

MR. AND MRS. K. A. MAKELA, PIONEERS OF LOUISE TOWNSHIP
(from Hilda Cullen)

Kalle (Kaarlo Arvid) Makela was born in 1884 in Alajarvi, Finland. From an early age he worked out as "renki" (farm hand) until he emigrated to the United States. His fondest dream was to become a land owner.

Mrs. Makela (Maria Lahti) was born in Vimpeli, Finland in 1880. While in service as piika (maid servant), she met Kalle, her future husband. In her middle twenties, she went to look for greener fields in Brooklyn, N. Y. There she found employment with a well to do family. Maria often recalled how she spent endless hours, standing by a hot stove, ironing miles of starched ruffles on blouses, skirts, petticoats and boy's shirts.

Mr. and Mrs. Makela were married on May 5, 1906 in Brooklyn. City life did not appeal to them so they decided to return to the old country. However, as is so often the case the second time around, they soon decided that "America" was a better place after all. Mr. Makela crossed the Atlantic once more, this time to seek employment in Toronto. His wife and infant son followed about a year later.

Through friends, Mr. Makela heard of a job in Louise Township, cutting and hauling wood for the smelter at Victoria Mine. He lost no time in getting to Louise, and there lived and worked with Mr. Kalle Hotti, who had a team of horses. Mr. Makela planned to stay only one winter, but ended up staying for the rest of his life.

His dream came true when he took up land (south half, Lot 8, Concession V) in Louise, and started pioneering. It was not easy. The Makela family worked hard, six days a week, with Sunday reserved strictly for worship, rest, seeing neighbours and essential chores. Mr. and Mrs. Makela raised two sons and four daughters.

When the parents retired from farming, the property changed hands to a new generation of Makelas. By this time, it had expanded to include the south half of Lot 7, Concession V. Mr. and Mrs. Makela retained some of the land on which they built, did some gardening and made rustic furniture.