



TERRACED HOUSE (stepped apartment building) 1937–1938

Alvar Aallon tie 4, Kauttua

A. Ahlström Corporation had the Terraced House built as the dwelling of senior clerical employees, and it was the first building plan ordered from Alvar Aalto for Kauttua. Aalto was one of the first architects representing the modern style, and the Terraced House represents modern functionalism quite faithfully. According to the principles of functionalism, the parts of the building should improve practicality, and all that is unnecessary is eliminated. The historical background of the Terraced House lies in Mediterranean architecture which Aalto admired and which gave him inspiration for the shape and façade of the building.

Aalto emphasized the importance of the main elements: light, air and practicality. The Terraced House has been placed on a slope, and the roofs of each apartment are terraces for the apartments above. Each apartment has its own path to the front door, and natural light gets in from the three points of the compass.

In the last master plan by Aalto there were four terraced houses all in all and they formed one part of the more comprehensive town plan of Kauttua. Even though Aalto designed the Terraced House as a standard house, only one was completed because of the wartime and the lack of high-quality building materials.

The building is called the Terraced House or the stepped apartment building. Local people tend to talk about the stepped apartment building but Aalto himself used the name Terraced House. That is why the official name of the building is the Terraced House.

A. Ahlström Corporation still owns the whole building including six rented apartments of different sizes. One apartment is a showroom maintained by the municipality of Eura and the other five apartments are still private homes.

VILLA AALTO, FEMALE CLERICAL EMPLOYEES' DORMITORY, 1942

Varkaudenmäentie 3, Kauttua

The dormitory designed for the single female clerical employees of the paper mill with 12 dwelling rooms of the same kind and a common living room with an open fireplace. The building called "Tipula" has a square floor plan and its roof is pyramid-shaped. The façade is of light horizontal boarding. The characteristic feature of the building are the round diagonal wooden beams decorating the terrace. Alvar Aalto also used these in the handrails of the Terraced House and in Villa Mairea, which was built at the same time in Noormarkku.

A. Ahlström Corporation still owns the building, and it is now used for accommodation purposes. Apart from that use, you can only view the building from the outside.



JOKISAUNA SAUNA AND LAUNDRY BUILDING FOR WORKERS, 1944–1946

Sepäntie 1, Kauttua

The sauna and laundry building built for the workers is one of the best examples of buildings from Alvar Aalto's "Karelian" period. The building emphasises the Finnish nature and design. It is made of logs, has a concrete foundation, and originally had a ridge roof covered with

peat. It is a two-storey house located on a slope, so access to both storeys takes place from ground level.

Today the building houses a café and a design shop. You can also hire the sauna for private use.

STANDARD A-HOUSES IN VARKAUDENMÄKI, 1942–1946

It is known that four of the single-family houses in the Varkaudenmäki residential area were designed by Alvar Aalto, and the others are modifications of the so-called standard A-house by architects who worked at Aalto's architects' firm. The houses were designed for industrial production, and Aalto drew his first proposals of the standard houses in 1937. The wooden houses were manufactured by A. Ahlström Corporation's factory for prefabricated units and then brought to the plot for erection. The houses in Varkaudenmäki are based on the standard AA house system, which utilised modifiable prefabricated units. The result was a residential area of similar single-family houses with varying details. The houses typically have a single storey, light horizontal tongue-and-groove cladding panels and asymmetric ridge roof, and the roof continues as a roof for the entrance.

The houses are privately owned and continue to be used for housing.



ELECTRIC HOUSES, 1944

Mäkrinteentie, Kauttua

The industrial manufacture of prefabricated houses was also applicable to the building of terraced houses, and the so-called electric houses were consequently built in Kauttua. They were based on the structures of the standard A-house and were intended as dwellings for the workers. The façade was made of the same horizontal tongue-and-groove cladding panels as in the single-family houses in Varkaudenmäki. Some changes have been made in the buildings: for example, the details of the porches are not the same as in the original plans.

The houses are reputed to have derived their name from the electric cookers installed in the houses, the first of their kind in Kauttua.

The houses are privately owned and continue to be used for housing.

CHIEF ENGINEER'S DWELLING, 1944

Lohiluoma, Kauttua

The dwelling of the chief engineer of the paper converting mill is situated in the Lohiluoma residential area intended for clerical employees. The building is a spacious two-storey wooden house beside lake Pyhäjärvi. Aalto highlighted the variation of materials and the use of natural materials in the simple building. Being close to the natural environment is an underlying theme in this building, too, because the large windows of the living room face lake Pyhäjärvi, and there is a sheltered terrace on the side of the lake.

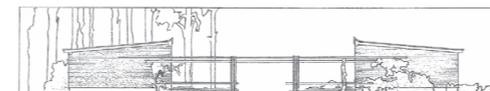
The building is privately owned and continues to be used for housing.



(DORMITORY) EXHIBITION HALL OR ENGINEERING WORKS, 1942–1943 and 1944

During the war, Aalto designed the dormitory for the women who worked at the paper converting mill near the Eura paper mill, offering temporary accommodation for 160 people. Its working title was Parthenon (Jungfrubur). The building was made of two opposite parts of red bricks, which were joined to the new engineering works a couple of years later.

The building was enlarged into an engineering works in 1944 when the extension of the paper converting



mill resulted in the building of a repair shop. The engineering works were soon called Mesuhalli (Exhibition Hall), because they were influenced by the Exhibition Hall in Helsinki, which also had a high middle space with side windows and lower wing portions. The new engineering works in Kauttua were built between two former dormitories as a higher part connecting the two former parts, and Alvar Aalto's original plan is no longer visible on the outside.



ALVAR AALTO in Kauttua



MASTER PLAN FOR KAUTTUA AND TOWN PLAN PROPOSAL

Alvar Aalto's first work in Kauttua was to draw up a master plan for the area. The plan covered the mill area and the surrounding residential area – the area which is now called Ruukinpuisto. There was a desire to cut the bonds to the past and to the old architecture of the area, and Kauttua was to become a stage for new social life and new architecture. Aalto planned the roads and buildings to adapt to the natural contours, and the buildings were designed to face south and west, offering a view over the river valley. The plan consisted of the terraced houses, blocks of flats and one-storey single-family houses. The building work started with the terraced houses, only one of which was actually completed. Of the full extensive plan, only the terraced house and the workers' sauna and laundry building were completed.

Alvar Aalto also drew many comprehensive proposals for town plans and master plans for Kauttua, none of which were completed as a whole. The plan proposal, however, specified the growing trends and the use of land of the industrial community up to the 1960s. The industrial community of Kauttua grew rapidly from the beginning of the 1940s, and the areas were segregated on the basis of various functions and social groups according to Aalto's plans.

Harry and Maire Gullichsen, the couple who ran A. Ahlström Corporation, were the driving force behind the plans.



- 1 ELECTRIC HOUSES 1944
- 2 SAUNA AND LAUNDRY BUILDING FOR WORKERS 1944–1946
- 3 TERRACED HOUSE 1937–1938
- 4 VILLA AALTO, FEMALE CLERICAL EMPLOYEES' DORMITORY 1942
- 5 STANDARD A-HOUSES 1942–1946
- 6 CHIEF ENGINEER'S DWELLING 1944

Information for visitors



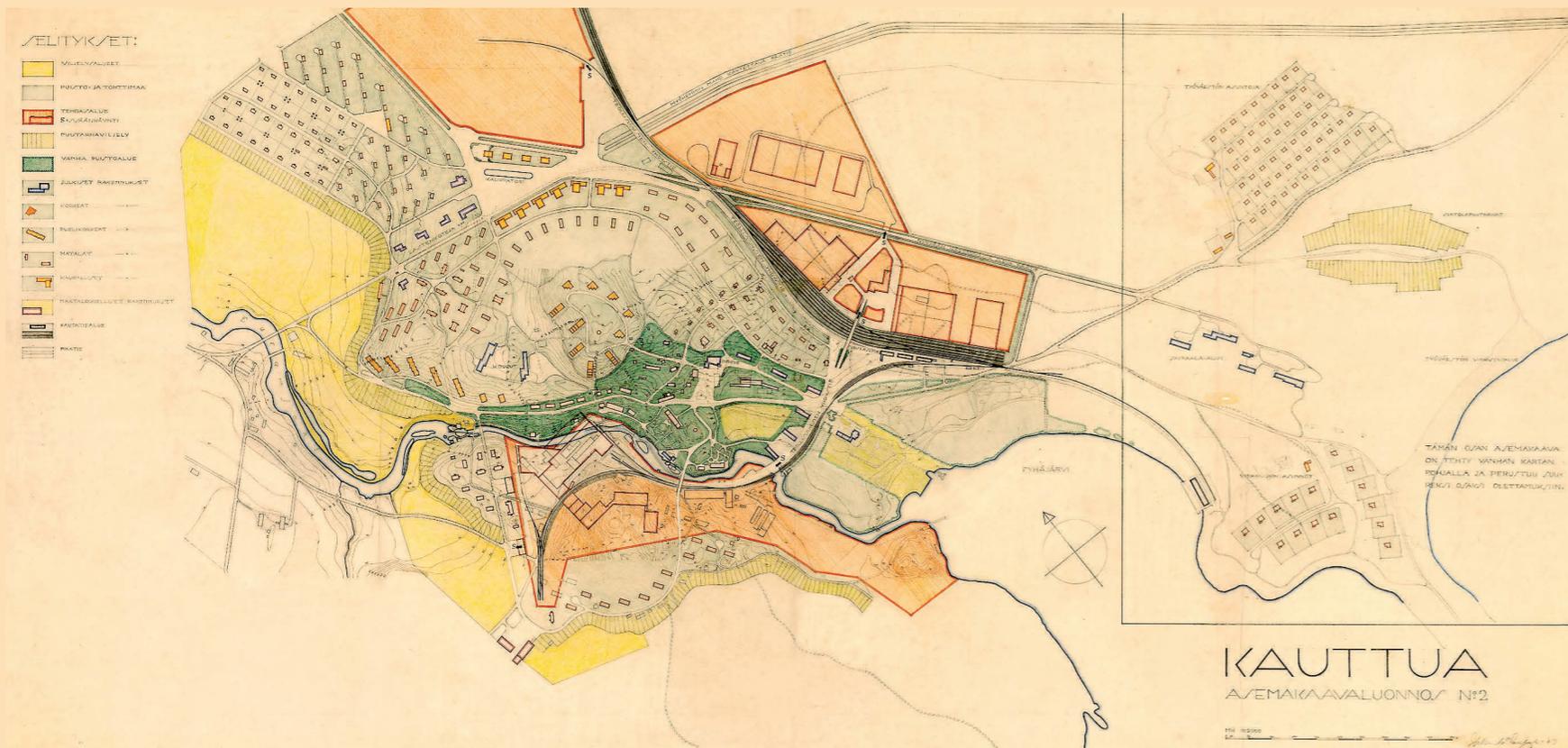
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Plans that were not carried out

- Design of standard terraced house, 1937
- Three four-family terraced houses, 1941
- Kitchen building, 1942
- Expansion of the paper mill and temporary housing, 1942
- Paper weaving mill, 1942
- Alteration work for manager's (Villa Ahlström) maintenance building, 1943
- Alteration work for office building, 1943
- Summer house, 1943
- Day nursery, 1944. This was carried out later as a design by Olav Hammarström.
- Alteration of clerical employee's dwelling Tainio, 1944

Draft of town plan number 2 from 1943

The draft was not carried out in its entirety, but it outlined the development of the industrial community and land use till the 1960s.

In the middle of the draft plan are five terraced houses in a fan-like shape. In their proximity, on top of the ridge, Aalto drew blocks of flats which would have had views to all directions.

The workers' residential areas are at the left and right upper edge. Detached houses for the clerical employees are located beside the lake and can be seen at the right bottom edge of the map.



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