

Contact: Felix Milanowski  
Address: Ashland, Wisconsin  
Ethnic Group: Polish  
Fieldworker: Matthew Gallmann  
Date: May 17, 1979

I called Felix from Ray Maki's house at 6:40. Felix told me he was "ready to record" and that I should "come right down". I arrived at Felix's house at about 7:30. I brought in my accordian the first time I entered the house. Felix asked if I planned to record and I told him that I had a machine in the car. He told me to go get the machine so I did.

When I came in the house he offered me a can of soda which I accepted. Then I told him that I wanted to learn how to play the button accordian. He took my accordian and played a few short tunes on it and then told me to sit down for my "first accordian lesson".

The "lesson" was awkward because Felix's accordian isn't in tune with my accordian. Neither are at standard pitch. Felix would play a tune and then I would play it back for him. We worked on one song which I neglected to learn the title of.

Then I told Felix that we should record in the living room. He said that he would practice while I set up the equipment. I recorded with a Craig deck on Shamrock tape with very poor microphones. I was in a situation where I felt that it was more important to record Felix with bad mikes than to put off the recording for another day. Felix was becoming apprehensive and I was worried about losing his trust.

The recording session went well. Felix was a little nervous about getting everything perfect on the tape. I tried to relax him by being relaxed myself.

Felix recorded tune after tune, playing through each one only once or twice. He broke down the tunes into categories of Polish hymns, English hymns,

May Celebration hymns, Polish dance songs and Oldtime dance songs.

The May Celebration hymns are songs sung in the month of May to celebrate St. Mary the Virgin. Felix learned these songs as a young man.

Felix told me during and after the recording session that he went to a school that taught English and Polish. The church he went to in Ashland had it's services in Polish. Felix is very proud of his ethnic background.

I feel it necessary to go through Felix's repertoire again on a quality machine or at least with better mikes and tape.