



# Finland

## INTRODUCTION

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This guide is for researchers who do not speak Finnish but must write to Finland for genealogical records. It includes a form letter you could use in requesting genealogical records from a Finnish parish.

The best sources of genealogical information in Finland are the church records kept by the local parishes. The Family History Library™ has microfilm or microfiche copies of these records prior to 1860 for all of Finland and to 1900 for much of Finland. Use the Family History Library Catalog™ to determine what records are available through the library and the Family History Centers™. If records are available from the library, it is usually faster and more productive to search these first. The library's publication *Finland Research Outline* (36216) explains how to research records at the library or at Family History Centers.

The church records available through the Family History Library generally correspond to the holdings of church records in the Finnish state and provincial archives. The form letter included with this guide is primarily intended for writing to parish offices for records not available at the Family History Library or the Finnish archives. If you write to a parish office that has already forwarded the needed records to an archive, the parish generally sends your letter to the appropriate archives or advises you to do so.

Should you need to write to a Finnish archive for information not available at the Family History Library or at a parish office, you may write in English or obtain the services of a private researcher to help you write a letter in Finnish.

## BEFORE YOU WRITE

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Before you write a letter to Finland to obtain family history information, you should do two things:

- **Determine exactly where your ancestor was born, was married, died, or resided.** Because most genealogical sources were recorded locally, you will need to know the specific locality where your ancestor was born, was married, died, or resided for a given time. See the library's publication *Tracing Immigrant Origins* (34111) for help in finding home towns.

- **Determine where records from your ancestor's home parish are stored today.** When you have a locality name, use a gazetteer to determine whether the name is a farm, village, parish, district, or county and to determine which parish serves your ancestor's locality. Parish record books for which the last date is older than 90 years are generally sent to provincial archives.

## RESEARCH BY MAIL

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Church records are obtained from parishes. It is possible to write to Finland in English; however, the response might be more favorable if written in either Finnish or Swedish, the languages of the country. This guide explains the procedure for writing to:

- A Finnish-speaking parish
- A Swedish-speaking parish
- The Archive of Discontinued Parishes (for the area ceded to the USSR in 1944)

You should make a copy of your letter for your own records prior to sending it. Make sure to mark your envelope *airmail*.

### How to Find Finnish Addresses

For a list of the Lutheran and Orthodox parishes in Finland and their addresses, see:

*Kunta- ja rekisterinpitäjälouettelo/Förteckning över kommuner och registerförare* (Register of the Parishes and Record Keepers). Helsinki: Väestörekisterikeskus, 1981. (FHL book 948.97 E4k; computer number 125454.)

Addresses for the Evangelical-Lutheran Churches in Finland can also be found on the Internet:

[www.evl.fi/kkh/y/srkosoit/index.htm](http://www.evl.fi/kkh/y/srkosoit/index.htm)

A list of archives in Finland and their addresses can be found in the *Finnish Research Outline*.

### How to Send Payments

Do not send money with the initial request. After receiving a response, send a check in Finnish currency for the amount requested by the parish. Checks in foreign currencies can generally be obtained from a local branch of a large international bank. Have the check made payable to the parish as

listed on the return correspondence (parish name + *seurakunta* [Finnish] or *församling* [Swedish]).

Another way to send money to Europe from North America is to telephone Ruesch International Financial Services at 1-800-424-2923. Ask for an international bank draft for the desired amount in Finnish markkas. There is a \$3.00 service charge. Ruesch will give you a transaction number to write on your payment check. Send the payment to:

Ruesch International Financial Services  
700 11th St. NW  
Washington, DC 20001-4507

Upon receipt of your payment, Ruesch will promptly send you a foreign currency draft (check) that you can mail to Finland.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT**

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It may take six months or longer for you to receive a reply to your request for information. Airmail improves the response time. The results of writing to parish offices can vary greatly. You may get a great deal of information, or you may get no answer at all. Some pastors are willing to do considerable research while others may be unable to provide information.

When you receive a reply, send the requested payment and a note of thanks or acknowledgment. If you need to request further information, refer to your earlier letters and their return letters by date. If they have assigned you a reference number, include that number as well.

Use Finnish-English or Swedish-English dictionaries to help you understand the reply. Sometimes you can hire accredited genealogists to translate for you. The Family History Library also has published genealogical word lists in Finnish (35815) and Swedish (31028), which may be helpful.

If you do not receive an answer, write again and include a copy of your first letter.

## **OTHER OPTIONS**

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Because some information is not easily obtained by writing directly to a pastor, you may need to hire a private researcher. The Family History Library provides a list of qualified researchers in its publication *Accredited Genealogists—International* (32750).

The Genealogical Society of Finland provides addresses of local genealogical societies and can also refer you to local professional researchers:

Suomen Sukututkimusseura/Genealogiska  
Samfundet i Finland  
Liisankatu 16 A  
00170 Helsinki  
Finland  
Telephone: 011-358-9-278-1188  
Fax: 011-358-9-278-1199  
<http://www.genealogia.org/ssse.htm>

A list of local genealogical societies in Finland can also be found on the Internet at:

<http://sss.genealogia.fi/stutkyh/indexe.htm>

## **SWEDISH-SPEAKING PARISHES**

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If you correspond with any of the parishes listed below, you should use the Swedish form letter rather than the Finnish form letter (see attached sample form letters). The Finnish names of the parishes are also listed so you can find them in the Family History Library Catalog. In addition to these parishes, all the parishes in Ahvenanmaa (Åland) County use Swedish. For information from larger cities like Helsinki, Turku, and Vaasa, you can write letters in either language.

<u>Swedish-Speaking Parishes</u>	<u>Finnish Name of Parish</u>
Bergö	
Borgå	Porvoo
Bromarv	
Dragsfjärd	
Ekenäs	Tammisaari
Esse	Ähtävä
Garmלקארleby	Kokkola
Grankulla	Kauniainen
Hangö	Hanko
Hitis	Hiittinen
Houtskär	Houtskari
Ingå	Inkoo
Iniö	
Jakobstad	Pietarsaari
Jeppo	Jepua
Karis	Karjaa
Karleby	Kaarlela
Kimito	Kemiö
Korpo	Korppoo
Korsholm	Mustasaari
Korsnäs	
Kristinestad	Kristiinankaupunki
Kronoby	Kruunupyö
Kvevlaks	Koivulahti
Kyrkslätt	Kirkkonummi
Lapträsk	Lapinjärvi
Larsmo	Luoto
Liljendal	
Lovisa	Loviisa
Malaks	Maalahti
Maksmo	Maksamaa
Munsala	
Nagu	Nauvo

Nedervetil	Alaveteli
Nykarleby	Uusikaarlepyy
Närpes	Närpiö
Oravais	Oravainen
Pargas	Parainen
Pedersöre	Pietarsaaren maalaiskunta
Pernå	Pernaja
Petalaks	Petolahti
Pojo	Pohja
Purmo	
Pörtom	Pirttikylä
Replot	Raippaluoto
Sibbo	Sipoo
Sideby	Siipyy
Sjundeå	Siuntio
Snappertuna	
Solf	Sulva
Tenala	Tenhola
Terjärv	Teerijärvi
Västernärjärd	
Vörå	Vöyri
Övermark	Ylimarkku

Jääski	Sortavala (city)
Kanneljärvi	Sortavalan maalaiskunta
Kaukola	Suojärvi
Kirvu	Suursaari
Kivennapa	Säkkijärvi
Koivisto	Terijoki
Korpiselkä	Tytärsaari
Kuolemajärvi	Uusikirkko*
Kurkijoki	Vahviala
Käkisalmi (city)	Valkjärvi
Käkisalmen maalaiskunta	Viipuri (city)
Lavansaari	Viipurin maalaiskunta
Lumivaara	Vuoksela
Metsäpirtti	Vuoksenranta
Muolaa	Äyräpää

\*There are other parishes elsewhere in Finland with the same name.

## ARCHIVE OF DISCONTINUED PARISHES

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After World War II, Finland ceded some of its land to the Soviet Union. The areas ceded were the largest and easternmost part of Viipuri County and Petsamo and Salla in the northeast. The parishes located in these areas were discontinued. Their records are now kept in the provincial archive of Mikkeli. The holdings for these parishes in this archive extend until 1949, except for a few parishes' records, which were destroyed or left behind during the war. You can write to this archive if you are seeking information for any of the parishes listed below. Address the envelope to:

Lakkautettujen seurakuntien keskusarkisto  
PL 2  
SF-50501 Mikkeli  
FINLAND

Make the check payable to:

Lakkautettujen seurakuntien keskusarkisto

The parishes listed below are discontinued:

Antrea	Petsamo
Harlu	Pyhäjärvi*
Heinjoki	Pälkjärvi
Hiitola	Rautu
Ihantala	Ruskeala
Impilahti	Räisälä
Inkerin pakolais- seurakunta	Sakkola
Jaakkima	Salmi
Johannes	Seiskari
	Soanlahti

## HOW TO WRITE A LETTER IN FINNISH

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The following pages include Finnish and Swedish form letters, respectively, with English translations in brackets. You should copy the letter and fill in the appropriate blanks. A separate request form should be used when requesting detailed information on a spouse or child. Make sure you type or neatly print your letter and, when necessary, add any diacritical marks and special characters (such as å, ä, ö) with a pen.

If the form letter does not meet your needs, you may write in English. Your letter should include:

- The name and address of the parish
- Biographical information about your relative
- A comment about payment
- Your signature and the date
- Your return address (including your country)

Be brief and simple. Do not ask for too much at one time.

### Writing Dates

Write dates the European way (day-month-year as numerals). For example, for December 10, 1989, you would write 10/12/89.

## SUKUSELVITYSTILAUS (Request for Genealogical Information—Finnish)

Vastaanottaja [Addressee]: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Tilaan sukuselvityksen seuraavasta henkilöstä** [I am requesting genealogical information about the following person]:

- Sukunimi [Last name]: \_\_\_\_\_
- Etunimet [Given names]: \_\_\_\_\_
- Syntymäaika [Birth date]: \_\_\_\_\_
- Syntymäpaikka [Birthplace]: \_\_\_\_\_
- Lisätietoja (esim. missä asui, kylä ja talo, milloin muutti ja mistä minne) [Additional information (e.g., village or farm, when moved and from where to where)]: \_\_\_\_\_

**Lisäksi pyydän tietoja yllämainitun henkilön** [I am also requesting information about the above-mentioned person's]:

- puolisoista/puolisoista [spouse(s)]
- vanhemmista [parents]
- isovanhemmista [grandparents]
- appivanhemmista [parents-in-law]
- lapsista [children]
- lasten puolisoista [spouse(s) of children]
- lapsenlapsista [grandchildren]
- sisaruksista [siblings]

**Pyydän samalla mainitsemaan, mikäli tällaisia tietoja löytyy** [Possible information about the following is also requested]:

- ammatit [occupations]
- kylän, talon tai torpan nimet [villages, farm, or croft names]
- kaupunginosan ja korttelin [part of town or city block]

*Sitoudun suorittamaan sukuselvityksestä voimassaolevat maksut, joista kirkkoherranvirasto lähettää laskun sukuselvityksen yhteydessä. [I am obliged to pay the applicable costs for the genealogical information, for which the parish office will bill me in connection with the reply.] Jos sukuselvityksen hinta ylittää \$\_\_\_\_\_, ystävällisesti pyydän ilmoittamaan arvellun hinnan ennen tilauksen täyttämistä. [If the cost of the research will exceed \$\_\_\_\_\_, please inform me of the projected cost before doing the research.]*

**Sukuselvityksen tilaaja** [Person requesting the information]:

- Nimi [Name]: \_\_\_\_\_
- Osoite [Address]: \_\_\_\_\_

Päivämäärä [Date]: \_\_\_\_\_ Allekirjoitus [Signature]: \_\_\_\_\_

## BESTÄLLNING AV SLÄKTUTREDNING (Request for Genealogical Information—Swedish)

Mottagare [Addressee]: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Jag beställer en släktutredning för följande person** [I am requesting genealogical information about the following person]:

- Efternamn [Last name]: \_\_\_\_\_
- Förnamn [Given names]: \_\_\_\_\_
- Födelsedatum [Birth date]: \_\_\_\_\_
- Födelseort [Place of birth]: \_\_\_\_\_
- Ytterligare uppgifter (t.ex. address, by eller hemman, flyttat när, varifrån och vart) [Additional information (e.g., village or farm, when moved and from where to where)]: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Jag anhåller även om uppgifter angående ovanstående** [I am also requesting information about the above-mentioned person's]:

- make/maka [spouse(s)]
- föräldrar [parents]
- far- /morföräldrar [grandparents]
- svärföräldrar [parents-in-law] barn [children]
- svärsöner/-döttrar [spouse(s) of children]
- barnbarn [grandchildren]
- syskon [siblings]

**Ytterligare anhålles om eventuella uppgifter angående** [Possible information about the following is also requested]:

- yrken [occupations]
- namn på byar, hemman eller torp [villages, farm, or croft names]
- stadsdel eller kvarter [part of town or city block]

*Jag förbinder mig att betala gällande kostnader för släktutredningen, för vilka pastorskansliet sänder en räkning i samband med forskningsresultatet. [I am obliged to pay the applicable costs for the genealogical information, for which the parish office will bill me in connection with the reply.] Om kostnaderna för släktutredningen överskrider \$ \_\_\_\_\_, var vänlig och meddela mig om den förmodade kostnaden före beställningen utförs. [If the cost of the research will exceed \$ \_\_\_\_\_, please inform me before doing the research.]*

**Släktutredningens beställare** [Person requesting the information]:

- Namn [Name]: \_\_\_\_\_
- Address [Address]: \_\_\_\_\_

Datum [Date]: \_\_\_\_\_

Underskrift [Signature]: \_\_\_\_\_

## **COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS**

The Family History Library welcomes additions and corrections that will improve future editions of this guide. Please send your suggestions to:

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File: Language Helps

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