About the 1972–1973 Fieldwork in Pennsylvania

The idea to document the vanishing unique culture of Lithuanian coal miners in Pennsylvania was first proposed by my father, emigre poet Kazys Bradūnas. Working as the editor of the cultural supplement of the American-Lithuanian newspaper *Draugas*, he wrote that the Lithuanian-American churches, schools, and Lithuanian cemetery monuments which were already disappearing, should be photographed immediately. It was equally important to record people's memories, lest they also remain undocumented. He suggested that Algimantas Kezys, the renowned photographer and founder of the Lithuanian Photo Archive, could lead such an expedition.

Elena Bradūnas with the singers Prane Pikūniene and Anele Ramyliene. Photo by Marc PoKempner, PAL, p. 198.

In 1972, A. Kezys made plans for the venture and invited the journalist Vladas Būtėnas to supplement the visual documentary materials with written accounts of local histories and conversations with Lithuanian immigrants or their descendants who still lived there. I asked to be included in the expedition to record and document folklore, especially songs. At that time I was studying for an M.A. degree in Folklore at the University of California and my professors encouraged me to go there to do my fieldwork. The primary patron of the expedition was the long-serving emeritus pastor of the St. George parish of Shenandoah, Monsignor Juozas Karalius. He, together with the current parish pastor, Rev. Juozas Neverauskas welcomed and housed us on the church premises. The parish served as a base from which we traveled daily to surrounding areas to gather our data. As V. Būtėnas recalls:

> We were not office or drawing-room folks but went everywhere where life was brimming and where the past was still breathing. [...] Once we stepped out of the rectories or convents we weren't afraid of swinging by even the grungiest saloons or clubs because we knew that one could hear stories there too. Elena Bradūnas, especially, tried to organize singing sessions and talks in which she shared details about Lithuania's history with the local Lithuanian community. In this way, the locals started to accept us as their own and not as some honored guests who required officiality and respect (PAL, p. 333).

People welcomed us warmly with great hospitality because they appreciated our desire to document the churches, rectories, and schools of the first immigrants, anything that marked a Lithuanian presence there. They were not afraid to disclose the strained relations among their own various factions in the past and were pleased that the histories of the "Lithuanian colonies" will be recorded. The aim of our expedition was to document the history, everyday life, and fate of the Lithuanian immigrants who arrived at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries fleeing conscription into the Tsarist army and a life of hardship in the homeland. Many of them wound up in Pennsylvania where coal miners were needed to fuel America's growing industries. We did not meet many living coal miners. The majority of our informants were elderly women who were in their eighties. They had arrived before World War I when they were around eighteen years old, invited by their brothers who had immigrated earlier and who often arranged marriages between their sisters and their friends. At the time of our visit, these men were already deceased, so it was their widows who recounted the miners' stories and told us of their difficult work. Many of them had never learned English and spoke in a colorful and rich Lithuanian dialect. Those grannies were also the singers whom I recorded.

We also gathered information from the children of those first immigrants who considered themselves to be second-generation Lithuanians. The majority of them had difficulty speaking Lithuanian but, nevertheless, were very proud of their heritage. We often heard them say "I'm Lithuanian and proud of it". They respected their parents and the efforts they had made to settle in a foreign land. The buildings that we visited as well as the hymn books we found in churches, the printed books and newspapers scattered in the attics of abandoned publishing houses, old photographs, as well as church and school records all attested to the love that the first immigrants felt for their homeland, language, and traditions. In 1973 the expedition returned once more to the same area, this time with extra students who joined the group – Raimundas Lapas and my brother, Jurgis Bradūnas. V. Būtėnas described the final expedition thus:

> These wonderful Lithuanian students formed a small representational ensemble that captured the hearts of the locals. Their songs, their ease with both the Lithuanian and English languages, their outgoing and vivacious personalities attracted all local people who considered themselves Lithuanian but who had not had the opportunity to meet such lively Lithuanian youngsters. [...] After a splendid farewell party in the hall of the St. George parish of Shenandoah where Lithuanian songs and conversations resounded almost until morning, we departed back West with material gathered over the course of two years; Rev. A. Kezys had taken around 2000 photographs and colored slides, E. Bradūnas had gathered armfuls of new folklore material, R. Lapas had a box of recordings and archival material fit for a museum, and I had several hundred pages of notes, recordings on magnetic tapes, and countless impressions that would last for many years to come (PAL, p. 333–334).

We presented the documented heritage of the Lithuanian communities to the public in a well-illustrated book *Pennsylvanijos angliakasių Lietuva* [Lithuania in the Coal Mines of Pennsylvania] (1977). This large-format album includes many documentary photographs and a thorough account of the history of thirteen Lithuanian parishes. I contributed a chapter with photographs of the people I visited and their autobiographical narratives. From the material recorded in 1972, I compiled a collection of 247 songs (the material gathered later has not been fully processed and remains in my personal archive). I drew on the song recordings and conversations with singers for my M.A. thesis at the University of California (1973), and for further coursework at Indiana University (1975). While visiting Lithuania in 1992, I transferred copies of this material to the Lithuanian Folklore Archives at the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore (collection LTR 6071 and cassettes LTRF k 1–6). Responding to the public interest, I wrote an article *Liaudies dainos likimas Pensilvanijos kalnuose* [The Fate of the Folk Song in the Mountains of Pennsylvania] for the journal *Liaudies kultūra* [Folk Culture] (1992) which was later reprinted in the compilation *Aš išdainavau visas daineles* [I have sung out all my songs] (1997). I am pleased that the songs and stories I recorded from the old immigrant diaspora are still relevant, and that my collection is once again of interest to folklorists. I hope listeners will enjoy hearing the voices of the immigrants singing their songs brought over from Lithuania more than a century ago.

Elena Bradūnas-Aglinskas

NOTES ABOUT SINGERS

Petronė Jurgšėnas (nee Krėvėnas) / Petronė Krėvėnaitė-Jurgšėnienė, b. 1884, Padvaronis village, parish of Daugšis, District of Suvalkai. Immigrated to the U.S. in 1902.

Mrs. Jurgšėnas was married in Lithuania at the age of seventeen and one year later came to America together with her husband. They settled in Shenandoah, where they both had relatives who had immigrated earlier. Her husband died in the 1940s from black lung asthma, and ever since then, Mrs. Jurgšėnas has lived with her daughter, Lily Roberts. Mrs. Jurgšėnas also had a son who lived in Shenandoah, and it was through him that I was introduced to her.

Although Mrs. Jurgšėnas had spent seventy years in America, she did not understand or speak any English. All my conversations with her were conducted in Lithuanian. Even her daughter and son, who spoke English among themselves and to me, always addressed their mother only in Lithuanian.

Mrs. Jurgšėnas claimed that she knew "hundreds of songs" and that she remembered them best when she was by herself, usually when lying in bed and unable to sleep. She explained that the presence of other people hindered her memory, and although I returned for several visits, she could only remember thirteen songs. When her daughter or son were present, they never sang along with her. Her son had initially told me that he did not think that she even knew any songs, thus indicating that she probably never sang to her children even when they were young.

Mrs. Jurgšėnas explained that when she first came to Shenandoah, there were many people who sang at picnics and parties, and that she always sang along with them: "But that was long ago. Now these customs are forgotten and I sing only to myself."

Most of her songs she said she had learned while still in Lithuania. Her memory, indeed, was a lot sharper about incidents from her youth. She even remembered several children's rhymes, folk remedies, beliefs, and superstitions – all of which she had learned when she was still a child.

Mrs. Jurgšėnas seemed to be quite aware of the content of the songs that she sang, usually following each one with some explanation about the meaning of the text, especially if it seemed to be somewhat ambiguous. After each song, she would either recite the words over again, as if to clearly emphasize the meaning, or simply paraphrase it in her own words.

For her 88 years of age she had a very keen mind, and always wanted to know about everything that was going on around her. She talked a great deal about various current news events, obviously reported to her by her children, and she always expressed her own opinions about them. For example, "I don't believe anything on television – it always lies. They even show people who are supposed to be dead. Like the President (re. Wallace) who was shot one day and then alive and healthy again in the evening." That Mrs. Jurgšėnas had a unique and independent way of thinking can best be exemplified by her statement on religion: "No one knows where God is. Look, they even shot people to the moon to look for Him. And did they find Him there? No. So why should I worry about looking for Him" (LTR 6071/IV/p.4-5).

> Singer's narrative [Mrs. Jurgšėnas]: *I am from Starapole. [...] When I immigrated from Padvaronys village, I wasn't yet seventeen, and I was seven when I moved from Starapole. We were from Daukšiai parish. You wouldn't believe how beautiful it was there. [...]*

My husband served in the war, and when he came home, he received a thousand from his brother, so we departed. We traveled through Antwerp. Everything was paid for all the way to Shenandoah. We got off in Philadelphia. It was July 4th, I remember. You should have seen it. I really thought I was in heaven. Music bands playing all night long. Stars shot and fell all over the city. I said to myself – this is heaven – better than what people had said about America. And then we took the train to Shenandoah. Oh my God, when we got here I thought – this is hell. Everything was black and dingy. You couldn't see the windows – the curtains were black. The faces of the men coming home from work – so black you couldn't recognize them. Oh yes, It was hell, and there were worse times to come.

Here, children started to work when they were just nine years old. They would carry lunch to the mines. [...] People would keep cows, pigs, ducks, geese and goats. They would graze them in the hills. When I was just a "greenhorn" here, there were many of us "greenhorns." So we all were singers. But those who grew up here don't sing anymore. [...] When I am lyingin bed, then I remember all the songs. Hundreds of them. I mean, we have some really beautiful songs (PAL, p. 202).

Peter Zatovasky/ Petras Zataveckas, b. 1903, Krikštėnai village, parish of Krokulis, district of Suvalkai. Immigrated to the U.S. in 1914.

Mr. Zataveckas came to Shenandoah when he was eleven, together with his mother and two sisters. His father had immigrated previously, but "he was nothing to be proud of." His mother died in 1917 and the children were raised by other families. Peter dropped out of school at an early age and went to work in the breakers, sifting coal from the slate. All his life he worked in the mines, a total of 38 years of labor. He was now retired, living with his wife and collecting black lung asthma pension. He was hesitant about having his singing recorded and did not want to be photographed. He finally agreed to sing, but stipulated that his identity never be published in regard to the sung portions of the tapes, while he or his wife were still alive. He explained that his manner of singing (which was quite powerful) might give rise to some suspicion as to the severity of his "asthma".

Mr. Zataveckas was married to a Lithuanian, but they spoke only in English to each other, occasionally resorting to Lithuanian words and phrases. With me, Mr. Zataveckas spoke primarily in English, but sometimes also in Lithuanian, especially in response to some of my questions addressed in Lithuanian.

Mr. Zataveckas said that he could remember many Lithuanian songs if he could sing along with others. On his own, he remembered only two Lithuanian songs and two others which I started and he joined in. His memory served him better with regard to English songs. For some he used an old songbook to which he occasionally referred for the words. Others he sang from memory, saying that he had learned them from records, radio, and other men who worked with him in the mines.

Mr. Zataveckas performed his songs with great enthusiasm and some flair for showmanship. He intentionally sang with a particular vibrato in his voice and always ended a song by slowing down the rhythm and slurring the last note. This manner of performance could have very well been influenced by the singing style of some popular recording stars of the 1930s. I suspect that Mr. Zataveckas copied this style because it was rather unusual among the "regular" singers of that area, and it tended to set him apart as a "special" singer. When he performed at the local Lith's Club (basically a tavern for men of Lithuanian descent) the other men who were present stopped their conversations and listened

attentively. A round of applause followed and it was obvious that Mr. Zataveckas was greatly pleased. He commented that he did not like to sing "like all the other drunks," and wanted to be sure that others could hear and appreciate his songs. He explained that if he did not try to sing "just a little bit differently, others drown you out." It seemed that his dramatic performance was intended specifically to attract the attention of an audience.

Mr. Zataveckas claimed that when he was younger, he sang more frequently with the "boys" at the club and at various social gatherings. His wife commented that he rarely sang at home, except when he was drunk. Mr. Zataveckas, however, mentioned that he would always sing the song entitled "A Dream of a Miner's Child" to his little daughter, although she said he never sang Lithuanian songs to his children (LTR 6071/IV/p. 20-21).

Singer's narrative [Zataveckas]: *I was eleven years old when I came to America. Boy, was that a difficult time! [...] They were pretty good at fixing up our birth dates so that we'd be pulled out of school and sent to the mines to work. You had to be sixteen to work. Our parents didn't know how old we were. So they thought – might as well let them be sixteen, that way they will be able to work. [...] I was twelve years old the first time I went to the mines. It was so cold down there that I was shivering. I shook from fear as well. It was dark everywhere, pitch black. Sometimes there would be an explosion beneath the mountain and everything would shake, and rats would come running out of all the holes. We children used to try to catch and kill them. That was our only game. When I worked in the mines, I barely saw the sun. I would descend early in the morning, and return home only after dark. I got fifty cents for the week* (PAL, p. 196).

I learned songs from my mother's boarders. I didn't know how to read or write then. I also bought Lithuanian records, but my sister threw them out already (PAL, p. 196).

Frances Pikūnas, nee Stankevičius / Pranė Stankevičiūtė Pikūnienė, b. 1891, village of Bernotiškis, parish of Udrija, district of Suvalkai. Immigrated to the U.S. in 1909.

Nellie Raymond (Ramyla), nee Zakevičius/ Anelė Zakevičiūtė Ramylienė, b. 1896, village of Liuklingenai, parish of Kriokialaukis, district of Suvalkai. Immigrated to the U.S. in 1911.

Two cousins, Mrs. Pikūnas and Mrs. Ramyla, were the most prolific of my informants. When they were still in their teens, they were sent for by their older brothers who had come to Shenandoah a few years before them, fleeing conscription into the Russian Army. Soon after their arrival the ladies were married to their brothers' "best buddies" (an arrangement which seemed to have been quite common at that time). They both explained how disappointed they were with this "land of gold", and how much they had often wished to return to Lithuania. But once married and with a family, this dream became impossible. Their husbands worked in the mines and died from black lung asthma in ca 1940's-1950's. Mrs. Pikūnas now lived with her daughter, Anna Fore, and Mrs. Ramyla lived by herself, her son having moved to Philadelphia, and her daughter to Florida. The last three weeks of my stay in Shenandoah I lived with Mrs. Ramyla and recorded her accounts and reminiscences about the general history and ways of life of the Lithuanian immigrants in Shenandoah. Neither of these women spoke English. Mrs. Fore, Mrs. Pikūnas's daughter, conversed with me in English, but addressed her mother only in Lithuanian.

Both ladies were present at the recording sessions and most of the songs they sang together. Mrs. Pikūnas often initiated the songs, and Mrs. Ramyla joined in, sometimes

singing in unison and sometimes in harmony (usually in major thirds). Some songs were performed by them individually.

Mrs. Pikūnas explained that she had always loved songs and still sings by herself so as to make sure her memory is still functioning. Mrs. Ramyla said that she often thinks of songs before going to sleep. Both of them remembered times when songs were always sung at weddings and various social gatherings. Mrs. Pikūnas said that even in more recent times, when singing was supposedly "no longer in fashion," she would still start songs at weddings and anniversary parties, and other people would come to her table to listen. Even if the younger people would tell her ahead of time not to sing, she claimed that she never paid much attention to them, explaining, "When I want to, I sing and no one can stop me!" She was a very forceful person, quite independent and active (well demonstrated by the fact that she wallpapered rooms when she was 74). Although she had taught herself to read and write, she disclaimed ever having seen any Lithuanian songs in print. Mrs. Ramyla, like most of my other informants, was illiterate.

Mrs. Pikūnas would start the songs in a rather fast tempo and often proceeded to the next stanza without repeating the last lines. Mrs. Ramyla constantly objected saying that the songs were being sung too fast, and that they always sound much better when the last lines are sung twice. In general, the two ladies sang one song after another, rarely even taking time out to comment on them, except to say, "Oh, this was so and so's song, when she/he was still alive." Mrs. Pikūnas, especially, had a very keen mind and always remembered whether a song had already been sung, even though the sessions were several days apart.

Mrs. Pikūnas' daughter was present at several of the sessions but, except for a few songs, she usually did not sing along with the other two women. Those songs which she did sing she claimed to have learned in the church choir.

I also recorded some folk remedies, beliefs, riddles and short narratives which the women could remember, but compared to their repertoire of songs, these other entries were very meager. Mrs. Pikūnas explained that she never cared very much for either stories or riddles, but had always loved songs, and therefore, could remember them much more easily.

Altogether, the two women sang over 120 songs and claimed that if given more time, they could still remember many more (LTR 6071/ V/ p. 199-201).

> Singer's narrative [Mrs. Pikūnas]: *Not long ago I attended a wedding. Now the young people say that it's no longer in fashion to sing. But I say - I'm going to sing. And when I sang, everyone gathered by my table and kept asking me to keep on singing. Long ago the weddings were really something - they lasted a whole week. Now - it's only for one day* (PAL, p. 197)

> *When I immigrated, I lived in Shenandoah, then later, spent 37 years in Connerton. After that I returned to Shenandoah, and will maybe die here. [...] Now it is fine here, but there were rough times. There was no electricity or water, we washed clothes with our hands…and those clothes were always oily. [...] But there was one positive thing – baking bread in an outdoor oven. So at least we had tasty bread. The flour was from a heavy grain, and you mixed it with rye. The kids would come running asking for that black "cake". Or when I would make potato-stuffed sausages, then the Irish kids would come running to ask for some* (PAL, p. 197)

I got nothing against the Church. It's the priests' job. They were educated - it's their job. But they shouldn't tell me anything. I converse well with the priests. Anyone can come to our home, even the priests when they do the Christmas visitations. I think of God as Nature that knows everything. Trees, flowers, berries - no one plants them. God grows them. All my life I'm grateful to Him for my health, but everything else we do ourselves, He only helps us. [...] Everything that is alive on this earth has its own task. All birds, and animals, and insects – all have their work. Look at what kind of a home a spider makes. And bees - such small insects build amazing homes. And ants too. All have their work and God only helps them (PAL, p. 198–199).

I learned to read in Lithuania. I would write to my parents, so they were happy. [...] I was pretty smart, had a good head on my shoulders. [...] I remember everything from my childhood very well. It's as if I can see those villages and woods. But now I have forgotten a lot. When you're young, you don't have other work on your mind. But when you grow up, then your mind gets cluttered with all kinds of nonsense – and that's why you forget a lot (PAL, p. 199).

Singer's narrative [Mrs. Ramyla]: *My older brother came to America first when he was fleeing conscription into the Tsar's army. He would write to me such beautiful letters, describing how wonderful everything is there, and that I could also come and help him keep up the household. He said that there are lots of rooms in the house, and that he needs help. He sent me a "ship card," and I went. I was sixteen at the time – young, strong and beautiful. That house, where my brother lived, was indeed huge, but he was just a boarder in it, and plenty of other men lived with him.*

One of these men was his friend, and the day after I arrived, my brother placed a bottle on the table and told me to make the acquaintance of my future husband! I didn't want to marry him, and wept all night, but there was nothing I could do about it. After a few months my husband sent a "ship card" to his own sister who also came and married my brother. [...] There were many young, single men, but very few young women (Bradunas 1975, p. 7).

Eugene Kalėda/ Eugenijus Kalėda, b. 1932, William Penn Patch, Pennsylvania

Eugene Kalėda lived in William Penn Patch which was about a half a mile from Shenandoah. He was a bachelor, 40 years old, and lived alone in the family house after his parents had died and his brothers and sisters moved away. Although he had a disability, he could still walk with some difficulty. He had a very cheerful disposition and was very excited about having his singing recorded.

During our first session he brought out various Lithuanian song books and records and proceeded to flip through them singing occasional stanzas from the books and brief excerpts from the records. Some songs he said he had learned from the records, others – while singing with the Lithuanian church choir, still others – from older people at weddings and picnics. Most of the songs, however, he said he had learned from his parents. He explained: "I was the youngest in my family and because of my legs I couldn't go out and run around with the other kids. So most of the time I stayed at home. Mom sang a lot and I would listen and learn. I always loved songs." Some of the songs which his mother had sung he had written out in a notebook, which also contained many other songs copied from various

books. He explained that his parents were very proud of being Lithuanian, and that he was the apple of his father's eye because he spoke and sang in Lithuanian.

Eugene's father had come to Shenandoah at the age of eighteen, and his mother had immigrated with her family when she was only five. Eugene explained that although his mother had learned English quite well, the family spoke only Lithuanian at home. This was because of his grandmother, who could not understand English, and also because the family was very conscious of their ethnic identity.

Eugene expressed himself very well in Lithuanian and made only a few pronunciation errors for which he constantly apologized. He explained that there were few people with whom he could practice his Lithuanian, and therefore, his knowledge of the language has somewhat deteriorated. When speaking to me he would begin a sentence in Lithuanian and then shift to English or vice versa, an interesting result of bilingualism which is also quite prevalent among the children of post World War II refugees. I have transcribed his songs exactly the way he pronounced the words, not attempting to correct the errors.

Although Eugene explained that he was very fond of most of the Lithuanian songs, he explained that he especially liked "those tear-jerky ones." Quite consistently, most of the songs which he sang from memory were about orphans, sad and lonely lovers, and a nostalgic longing for the homeland. The sad love songs were his special favorites and in his notebook he had even included Lithuanian translations of "When it's Springtime in the Rockies" and "Among My Souvenirs." He explained that he knew some other similar popular songs in English but did not like them as much as the Lithuanian ones. He commented that, in general, Lithuanian songs would seem very boring if the words were not understood. He also believed that "Lithuanians ruin their songs by always repeating so much." This attitude was evidenced by his performance of the songs, since he rarely repeated the last lines of a verse, although he was aware that they were usually sung twice.

Eugene Kalėda was the youngest of my informants and the only one of his age group who knew so many songs. Most of the other second generation Lithuanians whom I met, knew no more than one or two stanzas of a song. Many of them, however, commented that they enjoyed listening to Lithuanian songs and fondly remembered how their mothers used to sing. Thus, Eugene Kalėda could be considered a unique case among the second generation of Lithuanian immigrants. This may have been partially due to his physical condition and partially due to his great love of singing, which itself may very well have been fostered by his physical disability..

Eugene explained that in earlier times he performed at various picnics and social gatherings much more frequently than at the present. He claimed that now people only liked to listen to him, without making an effort to learn the songs themselves and sing along with him. I witnessed one Sunday picnic at which Eugene was present. He sang quite rapidly without repeating the last lines, and although the people could hum along, they were unable to match his quick tempo and sing the words with him. On the other hand, when I sang several songs, intentionally slowing down the rhythm, enunciating clearly, and always repeating the final lines of a verse, many of those present joined in singing the refrains. Eugene commented that in the past, when the older people would attend such affairs there was more group singing. Recently however, fewer older people frequent such events, and even when they do, they rarely sing because – as Eugene and others have observed – "it is no longer in fashion to do so."

Eugene did not belong to the Lithuanian Men's Club and was the only male employee in a sewing factory in Shenandoah. This explains, as others have pointed out, why Eugene usually associates with women at various social gatherings. At the picnic, which I attended, it was primarily the women who enjoyed and encouraged his singing (LTR 6071/ IV/ p.51-53).

Singer's narrative [Mr. E. Kalėda]: *I was born in America. My father was very pleased when I spoke Lithunaian. I was his real favorite. [...] Younger Lithuanians no longer keep the traditions, but I keep them. I always prepare Kūčias (ed. Christmas eve sacred dinner). My sister comes over and we celebrate it the way we did when we were kids. My father sang a lot, but he never danced. I asked him – why don't you dance? He answered – you won't earn your bread by dancing. He belonged to a fraternity and when someone died, they would go to the house with kantičkas (hymn book) and sing hymns through the night* (PAL, p. 208-209).

My grandfather was a shoe maker. [...] He came to America several times, and would always leave grandmother behind. [...] When everyone would go to the place where they received letters from America, everyone would rejoice and sing because they would receive money in the mail, but my grandmother cried, because he never sent her any. There were four children. [...] Finally she came to America as well. Then they had seven children. He sent her the "ship card". [...] Mom was just five years old when she came over with grandmother. Her only memory was of the journey by boat, when an old Jewish man gave her milk to drink from an aluminum cup. She remembered that he had a very big beard (PAL, p. 208).

Mary Pieri/ Marija Pieri b. ?, Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania.

Mary Pieri was born in Mount Carmel and has lived there all her life. She was married to an Italian, but considered herself "the most patriotic Lithuanian in all of Pennsylvania." She spoke only in Lithuanian with her 90-year-old mother, who had immigrated to the States in the early 1900s and now lived with her daughter. She also spoke Lithuanian with me, a rather rare exception to most of the second-generation Lithuanians whom I met there. She was very concerned that the Lithuanian parish retain some of its ethnic identity even though the present pastor was Irish. Several years ago she had organized a petition so that the Lithuanian flag would not be removed from the altar, and occasionally she taught the parish school children some Lithuanian songs and dances. She was an active organizer of the annual Lithuanian Day Picnic in Lakewood Park and was proud of being "the Lithuanian Tiger," a name given to her by the Irish pastor.

She sang several songs which she said she had learned while singing in the parish choir; others she claimed "to have picked up here and there." She did not learn any songs from her mother, who was strictly religious and never sang.

Mrs. Pieri said that she knew many more Lithuanian songs but could not remember them right away. She also mentioned that there were many older Lithuanians in Mount Carmel who liked to sing, but she did not then have the time to introduce them to me. I had intended to return for another visit but did not have the opportunity to do so (LTR 6071/IV/p. 33).

Mrs. Pieri's mother [Marija Kuprytė-Leskauskienė-Pranskaitienė] emigrated from Lithuania in 1902. Her first husband, Leskauskas, lost his leg in 1915 while working in the mines. Since there was no healthcare, he got gangrene and soon died. Her second husband, Pranskaitis, was killed by falling gravel. This is an example of just one family (PAL, p. 406).

Antanina Kisielius/ Antanina Čiurlionytė Kisielienė, b. 1891, village of Ricieliai, parish of Leipalingis, district of Suvalkai. Immigrated to the U.S. in 1907.

Mrs. Kisielius lived at St. Mary's Villa Nursing Home in Elmhurst, Pennsylvania, (about four miles from Scranton) which was administered by the Poor Sisters of Jesus Crucified, a religious order whose members were women of Lithuanian descent. Many of the residents of the Nursing Home were also Lithuanian, but some belonged to other nationality groups. The Sisters and other residents of the Home commented that Mrs. Kisielius was the one who knew the greatest number of Lithuanian songs and could sing their longest versions. The Sisters explained that Mrs. Kisielius often sits alone in her room and sings. Sometimes other old people come in and join her.

Mrs. Kisielius had come to the States with her mother and father when she was sixteen. The family settled in Philadelphia and she lived there until she came to the Nursing Home, in ca. 1962. She said that many of the songs she had learned in Lithuania from her mother. Others she learned while already in America. At one time, she even sang with her mother on the Lithuanian Radio Program in Philadelphia. She said she could only speak Lithuanian, and all her children, who were now dead, were raised speaking only Lithuanian at home.

Mrs. Kisielius sang her songs slowly, always repeating the last lines of the stanzas and explained that it was important to do so because "it helped one to remember the song better and also made it more beautiful." She said she always liked songs and never bothered to remember any stories or riddles. In her parting comment she told me, "Songs are the love of my life, and if it's in my power, I will die with a song on my lips" (LTR 6071/ IV/ p. 124).

Singer's narrative [Mrs. Kisielius]: *I lived in Philadelphia. My son hosted a Lithuanian radio show. Now he has passed away. But I, together with my mother, would sing on his show. My mom passed away just one year ago. She was over 100 years old. [...] But I wouldn't want to live so long. I'll be better off underground* (PAL, p. 207).

Katherine Stank (Stankevičius)/ Katarina Pocėdžiūtė Stankevičienė, b. 1882, village of Smilgiai, parish of Sesnuva, district of Suvalkai. Immigrated to the U.S. in 1901.

Mrs. Stankevičius, also a resident of the St. Mary's Villa Nursing Home, came into the room while I was recording Mrs. Kisielius and sang along to some of the songs. She was not very sure of the words, however, and would usually join in only for the repetition of the last lines of each verse. She explained that she did not remember songs as well as riddles and then proceeded to tell me about twenty-five of them.

Prior to her moving into the Nursing Home, she lived in Baltimore, Maryland. She immigrated to America when she was nineteen and settled in Baltimore, where she had other relatives who helped her get a job in a sewing factory. She was rather an exception among most of the first generation immigrants who had come to America in their later teens for she was quite fluent both in Lithuanian and in English (LTR 6071/ IV/ p. 125).

Sister Joseph (Kornelia Kizevičius), Poor sisters of Jesus Crucified/ Seselė Juozupa (Kornelija Kizevičiūtė), Nukryžiuotojo Jėzaus Seserys, b. 1906, city of Šiauliai, Lithuania. Immigrated to France in 1932, and to the U.S. in 1955.

Sister Juozupa said that ever since childhood she had been very religious and had always wanted to be a nun. Because of poor health she was not admitted into the only convent in Lithuania, and therefore, when she was 26, she immigrated to France, together with several other Lithuanian girls, and joined a convent. They had thought about eventually

returning to Lithuania and organizing a convent for Lithuanian girls. The war put an end to their plans. Many of the other Lithuanian girls left the French convent, and for many years sister Juozupa was the only Lithuanian in that religious order. Finally she received permission to immigrate to America and to join the Poor Sisters of Jesus Crucified, a religious order whose members were mostly Lithuanians.

Sister Juozupa sang several songs, all of which she had learned in Lithuania. Some songs were definitely not folk songs, but rather poems of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. After Lithuania's Independence in 1918, these poems were set to music and became very popular. In this respect, her repertoire of composed songs foreshadowed a similar tendency now found among post World War II Lithuanian refugees. She also sang some folk songs, saying that she had learned them from her mother. Both her parents died when she was only twelve, and consequently her songs about orphans often moved her to tears (LTR 6071/ IV/p. 152).

Ona Kalėda/ Ona Kalėdienė, b. 1887, village of Atesnykėlis, parish of Simnas, district of Suvalkai. Immigrated to the U.S. in 1910.

Mrs. Kalėda came to Shenandoah when she was twenty-three years old. Her brothers had come previously and helped to pay for her transportation. She was married in Shenandoah, but has been a widow since 1948. When she first came to Shenandoah, she worked in local Lithuanian taverns, and later bought and owned one herself. She explained that many of the songs she had learned from her customers, and therefore some of the songs were "not so nice, but very funny," i.e. bawdy.

I recorded Mrs. Kalėda when she had come for a visit to Mrs. Ramyla's. Consequently, most of the songs recorded at this session were performed together by both women. Some, however, were sung individually (LTR 6071/ V/ p.315).

Singer's narrative [Mrs. O. Kalėda]: *I learned a lot of songs here. I had a saloon, and there, everyone would sing. So I learned songs from them. When those "greenhorns" would sing, gathered together on a Saturday, then even the building would rattle! I had a good husband, but he didn't have good luck and would always get injured in the mines. He died in 1948 when he was only 62 years old. Here in those mines, when they do explosions, then everything rumbles and shakes. In my home the paper on the walls and ceilings would always fall off from the aftershocks* (PAL, p. 200).