in the early 1960s and died there. The farm is now owned by a Ukrainian farmer who lives a half mile down the road. While he was young, fishing was T.'s main source of income, but in later years he raised

chickens. His farm was on the main travel routes, and being an amiable sort and very active in the Finnish Hall, he had many visitors.

Environmental Relationship:

This sauna is about 200 yards back of the house well hidden from view in the bush. It has been abandoned for several years and is in poor condition.

Exterior dimensions:

The overall size of the building is 10'2" X 16'3". The exterior wall material is made of unpainted, hand split shingles nailed on top of horizontal planking over a rough 2" X 4" frame. The roof is gabled and of similar construction to the walls, shingles over planking. There is no suspended interior ceiling nor insulation in the roof. The building rests on a low concrete foundation, with the wood about 4" off the ground. In some places additional rock and pieces of birch have been placed under the wood frame to help level the building. The entrance door is located on the south-west corner and is made of horizontal planking over a vertical plank frame. The door's overall dimensions are 30" X 65" and it is held closed by a bent nail on the frame. There are two windows, one 24" X 24" opening into the change room on the west end wall, and another 14" X 10" on the south wall into the steam room.

Change room:

The change room is 9'9" X 8'2", the walls being the inside surface of the exterior 1" X 6" planking on a log frame. The floor is of similar wood, running east-west the length of the

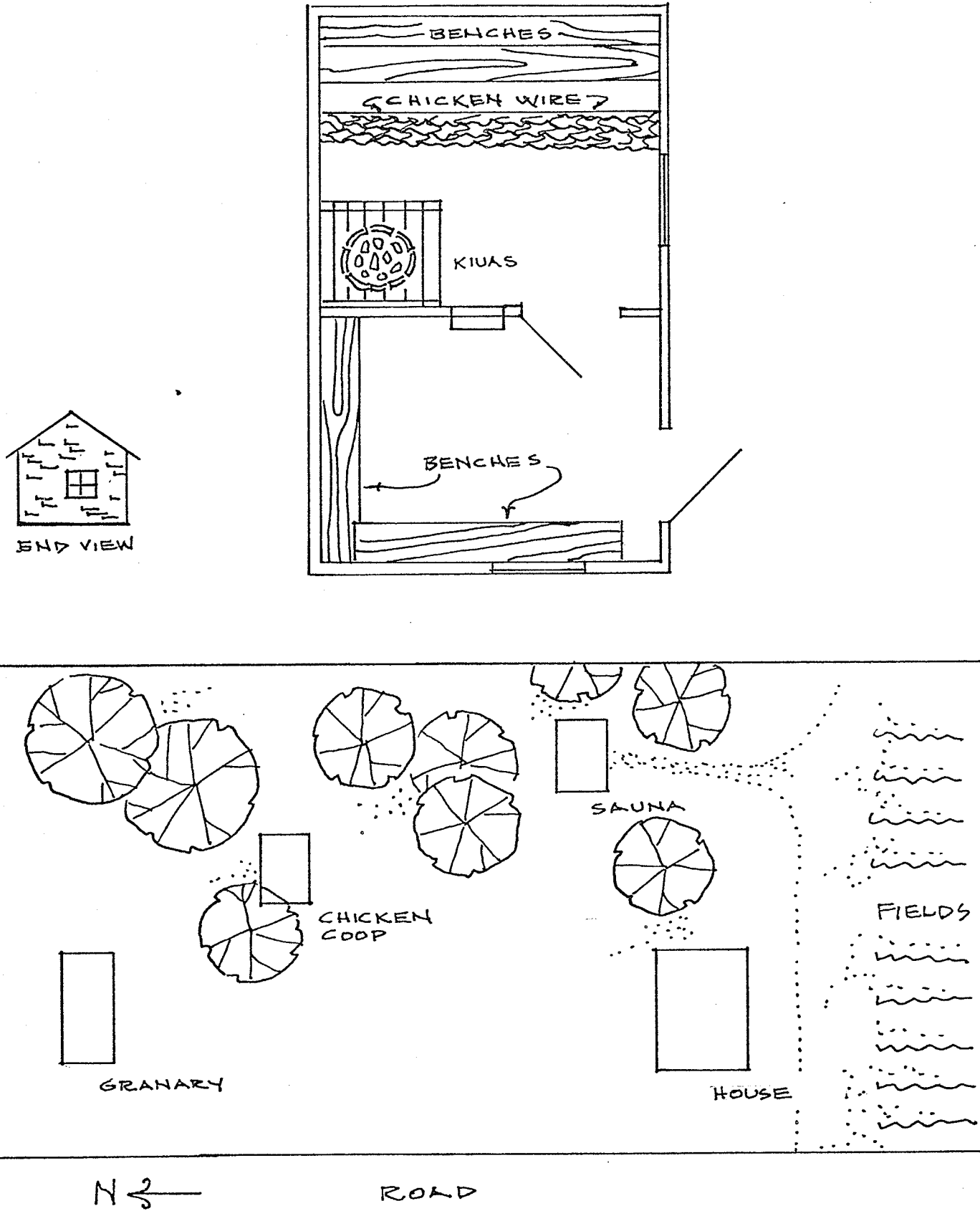


Figure 52.

Layout of Leonard T.'s farm and sauna (No. 4) in Rorketon, Manitoba.
(Not to scale).

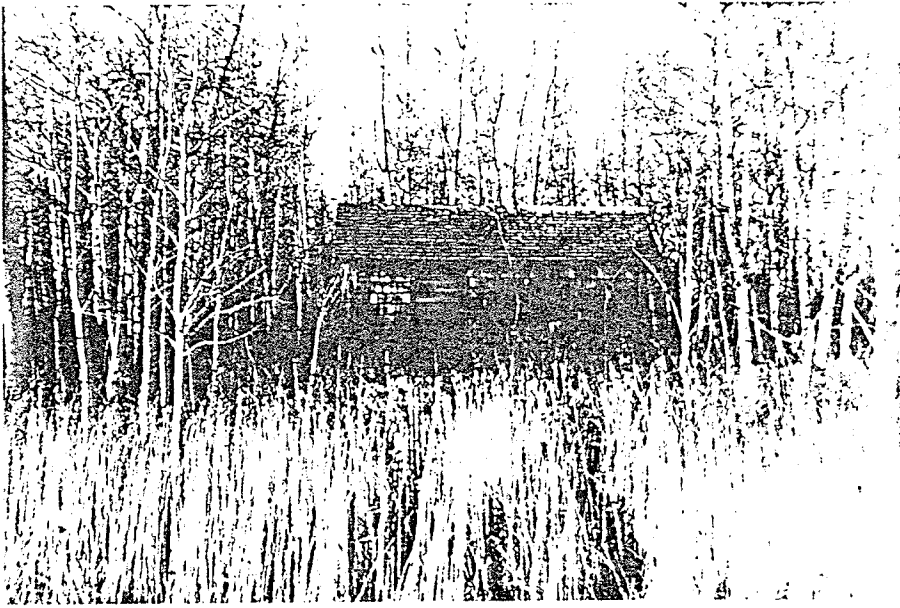


Figure 53.

Leonard T.'s sauna (No. 4) in Rorketon, Manitoba. It has been abandoned and is overgrown by grass and bush.

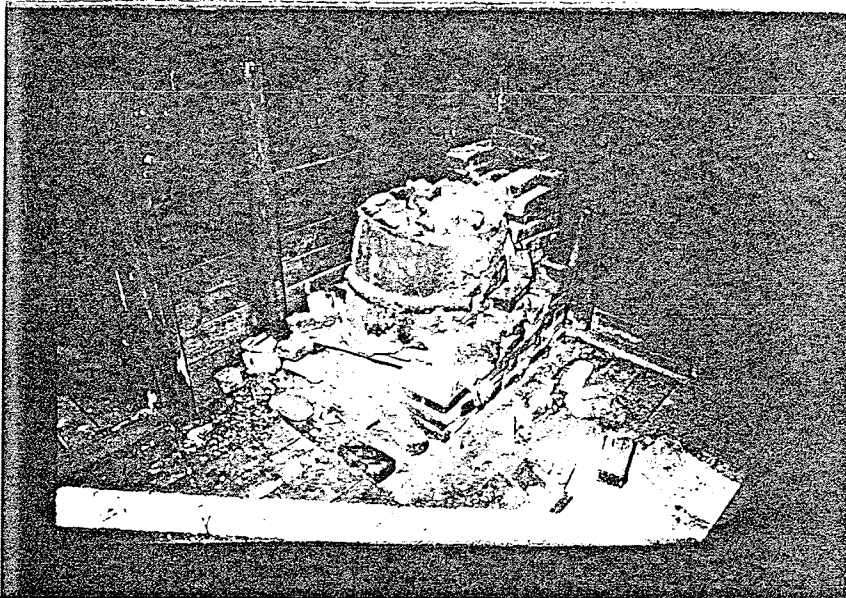


Figure 54.

The kiuas of the T. sauna (No. 4). A screen for holding fish during smoking is just to the right of this photo.

building. Benches of 1" X 8" run along the west and north walls. Light is provided by the exterior window. There is no electrical power connection to this building. The room is black due to the "smoke heating."

Sauna room:

The dividing wall between the rooms is of similar plank construction and has a small window 8" X 12" in front of which a lantern can be hung to illuminate the steam room. Entrance to the steam room is via a door 30" X 68" of similar construction to the exterior door, which opens into the change room. The remains of the frame of the benches for sitting upon are along the back east wall. It appears that there were once two benches, but the upper part of only one remains. A small window 10" X 10" is situated on the south wall.

The kiuas is located in the north-west corner of the room. It consists of a brick wall about 14" high, 36" X 36" square, open on the south side, on top of which is an iron grate. Sitting on top of the grate is a 2' high section of a 45 gallon drum, filled with heavy, irregular shaped rocks and pieces of brick. The fire is set below the grate. Remains of a metal pipe chimney are hanging above the rock barrel. In the middle of the room running north-south, the width of the room, parallel to the bench is a piece of chicken wire propped in place by three upright planks. This screen was apparently used by the present owner of the farm for smoking fish. It is not known whether Leonard T. did likewise.

As the T. sauna has been abandoned for so many years and is badly deteriorated it is impossible to get detail such as roof-bench-floor measurements and details as to its exact use. While T. lived on the farm the sauna was used regularly. Since he left the new owner has converted the sauna to a fish smoker but he uses it very irregularly. It was originally a smoke-style sauna so only a means of suspending the fish was required to convert it to its new use. Due to the lack of insulation this sauna was probably very difficult to heat in the winter.

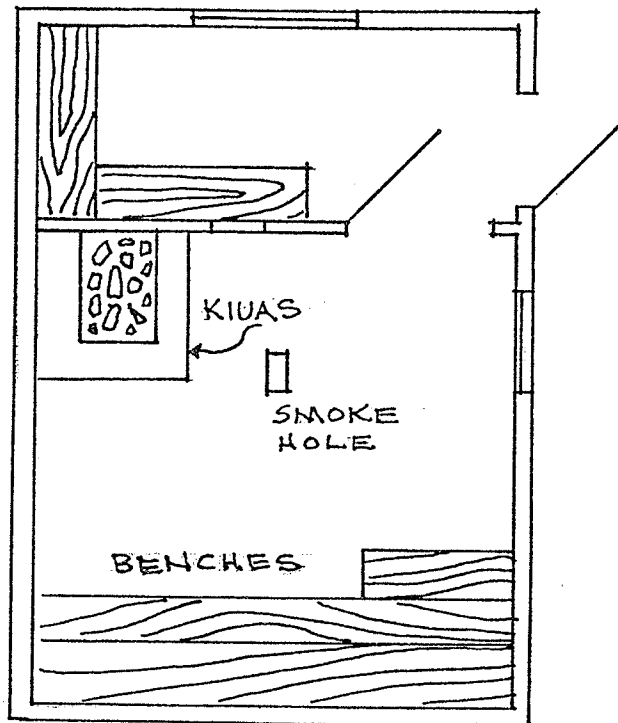
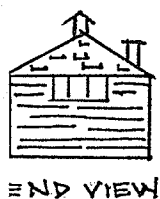
Ben K.'s Sauna (No. 5)

Mrs. Hilda K., the mother of the present owner of the farm was born in the city of Vaasa, Finland in 1900. She went to school with her husband-to-be Eino in the old country and followed him to Marquette, Michigan in 1922. Hilda worked as a cook in a labour temple boarding house. They decided that farming was a better livelihood, were married in July, 1924 and immediately came up to Rorketon. They took over Eino's uncle's farm, 2 miles west of Rorketon in 1927, where the family now lives. The uncle moved to the Finnish community of Dunblane, Saskatchewan.

The lay-out of the farm has remained relatively constant for the last 40 years, with the major change being the recent replacement of the original two-story Finnish style home with a modern bungalow on the same site.

Environmental relationship:

The sauna is located about 100 yards south of the house, in the north-east corner of the fenced in barn yard. The entrance door is within hand's reach of the fence on the east side. On the other side of the fence is scrub brush.



SAUNA PLAN

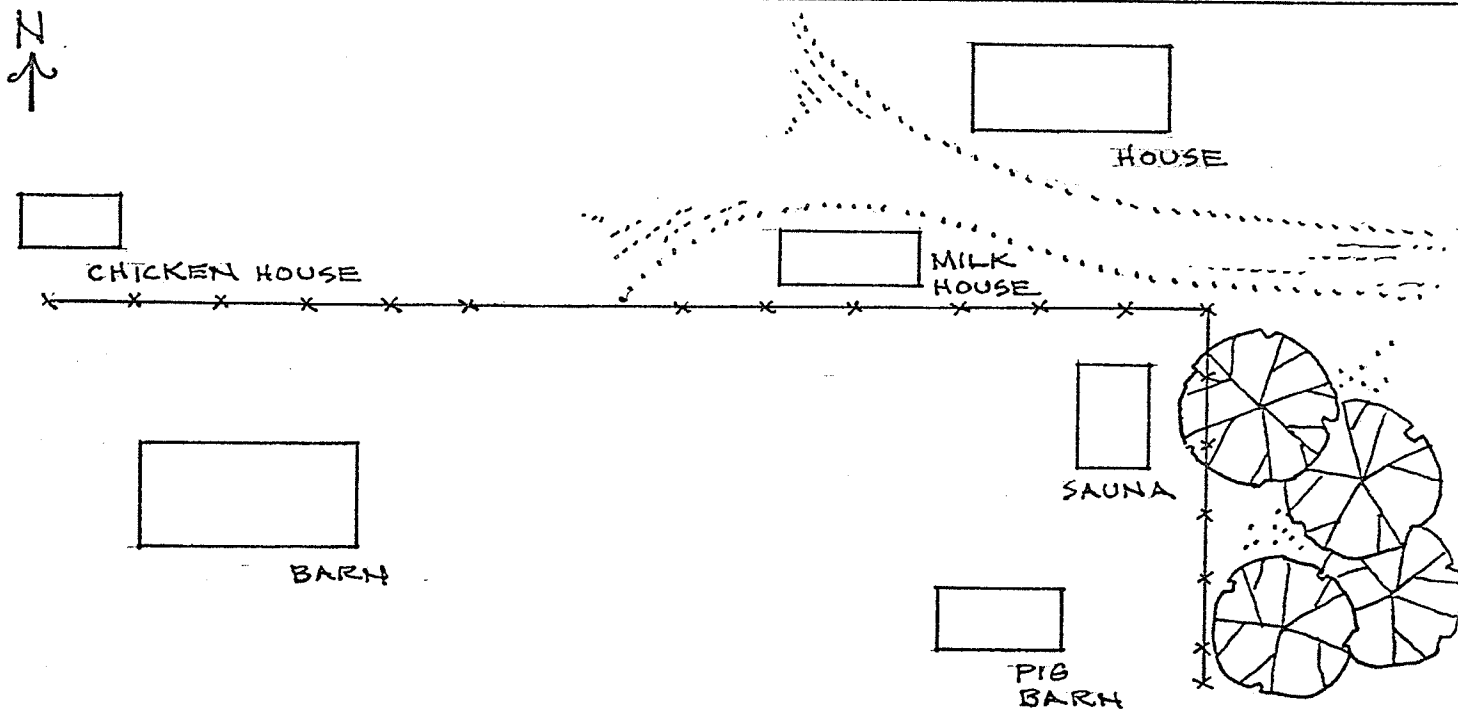


Figure 55.

Layout of Ben K.'s farm and sauna (No. 5) in Rorketon, Manitoba.
(Not to scale).

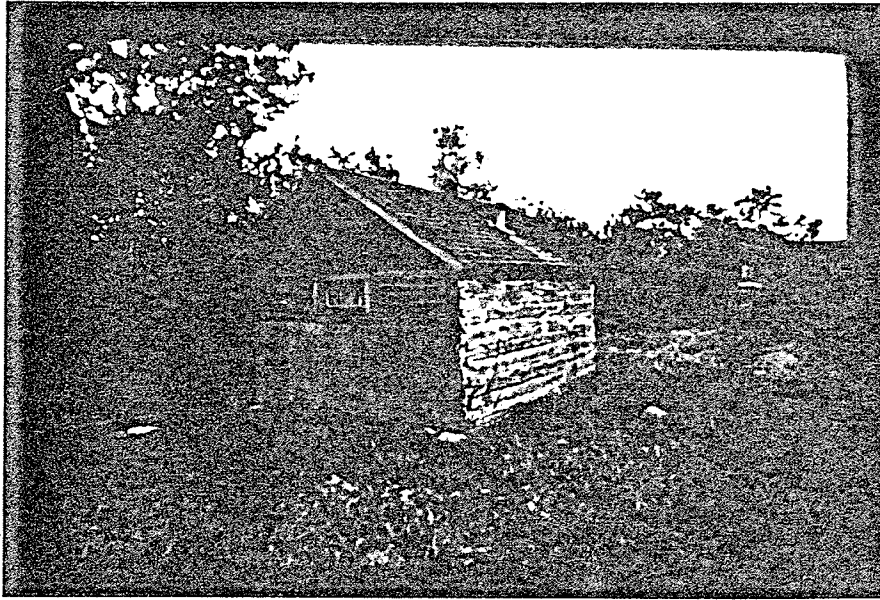


Figure 56.

Exterior of Ben K.'s sauna (No. 5) from the north side. Note plywood sheet used for backstop of ice hockey rink in winter.

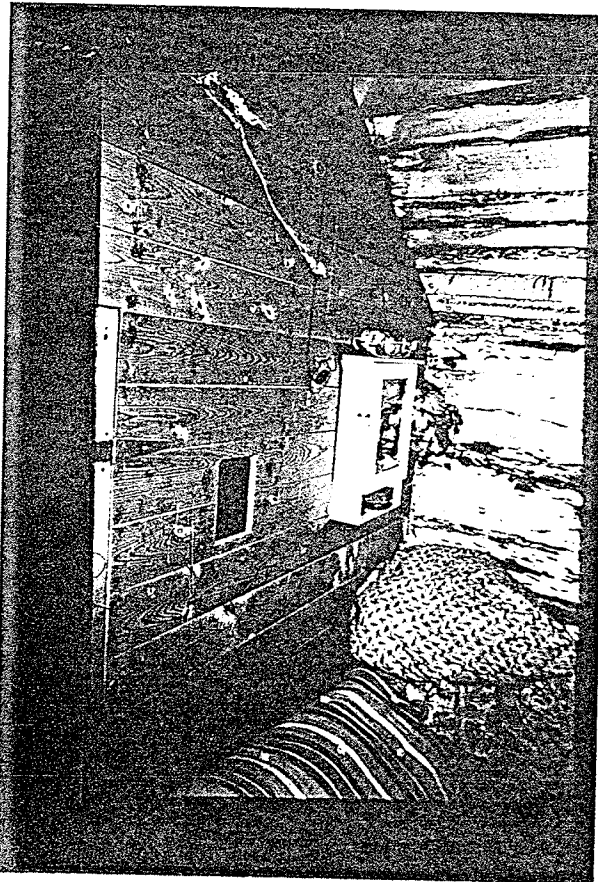


Figure 57.

Dividing wall of the Ben K. sauna (No. 5). Note vihta on the wall back of the medicine chest and the window in front.



Figure 58.

A vent, no longer used, from the savusauna days of the Ben K. sauna (No. 5), Rorketon, Manitoba.

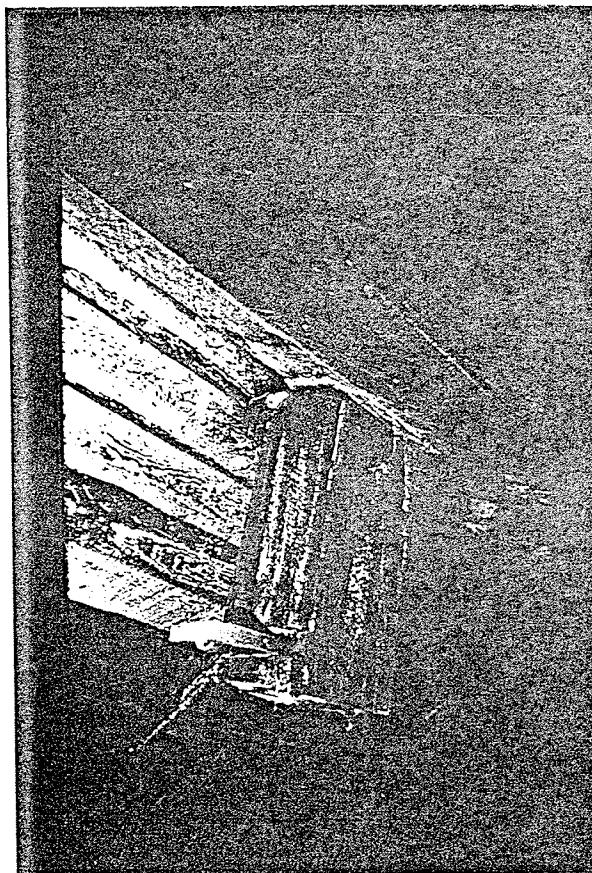


Figure 59.

Interior view of the above vent, showing slider for opening and closing. Ben K. sauna (No. 5) Rorketon, Manitoba.

Exterior dimensions:

The building is constructed of spruce logs and measures 10' X 13'8". The height of the wall in each corner is 6'1", with a rise to the peak of the gable of an additional 3'2". The logs are stacked horizontally using the vara technique described previously. The corners are connected using a dovetail joint. All of the exterior log is exposed except for a large piece of plywood on the north-end wall which serves as a backstop for a small ice hockey rink which is made each winter.

Logs are not used for the gable ends, as these are made of shingles over horizontal boards. The north end gable shingles are painted red while the south end ones are left unpainted. The frame of this gable roof is made from poles about 2" X 2". A small wooden chimney about 8" X 6" rises up about 8" from the center of the roof, a remnant from the savusauna days. A metal stove pipe chimney rises 1' above the center of the west side roof. There is no roof insulation nor an interior ceiling to this sauna.

A door 29" X 57" opening outward is located on the north-east corner, made of 1" X 2" boards nailed vertically on a Z-shaped frame. The door hinges are made so that the entire door can be lifted up off the pins set on the door frame. The door is locked and unlocked by simply turning a piece of wood 1½ X 4" which spins on a nail through its center.

There are two windows, one 27" X 13" on the north wall looking into the change room and one 19" X 23" into the sauna room. Both windows have curtains on the interior.

Change room:

In about 1960 a dividing wall was put up which split what had been a one-room savusauna measuring 13' X 9' into two rooms, a change room 4'9" X 9' and a sauna room 8'10" X 9'. The dividing wall, unpainted, is 1" X 6" tongue and groove planking on a 2" X 4" frame. The other three walls were once whitewashed as was the sauna room, but the wash is chipping off, and the soot-blackened walls are visible. The floor is 1" X 7" tongue and groove planking running north-south the length of the building.

Along the west and south walls are new benches for sitting upon when changing and nails on the north wall above the windows for hanging clothes. The window is covered with red curtains.

There is a small window, 7½" X 5½", in the dividing wall in front of which a lantern was hung from a metal rod to illuminate the change and sauna rooms. This was replaced by an extension cord and electric light but now a flashlight is used. There is also a medicine cabinet with a mirror hung on the dividing wall.

Sauna room:

The wall surfaces of the sauna room are the interior of the logs, roughly planed. Entrance is via a 30" X 67" door which opens into the change room. The floor planking runs as far as the middle of the benches along the south wall beyond which it is mud.

There is one two-tiered wooden bench which runs the entire width of the south wall. One steps up to this bench by a small bench-step, used for sitting upon when washing, which is 44" long and 13" high with 10" wide sitting surface. The lower-tiered bench is also 10" wide and 25" above the floor. The top tier is 15" wide, large enough for lying upon, and 39" off the floor. As there is no suspended ceiling, the distance from the top bench to the roof varies, but is a maximum of 68" at the peak. All the benches are made of 1" X 5" planks with 2" X 2" framing. Placed on the lower-tiered bench is the dipper used for throwing water on the rocks, a basin used for holding cool water when steaming and later hot water for washing, and several used vihtas.

When the change room was added about 1960, the old style savusauna kiuas was removed in favor of a stove type heater and metal chimney. The old soot-blackened rock pile was removed and dumped just beyond the entrance door and can still be seen lying in the bush when entering the sauna. The present kiuas is a barrel-shaped boiler surrounded by a metal frame 23" X 23" X 32" deep located in the north-west corner of the room. The back and two sides have metal walls while the stove door, opening to the south bench wall, and the top are open. Large rock is piled between the boiler and the metal sides, with smaller rock on the top, flush with the top of the metal sides. The rocks are in a variety of colours and shapes. A stove pipe chimney comes out of the back of the boiler and rises up through the roof. The kiuas

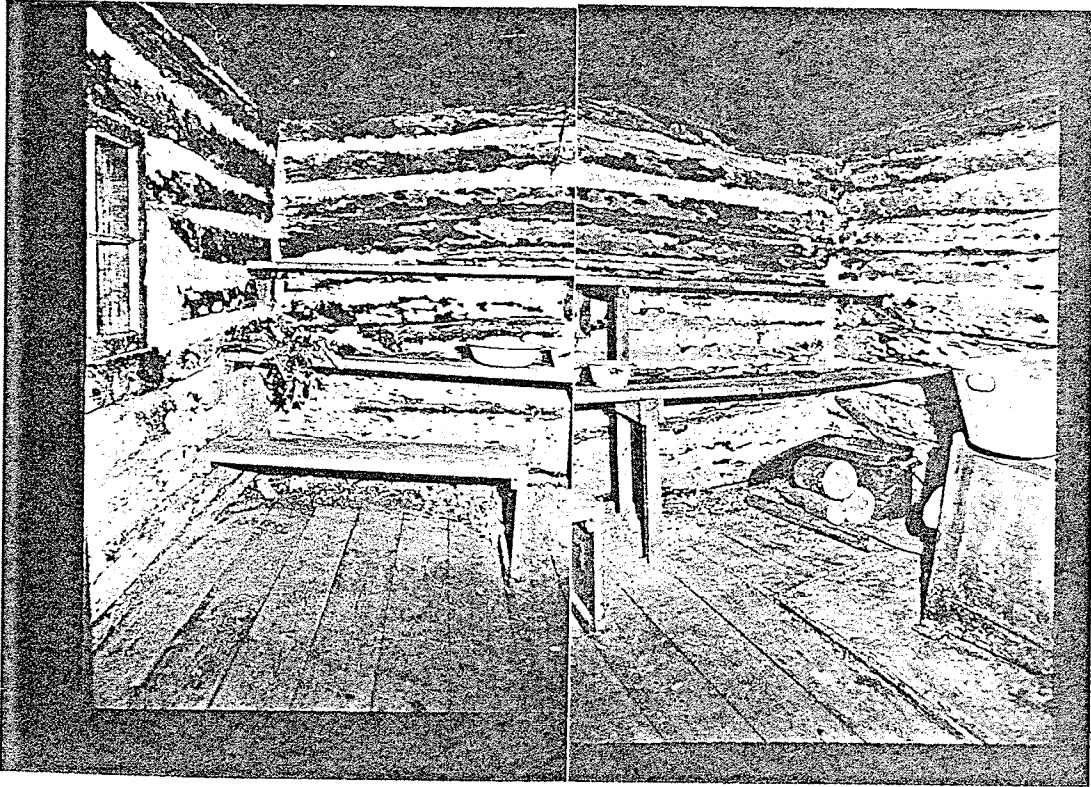


Figure 60.

Interior of sauna room (No. 5) belonging to Ben K. in Rorketon, Manitoba. Note two-tiered bench, vihtas and the kiuas to the left. Distortion is due to photo technique.

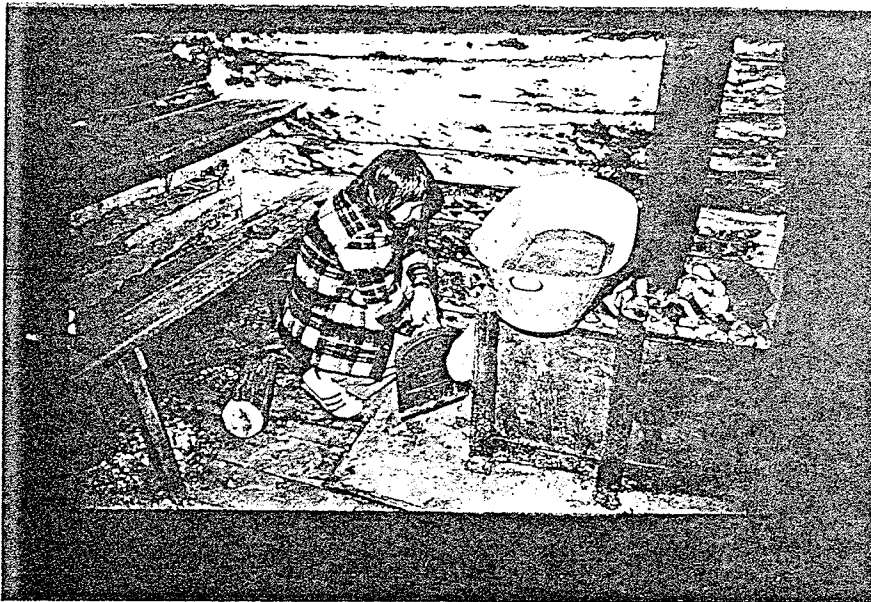


Figure 61.

Starting the fire in the Ben K. sauna (No. 5). Note the old baby bath-tub on the kiuas.

is placed on a heavy sheet of metal. An old oval metal baby bath tub has been placed on top of the kiuas and is filled with water for heating when firing up the sauna.

The old smoke vent used before the modernization of the sauna has been left in the middle of the roof. This consists of a wood port which comes 16" down into the room. The maximum size of the opening is 6" X 2" and this can be regulated by a 10" long block of 2" X 4" which can slide across the opening.

Several nails have been half-nailed into the roof frame above the kiuas. These were used to suspend fish for smoking in the days when the savusauna was in use.

The K. house has had indoor plumbing for several years and the sauna is used infrequently. It gets the heaviest use when out-of-town family members come for an extended visit and want a sauna bath almost every night.

There are three generations of the K. family living in the house. One young man, about 16 years old is able to converse in Finnish quite well with his grandmother (born 1900) who understands no English. This is the only instance the author has encountered of a third generation Finn in Manitoba, under 20 years of age, having picked up a rudimentary knowledge of the language at home.

Bill W.'s Sauna (No. 7)

Bill W. was born in Rovaniemi, Finland in 1908 of a Finnish mother and a Swedish-Finnish father. Relatives sent tickets for the family to immigrate to New Finland, Saskatchewan so they travelled there in 1914 and began farming. In 1923 about six Finnish families including the W.'s

settled in Meadow Portage. As was previously mentioned Bill W.'s mother gave birth to four of her seven children in the sauna in Meadow Portage.

Mrs. Bill W.'s family was originally from near Oulu, Finland. They went to the United States early in this century, moved back to Finland in 1908, and then returned to Red Lodge, Montana for work in the mines for two more years. In 1920 two Finns whom they had known earlier from Rolla came back from their new homes in Meadow Portage and persuaded Mrs. W.'s parents and their family of seven children to settle near them. Mrs. W.'s father was extremely handy. He was the local blacksmith and also made a variety of wooden objects such as skis, sleighs, violins, spinning wheels, barrels, birch bark baskets and even leather boots for the family.

After their marriage Mr. and Mrs. W. farmed in Meadow Portage remaining there until 1958 when they moved to Rorketon. They brought their sauna with them. This was the third sauna that they owned, the first two having burnt when they were still on the farm. Their sauna was originally a savusauna when it was built in the 1940's but was modified by Mr. W. after it was moved.

For several years their Ukrainian neighbors used to use the sauna for a moderate charge, but Mr. and Mrs. W. discontinued this small business as it got to be too much work to cut wood and haul water for the bathers. Willie S., Mr. W. and a woman friend of the family are the only ones who bathe there regularly. For personal health reasons Mrs. W. does not use the sauna. Usually early on Saturday evening Willie S. and Bill W. bathe together while the woman friend, a non-Finn, bathes alone. The W.'s do not have plumbing in their home and get their water from a nearby well.

As well as for bathing, the sauna is used for washing clothes. There is an electric hook-up to the building for the lights and Mrs. W.

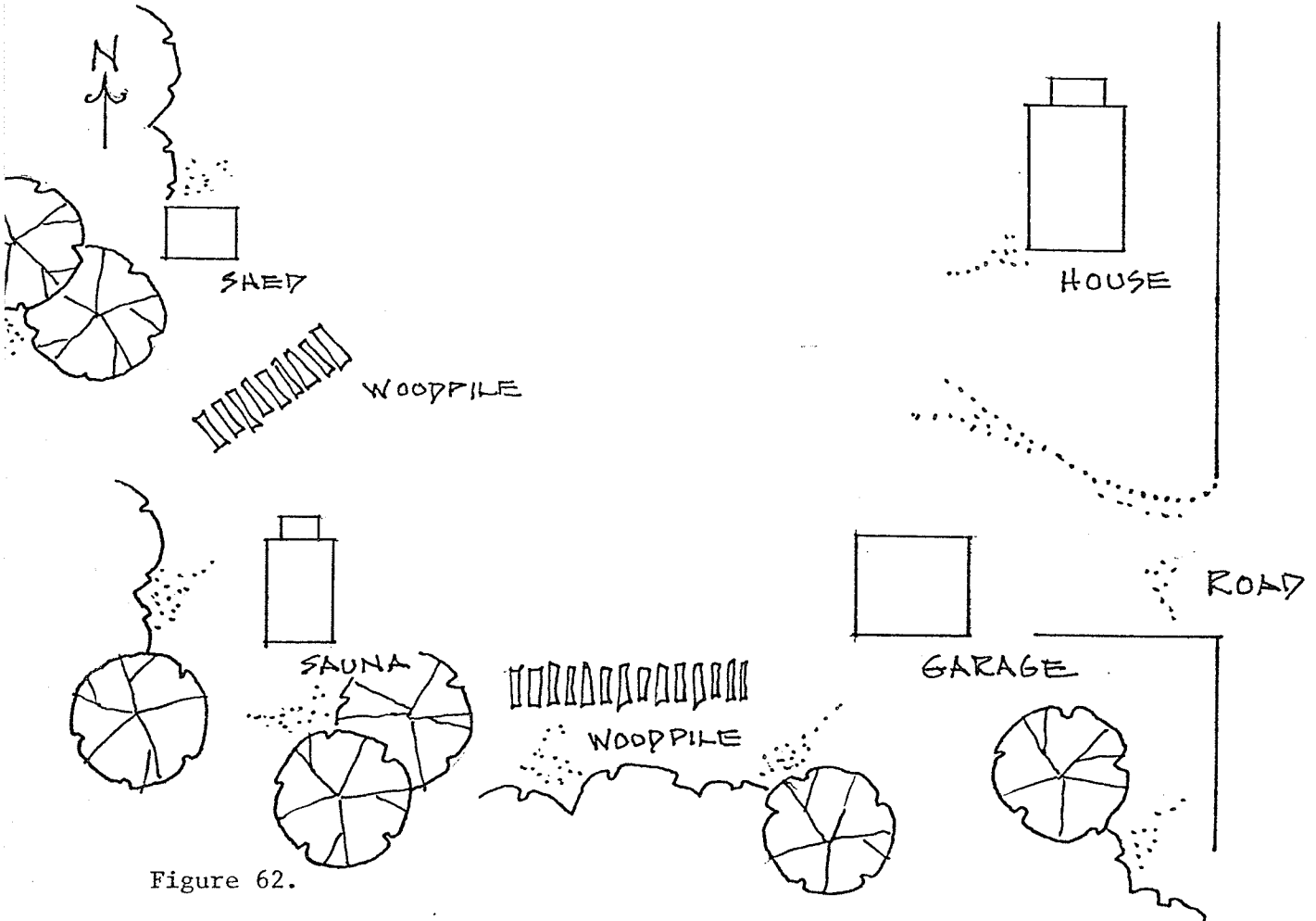
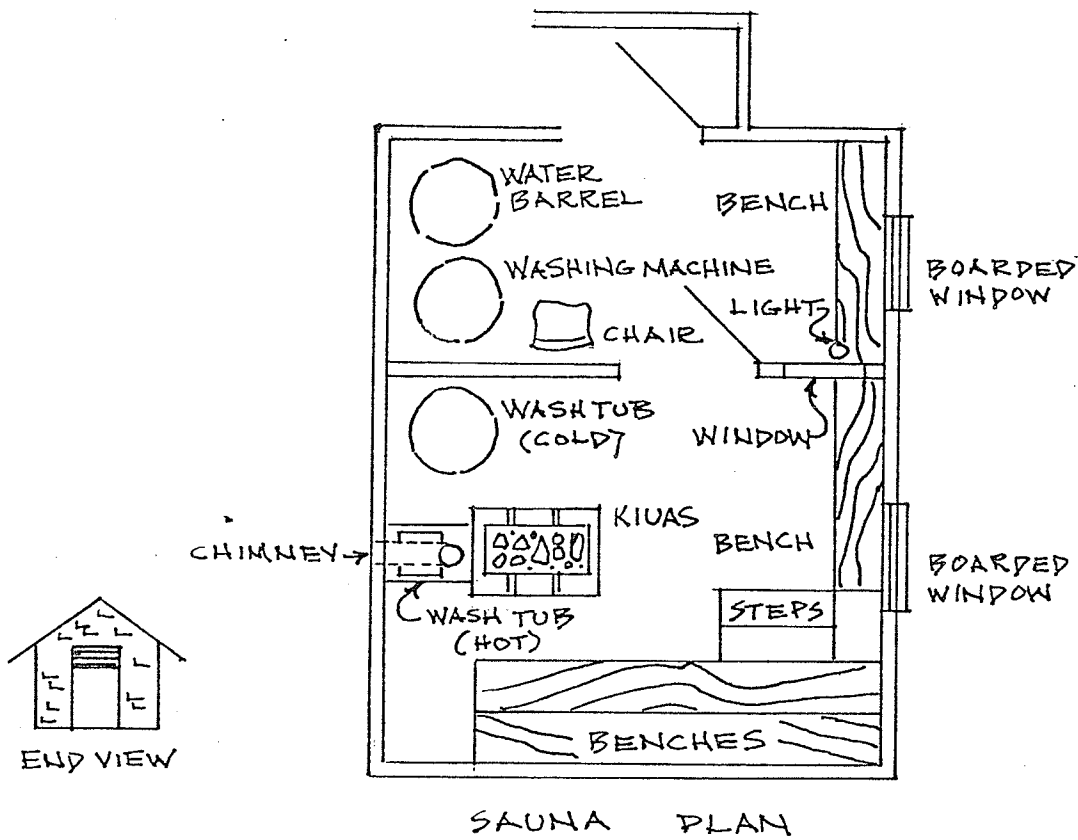


Figure 62.

Layout of Bill W.'s yard and sauna (No. 7) in Rorketon, Manitoba. (Not to scale).



Figure 63.

Looking from the house towards Bill W.'s sauna (No. 7). This is the only sauna within the town of Rorketon, Manitoba. Note the boarded up windows.



Figure 64.

Bill W. holding oak vihtas which he uses in his sauna. Rorketon, Manitoba.

heats water on the wood burning kivas and operates an electric wringer washing machine in the change room.

Environmental relationship:

The sauna is located about 125' back and slightly south of the house, nestled amongst the trees. Two piles of firewood flank the building on the north and east sides. Other homes are several hundred feet on either side of the property while the back is all bush. A flock of wild grouse nest on the property and wander about the yard freely. The sauna is in excellent condition.

Exterior dimensions:

This sauna is a 2" X 4" frame building, covered on the exterior with white painted shingles. The overall dimensions are 10'10" X 16'6". The walls and roof are insulated. The roof is gable-style and is covered with asphalt rolled shingles. The building sits on a concrete pad.

A small, doorless lean-to 48" X 48" has been added in front of the entrance door on the north side. The door is an old house door measuring 28" X 69" with a commercially-made, hand-turning door knob. At one time there were two windows along the east wall but these have been boarded over.

Change room:

The change room, measuring 5'9" X 9'9", has been recently re-done with new chip board plywood. The floor is regular plywood. There is a bench along the east wall and a window at the south-east corner of the dividing wall with an electric light in front of it. A chair is placed at about

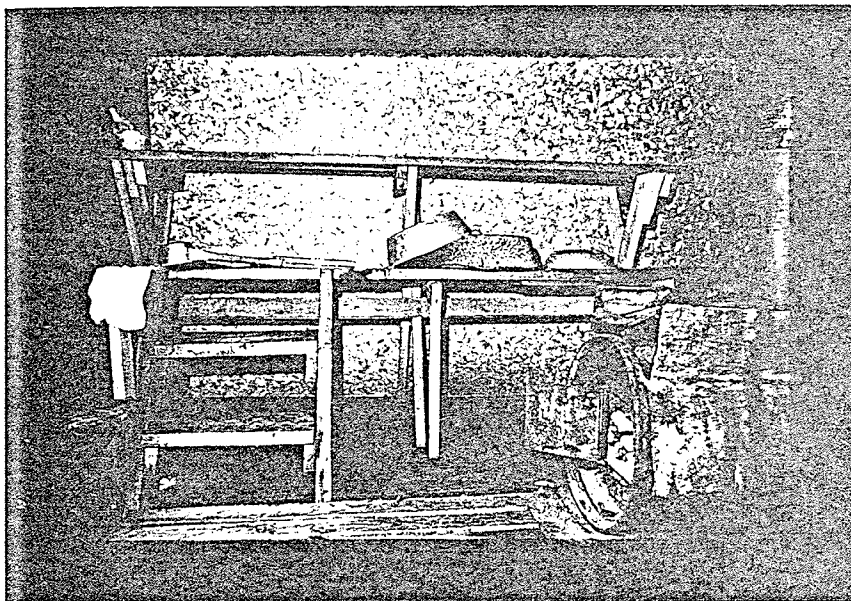


Figure 65.

Interior of Bill W.'s sauna (No. 7) room. Note the kiuas on the right and the basins and dipper on the two-tiered bench.

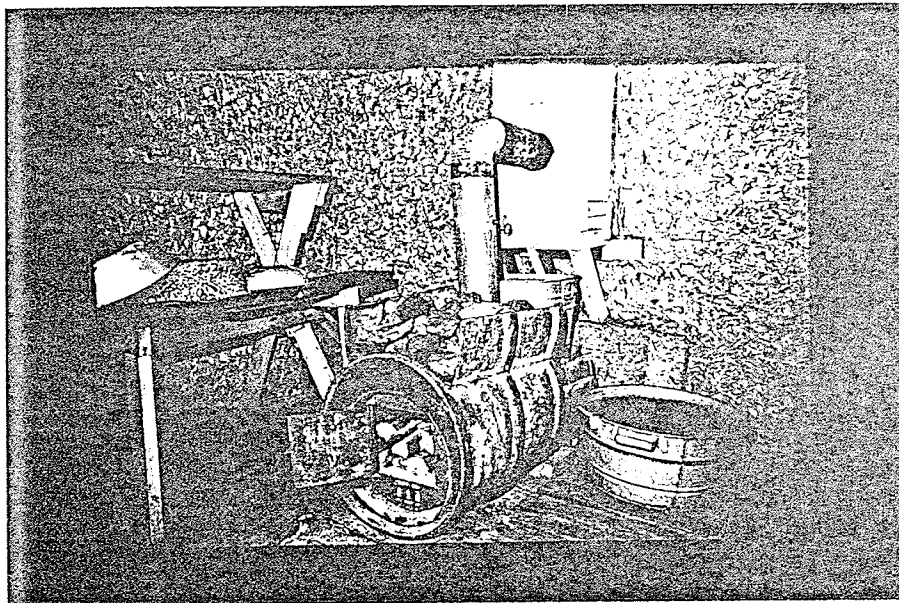


Figure 66.

Kiuas with chimney in the Bill W. sauna (No. 7) in Rorketon, Manitoba. Note the rocks on the barrel, the hot water tub on the back of the stove and the cold water tub on the right.



Figure 67.

The late Martti K. in front of his sauna, the last in the area, located on his farm west of Eriksdale, Manitoba. Note the ladder leading to the roof. This was to aid in putting out a chimney fire which might start from the wood burning stove.

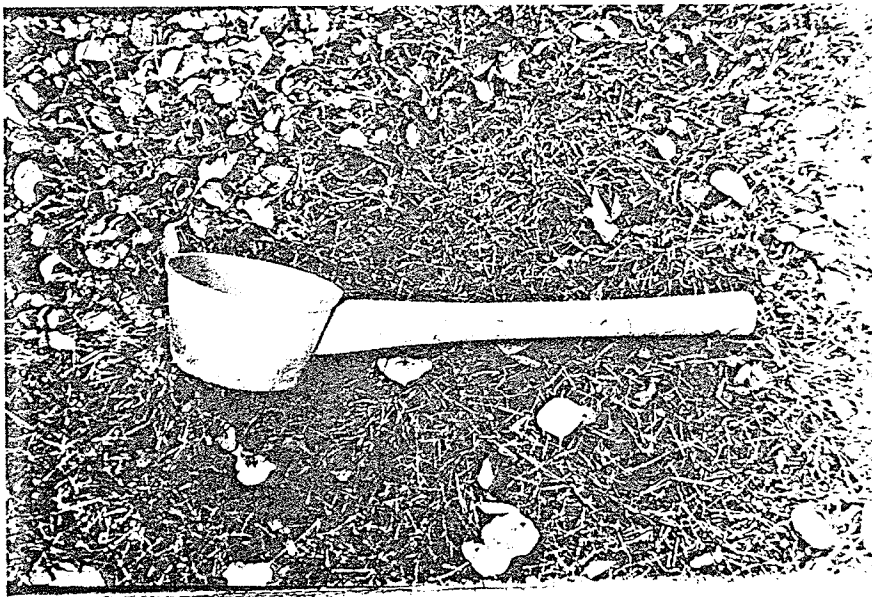


Figure 68.

Dipper used for throwing water on hot rocks in sauna (No. 7), Rorketon, Manitoba. The bowl is aluminum while the handle is made of hand-shaped wood which does not transmit heat to the holder.

the middle of the dividing wall. On the north-east corner wall are two metal and two wooden hooks for hanging clothes. A wringer washing machine and a 45 gallon barrel full of water is along the west wall.

Sauna room:

Entrance to the room is via a plywood door, 30" X 60", opening into the change room. The walls and ceiling of this room have also been repaneled with chip board plywood. The floor is 1" X 3" planking. Concrete can be seen around the kiuas base which is not covered by wooden flooring.

There is a two-tiered bench along the south wall which is reached by ascending three steps. The width of both benches is about 16". The distance from the ceiling to the top bench is 37" and to the lower bench it is 55". The distance between the benches is 18". The overall ceiling to floor height is 82". The insulated suspended ceiling in this sauna allows for much more even heating of the room than would just an uninsulated gabled interior roof. A low bench, 12" from the floor, runs along most of the east wall.

The kiuas is located about midway along the west wall, with the stove door opening to the east. The firebox is an old hot water heater. It has been placed within a metal 45 gallon barrel lying on its side with the end cut out. The upper part of the barrel has been cut and peeled back with the barrel sides serving as walls to hold the rock. The rock has been gathered from the lakeshore and is irregularly-shaped and soot-blackened. A rectangular metal laundry tub

sits back of the barrel and chimney near the wall on the end of the fire box. This is the hot water source. A stove pipe is attached midway along the firebox and enters a mortared cinder block chimney. A tub of cold water is beside the kiuas.

Bill W. prefers and regularly uses oak vihtas. Birch trees are uncommon in the local area.

It is difficult to be optimistic about the survival of the sauna in Rorketon. There are few young people of Finnish origin left in the area and those that remain show little interest in maintaining Finnish traditions. Only Bill W. and Willie S. are enthusiastic sauna goers, but they are getting on in years. Non-Finns in the area had a little interest in sauna bathing but were not motivated enough to acquire their own saunas. The non-Finn that does have a sauna in the basement of his home is a wealthy hobby farmer who only lives in Rorketon for part of the year.

The Pas

During the ten years that the Finns have been in The Pas, they have constructed about 15 saunas in the town or at cottages on nearby lakes. Most have been for their own use but at least two of the cottage saunas were constructed for recreational use by non-Finns.

The sauna has had an important function with The Pas Finns since their arrival. One of the first major social gatherings at Rocky Lake in the summer of 1971 involved the construction of a temporary primitive form of savusauna on the lake shore. About 15 people, adults and children took part in using this sauna. (See Figures 69-72).



Figure 69.

Savusauna constructed of wooden poles, felt liner from the paper mill and plastic garbage bags on a lakeshore near The Pas, 1971.

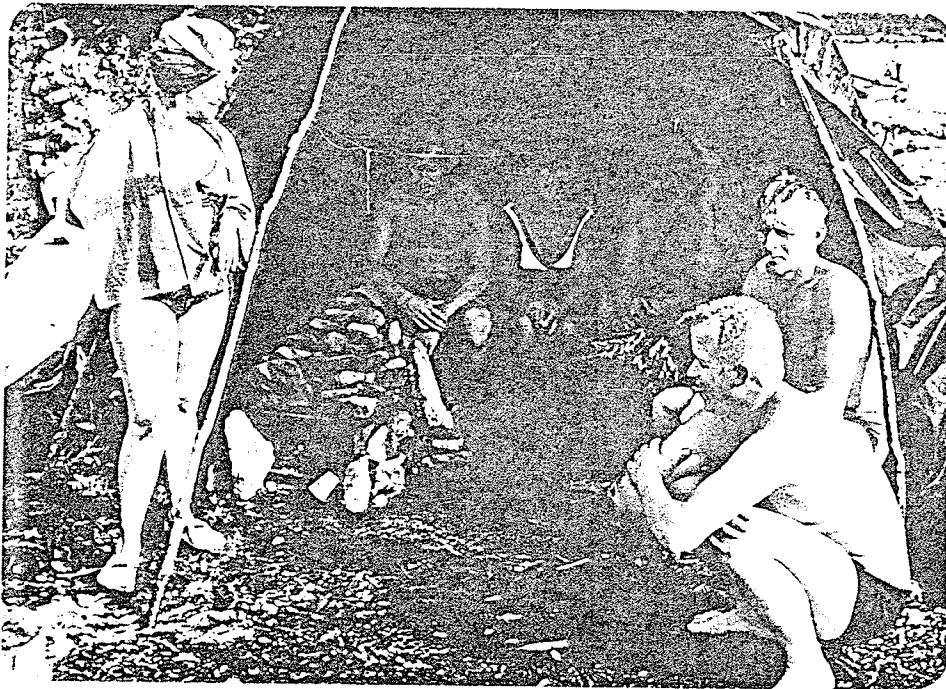


Figure 70.

Adults getting ready to use the savusauna. Note the vihta and the construction of the rock pile, with the fire extinguished.



Figure 71.

Adults and child using the sauna. Note the steam escaping on the right.



Figure 72.

The Pas Finns posed for a picture after using the make-shift savusauna.

Most of the Finns rented living quarters when they first arrived but after a few months several purchased or started to build homes and included a sauna in their new dwelling.

In the spring of 1977 there were five saunas in Finnish homes in The Pas. All were heated electrically and were usually located in the basement of the house. Located at surrounding cottages, the Finns had another seven saunas, all wood-burning varieties.

The use of electric sauna heaters in town was a matter of convenience. No wood had to be hauled, the rooms were easier to keep clean and to build. The rural saunas were more traditional, several being log buildings. Wood was in ready supply for burning, cheaper, and thus the older types were practical under the circumstances. There was also a conscious attempt to construct an "old fashioned rustic" sauna as described later.

Matti R.'s Sauna

Matti, his wife and their three young children moved to The Pas in January 1971 as part of the original Finnish group recruited to work for Churchill Forest Industries. After several years Matti is now a chief supervisor in the wood room and pulp mill. He was originally from Kuusankoski in East Finland and one of the older Winnipeg Finnish residents whom he visits regularly is from his home village. Matti was a skilled paper worker in Finland, having taken a pulp mill course and served as president of a 4,600 paper workers union.

By 1977 Matti had built three saunas in The Pas area, one in his home, one in a cottage which he had sold and another at a non-Finn's cottage. Matti built his home in The Pas and after moving in he added a sauna in the basement in 1975.

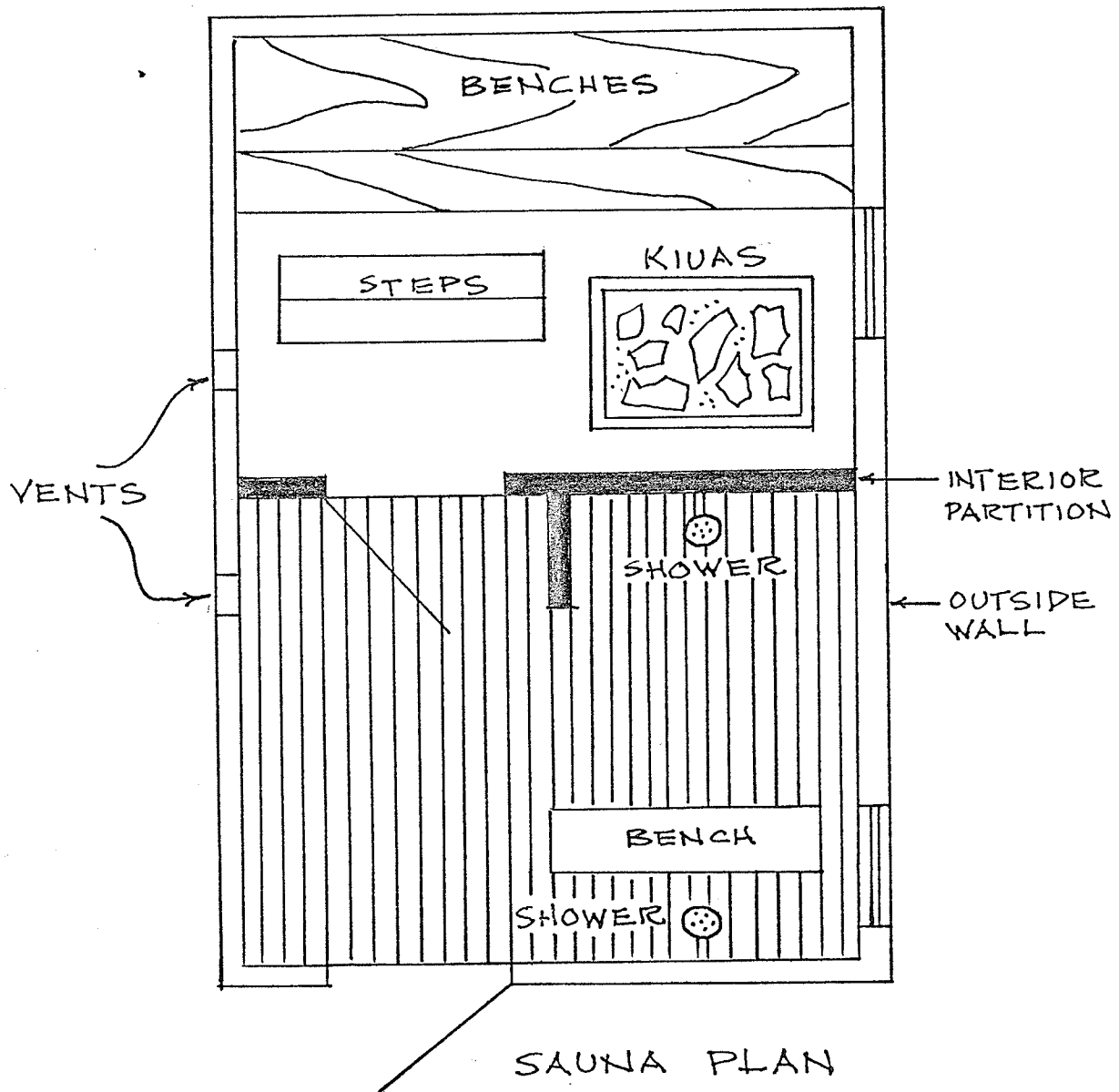


Figure 73.

Layout of Matti R.'s sauna in the basement of his home, The Pas, Manitoba.
(Not to scale).

Environmental relationship:

The sauna is in the south-east corner of the basement. Also located in the basement is a bedroom, a second bathroom and a family room. The basement ceiling is at a height of 8'. Changing clothes is usually done in the bedroom, but there is a bench just outside the shower room for resting and hanging towels. Electric lighting is used throughout the sauna area, which is divided into two parts, a shower room and the actual sauna room.

Shower room:

The shower room is the first one entered when going to the sauna. It measures 7' X 9'. On the right are two showers, one on the west and one on the east wall, the walls being of ceramic tile over 2" X 4" framing and plywood sheeting. The ceiling is exposed plywood. The floor is removable duck board on the regular concrete basement floor. The north wall, which extends into the sauna room is 2" X 4" studding covered with 6" tongue and groove cedar planks. There is an exterior window in the south wall next to the shower, opposite which is a fan driven vent at ceiling level. Beneath the west shower is a small bench for sitting on when washing.

Sauna room:

Entrance to the sauna room is via a 28" X 72" hollow mahogany door opening into the shower room. The wooden handle is hand-carved and the door is held closed by means of a spring door-roller attached to the door frame on the shower room side.

The sauna room measures 6' X 9' and the walls are covered with 6" wide tongue and groove cedar nailed horizontally. The ceiling is of similar material.

Along the entire 9' long east wall is a two-tiered bench constructed of 1" X 4" cedar. Six planks are used for the upper tier, making a width of 25" while the lower tier uses three planks for a 12" width. Two small steps are used to climb to the lower bench which is 33½" from the floor. The upper bench is 16" above the lower bench and 44" from the ceiling. A small section of duck board is in front of the steps.

The sauna room is heated by an electric kiuas standing on the concrete floor in the south west corner. The kiuas measures 18" X 16" X 30½" high and is an Ikonen model designed and manufactured by a Finnish man by that name residing in Winnipeg. The heater is made of stainless steel and is thermostatically controlled from outside the sauna room. These heaters are more expensive than mass produced commercial models but their high quality materials and durability makes the Ikonen name highly respected among local Finnish sauna users. The rocks in the kiuas are irregular shaped black granite about 12" in diameter and piled slightly above the top of the heater.

A vent 9" X 3" similar to the one in the shower room is located on the north wall at the ceiling level. A wall fan draws the hot humid air out of the sauna room. A basement window similar to the window in the shower room is usually opened during the course of taking a sauna to bring in fresh, cool, outside air. A sauna thermometer ranging from 0 - 140

degrees C. is located on the north wall and is visible when sitting on the benches. A plastic pail is located on the bench and is filled with water for throwing on the kiuas while having a sauna bath. A wooden handled, copper bowled-ladle is used for throwing the water.

Matti R. has made oak vihtas for use during the sauna bath. The branches were gathered during a trip to the Finnish settlement near Wapella, Saskatchewan. Extra vihtas were stored in the freezer. Matti prefers oak as it lasts longer than birch vihtas.

The sauna is a regular part of Matti and his family's lifestyle which is still very close to their Finnish roots. It is heated up once or twice a week and the bathtub and shower is used infrequently. For this family the sauna has been easily and successfully transferred from Finland.

Andy L.'s Sauna

Andy L. and his wife are one of the only Finnish couples in The Pas who were in Canada for several years before coming to this northern community. Andy came to work in The Pas through Canadian recruitment and not as part of the Finland recruitment program. His work specialty, evaluating timber reserves, is in a different division of the overall forestry operation than the jobs of the other Finns. Andy is of Swedish speaking Finn origin while his wife is of Finnish speaking origin. The L.'s have a home in town in which there is no sauna. Before moving into town they had a home at Clearwater Lake which they now use as a cottage. At this location is a sauna described below (Figure 74). It was built in 1972 by Andy and several Finnish friends using gas powered chain saws.

Environmental relationship:

The sauna is located in a picturesque setting, surrounded by trees between the cottage and Pioneer Bay on Clearwater Lake, about 35' from the water. The cottage is on a rise of land about 30' further from the water.

Exterior dimensions:

The exterior dimensions of the sauna are 15' X 15'. It is constructed of large spruce logs 11" to 16" in diameter stacked and corner notched with about 9" extension at the corners. The top and bottom of each log were planed flat with a standard thickness of about 8" between which is a piece of fibre glass insulation for chinking. The logs were debarked with the natural round sides stained dark red-brown. The building sits on large rocks on small concrete pads, raising the structure about 1' above the ground.

The gabled roof is constructed of log-framing covered with sheets of panelling and topped with asphalt shingles. The gable peaks are on the north and south walls. The north gable roof overhangs the wall about 3' as does the floor to create a porch for resting during the course of a sauna bath. The steps rise to the porch upon which are several lawn chairs.

The entrance to the sauna is via a vertically nailed pine plank, lockable, wooden door, about 32" X 73" on the east end of the north wall. The door handle is wood and is roughly shaped and carved. There are three windows in the building, two aluminum frame sliding windows opening into the change

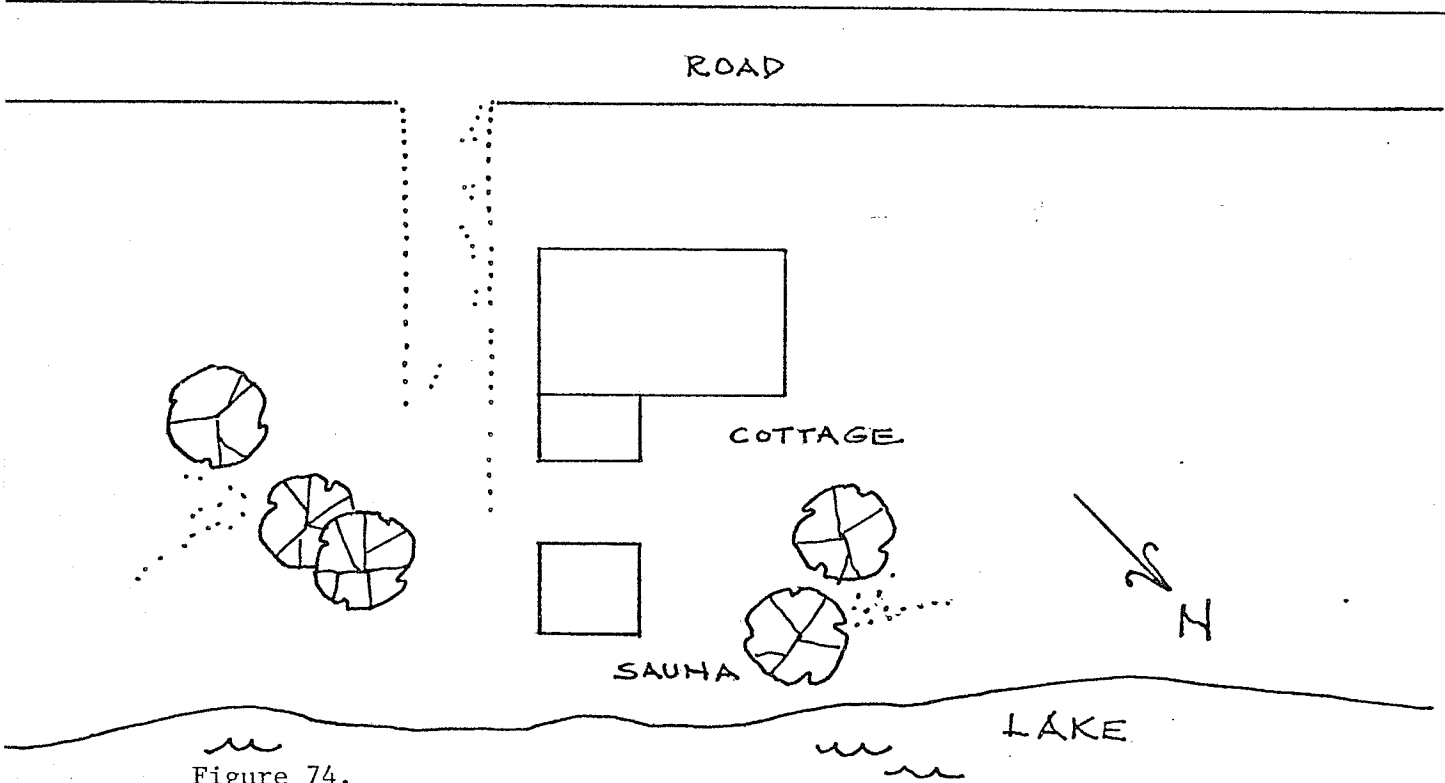
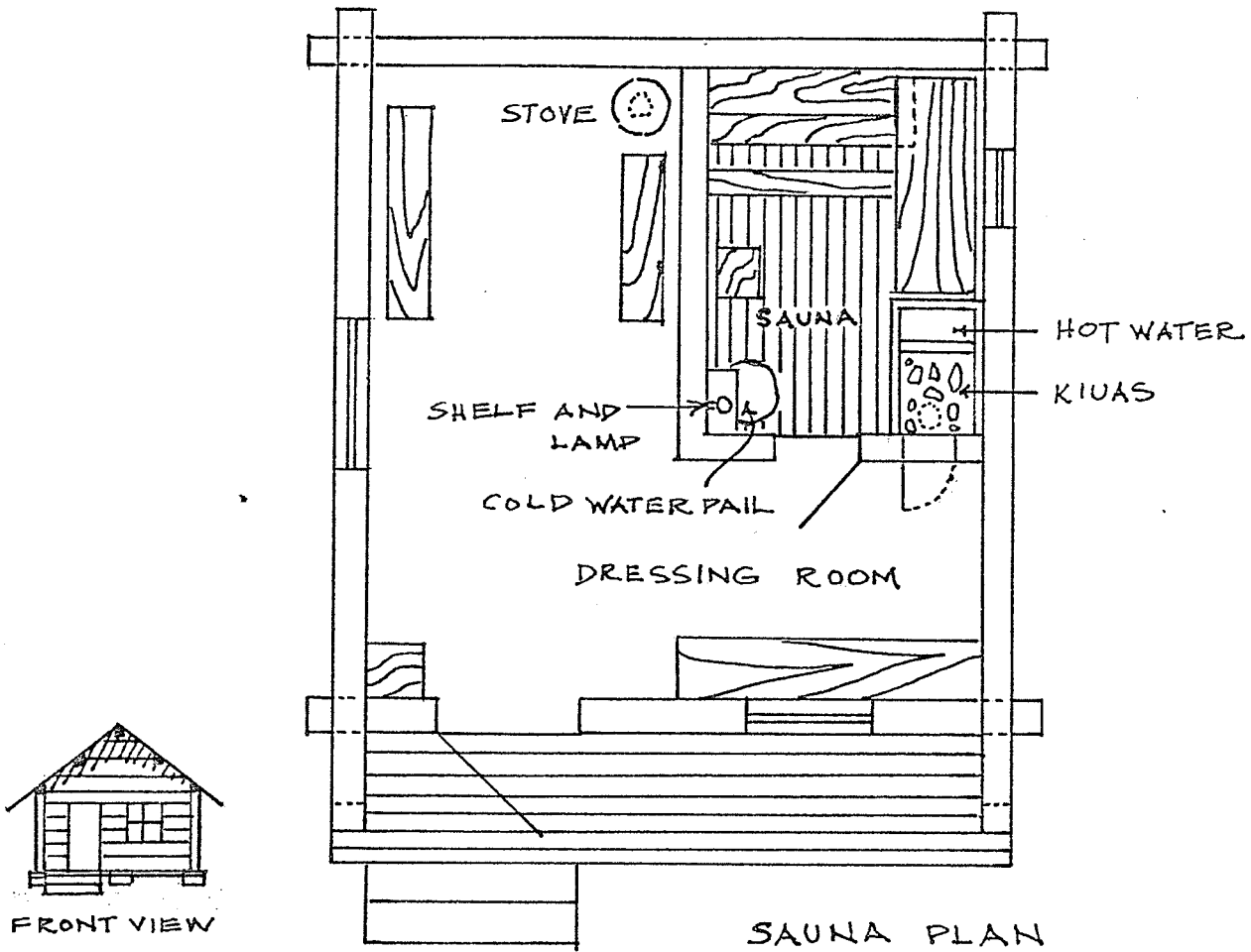


Figure 74.

Layout of Andy L.'s yard and sauna, The Pas, Manitoba. (Not to scale).

room, one on the east wall and the other on the north wall. A small wood frame window 20" X 14" on the west wall is part of the sauna room.

Change room:

Coming in through the exterior door, one enters the L-shaped change room with the sauna room in the south east corner. The walls are the interior surface of the log walls with a plywood floor. The ceiling rises to the sloped surface of the gable roof. There are four wooden benches, one along the east wall, one in the north east corner, another on the north wall and the fourth along the east sauna room wall. The sauna room wall exteriors are vertical pine planks. Five sets of tree branches carved into clothes hooks are nailed to the walls near the benches. A small wood burning stove is located in the south west corner. It is used for heating the change room in winter. One 60 watt electric light supplements the natural light coming through two windows.

Sauna room:

The sauna room is a low small room 6' X 7'7" with a 6'10" ceiling, built in the south west corner of the building. Entrance to it is via 2' X 6' door which opens out into the change room. The interior side of the door is vertically nailed pine planking, while the exterior is plywood. The handles are hand carved wood. The south and west walls are the interior of the logs while the east and north walls are vertically nailed pine planking, the floor is duck board over plywood.

There are two benches, L-shaped along the length of the south wall and along the west wall as far as the stove. The south bench is 6' across, constructed of two inch thick planks, 12" wide and 8" wide. The west bench is of similar material. The benches are two tiered, the lower, narrower bench serving as a step and foot rest when sitting on the upper. The distance from the ceiling to upper bench is 39", from the upper to lower is 16" and the lower to the floor is 25". A low step which also serves as a seat when washing is in front of the south wall. A 20" X 14" window is midway along the west wall just above the bench and along with a dim electric light on a shelf in the north east corner provides the light for the room.

The kiuas is wood burning, located in the north west corner. The metal chimney extends straight up through the ceiling. The stove measures about 16" X 28" X 28" and has a container for hot water on the south side. The door of the fire box extends through the north wall and the fire is stoked from the change room side of the wall. Any available wood is burned. Small rounded stones about 8" in circumference are piled around the fire box and on top of the stove.

A five gallon plastic pail containing cold water is along the east wall. Water is thrown onto the kiuas using a ladle hand carved from a bulbous growth of a birch tree. A hammered copper plaque of sauna ladies is nailed to the east wall. Oak vihtas are used.

The Andy L. sauna is used regularly by the owner and his friends throughout the year. The intent was to build an "old fashioned style

sauna" and this effect was achieved. The large logs and the use of heavy planks and wooden accessories makes the sauna very rustic in appearance. The sauna room ceiling is quite low, only 6'10" and is in keeping with the old savusauna style where one had to bend over to enter.. Andy is very active with the local ski club and with one of the main ski trails close by, his sauna is a favorite location place for after ski gatherings. While this sauna has a very traditional function for the owner, it also figures into the larger social and recreation activities of the community, which is mainly non-Finn.

The sauna is now well established in The Pas and will probably survive for many years. The Finnish population utilizes the sauna in their homes as the main bathing location. Its use by non-Finns is growing partially due to the availability of skilled Finns who can advise them and even construct the saunas for them. Logs are readily available for log building construction so more traditional styles of saunas as previously described can be easily built.

Eriksdale (Macross, Mulvihill)

The last remaining usable sauna in the Eriksdale area was owned by the late Martti K. who died suddenly in January, 1977. Martti and his wife, Eilli emigrated from Teuva in central Finland in 1925, following Mrs. K.'s married sister to a farm west of Eriksdale. Mrs. K. stayed there while Martti went to British Columbia to look for work in 1927. He "rode the rails" for a year. In 1928 they lived in a log shack on the road allowance. He also worked for a while in Pointe du Bois in 1928 with N. K. Johnson's crew and in 1934 bought a quarter-section of hay land near Lake Manitoba. Between 1935 and 1940 the K.'s lived in British Columbia and then moved back to Eriksdale and farmed.

After their retirement in 1973 the K.'s lived in the town of Eriksdale and spent their weekends on the farm, about nine miles west. Mr. K. was extremely proud of his sauna. It was a fairly new frame building covered with buffalo board on the exterior and with plywood on the interior. The change room had a washing machine and tub for doing the clothes while the kiuas was of a chimney type. With Martti gone, one of his sons will possibly take over the farm, but they already have homes and it is unlikely that the farm buildings will be occupied.

There are several descendants of the original Finn pioneers in the area, but all of these families were formed through mixed marriages between Finns and non-Finns. Martti and his wife were the last of the early settlers and with them will go any link with the old country and Finnish traditions. The chances of a revival of the sauna tradition are very slim and the remaining sauna is very much a relic from the past in the Eriksdale area.

Elma

The sauna tradition got off to a very good start in the Elma area as many of the Finns had farms along the Whitemouth River which provided ideal locations for the saunas. At the time of early settlement, which was about 1895 every farm had a savusauna, and one informant in his 80's claims that not one of these ever burnt down. The earliest saunas were one-roomed log buildings often with a flat roof covered with sawdust and clay for added insulation. As far as is known the saunas in Elma were built when the owner had time and were not the first building put up. Sauna literature often mentions that pioneer settlers would construct a small log shelter that would later be converted to a sauna when a larger home was built (Mead 1967:88). This practice has never been followed or

even mentioned by any Finns in Manitoba. The sauna was high in priority but was built after the house.

Oak vihtas were used in Elma as the available birch got used up quickly. They were made during the summer when the oak was in full leaf, and if dried properly oak vihtas would last for many baths.

For several years around the 1920's there was a Finnish woman who did cupping and blood letting in the sauna, but she moved to the United States in the 1930's.

There are no recorded instances of women giving birth in the sauna as the most respected midwife in the area preferred to work in the homes. One Finnish woman, now in her 80's was born in the sauna in the old country, but said that, "I don't mention that to anyone." She was very surprised that her husband knew this fact when she told the author while in his presence as she had never informed him of this in over 55 years of marriage.

The exact number of saunas presently in the Elma area is not known. A number of second and third generation descendants of Finns have them on their farms. A rough estimate as to contemporary saunas would be about ten. As far as is known all of these are frame buildings, but one or two might be logs covered over by siding. None are known to be savusaunas. One Finnish man in his early 90's, who just retired to Winnipeg, had a barrel type stove that allowed a certain amount of smoke to enter the steam room during heating. When he entered for bathing the smoke would be re-directed up the chimney by closing a small door on the fire box.

One interesting development with the sauna was its spread among non-Finns in the area. Several Ukrainians have recently bought farms from Finns and have continued using the saunas on their farms. One Ukrainian

Figure 75.

An axe, auger, buck saw, and vara used by the Finns in Elma, Manitoba in the construction of log buildings.

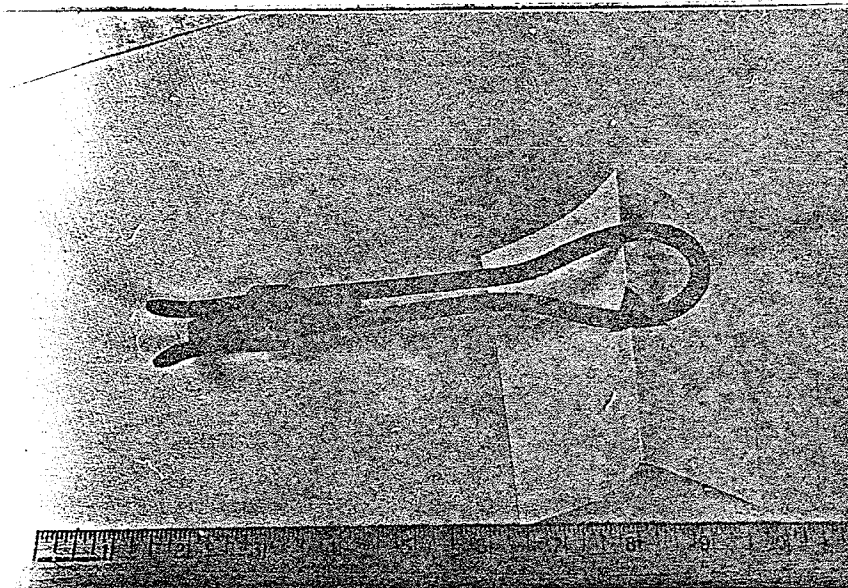
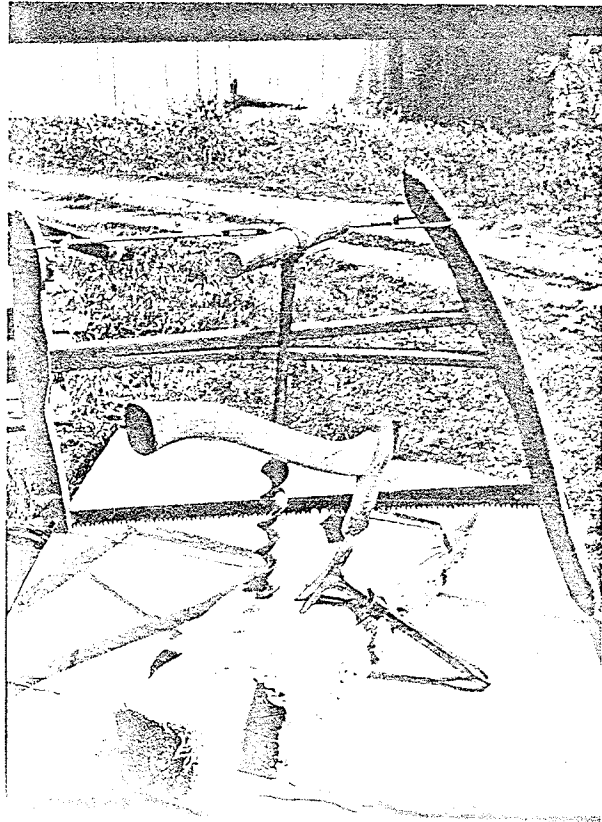


Figure 76.

Close-up of a vara or scribe used for marking contours on logs stacked horizontally when making walls. This one is adjustable and was hand forged in Elma, Manitoba.

Figure 77.

Moses S., one of the pioneer Finns who came to Elma in 1905. This photo was taken on his property alongside the White-mouth in 1975.



Figure 78.

Moses S.'s small, two-roomed sauna in Elma, Manitoba. The kiuas was constructed so that a small amount of smoke flowed into the room during heating. The smoke was directed up the chimney when bathing by closing a small door on the barrel heater.

Figure 79.

A savusauna on the John N. farm in Elma, Manitoba c. 1940. This building was moved by the ice from the Whitemouth River. Note the open end gable and the blackened smoke hole on the back wall.

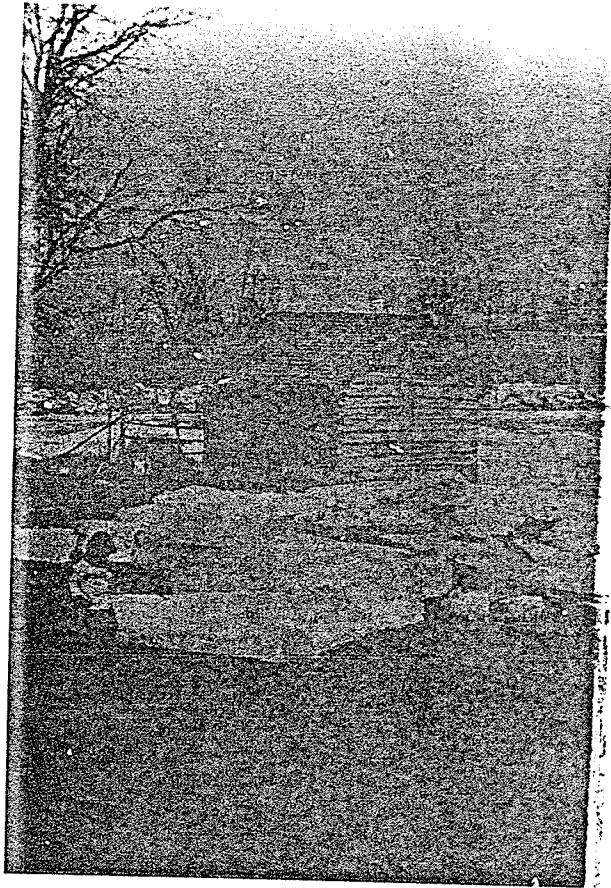
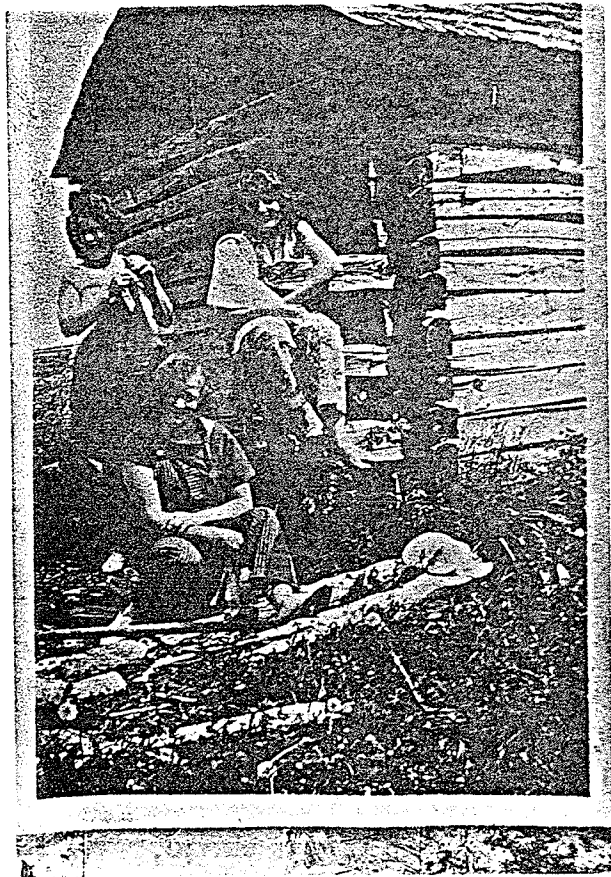


Figure 80.

A Winnipeg Finnish girl (sitting) with friends outside a savusauna in Elma, Manitoba c. 1935. Note the corner joint detail and the blackened smoke hole.



forest ranger, Joseph K. worked in the bush with a Finnish man from Elma in the 1930's. The two built their first sauna in the bush together, then the Ukrainian fellow built a sauna on his brother's farm and eventually one on his own farm. Joseph was so enthusiastic about the sauna bath that during the winter he would cool off in the river through a hole in the ice or roll in the snow. He is now retired in Winnipeg and frequents the saunas in commercial establishments or in the homes of friends.

The saunas that this Ukrainian built were of a rather primitive one-room savusauna type, in which field stone was used for the rock pile. The walls were of peeled spruce logs, with small poles laid on top, creating a flat roof. Bark was laid on top of the poles and then earth was heaped on the bark, making a water-tight, well-insulated roof.

One Norwegian fellow, Lars H., who worked in a saw mill in Elma in 1925-26, became a friend of a Finnish man who sold wood to the mill and would frequent the Finn's sauna. On Sunday, his day off, Lars and a co-worker would go to this Finn's home and bathe after the family was finished. One day they came early and were amazed to see the entire family, husband, wife, two daughters and a son, rolling in the snow after their sauna bath. This building was a two-room wood-frame savusauna. It was situated along the river several hundred yards from the house. Lars did not continue frequenting saunas after leaving Elma.

Elma was also the destination of several outings of the Winnipeg branch of the Loyal Finns in Canada. In June 1931, in June 1932, and in the summer of 1937 weekend trips were taken by the group to Elma, often to take part in the Midsummer Celebration (Minute Books of Winnipeg Loyal Finns 1931, 1932, 1937). One woman who immortalized the 1931 trip in a

poem she wrote at the time, Viisu Elman Reissusta ("Song of a Trip to Elma") reflected on a sauna bath taken that weekend.

"We went to Elma on one of those trips, it's in my poem you know. The ladies were supposed to go into the steam bath first, but we were just a little bit late. That was in L.'s steam bath."

"That was an old fashioned one?"

"Yes, an old fashioned one, and we were quite a group that stayed with L. over night. Many boys and girls. We slept all over the place. And some one said, 'Helen, warm up the steam bath as the ladies will go first.' The ladies go to the steam bath first, followed by the men. But we were a little late so the men went to the steam bath first, without the ladies knowing so. When we found out, that they were in the steam bath, oh boy! The whole group went in and we scared the boys in the steam bath. They thought we were going to come in, right into the steam bath. We made noise and scared them so, that they all ran out, you know, right out of the steam bath! That was really something! But we were just making fun of them. So we scared them out from the steam bath before they were finished. That was the only thing comical about it" (Interview with Martta N., August 1976).

The sauna tradition in Manitoba is the oldest in the Elma area, going back to about 1895 when the first Finnish settlers arrived. Its history is interesting and colorful as illustrated by the previous anecdotes and has been extended to include non-Finns. The sauna has a fair chance of surviving in Elma, not primarily for its original function as

a bath house, but for novelty and recreational use. The actual construction of the building and the bathing customs will still be identifiable as Finnish, however, as the second, third, and even fourth generation Finns have come to emulate some of the behavior of the highly respected pioneers who were living in the area until very recently. Some of the "Finnish" tradition is also maintained by the non-Finns like the Ukrainian sauna enthusiast previously mentioned who was quickly assimilated into customary Finnish sauna bathing practices.

Riverland

The area known as Riverland is a ruggedly beautiful stretch of land along the Winnipeg River across from the town of Lac du Bonnet. The small group of Finns who settled amongst a predominately Swedish community took out homesteads along or very near the river. About 1920 there were probably about ten saunas in the area, with two or three in the Newcomb area. Most of these saunas would have been savusaunas located right along the river.

There were in the summer of 1976 at least six saunas in Riverland and one or two across the river in Lac du Bonnet. All these saunas were two-roomed and had a chimney-style kiuas. Only two were more than 25 years old and both of these were built of logs. All the rest were frame buildings, some of which were converted from a shed or summer kitchen.

The interesting thing about the two older log saunas is that they were both made in the 1930s by the same man, John M., who did many odd jobs about the area. One of the saunas was built for an English-Finnish married couple, cottage owners from Winnipeg. This Finnish lady introduced many non-Finn cottage owners to the sauna but was very perplexed when several English women would only bathe with their bathing suits on.

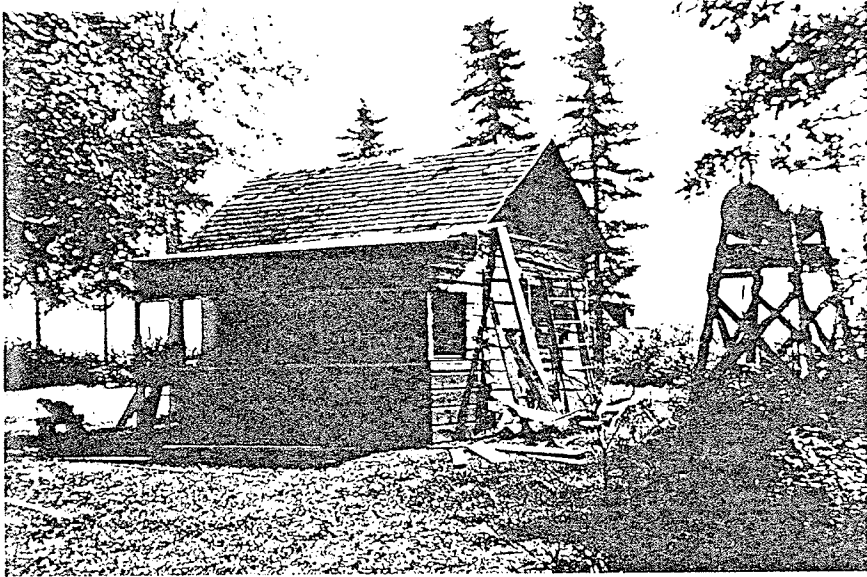


Figure 81.

Sauna built by John M. c. 1935 for a Finnish-English couple on their vacation property in Riverland. A verandah is being added by the present owner. The water drum is part of a gravity feed shower system.

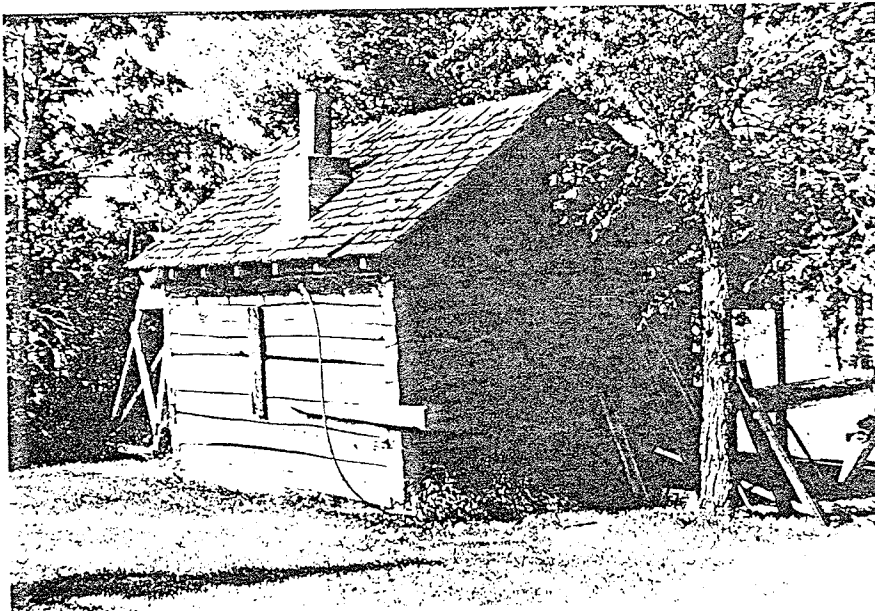


Figure 82.

Rear view of the above sauna. The building has two rooms and a chimney-style kiuas. Note the heavy horizontally stacked log construction.

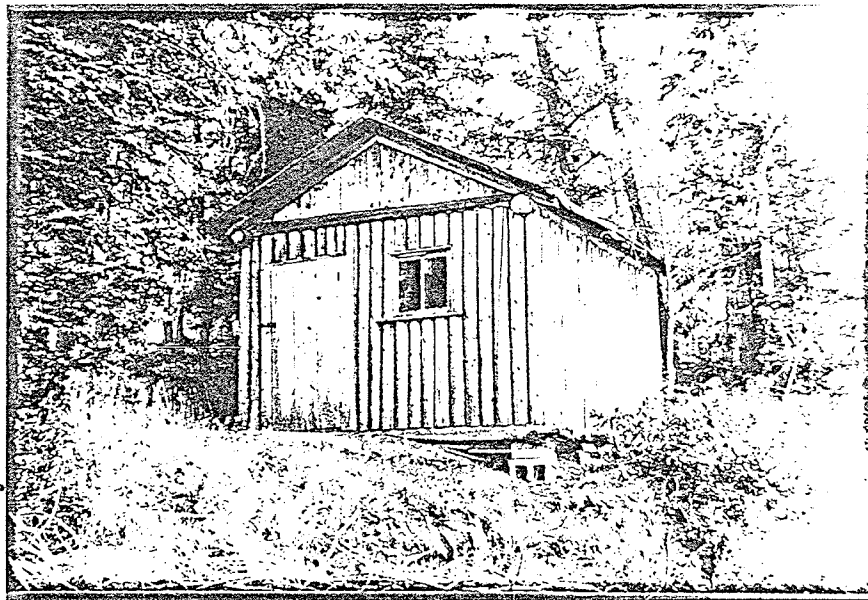


Figure 83.

The only old sauna in Manitoba constructed using logs stacked on end. Built by John M. for a Finnish couple, Mr. and Mrs. K. c. 1935, in Riverland. The base is blocked up to keep the sauna from slipping down the bank to the Winnipeg River, about 30' away.

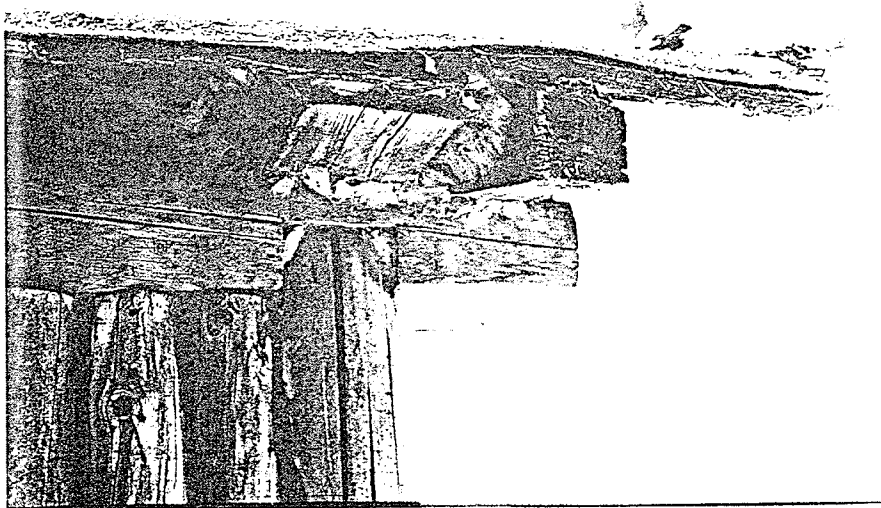


Figure 84.

Complex corner joint detail at roof-wall line on the above sauna. The use of small diameter logs, about 66 in total, necessitated chinking to decrease heat loss.

Figure 85.

Birch vihtas hanging in the change room of the K. sauna in Riverland, Manitoba. This property was bought by a Latvian man in 1940 and, being an enthusiastic sauna user, he made these vihtas.



The other sauna was built for permanent Finnish residents, Mr. and Mrs. Toivo K. The construction of the K. sauna, and the house is unique in that the logs used are stood up vertically and not stacked horizontally. A note book kept by Mrs. K. indicates that it took John M. 22 days to build this sauna and that he used 66 logs. In 1940 the K.'s sold out and moved to Pointe du Bois. A Latvian man bought the property and the yard became the centre for many Latvian celebrations. He was also a great sauna enthusiast and bathed regularly with a Finnish neighbor. Since his death in the spring of 1976 the property has been unoccupied.

Of the other saunas in the area, three are owned by long time Finnish residents, one by a 1951 immigrant who recently settled permanently in the area, and the last one by a non-Finn from Winnipeg. This latter cottager purchased the second sauna built by John M. He is presently adding a screened porch to the front of the sauna. One of the Finns who has a separate sauna building is now erecting a new home in which a sauna is included.

The Riverland area is rapidly being developed as prime vacation land. Several Finns indicated that they have been approached by complete strangers wishing to purchase their property. Whereas in the early settlement period the sauna had very traditional functions, such as bathing and blood letting, it is now very much sought after as an added recreational feature of the cottages of non-Finns. Having a sauna will increase the sale value of any cottage property.

The sauna will quite likely survive in Riverland, perpetuated in the long run primarily by non-Finns for recreational uses. One non-Finn cottager recounted a story to the author with great gusto about how, after a long drinking party, a dozen or so men retreated to the heated

sauna where they proceeded to play pranks on one another. In the course of this activity, soaking the room and each other in the steam room the door and frame of this fine old building were damaged. Many Finns spoken to by the author would abhor this kind of behavior in the sauna as the sauna bath is supposed to be conducted in a quiet and relaxed atmosphere.

One older woman, whose son is married to a non-Finn, has been a strong advocate of the sauna amongst her young grandchildren. These kids love to take a sauna. Last winter, they, as well as their grandmother, made "snow angels", naked in the snow, while cooling off after the sauna bath. It is this woman's son who is now building a sauna in his new house. A Finn couple, on the Lac du Bonnet side of the river, has a sauna in their basement heated by a small home made fuel oil burner.

There are so very few Finns in the Riverland area and the land is developing so rapidly that it is likely that whatever happens to the sauna in the future will be a result in more of the recreational cottage development than of Finnish influence. The trend here differs considerably from the trend in the Pointe du Bois area just down the road.

Pointe du Bois

The sauna is very much a living tradition in Pointe du Bois. Even though there are only about twenty-five or thirty Finns living permanently in the town, during the weekends and summer holidays it is not uncommon for eighty to a hundred Finns to be there. This influx consists primarily of Finns from Winnipeg, usually those who immigrated after 1950. They come to fish, relax and to be sociable with their Finnish neighbors. There is little or no new land being developed into lots in the area; consequently, there is keen competition amongst the Finns in purchasing

cottages or homes that become available. Some non-property owners visit with the permanent residents or stay with cottage owners. Several properties have small separate guest houses which are rented out.

The intense interest of the Finns in living and holidaying at Pointe du Bois is reflected in the care shown towards the sauna. Not one mention was made to the author of any sauna which has been abandoned or is no longer in use. There are about fifteen saunas in the Pointe, two or three having been built in the last few years. None are of the savusauna type. There is one log building which was of the smoke style but this has been converted into a boat house. The few savusaunas that there were have been modernized with the addition of a stove and chimney. Unlike other Finnish settlements where almost all the early saunas were savusaunas, this was not the case at the Pointe. At least two saunas, one of which is described below, had very sophisticated kivas and water heater designs, so much so that it is suspected that the materials may have come from the dam and power house construction site just down the road. The Finns who built these two saunas lived next door to each other and worked at the dam site where they developed the necessary skills and had access to cement, steel pipes and equipment used in building these saunas.

The following description illustrates how the original pioneers are being replaced by "1950s" immigrants.

Kusti P.'s Sauna

This sauna was built by Herman H. who came with his wife to work as a laborer at Slave Falls in 1929. He first built his home and then the sauna in 1930. He died in 1944 and his wife later remarried Arvi M. During the 1960's Kusti P. rented the guest house and, when Mrs. M., widowed for a second time, decided to sell out and move back to Finland

after 40 years in Canada, Kusti purchased the property. He has spent much time and money repairing the buildings and may retire to the Pointe in a few years. Kusti came to Winnipeg in 1951, worked for a large piano repair firm for several years, and eventually opened up his own one-man shop.

Kusti, his wife and their son spend every weekend and several weeks during the warmer months at their cottage. They regularly bring guests down with them and occasionally during the winter spend a weekend at the Pointe cross-country skiing. Kusti and his wife are also very active in the Finnish church groups and the Finnish club in Winnipeg.

Kusti and his wife are very enthusiastic sauna bathers, and regularly use the sauna twice in one weekend. Their guests are respectfully invited to share the sauna with them. Men and women bathe separately, though husbands and wives might go together. Kusti makes birch vihtas, gathering the leafy branches from the trees growing on his property. They are hung to dry in the boat house. The K.'s also have an electric sauna in the basement of their Winnipeg home.

Environmental relationship:

The K. property is on the banks of the Winnipeg River and is slightly rolling. The sauna is located down the bank, south of the house. A boat house is between it and the river. A small creek runs back of the sauna. Cedar, birch and spruce trees grow abundantly over the yard. Houses on the adjacent property and the road are several hundred feet away and barely visible through the trees. The entire setting is somewhat idyllic.

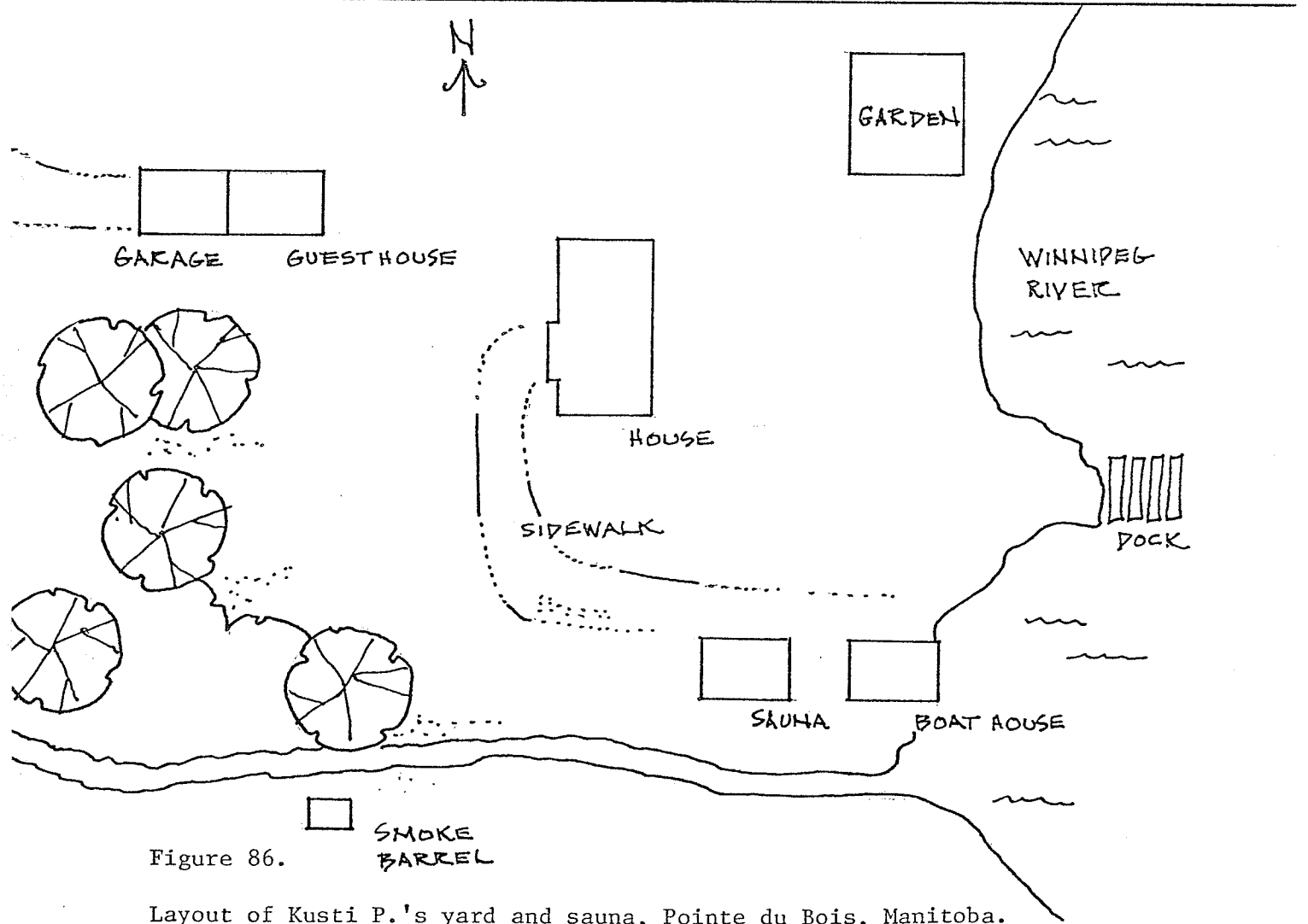
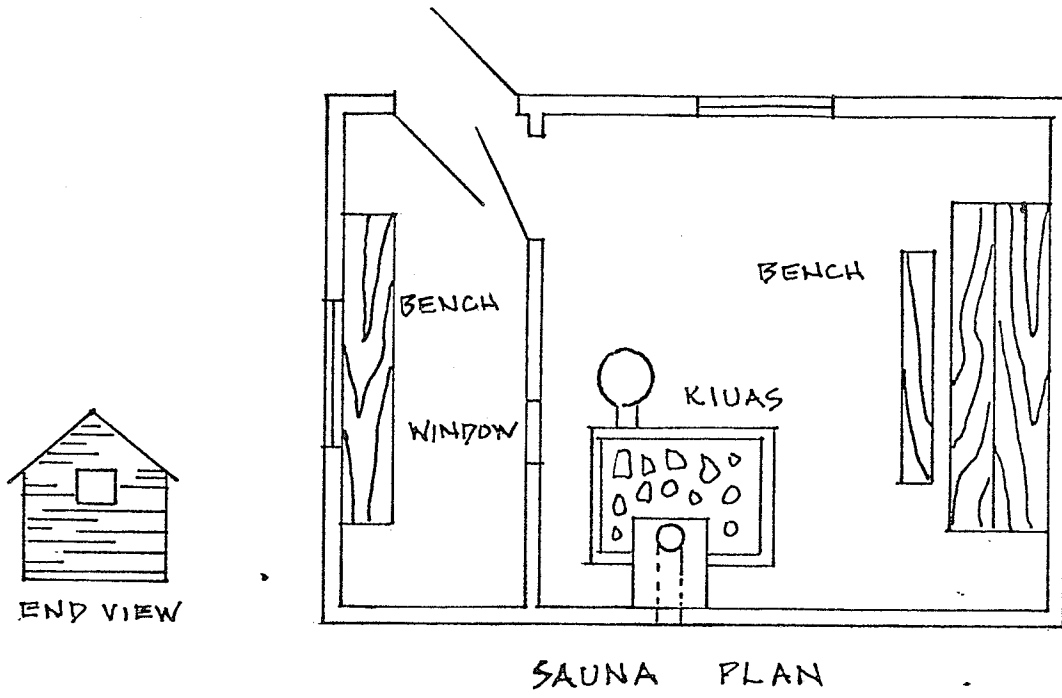


Figure 86.

Layout of Kusti P.'s yard and sauna, Pointe du Bois, Manitoba.
(Not to scale).

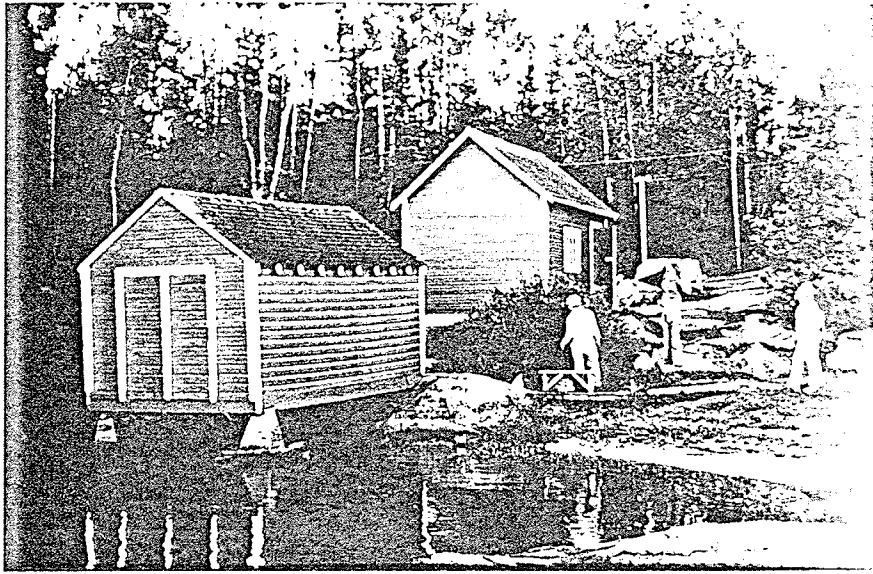
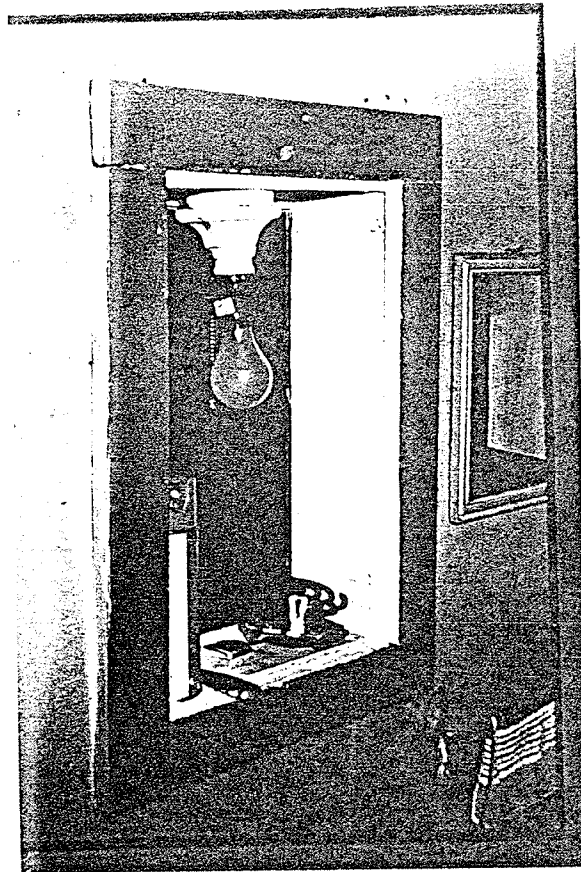


Figure 87.

The Kusti P. sauna behind the boathouse, at Pointe du Bois, Manitoba.
Photo taken from the dock.

Figure 88.

A light suspended in the window on the dividing wall between the sauna and change rooms in Kusti P.'s sauna, Pointe du Bois, Manitoba.



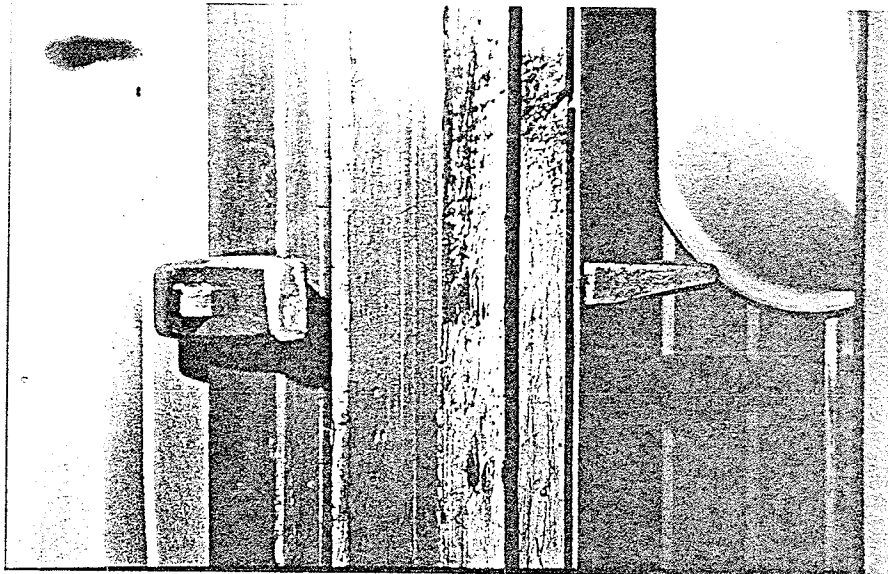


Figure 89.

Detail of the latch used to lock and unlock the door between the sauna and change rooms. The locking piece of wood could be spun from either room. Kusti P.'s sauna, Pointe du Bois, Manitoba.

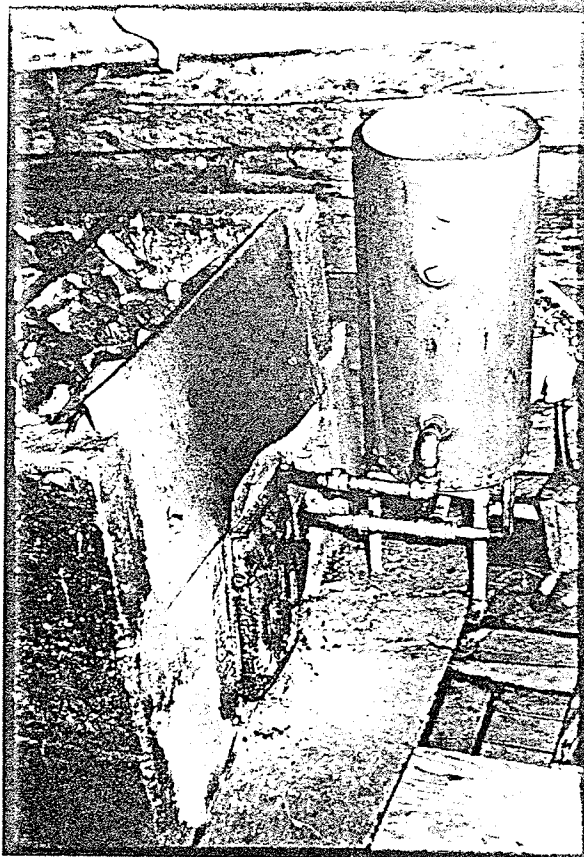


Figure 90.

The kiuas and water heater in the P. sauna. Note the pipes from the heater extending around the fire box and the heavy concrete walls.

Exterior dimensions:

The building was originally log, probably using the vara technique but has been covered over with horizontal siding painted red with white trim. The overall dimensions are 15' X 10', and 7'9" high in the corners. The roof is gabled and rises 4' above the corner height. There is a suspended interior ceiling, creating an attic to which access is gained through a small door on the west gable. The roofing material is rolled asphalt shingles.

The sauna rests on a concrete pad which is about 9" thick on the west end and increases to about 30" thick on the east end owing to the slope of the land towards the river. Extending out of the concrete about 3' on the east side is a wooden drain tube which opens into the middle of the steam room and takes away the excess water.

There are two windows on the building, one looking into the change room and the other looking into the steam room.

The outside door, measuring 28" X 69", is on the northwest corner and opens outward to allow entrance through a screen door. The exterior door has a brass handle and provision for locking with a key.

Change room:

The change room is 4'6" X 9' with walls of pressed paper-board painted pink with a white ceiling. The floor is linoleum over wood and is covered with woven rag mats. A bench runs along most of the west wall. There are hooks for hanging clothes on either side of the west wall window.

The wall between the change and steam rooms has a small window about the middle. An electric light is fixed in front of the window on the change room side and illuminates the entire sauna. A small mirror hangs next to this window. Also located on the upper part of the dividing wall is the end of a stove pipe which connects to the chimney. There used to be a small stove in the change room for heating it up during the winter. Hanging on the south wall is a medicine cabinet containing a variety of things such as matches, a knife and screws.

Sauna room:

This room measures 9' X 9' and has unpainted 3" tongue and groove planking nailed vertically over the logs on all the walls and ceiling except near the kluas. Here the original logs are visible and above the stove on the ceiling is a piece of sheet metal 3' X 4'.

A two-tiered 8' long bench runs along the east wall. The top tier is 20" wide and the bottom one is 15". Access to the tiered benches is by a low movable bench. The distance from the top tier to the ceiling is 46" while to the lower tier it is 60". The overall floor-to-ceiling height is 88".

The kluas is located in the south-west corner of the room. A cylindrical-shaped stove is surrounded by 4" thick rectangular concrete box measuring 42" deep X 37" wide X 29" thick. Rock is piled on top and around the stove to a height level with the concrete wall. Most of the rock is small, angular shaped granite averaging about 8" to 12" in diameter.

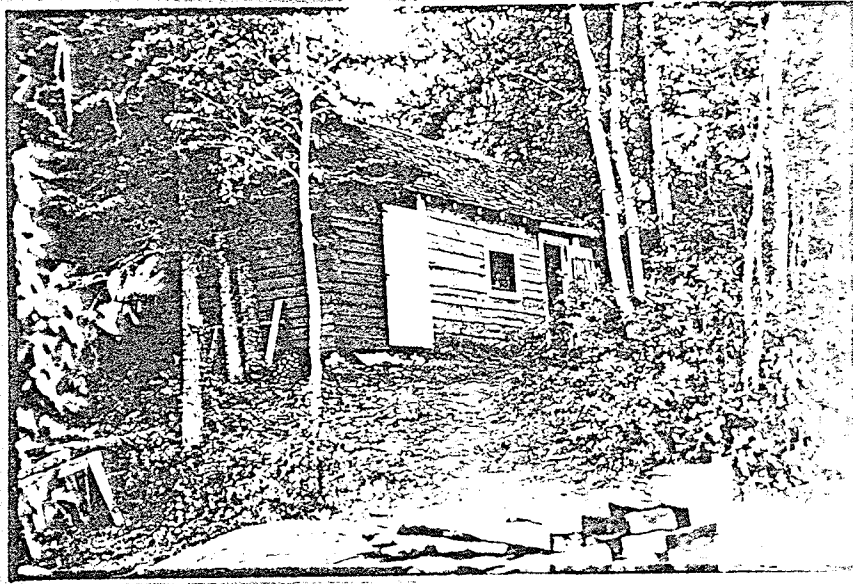


Figure 91.

The S. sauna, immediately south of Kusti P.'s property in Pointe du Bois. The section on the left is a wood shed added on later to the original log building.



Figure 92.

The kiuas and water heater of the S. sauna. Note similar construction style to the P. sauna.

A metal pipe rises out of the back of the stove and connects to a brick chimney supported above the stove by a wood and iron bracket.

A steel hot water tank is located west of the stove door along the dividing wall. A small pipe comes out of the tank, runs through the concrete wall, around the fire box and back into the tank. This creates a self-circulating hot water system. One 5 gallon pail and a 5 gallon crock hold cold water from the river. Wash basins are of plastic and hang from nails on the wall when not in use. Small aluminum pots are used by each bather to pour a little cool water on oneself when it is too hot and to throw water on the rocks to create loyly.

The S. sauna located just south of the P. property is constructed of logs and was built a few years earlier, c. 1925. The two saunas are however remarkably similar in size, layout, and use of materials. Either Mr. S. built H.'s sauna, too, as it is known that he built the one on his property, or else Mr. H. copied S.'s sauna.

As was previously stated Pointe du Bois is an important place for Manitoba Finns. In many ways it resembles Finland and supports the folk saying that "Where there is rock, water and birch trees there will be Finns." The original settlers were able to find stable employment in the immediate area which was not the case with other rural Finnish communities in Manitoba. This gave the Pointe a certain amount of economic and cultural stability. It was probably this stability, the physical setting, which resembles Finland, and the desire to be with other Finns that

attracted many of the "1950s" immigrants to first seek out the Pointe as a holiday site.

Holidays are given much importance in Finland, one writer claiming that

since most Finns no longer engage in farming (which was labour intensive during warm weather), summer has become the season of relaxation. For urban Finns, it is a time when life is lived out of door and when city streets are emptied by the exodus from town to country...Although its triumph may be short lived, summer revives and revitalizes the Finn (Mead 1967:139).

Interestingly, the sauna is credited with having a similar revitalizing effect. Even in the cold of winter its heat and fragrance of birch vihtas can be viewed as a touch of summer. When they leave the city

the most basic Finnish holiday is simply a disappearance into the country side - either to one's own summer cottage, or to a relative's; or possible to a lomakoti or holiday home supported by one of a number of organizations... (Bacon 1970:204).

An excerpt from a poem written in Thunder Bay expresses a Finnish-Canadian's desire for one's own place:

We did build a farm, other
Countrymen came and it became part of
A place - a place to belong. We had our own
Pihakoivut - birch trees in the yard.

(Kouhi 1977).

Similar sentiments of one's place are revealed by a Finn in British Columbia

"'Someday I shall return home', said an elderly Finnish man...

'I will save enough money and as soon as I am sixty-five years old, I will go to Finland. I shall buy a small, red cottage near a blue lake and then marry a middle-aged widow with some means, build a sauna, raise chickens and vegetables and heat my sauna on Saturdays and live happily ever after'" (Kinanen 1955:1).

The desire for land and a place of one's own was one of the major reasons why hundreds of thousands of immigrants came to Canada, and is by no means uniquely or peculiarly Finnish. What is somewhat unique, however, is the focus by the Winnipeg Finns on Pointe du Bois as an almost ideal vacation, and possibly retirement centre. It is also an ideal that many of them can and do achieve. The desire for a vacation land among the Finns is not simply part of the popular "back to the land fad" or nostalgia about the past that has developed in recent years. It is more of a continuity with old country living styles.

In such a setting the sauna takes on a very positive and symbolic meaning. Taking a sauna bath reinforces one's self-identification as a Finn but is also an affirmation of material success in the larger Manitoba society.

WINNIPEG

The Finns in Winnipeg have had access to the sauna since they first came after 1900. The type of sauna available and its function has, however, changed dramatically over the years. In the old country most Finns had private family saunas, but until about 1960, Winnipeg Finns used only public saunas. Thus, despite the absence of private saunas, sauna bathing remained a common practice. In recent years there has been a surge

in sauna building and there are many saunas in Finnish homes. However, the private saunas are to be found only within the group that immigrated after 1950. The fact that the "post-1950s" group is the main advocate of the sauna in recent years has much to do with the times and social climate of the larger Manitoba society and it can only be understood in this context. The saunas in the homes of Winnipeg Finns are similar to the Matti R. sauna as previously described in The Pas section.

Early Immigrants and the Sauna

Between 1921 and 1931 the Finnish population in Winnipeg increased from 36 to 179, according to the federal censuses. Many of these immigrants were young, single and semi-skilled. The Depression which followed in the 1930s, and then World War II, in which Finland was allied with Germany, imposed an extreme hardship on these young immigrants. During the 1930s most of the Finns lived in the downtown area of the city on Bannatyne, Furby and Elgin streets in Finnish rooming houses. Several of the Finn families who took in boarders were older couples who treated them like additions to their own families. In the early 1930s the left wing group operated its own rooming house as did the Loyal Finns between 1932 and 1935. The latter operation was interesting as it was run along the lines of a mutual welfare organization. Club members donated many household effects to get it running and then charged minimal rent to single Finnish men who needed a place to stay. This house also served as the club headquarters, but became too expensive to operate and was given up in 1935.

During the late 1920s and early 1930s only one Finn couple is known to have had a sauna in their house, a Mr. and Mrs. John R. He had been a prospector, but upon coming to Winnipeg, opened a small rooming house

where eight or nine young men stayed. He also ran a small restaurant on Logan Avenue for a few years which was known to local Finns as the Finnish Cafe. The sauna room was located in the basement of the house and was heated by a wood burning stove. It was used regularly by the boarders and often by their guests. A prank was played upon a German minister who lived in the house for awhile. Before he went into the sauna for the first time he was advised in all solemnity to throw a cup of cold water on the rocks to cool them down if the temperature was too hot. After a few cupfuls of water on the hot rocks the volumes of steam drove him out, naked, from the sauna to the great amusement of the Finns who were watching.

Very few Finns had access to this sauna and had to go to public saunas or do without. There were two commercial establishments which began operating in the 1920s which were, technically speaking, saunas with a kiuas and rock pile. The one, in Winnipeg's north end, was visited infrequently by the Finns as it was quite far from where most of them lived. One Finnish woman said that this was the first steam bath that she went to in Winnipeg. She only went there once and saw non-Finn women who

"brought in their lunch with them, sandwiches and they eat the sandwiches in the washroom, you know the room you wash yourself in, when going to the steam bath. It was cool there. They sit on the benches, have a sandwich and then go back to the steam room, which was very strange to us. We never did that. They wanted to stay there for a long time" (Interview with Martta N., August 1976).

It was mostly used by the Ukrainian and Russian residents in the north end and is believed to have been started by a Ukrainian man. It is presently called Obee's Finnish and Russian Steam Baths.

The Finns used to bathe at a sauna on Alexander Avenue in downtown Winnipeg now called Alexander and King Steam Baths. It is thought that a Finnish couple from the United States started this business, initially called Finnish Steam Baths, and eventually sold it to another Finnish couple who operated it for a few more years in the 1930's. From then until the present no Finns have been associated with this business. While the Finns were operating the business birch vihtas were available for a modest price, made by some of the local Finnish men when they went out to the country.

The Finnish Steam Baths was a small establishment. There were separate changing and washrooms and the small sauna room, about 8' X 10' was heated by a wood burning stove. Men and women would bathe on alternate days, usually on their day off from work, alone or with a friend. Many non-Finns bathed there regularly too.

A very humorous story is told about one of the Finnish girls who worked at Moore's Restaurant about 1930 and her English woman boss who got involved with the sauna.

"That was my friend, we had a room together. They called her Toona at work because it was hard to say Tyyne. She wanted a day off from work and at first they said 'O.K. you can have the day off.' And then they wanted her back to work the shift from four to twelve. So when I went to work they asked me 'Why didn't Toona come to work?'

I said, 'No, she's gone to the steam bath.'

'Steam bath!' says the cashier lady.

'Yes,' I said, 'it's her day off.'

'No, we want her back to work right away. Right away, she must come back to work, we need her.'

'So,' I said, 'she's in the steam bath.'

So the cashier runs and talks to Mr. Moore. He said that she must go get her. So the cashier came to me and asked where the steam bath is and how to get there. So I told her where the steam bath is on King Street and how to get there and so on. She took a taxi.

It was winter time, and she had a fur coat on, a nice muskrat fur coat. She was English, very prim, real dainty, maybe 100 pounds. A real lovely little lady.

She went to the steam bath to find this girl and then of course we heard the story when she came back. There was a lot of commotion, she was telling the story of what happened in the steam bath and of course my friend was also telling how comical it was. She had gone to the steam bath and told the fellow who was at the front desk that she wants to see this girl. Well he said,

'You cannot go because she's in the steam bath.'

'Oh, I must see her! I must go. Where do I go?'

So he showed her the stairs. Down she went, down the narrow stairs and then there were dressing rooms on the sides. She went to the washroom. That was empty, there were no girls there. And then how she explained it! She opened up a door and explained it to me...

Whoop. There full, a room of steam. Hot! Hot as hell! Two naked girls sitting on a high up platform and hitting themselves with switches. Horrible. She could hardly breathe, so she started to yell,

'Toona, Toona, Toona is that you? You know you must come to work.'

'No, I am not coming to work! I'm having a steam' answered Toona.

And the girls threw a little more water on the rocks. So the poor lady got more steam. And she could hardly breathe. She was begging her to come to work. And Toona insisted that she is not coming to work, she has to finish her steam bath.

Toona promised that after she's finished she would come to work. So after this lady went back to work Toona came a couple of hours later.

And that was the comical thing. Being the winter time she has on a beautiful muskrat coat and she goes right into the steam room. There were lots of stories about that, her experience with the Finnish steam bath" (Interview with Martta N., August 1976).

While this story is very funny it is quite revealing about the status of the sauna among non-Finns. This English lady thought the sauna was "Horrible," and "hot as hell!" Another Finnish woman said that the English women that she introduced to the sauna at her cottage would not go naked, but insisted on wearing their woollen bathing suits. Another time two Finnish women were out cross-country skiing in 1928 when this was not a popular sport. They were "looked at kind of odd" and never went out again.

These experiences and others like them did have an effect upon the Finns. It brought into question the acceptability of sauna bathing and skiing, things which were just as natural to them as eating and sleeping. Wanting to become good Canadians at this time in history meant that strange customs like sauna bathing could not be carried out publicly. There was, I believe, a certain stigma attached to being associated with saunas.

If it was socially unacceptable among many non-Finns to go to the sauna, what option did the Finns have? They could go to private saunas in homes but there were so few of these that it was not readily possible to use them. They could go to the saunas out of town, and this is what they did do. Several trips were organized by the Loyal Finns to Elma and many people went individually to visit friends in Elma, Riverland and later to Pointe du Bois. These trips were most common in the 1930's when Finnish social activities were at their height in Winnipeg.

The sauna had an importance then that went beyond simply bathing and socializing with friends. It was a symbol of identity and of expressing community with other Finns. The heat and steam symbolically cleaned away self-doubts and restored to the Finns an awareness of their cultural origins.

While this social psychological approach is rather speculative it may have some merit. There was, during the 1930's some anti-Finnish sentiment in Canada due to their reputation as "Bolsheviks and Communists." A Finnish United Church minister wrote...

A laborer of Finnish nationality was formerly regarded as preferable to other foreign laborers, but now the objection is made that they are tainted with Socialism, Bolshevism and

Communism. If a man professes to be a Communist he will be refused employment every time. In certain places where employers fail to make a distinction and think that all Finns are Bolsheviks, they refuse to employ any Finns. Thus all Finnish immigrants suffer because some are Communists (Heinonen 1930:86).

Similarly, Bradwin (1928:115) in his classic study of northern bush camps, praises the skills of the Finnish camp workers but is critical of some workers and their "...expression of radical ideas. They appear loathe to abide the slower constitutional methods." The story, Painted Fires, by Nellie McClung is about a Finnish immigrant girl, Helmi, who comes to Winnipeg to work as a domestic. Through naivety on her part she gets involved with the police and is brought to court. This is the period of the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike and the magistrate wrongly accuses her of being

...a high-tempered, dangerous young anarchist - the sort I would like to see ducked in the river...Finns are naturally red, and I don't trust them (McClung 1925:68-69).

It is known that the Finns in Winnipeg were being watched by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and left wing activities were monitored in the 1930's. Several of the more ardent Finnish socialists from Manitoba are known to have emigrated to Soviet Karelia during the late 1920's and early 1930's (See Kero 1975 for more on this migration). It is not known if any were deported because of their political activities.

Also, during World War II, Finland came to be allied with Germany in an attempt to ward off a possible Russian invasion. All of these factors, plus uncertain economic conditions resulted in a desire by many Finns to

rid themselves of any association with radical Finnish elements and the result was a receptivity to assimilate "Canadian" cultural elements and to reject things Finnish, and what is more Finnish than the sauna? Even the formation of the Winnipeg branch of the Loyal Finns in Canada may have had an assimilating effect. The membership book and constitution of this group was in the English language and one of the conditions of membership was an oath of allegiance to the Crown.

The assimilative tendency was often the result of the extra work or effort required to maintain a special organizational structure or culturally different practices. Many people did not or could not make this extra effort and consequently traditional cultural behavior such as sauna bathing fell into disuse.

The previous arguments may have been stated a little strongly, but the fact is that the group of 1920s immigrants in Winnipeg did not continue to use the sauna on a regular basis. None have a sauna in their home today or know of any old timers who do, nor do they frequent public saunas or take sauna baths with friends who have saunas, usually 1950s immigrants. They can afford to have saunas but do not. They have almost completely given it up.

The relationship between the 1920s Winnipeg Finnish immigrants and the sauna can be summarized as follows. When they first came the Finns accepted the sauna as a natural part of their lives. The use of the public saunas and the building of one home sauna attest to this. They attempted to resume and encourage this old country practice in Winnipeg. Due to unacceptability of the practice to non-Finns, some anti-Finnish sentiment, and a difficult economic situation, this did not happen. As a

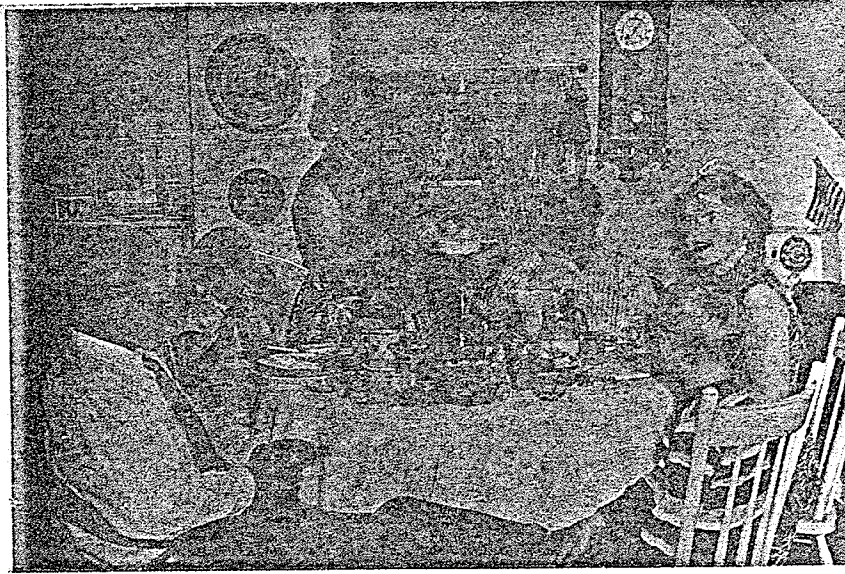


Figure 93.

Finnish immigrants in Winnipeg c. 1951. They were renting the upstairs of a house. One of the couples now owns their own home and has a sauna in the basement. They vacation in Pointe du Bois.

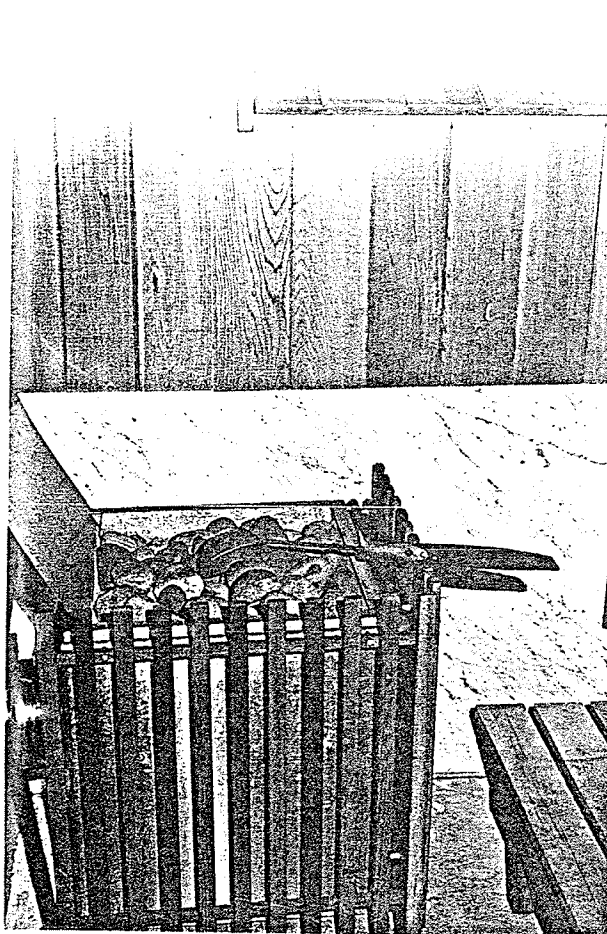


Figure 94.

Electric kiuas in the basement of one of the above couples.

result most of the older Finns in Winnipeg who came in the 1920s rejected the sauna and do not want to and have not taken a sauna bath for years.

"Post-1950s" Immigrants and the Sauna

The above situation is in sharp contrast with that of the "post-1950s" Finns in Winnipeg. They are ardent bathers and often have two saunas, one in the home and one at the cottage. When this group came in the early 1950s, it numbered about 200. Many of them were married, upwardly mobile, skilled tradesmen. They were able to find work quite quickly and did well economically. Their entrance into the work force coincided with a high growth period in the Manitoba economy and a booming construction industry where many of them were employed. The result is that by the 1970s many of these Finns are securely middle class, they own their own homes, their children are grown up and married, and by Canadian standards "they have made it." In the process they have been able to maintain many elements of their Finnish background. That they did it so easily in very different times than the 1920s Finns was a point of conflict between the old-timers and the newcomers. One Finnish woman in her 80's wrote,

Unfortunately the feeling amongst some of the more recent arrived Finnish people from Finland was that we 'older' Finns had accomplished very little and they were very critical of our past efforts. They failed to understand that times then were not what they are now and in my opinion it took character and hard work to accomplish what we did accomplish, i.e. to help each other in difficult times and keep in touch with Finnish culture and at the same time to be a loyal Canadian in our new home land (Letter from A. W. to the author, April 1976).

The two Finnish church groups in Winnipeg, Lutheran and Pentecostal, and the Finnish Club are almost entirely composed of 1950s immigrants. The majority of older Finns refuse to come out to their social events even though they started two of these groups, the Lutheran Church congregation and the Finnish Club.

Sauna Buildings in Winnipeg

The successful transfer of the sauna to Winnipeg by the 1950s group is due in large part to the public awareness and popularity of the sauna amongst non-Finns. They were ready to accept and encourage it. "Sauna culture" has grown in immense world-wide popularity in the last 20 years and equally so in Winnipeg in the last ten years. At least four Finnish contractors were able to capitalize on this popularity for a while. One Finn designed and marketed heaters for several years. He has built over 75 saunas in Winnipeg since 1959. Three other Finns built a total of about 75 other saunas in Winnipeg since 1959. These saunas were mainly for wealthy non-Finns in Winnipeg and for several businesses such as hotels, health spas, and private sports clubs. None of these people are regularly building saunas now except for close friends or relatives. The large construction companies can build a sauna much faster and more cheaply, though often these saunas are poorly designed and the workmanship is shoddy. The Finnish contractors all stress that their workmanship is top quality and they do not try to cut corners by using cheaper low grade materials or reckless installation. To them installing a sauna is a slow meticulous job that few people are willing to pay for and consequently they have been forced out of the sauna business. Installation of a basement sauna with a change room, a washroom with shower and the kiuas room costs from \$3,000 to \$5,000.

A survey of the 1978 Winnipeg telephone book lists fourteen sauna equipment distributors in the city. In addition, many hardware and building supply stores sell sauna equipment. Many of these businesses also do installation of sauna rooms. In total there are probably over thirty sources of sauna building supplies in Winnipeg, where the potential sauna owner can buy the materials to build his own sauna or can contract out the entire job. Only one company has Finns associated with this work.

There are probably well over 1,000 saunas in Winnipeg, but an accurate figure is impossible to arrive at. About one out of three of the 1950s Finnish immigrants have a sauna in their home or at the cottage, but this is also a very rough estimate.

In summarizing the relationship of the Finns to the sauna in Winnipeg, two patterns emerge. The 1920s immigrants were subject to assimilative forces and difficult economic circumstances. They attempted briefly in the 1930's to maintain the sauna but conditions were such that they gave up and the sauna became a memory of things past. The post-1950s immigrants encountered different circumstances, and their arrival and use of the sauna coincided with its immense growth and popularity amongst non-Finns, publicly and in private homes. Some 1950s immigrants were even able to capitalize financially on their knowledge and skills of sauna building. The sauna is now an accepted part of Canadian life and represents a high status leisure and recreational achievement amongst non-Finns. The 1950s group accepts the sauna as part of their own life in Canada. They knew all along that sauna bathing is a relaxing and cleansing experience, both physically and spiritually but still wonder why it took the majority of Canadians so long to discover it.

Non-Finnish Saunas in Canada

Following are two short discussions of sauna bathing amongst the Estonians and Doukhobors. These are presented for comparative purposes. Intensive research would have to be done before their sauna practices could be analyzed as to why it is less common with the Doukhobors than amongst the Finns and Estonians.

The Estonian Sauna

In the old country the Estonians have a sauna tradition almost identical to that of the Finns. In Winnipeg, according to the 1971 census, there are fewer than 100 people of Estonian origin. At least five of them have saunas in their home. This high proportion is due to the fact that one Estonian, a professional engineer, designed and marketed a sauna heater that the Estonians also bought. He designed his first unit about 1960, primarily for his own home use. Over 150 units of his sauna heater were sold, as well as 100 units of the one-man sauna seat. These were sold right across Canada. This engineer may have been the first Estonian to have a sauna in Winnipeg.

The unit designed by this Estonian differs from the more common varieties that were designed in Finland. Most of the Finnish models work by an electric element heating a rock pile in a corner of the sauna room. The convection currents heat the air in about one hour. The Estonian unit is located outside the sauna room. A heater element of several thousand watts heats air that is blown into the sauna room by a fan. A second element heats a small container of rocks upon which a small jet of water is sprayed. The steam produced is piped into the sauna room by a small pencil-thin metal tube. The room is ready for bathing in about 20 minutes.

Figure 95.

An Estonian man holding a vihta outside the sauna in his basement in Winnipeg. The machine on the right was designed by an Estonian and blows steam into the sauna room via the small coil on top.

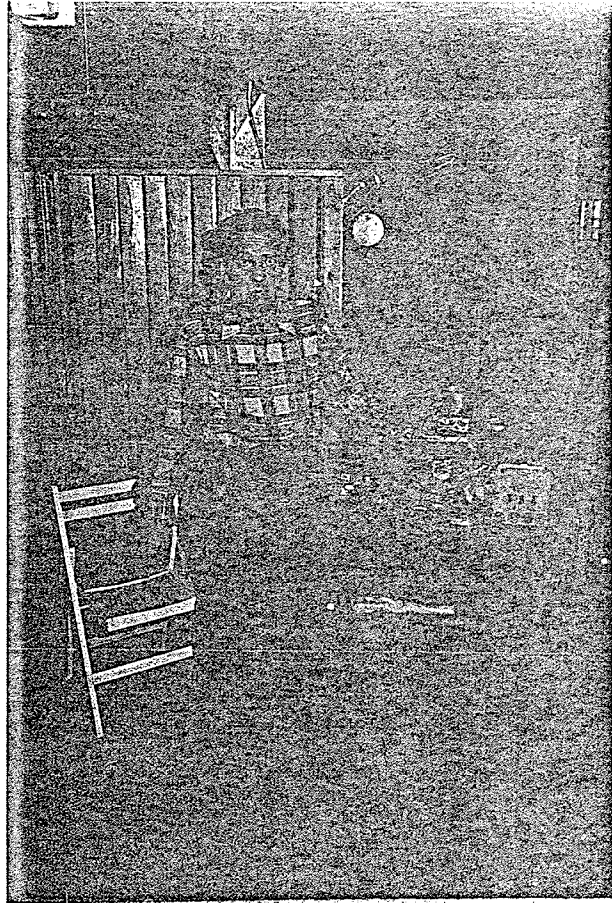
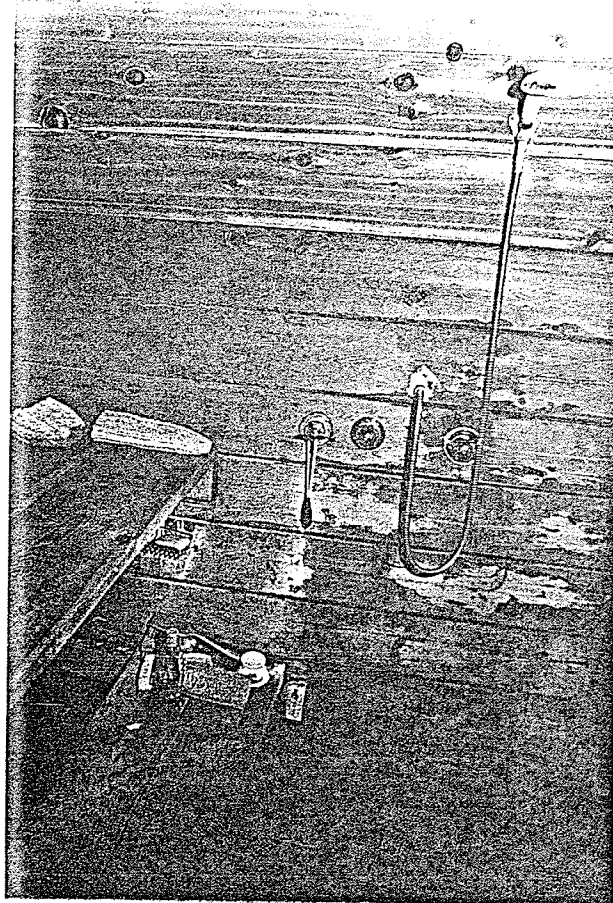


Figure 96.

The interior of the sauna room which measures about 6' X 8' and has a two-tiered bench. Note the shower and the valve in the centre of the photo which controls the amount of steam entering the room.



The use of the sauna by the Winnipeg Estonians, most of whom are post-World War II immigrants, appears to be similar to that of the Finns. They consider it to be a very natural part of their upbringing and as such, taking a sauna bath is a way of re-affirming their identity as Estonians. It is also an enjoyable and relaxing way to get clean.

The Doukhobor "Bania"

In 1899 about 7,500 Doukhobors came to Canada settling originally in 61 villages on three blocks of free land in Saskatchewan. The proto-Doukhobors were originally

from various parts of Russia, including the Finnish-derived population in the north and the Siberian in the east...as well as Crimea (Tarasoff 1969:14).

Members of this religious group or social movement, as it is called by their social historian, Koozma Tarasoff, came from various parts of Russia. Due to their banishment throughout the empire by the Czarist rulers they were exposed to a variety of inhospitable geographical regions and in contact with many other cultural groups. Despite these exiles, the attempts to assimilate them and, in some cases, the attempt to exterminate them, the Doukhobors survived and prospered. This was largely due to their determination to survive and their search for "universal brotherhood" carried out under conditions of economic self-sufficiency and isolated communal life.

During their early years in Canada the Doukhobors lived in 61 villages with one communal bania or Russian steam bath per village. As previously described in this paper the bania is almost identical in construction and use to the Finnish sauna. With the breakup of the villages and the migration of several thousand Doukhobors to British Columbia the

communal bantias fell into disuse. Those people remaining behind operated individual farms and in some cases had private bantias on these farms. These private bantias do not appear to have been as common amongst the Doukhobors as the sauna was with rural Finns. The author visited one of the centers of Doukhobor settlement around Pelly and Verigin, Saskatchewan in June 1976 and saw only three bantias. These were all very old buildings used by just a few of the older Doukhobor residents. Even though there were many young Doukhobor people in the area they did not use or have much interest in the bania.

There are a number of Doukhobors now living in Winnipeg, but only one man, now in his 90's, is known to have a bania in his home. It is difficult to hypothesize as to why they have given up the bania. It may be partially due to the intense pressures, in the past, that have been put on the Doukhobors by the government, the press and general public in order to assimilate them to the values of the larger Canadian society. Giving up the bania, like the language, and many other Russian customs, may have been a part of becoming more acceptable to non-Doukhobors. This is just an educated guess, however, and much more research would be required to properly analyze the decline of the bania amongst the Doukhobors in Saskatchewan and Manitoba.



Figure 97.

An early Doukhobor bania near Kamsack, Saskatchewan, c. 1900. Note the sod roof and plastered exterior. (Photo from Koozma J. Tarasoff, No. 157-29A).

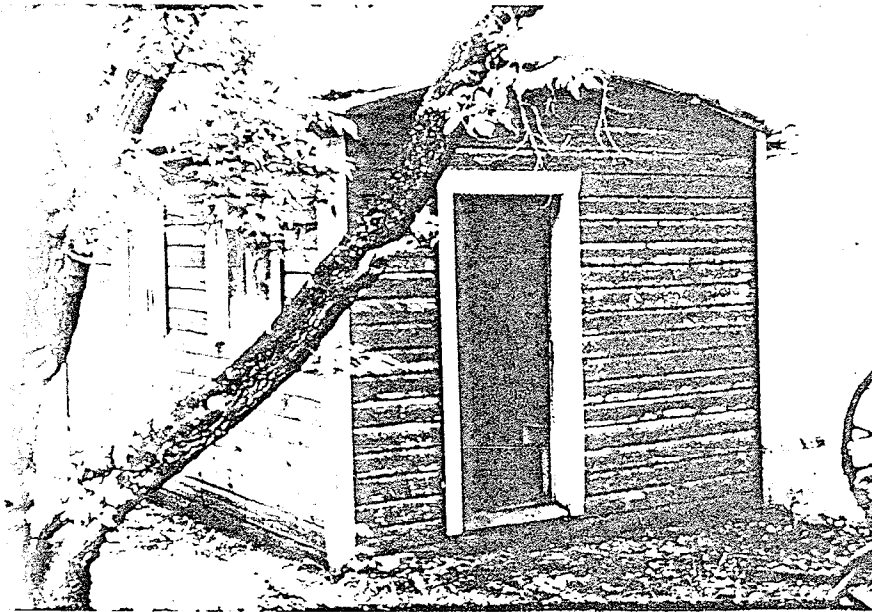


Figure 98.

One of the few Doukhobor banias in the Pelly, Saskatchewan area, 1976. A Ukrainian couple owns the farm, but the bania has not been used for several years.

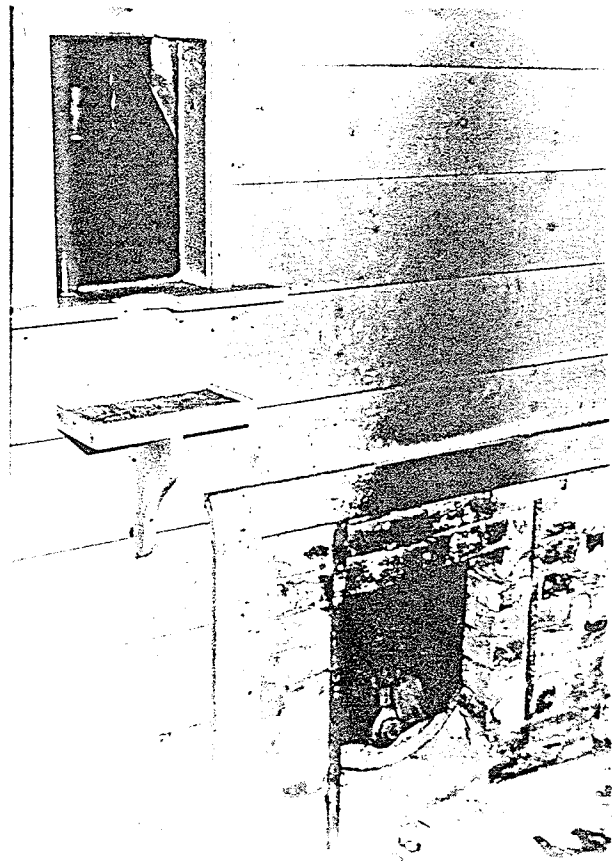


Figure 99.

The furnace door for stoking the bania from the change room side. Note the window and shelf for holding lantern. Pelly, Saskatchewan.

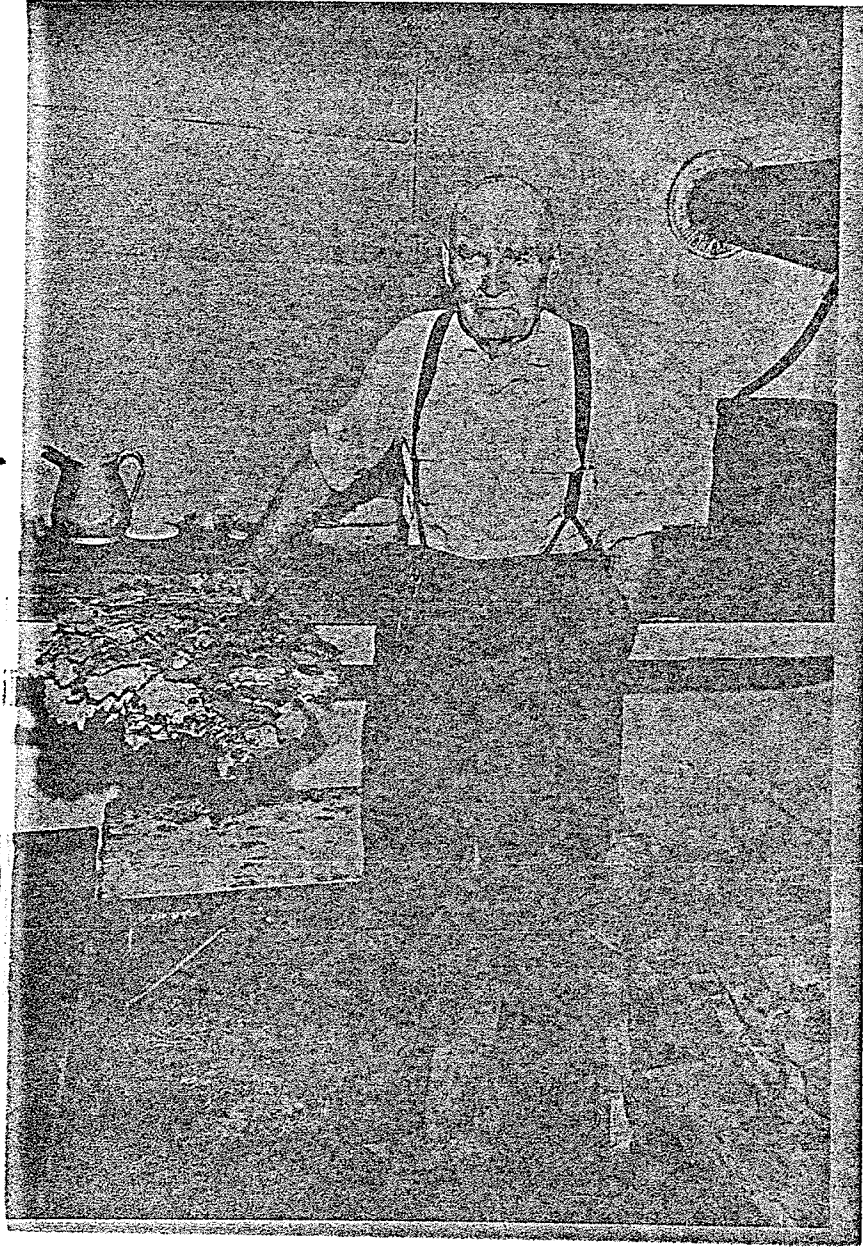


Figure 100.

A Doukhobor elder in his basement bania in Winnipeg. Note the wood burning stove on the right, the raised bench and water container at the rear, and the oak whisk. c. 1968. (Photo from Koozma J. Tarasoff, No. 177-33).

CULTURE CHANGE AND THE FINNISH SAUNA

The purposes of this thesis were twofold: first, to document the Finnish sauna as an example of evolving ethnic architecture in Manitoba; and secondly, to describe and analyze the practice of sauna bathing and its variety among Finnish immigrants arriving at different times and settling in different locales.

The sauna is one of the few cultural elements common to all emigrants from Finland. The three main components of the sauna - heat, rock and water - were easily transferable from Europe to Canada. As the previous descriptions and figures illustrated these three components were combined and utilized in a variety of ways by the sauna builders to create unique structures. Even though all the saunas viewed by the author were readily recognized as such, often from great distances on farm roads, no two were alike. All log buildings were very different. The type of wood used, its shape, the corner notching, roof styles, room arrangements and so on differed from building to building. The location of the kiuas, chimneys, vents, benches, windows and door, was decided by each builder who had his own conception of a "real Finnish sauna." This is in keeping with most folk or vernacular architecture which recognizes a traditional base concept and an acceptable range of individual interpretation and variation.

Along with recognizable variety between individual saunas in Manitoba, there is still evidence of earlier types of saunas which are no longer in use. A single room savusauna, the first type built, is standing in Rorketon as are variations on this type which were divided to create a change room. Many saunas showed signs of having been converted

from a savusauna to a chimney and fire box kiuas. The walls are still blackened from the smoke days and the vents remain in the roof.

Most of the early saunas in the rural settlements were built before 1920 using logs from the owner's farm. Many of these buildings burnt down and were replaced by wood frame buildings as over the years fewer and fewer log buildings were constructed on farms. The Andy L. sauna described at The Pas is one of the few examples of contemporary log construction. Log building has been "rediscovered" as there is a conscious effort by Finns and non-Finns to follow older traditions; for less skilled woodsmen, prefabricated log buildings can be bought.

The adaptability of the sauna is one of the main reasons it survived the transfer from Europe to Canada. In Manitoba the woods used in the construction of the rural saunas and the actual locations of the saunas differed considerably from the situation in Finland. These differences, while important, influenced the detail of the sauna, but did not prevent it from being built and used. There is great variety in the saunas in Finland and this variety also occurs in Manitoba saunas.

The early log saunas which were changed and modernized from the smoky savusaunas into chimney types and recently the use of frame buildings were typical of the countryside, more particularly farms and resort areas. During the last few years, saunas have become extremely popular and fashionable in the towns and cities in Manitoba. These saunas are usually in the basement of the home, are heated electrically and have an attached shower area. City saunas in Winnipeg are common among Finns who immigrated after 1950.

The use and significance of the sauna varied amongst Finnish communities and between periods of immigration. The rural Finnish farming

settlements are in the ecological zone known as the parkland belt. These were fairly marginal agricultural areas at the time of initial settlement and except perhaps in the Elma area, the sauna at present is not flourishing. It is in danger of dying out in Eriksdale, Meadow Portage and Rorke-ton. One important factor in these settlements is the very small Finnish population, the large degree of inter-marriage with non-Finns over the years and the fact that most of the young people have to move out in order to find employment.

Riverland and Pointe du Bois, the two rural areas where the sauna is still relatively important have become vacation centres and the sauna here is important to non-Finns as well as to the Finns. Pointe du Bois is unique as it has become the focus of recreational activity for Winnipeg Finns, mainly those who came after 1950. The permanent Finnish residents, though small in number, have also enjoyed a certain economic and cultural stability due to the hydro dam and local employment opportunities. Both of these areas are on the border of the parklands and eastern woodlands ecological zones.

The Finnish settlement at The Pas is very similar to the Winnipeg Finns in having saunas in their town homes as well as at their cottages and summer homes. Most of these people have been in Canada less than ten years and are living a life style very similar to their Finnish upbringing, many of the men even having similar jobs. As such the sauna is a normal part of their life and all indications are that it will survive very well at The Pas.

The period of immigration of the Finns to Winnipeg can be roughly correlated with the ownership and use of the sauna. The 1920s immigrants have almost entirely given up the sauna. This was perhaps due to economic

and then social reasons over the years which discouraged its use. Many of the Finns who came to the city before 1930 were single and without any money. They came to find jobs and lived in boarding houses. Without owning a home, they could not have a sauna where they lived unless they lived with a Finnish family. Only one or two Finnish families at this time had saunas in their homes but this was only for a short time. The single Finns who wanted a sauna bath had to use the commercial saunas.

In later years when they married and established homes of their own, many of these Finns could afford a sauna but never installed one. This lack of interest in the sauna was partially due to the habit of using other bathing techniques. More important, however were social reasons and social pressures on the Finn to relinquish the sauna tradition. The story related earlier about the English cashier lady's negative experience with the sauna and the statements of several older informants regarding non-Finns disapproving of this bathing technique had an assimilating effect on the small Finnish community. During the 1930s, when many Canadian Finns were deported as communists and bolsheviks and were very vocal leaders of trade unions and radical political groups and again during World War II when Finland was allied with Germany, the more conservative Lutheran Finns disassociated themselves from their countrymen. This also perhaps involved disassociating themselves from Finnish traditions like the sauna.

The post 1950s immigrants which includes those in Winnipeg and The Pas, are the most enthusiastic Finnish sauna users. They came with sauna traditions, found conditions favorable to its transfer to Manitoba and encouraged its use. They are strong advocates of Finnish cultural traditions in general.

The symbolic importance of the sauna has also evolved over the years. Initially, in the early settlement period before 1930, outsiders viewed the sauna bath as a foreign and perhaps peculiar immigrant practice. However, it was important to the Finns as an integral part of their culture and functionally very adaptive where there was no indoor plumbing and where wood, rock and water were abundant. In situations where the Finns were in a minority, which included all Manitoba Finnish settlements, the sauna was important as a symbol of Finnish identity and became a safe refuge for socializing with fellow countrymen. This was the situation in rural areas and also initially in Winnipeg, where after a while, as previously discussed, the early urban Finns gave up the sauna. Before its very recent world-wide popularity, the sauna in Winnipeg was perhaps associated with backwardness and a failure to assimilate, a description which many Finns did not want applied to them.

The contemporary sauna combines intangible symbolic functions and practical physical functions, it is a blending of both the ideal and real world for the Finns, a link with their past and their homeland. The sauna has been recognized and praised by non-Finns for its therapeutic, physical and spiritual cleansing value, as a refuge from the hectic pace of the 20th century and as a relaxing place to socialize.

This thesis raises many additional questions about the process of culture change than just how it applies to the sauna in Manitoba. Other Finnish communities should be surveyed to discover whether similar changes occurred and why, as well as other groups with similar bathing traditions like the Doukhobors and Estonians. The entire field of ethnic studies in Canada requires further work and if this thesis can serve as a minor contribution, then one of its main objectives has been met.

APPENDIX A

SAUNA DATA FORM

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Type | 25. Room Dimensions |
| 2. Building Name | 26. Change Room |
| 3. Location | 27. Wall Material |
| 4. Present Owner | 28. Floor Material |
| 5. Recorder & Date | 29. Lighting |
| 6. Number of Photos Taken | 30. Benches |
| 7. Environmental Relationship | 31. Clothes Hooks |
| 8. Present Condition | 32. Additional Features |
| 9. Physical Characteristics | 33. Sauna Room |
| 10. Exterior Dimensions | 34. Wall Material |
| 11. Wall Material | 35. Floor Material |
| 12. Type of Construction | 36. Ceiling Material |
| 13. Corner Joint Detail | 37. Bench Locations |
| 14. Roof Style | 38. Height Measurements |
| 15. Roof Material | 39. Sauna Room Door |
| 16. Insulation | 40. Heat Source |
| 17. Style & Door Location | 41. Dimensions |
| 18. Size | 42. Type of Box |
| 19. Latch Detail | 43. Rock |
| 20. Window Style & Location | 44. Vent or Chimney |
| 21. Additional Exterior Features | 45. Water Containers |
| 22. Interior | 46. Additional Features |
| 23. Number of Rooms | 47. Type of Wood Burnt |
| 24. Function of Rooms | 48. Switches () used? |

Appendix A (Continued)

Cultural Information

Date of Construction: _____

Order of Sauna Construction: _____

General "Style" of Sauna: _____

Was Sauna Moved? _____

Builder: _____

Birth Date & Place: _____

Year of Immigration: _____

To: _____

To Manitoba: _____

Why? _____

Ethnic Origin: _____

Education: _____

Religion: _____

Occupation: _____

Spouse and Children: _____

Military Service: _____

Political Activities: _____

Hobbies and Skills: _____

Paper and Magazine Subscriptions: _____

Did Others in Neighborhood Use This Sauna? _____

Other Possible Contacts: _____

Additional Information: _____

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