

Informant: Ray Maki
Ethnic Group: Finnish/button accordian
Address: Washburn, Wisconsin
Date: August 15, 1979
Fieldworker: Matthew Gallmann

I had called Ray on the 14th and I was going to go see him then but I had some complications involving my car and so we put it off until the 15th. I told Ray that I would arrive about 6:00 p.m. As it turned out I arrived at his house at around 6:30.

I went up to his house with my button accordian and Ray answered the door. He was the only one around at the time. I asked Ray what he's been up to and he said that he's busy working all the time. He told me that he built the new wood shed outside. I had neglected to notice this so he took me out and showed me the shed which he had made from mostly scraps. I explained to him that I had been traveling around the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Further, I told him that I met some button accordian players up there and had learned some new songs. Ray asked me to play these new songs. I played "Raddiko" and "Mailmen Matti" for him and he was pleased.

By the time I finished playing "Mailmen Matti" Vera and her mother were heading into the room. I was a little confused during this situation but I think that they were coming to hear me play. Ray told them that I was finished playing and so they went back into the other part of the house.

Then Vera came back into the kitchen and began making coffee. She left the room bringing cake and coffee for her and her mother.

Ray picked up his button accordian and began to play a tune which sounded familiar to me. I said that I should go get my recording equipment and Ray agreed.

I set up the equipment while Ray played his button accordian.

During the recording session Ray kept asking if the recording machine

"heard" what he just played. Ray wasn't very talkative about biographical kinds of things. I think that he felt like he had to fill the tape with music. I tried several times to coax him along and get him to talk but it never seemed to work.

At one point in the interview Vera came into the room and announced that it was coffee time. Ray and I advanced to the table. I was told to sit at the place that had a piece of cake waiting.

Ray and I drank coffee and talked for a little while. I asked him about the "Oulu Summerfest". Ray said that everything had gone up in price yet there weren't many performers there. I think that he felt the Summerfest was much better in past years. He showed me a picture of the Oulu school where the celebration was held. Ray also showed me a carved wood accordian player that he acquired at the festival.

We got back to do some more recording and taped a few more songs. At this point I used the crystal signal on the Nagra II machine I was using to show the beginning of this second part.

After the second part of the taping session we went up to Ray's garage to look for some tapes he thought I might be able to use. We found the tapes and a rain jacket that Ray gave me. The tapes were older tapes, some acetate, with country western music on them.

After we looked around the yard and talked a little bit we went back into the house and I began to pack up my equipment. Ray said that I should come over some time so I could go out to his "wilderness cabin" with him. It sounds like a good idea to me and I was flattered that Ray invited me.

I said goodbye to Vera and Ray and departed for Ashland.