

TAPE INDEX

December 23, 1980

Collector: Jim Leary

Informant: Charles Karye

Marengo, Wisconsin

1. Collector's announcement.
2. Parents born in Finland. Dad born of Swedish parents near Gulf of Bothnia, but grew up in Finnish community and could speak Finnish. Mother born there too. Couple married in Finland.
3. Came over in 1899 to Negaunee, Michigan. Stayed 13 years and moved to Owen, Wisconsin in 1912.
4. Parents both good singers. Father Apostolic Lutheran hymn singer both in old country and over here. Charles picked up singing at home. Could sing many songs "by heart" at age two or 3.
5. Mother Finnish, slow to pick up English. Father could handle Swedish, Finnish, and English.
6. Family had friends in Negaunee, relatives came later. Father worked in the underground iron ore mines. Disturbed by accidents and tired of farming, CK's dad looked for land. Looked at Floodwood and New York Mills, Minnesota, but heard about the land John Pelto was promoting in Owen.
7. Dad died in December 1918 at age 40 from influenza, but family kept farm for 38 years. About 90 Finnish families there: from Minnesota, Wisconsin, DeKalb, Illinois, etc.
8. Finns around Owen "all kinds": Apostolic Lutherans, Suomi Synod, some Communists.
9. On the fundamentalist beliefs of Finnish Apostolic Lutherans. Their adherence to the bible.
10. Charles moves to near Marengo in early 1950's (his wife's home territory). Charles worked out as a carpenter for many years, was in the carpenters' union. Worked in Ashland, Duluth-Superior, Twin Cities, Chippewa Falls, "out west," etc.
11. Growing up. Eight children born. Two died at an early age, a brother and a sister. Three more boys and three girls. Charles born December 1903. One sister could sing, but the rest not too well.
12. Father said to have a beautiful voice. C reckons his is louder but not so pretty. Much singing in family while growing up. Singing was mostly in Finnish and all religious: "songs" and "hymns."

13. On the role of a hymn singer. A person who knows the most hymns and leads the singing. He also chooses the songs to be sung. Sometimes more than one in the congregation. Some selections are determined by the time of the year.
14. On the tunes: "We learnt 'em when we were young and I'll never forget 'em." Tunes aren't written down. Many of the words and tunes of the songs have been "revealed" in dreams or visions. Richard Kumpula of North York (meatcutter at the Iron River Coop, home only on Sundays and Mondays) has made songs in such a fashion.
15. Songs are mostly unaccompanied. An organ brought in once in a while when there was a wedding. CK's dad's brothers in Finland played accordion.
16. On different versions of the same tunes. A little different in different locales. Style generally demands a slow and regular tempo.
17. In church there's a special place for the singers. They're appointed at an annual meeting.
18. Dancing and music are from the devil, but moving with the spirit it comes from God: "when they're overpowered with the spirit that their sins are forgiven, then they start rejoicing."
19. On schisms among the Finnish Lutherans. Generally come when a particular speaker is favored.
20. On the minister. "He ain't trained." Works another job, supposed to be like everybody else, but called by God.
21. On the church building: "don't have to be anything fancy." Local church on County Trunk C, mile and 1/2 west from 13.
22. On structure of the service. Sermon, singing, people sharing their feelings and sometimes "rejoicing." There's often a singing session after the service. Services are last Saturday night and Sunday of every month. January 24th and 25th.
23. On CK's repertoire. He reckons he knows most of the 328 songs in his Finnish songbook (title in notes from previous session). C's wife, Arne Kovala's sister, knew all of the songs.
24. Sometimes people come from as far as Minneapolis and Cloquet for services sometime. Plenty of singing goes on then. CK reckons all have the same book as his congregation uses.
25. Dinners accompany big church gatherings. Food not necessarily Finnish, but is pot luck.
26. CK starts to be a lead hymn singer in Owen at about age 20. He visited various Finnish groups at meetings in ~~hymn~~ homes when he was out traveling. Services are published in Finnish/English newspapers of various locales.

((The Tape Ends, The Session Ends))