

Extract from **Copper Cliffin Suomalaiset ja Copper Cliffin Suomalainen Evankelis-Luterilainen Wuoristo-Seurakunta** written by Rev. Lauri T. Pikkusaari in 1947 for the 50th anniversary of the Wuoristo Finnish Evangelical Lutheran church in Copper Cliff.

Jaakko Porrasmäki Pages 104 and 105

The Temperance Society was founded in Copper Cliff, ON on 18.11,1894 and was possibly third out of all the Finnish Canadian organizations started in Canada (Lutheran congregation in New Finland in 1893 and Temperance Society, 'Pelastuksen Sankari'- 'Hero of those saved', in Sault Ste. Marie,ON in 1894).

It is known that Jaakko Porrasmaki, who lived in America and most recently in Sault Ste. Marie, ON, was deeply inspired in temperance (abstinence), especially after hearing speeches on temperance given by two great Finnish men, Sillberg and Jasberg. He felt that it was his sacred calling to establish Temperance Societies in Canada, and so he was sent by the central office of the Temperance Society to start such an establishment here in Copper Cliff. Prior to this, he had already started the above mentioned society in the Soo (ON). The Temperance Society Central paid his travelling expenses to Copper Cliff. Their intention was to have him accompanied by another man, Mr. Hauta-aho, who also was living in the Soo at the time, but for some reason, he did not come to Copper Cliff till 1897. Jaakko Porrasmaki was very religious, but to his deep regret, was also an alcoholic. Though an alcoholic, he conducted a Christian burial for Mr. Ikola, native of Ilmajoki, who was said to have died from a 'warm disease'.

Arriving in Copper Cliff, it has been said that he had been ridiculed for taking on an impossible task during such alcohol ravaged times and also due to the fact that he was an alcoholic himself. Living here he experienced a strong religious (Christian) awakening and at the same time was able to stop drinking completely. He was an excellent singer as well as humorous, and having been able to establish the Temperance Society, he was said to be 'a tough man'. Though his religious awakening happened late in his life, he was still able to leave a great impression on the visiting pastors. At this point he was already a sick man suffering from a kidney disease, and was able to live only six years in this area before his death in the summer of year 1900. During his time here he accomplished so much good. It has been told that the local people in Copper Cliff had no intentions of starting or establishing a Temperance Society. As a matter of fact, they were opposed to it.

Copper Cliff Temperance Society joined the 'mother' organization, called The Finnish Social, Temperance and Brotherhood Society in America, SKRV. In their 'founding book' (minutes) they have 27 names listed but it does not include Jaakko Porrasmaki's name, who at that time may not have had intentions of staying here. A decision was made on 8.7,1900 by SKRV to honor the founder of 'Oikeuden Ohje', Copper Cliff Temperance Society, and to announce his death in the Temperance (Raittius) and Immigrant (Siirtolainen) newspapers. Moneys had also been collected to cover part of his health costs (\$46).

Jaakko had named both "Oikeuden Ohje" in Copper Cliff; as well as 'Pelastuksen Sankari' (Hero of those Saved) in the Soo. He was also sent as a representative to the SKRV general meeting in the summer of 1899. He also served the longest tenure as a chairman of the society - 1895 and 1898-1900 (until his death).

Family History Page 170

The family's first immigrant (forefather) in this area was Jaakko Porrasmäki, born 10.9,1853. He

was the founder of the Temperance Society, Wuoristo Sunday School, one of the founding members of Wuoristo congregation, looked after the Finnish elementary school classes (winter of 1898-1899) and also participated locally in many other activities. A kidney disease ended his life on July 5, 1900, at a Sudbury hospital. He was a native of Kauhajoki, village of Harja, Porrasmäki croft.

Prior to establishing the Temperance Society in 1894, he had perhaps lived in the States for a number of years. Before coming here, he had also lived in the Soo for quite some time and had taught Sunday school there. After starting the Temperance Society here, he moved back to the Soo, but it is not known as to how long. Nevertheless, he moved here permanently in 1896 bringing with him some starter for 'viili' (Finnish plain yogurt). He was an excellent canvasser - even collected enough money to pay travel expenses back to Finland for someone suffering from paralysis.

He was an alcoholic when he came to Copper Cliff to start the Temperance Society, but here he experienced a religious renewal (could be 'new born'), was completely healed from his drinking, and at the same time his playful, humorous personality changed to much more serious one. His former Sunday School children remember him as a kind and gentle man.

Jaakko's wife has always lived in Finland, died in Kauhajoki, possibly in 1910, or sometimes before that. He (they) had 4 boys and 2 girls, of which 2 boys and both girls are still living (as of 1947). Only two sons, Iisakki and Nestori, came to live in the Nickel belt area, but the rest stayed in Finland. Nestori, who uses the name, Maki, is still living in the area and works as a trapper.