

Field Notes

Wednesday, July 18, 1979
Eva Koopikka - Informant
Marina Herman/Sara Poynter - Field Workers
At Eva's House - Kearsarge, Michigan

Marina and I left around 12:30 to drive to Kearsarge to talk with and record Eva Koopikka. This was my second interview with Eva and Marina's first. As we pulled into the driveway, Eva's husband Gus was spraying around the yard for mosquitoes. He told us to go on in. Eva was on the phone but greeted us anyway and told us to come in. She cut her conversation short on our account. Marina and I decided the living room was best for recording so we set up the equipment there. Eva wasted no time but immediately began talking non-stop at first about the rocking chair I had chosen to sit on.

It was hard to keep Eva on track with what we were after. It was also very hard at some points, to even attempt to ask a question. I gave Marina some early warning about Eva's "enthusiasm" - but even our mental preparedness gave way to total frustration. Just as we were near the breaking point, I felt determined to record some songs, so I gave a last full-force effort. I'd ask a question - totally unrelated to Eva's conversation - related to our project. Eva was still more interested in talking about other things, but I remained persistent and with Marina's help we got Eva to sing. (Refer to tape). After a few songs Eva declared it was time to "wet our whistles". (There may be two sighs of relief audible on the tape at this point - one from SP and one from MLH).

We went into the kitchen and Gus joined us also (Gus came in at the last few minutes of taping also - his voice is male voice on tape). Eva showed us her pictures of her trip to Finland. I copied some of her recipes also. We had nice conversation over coffee, nisua, and jams and 1½ hours later we managed to leave - Eva still talking.

Eva has an exhausting amount of energy. My visits with her are for the most part pleasant - it's just that it's hard for me to get from her what I want. But she is very kind and hospitable - I think an informal (non-interview) visit with her would really be delightful and Eva really enjoys our visits. MLH, MG and I have come to the decision that we may have already exhausted her repertoire, but I'd like to keep in touch with Eva on a personal basis. She's very informative of her Finnish background in other respects rather than music and can be a help to me in that way.