

The Kuorikoski Church Builders

The Kuorikoski family of church builders emerged from the long and distinguished building tradition of the Kokkola region, which dates back to the period before the Great Northern War. The first known church builder in the family was the farmer Matti Matinpoika Kuorikoski (1741–1800). His son, Heikki Kuorikoski (1772–1847), continued his father's work, followed in turn by his six sons and eight grandsons.

The work of the Kuorikoski church builders began in 1776 with the construction of Kaustinen Church and concluded 140 years later, in 1916, with the preparation of restoration plans for Veteli Church. Over the course of those years, the family's master builders worked in more than one hundred parishes throughout Finland, constructing and restoring churches and bell towers, as well as preparing plans for new buildings and restoration projects.

Their work extended from Hanko in the south to Utsjoki in the far north, and from the Vaasa region to the shores of Lake Ladoga. In total, they built more than forty churches and over twenty bell towers.

In addition, they designed and restored more than thirty churches and bell towers. They also built houses, industrial buildings, bridges, mills and many other structures. Measured by the number of master builders in the family, the number of ecclesiastical buildings they created, the length of their active period and the geographical extent of their work, the Kuorikoski family is regarded as Finland's most significant dynasty of church builders.

Caption: Top row, from left: the brothers Jaakko Kuorikoski (1807–1880), Erkki Kuorikoski (1813–1889) and Abraham Forslund (1817–1883).

Bottom row, from left: Juho Jaakko Kuorikoski (1841–1918) and his cousins Erik Kuorikoski (1835–1901), Kari Kuorikoski (1843–1884) and Gustaf Kuorikoski (1845–1889).

Photographs courtesy of the Finnish Heritage Agency, the Ostrobothnian Museum, and the collections of Toimi Ahvenjärvi and Eija Kuorikoski.

Unveiling of the Kuorikoski Memorial, 1939.

Kaustinen Church.

The Builders of the Kuorikoski Family