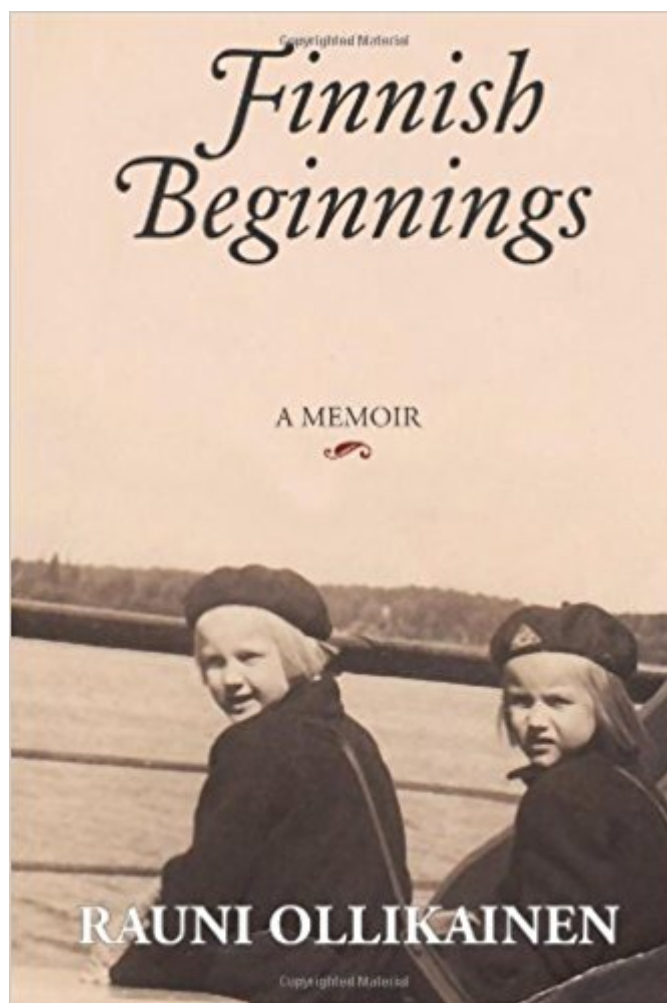


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Finnish Beginnings: Memoir - A Childhood In Finland



Synopsis

Finnish Beginnings is a memoir about the author's childhood in Finland. But it is much more than that. It is about her working class family and how they coped through four wars. It is about Finnish history and culture, told through the eyes of the author as a child, describing how the family was impacted by contemporary political and historical events. The father fought in three wars, and the author and her sister became part of one of the largest child evacuations in Europe. The last four chapters develop into an immigration story in which the family leaves Finland for Vancouver, BC, Canada in 1951, only to end up languishing in the dismal Immigration Building, described by Canadian author Pierre Berton as "the home of hope and heartbreak". In the case of the author and her family, hope triumphs over heartbreak as they build a new life in Canada.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Rauni Ollikainen spent her early childhood in Finland and immigrated to Canada with her family at age eight. She grew up on Vancouver Island, moved to California as a young adult where she attended college, then travelled back to Finland for a lengthy stay, getting in touch with her original roots. From there, she moved to London, UK, where she lived and worked for a few years. She returned to Canada settling down in Victoria B.C. where she graduated from University of Victoria, worked for the Provincial Government, and was an active member of Victoria Theatre Guild for fifteen years. She has written book reviews for the ALS Society Victoria Chapter newsletter and has had short stories published in local magazines.

I loved reading this book. It resonated with me from the very beginning. It seemed so familiar with me. I learned about Finnish history. I am planning on re-reading this and re-reading it again. I am Finnish and Native American. I read this book and there is much common history and philosophy. My Finnish family immigrated to British Columbia. This book is awesome.

This is an awesome book. And for someone who is Finnish I could relate to all the traditions the author includes. LOVE!

This is a easy reading book. It kept my interest. Very enlightening, partly because of my own Finnish background. It tells of Finnish customs, and also Rauni and her sister are about my own age.

The book is a very good about Finland and describes the life growing up in Finland. It is factual and has its humor too. A very easy read.

I was kinda looking to read a real story about families in Finland during WWII, however the author was born about the same time as I was, after WWII. The author did a good job of telling what her parents and grandmother went through. The book had a good ending when the family moved to Canada.

Some poignant insights into the life and times of a woman my wife and I once knew and called a friend . . . even though we are from the right field politically and she was firmly planted in the left field.

I thought this was going to be an interesting story of surviving WW!!; instead it was just a rather boring autobiography and didn't really give me much insight into life in Finland.

This well written historical memoir draws you in right at the beginning and keeps you all the way to the end. As a family memoir, it's full of adventure and warmth and honesty. You'll find yourself empathizing with every character as they move from the city to the countryside and finally across the ocean to Canada. As a slice of history, you'll marvel at the valour of the Finnish soldiers defending their tiny country against their giant neighbour Russia, and at the heartache of the families that had to ship their children to Sweden, and then at the courage of the immigrants that made their way to the west coast of Canada. And throughout the book you'll delight at the

adventures and misadventures of the three Ollikainen sisters.

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