

Informant: George Nousianen
Ethnic Group: Finnish/Fiddle
Address: Copper Harbor, Michigan
Date: July 25, 1979
Fieldworkers: Sara Poynter
Matthew Gallmann

I had called the Nousianen household on Monday, July 23, 1979 and confirmed with George's daughter-in-law that we would be coming to Copper Harbor at 11:00 a.m. I also talked to him on Wednesday, July 25, 1979. But Sara and I tried to finish indexing the Rudy Kemppa interview and didn't get to George's until 1:00 p.m.

It was a chilly, cloudy day but as usual it was an enjoyable drive up to Copper Harbor. When we first arrived at the Standard Gas Station, that the Nousianen's own, George, Mrs. Nousianen, and George, Jr. were standing around a moped. George started the moped and George, Jr. drove off on it.

George, Mrs. Nousianen, Sara, and myself stood talking. George asked us who we had seen since we last talked with him and we told him, Rudy Kemppa. George said that Rudy was a friend of his.

Then George asked if we got to see Laurii Kiviranti and we explained that we hadn't seen him and would probably wait until next time we were in the area. George said that there is another person we should meet in the Copper Country, Mrs. "Jingo" Vachon. George said that she plays a very rare instrument known as the "swinette". When we asked George what a "swinette" was, he explained that you take three strings and attach it to a pig's tail and pluck them. We all laughed at George's little prank. He then explained that Jingo was somebody we should meet.

We all walked into the building and sat down wherever we could. What follows is an unchronological summary of important things that happened. It turned out that George hadn't touched the fiddle since we last saw him but

he had written a list of old Finnish songs that he knows. The Nousianen's had been very busy with company and the gas station. The situation was chaotic and it didn't leave much room for taking detailed notes. There was a young couple and their baby present during a large portion of our interaction with the Nousianen's. They were friends of the Nousianen's. Besides this George and Mrs. Nousianen were tending the gas station. George, Jr. eventually came back to tend the station but there was so much business that George had to help out also.

We listened to a tape that "Jingo" Vachon had recorded. We all listened closely to the tape and laughed at Jingo's humor.

George played his fiddle a little and recorded a mazurka that I could learn. He began teaching me the tune but I knew that I wouldn't remember it.

George gave me a songlist that he had compiled and told me to keep it. It seems that George has a large repertoire but the songs don't immediately surface in his mind. Thus we spent some time writing down tunes as they came back to George.

When we were leaving George told me to be sure and bring Sara back with me if we came back in September.