

TAPE INDEX

January 13, 1981

Collectors: Jim Leary and Matt Gallman  
Informants: Eino and Helvi Okkonen,  
Bill Hendrickson  
Herbster, Wisconsin

1. Bill H. talks about how some say his Dad was born in Sweden, but he reckons it was Finland.
2. Collector's announcement.
3. Bill talks about his Dad's birth in Finland, his work amongst reindeer in Lappland, on the fishing boats in Norway, then to Michigan where he made firewood, and to the mines in Ely, Minnesota, and finally to Bark Point.
4. Bill had three older sisters, he was the first born on Bark Point (1901), then two more sisters were born. Dad worked loading lumber at Corny, in the lumbercamps, farming, and fishing with gill nets and set hooks.
5. Bill fished with Dad from early teens til 1928, then bought a ~~store~~ store in Herbster.
6. Dad palyed mouth organ and "could sing real good." Bill began with mouth organ, Dad offered to buy him a "two row 'cordeen." Bought a later accordeon along with Eino Okkenen from a touring musician. A piano acc., this was in the 20's.
7. Eino's folks also from Finland. Came to Ely, Dad worked in woods and mines, then came to Bark Point by boat. Two girls and a boy when they arrived.
8. E. born in 1903, started to fish with father and brother in teens. Fished herring in spring and fall with set hooks. Also had strawberries, few cows, dad worked on the town roads.
9. 1930 E. built a 40 ft. fish boat with brother and brother-in-law; fished out of Corny until 1952. Then Eino worked on the ore boat until 1967; worked fishing out of Crescent City, Ca. in the winter, crab fishing with his nephew.
10. E had a sister who was good with a mouth organ. Learned to play the "two row 'cordeen" by fooling around with Bill Hendrickson. They played by ear.
11. Helvi Okkonen (nae Winttuuri) grew up in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, east of Boston. Family returned to Finland in 1912, when she was one; then returned to Mass. in early 20's, coming to Herbster in 1922.
12. Helvi and her sister Aili used to sing in Finnish programs; their mother was a good singer and could play a little piano by ear. Her dad played accordion a little. H. mentions her bother Olavi and how he played mouth organ from the time he was little. He played violin and accordion a little too.
13. On Bark Point's Finnish Hall: its construction, layout, the dances.

14. Hall built around 1920. Bill and Eino would play, one at a time, trading off. They learned many tunes from records; many purchased in Duluth.
  15. Musicians came from Minnesota, Michigan and elsewhere. Ted Phillips from Herbster played modern pieces on the piano there according to sheet music. Viola Turpeinen played there, also Tuura Liho (sp?) from Duluth. Viola T. was recognized as the best player. Bill liked her because she didn't have a lot of backup players "drowning out her music."
  16. Everybody would come to the dances (from Port Wing and Corny), regardless of ethnicity. A "darn good lunch room" was in a basement under the stage. They used to play basketball in the hall.
  17. On Bill and Eino's strategy for playing a set. Probably waltz, then two step, or polka . . . they had a lot of squaredances. They not only played Finnish tunes, but other popular ones. (Helvi is showing Matt pictures from her family album).
  18. Besides the Finnish Hall there was a community hall and a place called Melody Garden where ~~Bill & Eino~~ Ted Phillips played; there was also a fancy fiddling Irishman named Dan Dailey (Daley?).
  19. All the kids spoke only Finnish while growing up.
  20. Bill comments on his current piano accordion, bought in the 40's. Eino quit playing around then.
  21. B.H. talks about playing again after a long layoff, he comments on his efforts to reclaim his repertoire. E.O. sings a snatch of the old favorite "MaillmanMatti."
  22. We discuss a picture of the Finn Hall and other photos.
- (Tape one ends)
- The next tape consists of Bill's playing on piano accordion.
23. "Kauhavan Polka."
  24. "Tiskarin Polka."
  25. The Miller's Song (Finnish).
  26. "Kerenski."
  27. "Ten Fingers" (Also Finnish).
  28. "Kotilan Kulias Tansit."
  29. "Nikköina."
  30. A Finnish Schottische, Bill couldn't recall the title.
  31. "Ei Kukaan Minaa Lemikan" (these are the words, Bill forgot title).

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32. "En Mina Aitilan Kiusulaan" (these are the first words, Bill forgot the title).
33. "Red Wing."