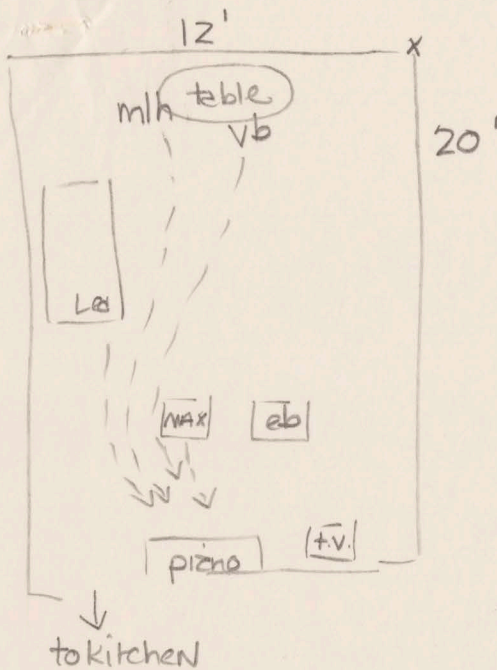


June 13, 1979

Collector: Marina L. Herman

Informant: Verna Bloomquist



MLH met VB before choir practice briefly to look at a few old Norwegian songbooks VB's mother and aunt gave her. (She seemed excited.)

After choir practice (around 7:30), MLH drove BV to her house. VB lives at 29 West 3rd Street, Washburn, just off Washington Avenue. As we walked toward the house, she pointed out her flower garden and starter plants for the vegetable garden. They had leftover plants, so offered to give MLH peppers and tomatoes. A group of lilac bushes lined the pathway to the back door. We walked in through the kitchen, then into the living room. VB's husband Elmer was sitting in a easy chair in front of the television. VB's Aunt Lea (her mother's sister) and AL's husband Max (a Scottish immigrant) were also watching television. When we came into the room, VB introduced MLH to them all, then took MLH over to the table in the back of the room where she had various Norwegian songbooks and hymnals laid out. VB then showed me her grandmother's storybook (for panmanship practice). It was in Norwegian. VB explained to AL my interest in Norwegian old songs and the culture. VB began reading it, then asked AL to help out. They read for awhile and roughly translated it.

I asked about the songbooks and if VB could remember any songs. VB said she was tired, but began singing from the songbooks. AL joined in after a few minutes. They both held the book, reading and singing along. I asked if I could get the tape recorder, but VB said she was too tired tonight. She suggested that I come some other time.

I was about to leave when VB suggested I come over to the piano to sing. Max was enticed by Verna to play the piano. He plays old Scottish tunes by ear (does not read music). After 5-10 minutes, Max got up. Verna coaxed Lea to sit down and play some songs. Lea said she didn't remember anything and her playing was quite shakey. Verna gave her some old sheet music to play - 1920's music, some songs her mother taught her. Lea and Verna sang together - Verna putting a harmony to it. Verna then asked Lea to play a few rag-time songs. Lea was hesitant, and warmed up on the piano. Within a few minutes, her pace picked up and she played two or three pieces. (Did not give names).

Verna sat down at the piano next. She, too, played by ear, picking out the tune and putting bass clef chords and

and rhythms to it. Verna said each song she sings reminds her of different friends or relatives, or different life stories. She repeated this philosophy with each song.

The music dwindled around 9 p.m. Lea and Max looked tired, Lea got up from the piano bench to go back to the couch to watch TV. Verna couldn't think of any more songs off-hand. I suggested that I could call her some other time and that I would talk to her soon about her performance at Bayfield Heritage Days.

On our way out, she took me to their shed and gave me some leftover tomato and pepper plants from their garden. She walked me to the car and said thanks for stopping over. I drove off at 9:15 p.m.