

[Souchon:] This is September 29, 1956 and I'm at 815 Aline Street, New Orleans, Louisiana and I'm having an informal chat with Arnold Loyacano. Arnold, give me your full name. Is Arnold the whole business?

[Loyacano:] No, it's Arnold Joseph Loyacano.

[Souchon:] And, of course, if you were a lady I wouldn't dare ask you this, but what's the date of your birth?

[Loyacano:] Well, it's August 13, 1889.

[Souchon:] Were you born in New Orleans?

[Loyacano:] Born in New Orleans.

[Souchon:] What street, do you know?

[Loyacano:] I was born on Magazine Street.

[Souchon:] Magazine and what?

[Loyacano:] Near Thalia [Street].

[Souchon:] And how many brothers and sisters did you have?

[Loyacano:] Well, I had four brothers and three sisters.

[Souchon:] And how many are living today?

[Loyacano:] Well, I have three brothers living and one sister.

[Souchon:] And how many of that group are musical?

[Loyacano:] Well, most all of them played. Pretty near everyone of them played in the house. They don't play anymore hardly except

[Joseph] Joe [Loyacano]. I don't know what [Jefferson] Jack [Loyacano] is doing. He's in Chicago, but Joe is playing bass with [Tony] Almerico.

[Souchon:] I know that. He still looks fine and he's--incidentally I ran into him down at a record--a radio shop the other day. He was buying some material for an aerial he was putting up.

[Loyacano:] Yeah, he quit drinking. He should have done that years ago.

[Souchon:] I didn't know he was drinking.

[Loyacano:] Oh he's been off it now about six years. He don't drink anymore.

[Souchon:] Arnold, what instruments did you all play in the family?

[Loyacano:] Well, guitar and fiddle, piano, bass. That was mostly--no--except for Joe and Jack. They played trombone.

[Souchon:] Both of them played trombone?

[Loyacano:] At the same time.

[Souchon:] No reed, huh?

[Loyacano:] No reed.

[Souchon:] Did you all take lessons or just a family thing?

[Loyacano:] Well, it was more or less a family thing. I took lessons on the piano and then when I went to Chicago I took lessons on the bass again.

[Souchon:] Well how old were you when you started playing music?

[Loyacano:] I was six.

[Souchon:] What instrument?

[Loyacano:] Bass.

[Souchon:] [How in the hell could you stand up to a bass?

[Loyacano:] Well you remember the old sewing machine covers they used to had, those little boxes. I used to get on top of that box and I had a small bass. I guess it was about oh not a half-size about a quarter-size.

[Souchon:] You started out on that?

[Loyacano:] Yes I did.

[Souchon:] And were you strong enough to press the strings down?

[Loyacano:] Oh sure, sure, I developed into a real cat.

[Souchon:] Did y'all have a kids band?

[Loyacano:] Well, we had a kids band with Jack Laine.

[Souchon:] I mean youngsters--something like that?

[Loyacano:] Yes, all short pants.

[Souchon:] I'll be doggone.

[Loyacano:] Oh yeah, Georgie Brunis was in that band and [Alfred] Pansy Laine, Jack's son, and myself. I don't know just who else but you see--

[Souchon:] About how old were you then?

[Loyacano:] I was about fourteen. Jack lived on Port street, and we used to go down there and stay over night. We'd play a job Saturday night and stay at his house and then we'd catch the "Smoky Mary" [Train] on the Sunday morning and go out and play at Milneburg.

[Souchon:] When you were kids that age?

[Loyacano:] Yeah, sure.

[Souchon:] Did you get paid?

[Loyacano:] Sure, we got paid.

[Souchon:] How much?

[Loyacano:] A dollar, dollar and a half. That all anybody got--

[Souchon:] Did they give you something to eat and something to drink? Beer and stuff like--

[Loyacano:] Well, no, they wouldn't give us any beer cause at that time they wouldn't give any kids anything that was alcoholic. They give you all the pop and stuff, your cream soda and that big old fashion [unintelligible].

[Souchon:] You had all you could eat on the Milneburg, huh?

[Loyacano:] Oh, sure. Well, incidentally, that's where Jack Laine got the name "Papa" Laine and "Mama" Laine.

[Souchon:] Putting the kids up, huh?

[Loyacano:] Yeah, Georgie Brunis used to go sleep up in the loft.
Sure.

[Souchon:] Wasn't he playing an alto [horn] then?

[Loyacano:] No, you see, they all started--those fellows all started--
it wasn't any of those boys in that family that played any string
instruments. They played all brass. [There is some confusion here.
The alto horn is a brass instrument. Perhaps he thought Souchon
meant alto saxophone.] And they used to--well, they had a band.
You remember the De Droits? Johnny De Droit and Paul [De Droit]?
Well they used to parade in the dust [i.e. unpaved?] out there with
a wash tub for a bass drum and I think that--

[Souchon:] Didn't they live up around the Arabella Street [streetcar]
barn?

[Loyacano:] You mean the De Droits?

[Souchon:] No, the Brunies'

[Loyacano:] The Brunies' no, at that time the old man had a place
on Tchoupitoulas Street, a saloon, and the Brunies'--

[Souchon:] Tchoupitoulas and what?

[Loyacano:] Well, that was between Josephine and Jackson [Streets].
And I'm pretty sure that the Brunies' lived on Josephine Street.

[Souchon:] [There ?] in the same neighborhood, huh?

[Loyacano:] Oh yes.

[Souchon:] Out in the Irish Channel, huh?

[Loyacano:] Yeah, yeah we used to go up there and rehearsal in the old
man's saloon.

[Souchon:] Well my memory of those kids of the Brunies; the two that
I knew just by sight, was that one of them played an alto and the other
one played a trumpet.

[Loyacano:] Well, Georgie played alto and he played baritone [horn].

[Souchon:] He did?

[Loyacano:] Yes, he was a little kid. He used to march in the bands playing baritone. Incidentally, I used to play drum.

[Souchon:] You did, huh?

[Loyacano:] Yes, that's something you didn't know.

[Souchon:] I sure didn't. Well, wasn't there one of those Brunies' that was so small they called him "Stick Pin" or was that somebody else?

[Loyacano:] No, I don't remember calling him that. Course they called lot a worse names, but I don't remember calling him that.

[Souchon:] Well, let's come back to your family. Did your mother and father play any instruments?

[Loyacano:] My father did.

[Souchon:] What'd he play?

[Loyacano:] He played guitar.

[Souchon:] He did? Was he good?

[Loyacano:] Well, I guess you'd call him good for those days.

[Souchon:] But your memory of his playing was that he was all right?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yes, he'd play in the right key and everything. I mean he didn't interpose [i.e., substitute ?] any chords and stuff like they do today--it's all advanced, yes, he played only straight. They used to be fellows--I don't know whether you ever heard of the Werleins?

[Souchon:] Sure.

[Loyacano:] Did you? George Werlein?

[Souchon:] Yeah.

[Loyacano:] Jack Werlein?

[Souchon:] Yeah.

[Loyacano:] [Joseph] "Jolie" Yost?

[Souchon:] No, I don't remember him.

[Loyacano:] You never heard of him. Well, they had a three piece band, too. [John] "Bud" [Loyacano] used to play with them.

[Souchon:] Up in the Irish Channel?

[Loyacano:] No, they lived on Gaiennie Street, Gaiennie near Constance. Between Constance and Magazine [Streets]. I was just a kid then; whenever I played any jobs somebody usually had to carry the bass.

[Souchon:] Well, when you started playing the bass as a kid, how'd you do about lugging that thing around?

[Loyacano:] Well, I didn't carry it.

[Souchon:] What happened?

[Loyacano:] Usually one fellow would carry the box, soap box--remember those wooden boxes, milk boxes, Magnolia mild and all that--well, [I'd ?] carry that. Then, usually Bud would carry the bass, [be]cause Bud being a guitar player, I'd carry his guitar.

[Souchon:] Was he huskier than you are?

[Loyacano:] Oh yeah, Bud was a big man then, gee, he weighed all of a 185 pounds for 5'10", he was husky.

[Souchon:] Well, before you actually got good enough to play with those kids' bands, did y'all just play in the neighborhood, you had a little band that would make up in the neighborhood?

[Loyacano:] Well, I tell you, we had an old fashioned player piano and we used to get my nephew to pump it, because you had to pump the pedals--you remember that--and Joe and Jack would get out their horns and I'd get the bass fiddle and we'd play along with the old fashioned piano; my nephew would pedal it.

[Souchon:] Then you started going out on regular jobs, huh? How long did y'all practice together before you went out?

[Loyacano:] Well, Joe didn't play in the band with me.

[Souchon:] I mean that little group that you mentioned that went out to Milneburg and dances and all that?

[Loyacano:] Well, as far as I can remember, we never did have any rehearsals to play that stuff. We knew all that stuff by heart.

[Souchon:] I mean you had to work yourself into it. You can't just suddenly get on a bass and play.

[Loyacano:] Oh, well, Jack Laine is the cause of that. He called up all the kids and told them to meet at his house. We'd meet at his house and he had a pretty good size front room, so we'd play a couple of tunes and every man for himself. Of course, you take in these days the fellows that played music had sharp ears. You couldn't varyate [i.e., vary] fraction of a tone unless somebody detected it. And the --ears were so good that--well, I'd say they played perfect pitch. They really didn't need much rehearsal because of the fact that the bands ahead of us--I remember the time when I got beat--[spanked ?]. I was passing by and I heard a Dixieland band, was [a] ragtime band that time, and I sat on the curb and forgot what time it was, sitting there listening to it.

[Souchon:] Where was that?

[Loyacano:] [I can't remember ?] on Magazine Street.

[Souchon:] I was going to ask you that thing. Do you remember the names of any of the tunes that you played when you were with those youngsters?

[Loyacano:] Oh, well, they had--in those days they wasn't any names to those tunes; they were numbers and--I mean, like "Number 2," that was the "Tiger Rag," you know, and these fellows attached names to them later on.

[Souchon:] [Obscene Omitted]

[Loyacano:]

[Souchon:]

[Loyacano:]

[Souchon:] Did "Panama" have another name?

[Loyacano:] No I don't--

[Souchon:] Somebody mentioned that--I think the name was the
"Walking Dance."

[Loyacano:] I don't remember that.

[Souchon:] [You] don't remember that?

[Loyacano:] I don't remember that.

[Souchon:] What's this tune that Jack Laine refers to as "Praline,"
you remember that?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yes, let's see how that went, I forgot now--I forgot
just how that--

[Souchon:] It hasn't been taken and made up into another tune now
has it?

[Loyacano:] No, not that I know of. And King [Watsky or Watzke ?],
I told you about him the other day, he composed a tune called
"Ratification," and that was [source of title ?] the high ranking tune
around here.

[Souchon:] It was, huh?

[Loyacano:] Yeah [for] those that could play it. And a lot of them
couldn't, play it.

[Souchon:] Did it have two or three key changes in it?

[Loyacano:] Just two, F and B flat. [or two keys in it ?] We copied
more or less because we were interested in the music. It's just like
a kid being interested in baseball, most of us would rather play the
music than play baseball.

[Souchon:] Y'all loved it, everyone of y'all?

[Loyacano:] Oh, sure, sure, we used to dream music.

[Souchon:] Well, how long did you play bass before you took up piano?

[Loyacano:] Well, I had played piano before I played bass; I was started about the same time. A women in the neighborhood was teaching me piano at that time.

[Souchon:] Well [do] you remember her name?

[Loyacano:] No, right off-hand, I don't.

[Souchon:] [Did] she live nearby you?

[Loyacano:] She lived two doors from me.

[Souchon:] Pay lessons, you folks sent you?

[Loyacano:] Yes, I think it was fifty cents a lesson. But she used to spend about an hour there.

[Souchon:] My family put me on the guitar whin I was--my grandmother--when I was eight years old, and far about four lessons this woman came up to our house and gave me a lesson; and then she told my mother and daddy I was hopeless, never mind fooling with it. So then I put it down for two years, and then I started going to dances where they had "nigger" band, you see, and then I'd stay--I wouldn't dance; I'd just stand up and watch [unintelligible] play. But you're saying how much it cost you, when I got a little bit older, I used to go over across the Bay St. Louis and Pass Christian [Mississippi] in the summer and the nigger in the back there that played both guitar and mandolin, he used to let me pay him "Two bits" [\$.25] an hour just to sit down and let him play along--me and him play together at his house, there. You never did play with any coons, did you, at all? [Never use a negative form in questions. Leading!]

[Loyacano:] No--

[Souchon:] W s there a sharp color line then?

[Loyacano:] No, it wasn't exactly that, it wasn't necessary, and

another thing is there were few colored around where I lived. It was more of a select neighborhood and on top of that we had to beat the bell at night.

[be in ?]
[Souchon:] You had [the bell ?] at what time?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah, nine o'clock. Every night the fire bell would ring at nine o'clock and we'd have to--

[Souchon:] Curfew, the city would ring it?

[Loyacano:] Yes, sir.

[Souchon:] What about your family, they laid down the law that had to be?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yes, you had to be down there, at least down at the house, and when they went inside they locked up; you were locked out.

[Souchon:] Is that so?

[Loyacano:] Not like today, no.

[Souchon:] Well, I betcha those kids got in very little trouble compared to what they do--[now ?]

[Loyacano:] Oh, well, there was practically no trouble. Once in a while one out of a hundred might decide to crack a Chinaman's windowpane or something foolish, you know, something like that. But, as a rule, I say ninety-nine percent of the kids were kids. They didn't--they were taught better. There wasn't any reason to go around and throw rocks at people. [Compare Gumbo Ya Ya. ~~Title and authors~~]

[Souchon:] Where did you go to school, Arnold?

[Loyacano:] I went to Jackson School.

[Souchon:] Did you?

[Loyacano:] Arh-huh, Terpsichore and Magazine [Streets].

[Souchon:] How far did you go in school?

[Loyacano:] I went to [the] top and I went]]when I went there we had an orchestra--school orchestra. Had fellows like Gussie Mueller, Eddie

Edwards. They were in it, Alec Coulonge he was in it. I have to laugh when those guys tell me how young they are, you know?

[Souchon:] What year was that, you remember?

[Loyacano:] Oh, Lord, let's see. That would be about--

[Souchon:] Before 1900?

[Loyacano:] No, that would be about 1905, I guess, something like that. Course you see, the first day--I was taught at home by my sisters.

[Souchon:] Oh, they did give you coaching?

[Loyacano:] Yeah, the first day I went to school I went in the third grade, and the third grade was a lot more severe in those days than it is today. In other words my comparison with the teaching today would be about--third grade would be equivalent to fifth and they had that split season deal, they--[in age ?]

[Souchon:] They didn't teach music in the schools though, did they?

[Loyacano:] Well, oh, yes, not like today, no. They didn't give much time, about fifteen minutes, but all that training, that music training, was by a music teacher with the blackboard and notes on the blackboard.

[Souchon:] [Did ?] you learn your solfeggio is that what you learned?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yes.

[Souchon:] At school?

[Loyacano:] Yes.

[Souchon:] Well, hadn't you learned it before that though?

[Loyacano:] Well, sure I--they sent me to the Milano Conservatory in the old French Opera [House].

[Souchon:] They did, huh?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah.

[Souchon:] [About ?] how old--what age?

[Loyacano:] I was just a kid, I guess about seven years old. They had

a whole gang of kids learning to play at that time and there was a little fellow lived up on Richard Street--I can't think of what his name is right now, but he and I, we led the field. We were in a class by ourselves; so we each go on Saturday morning early, because of the fact that there was only two of us capable of staying in that class. The rest of them didn't advance as fast as we did.

[Souchon:] Well, at that class you went to, was it still learning how to read and all that, or did you actually play music?

[Loyacano:] Oh, no, we didn't play; no, at that time I was learning violin, fiddle, sure.

[Souchon:] What else can you play?

[Loyacano:] Well, I can't play much of anything anymore but I did play: fiddle, and mandolin, guitar, bass, piano, drum.

[Souchon:] You never fooled with any wind instruments?

[Loyacano:] No, brass, no. I tried--

[Souchon:] Not even a tuba?

[Loyacano:] Oh, I played tuba, oh, yes. You see, when I played tuba I went about it right. It had to be that way because I studied with Hamburg, [Spelling ?] tuba player. And Hamburg was second bass in the Chicago Symphony under [Frederick] Stock so--

[Souchon:] Well, how old were you when you took up the tuba?

[Loyacano:] Oh, I guess that would be about ['27] ['28]
[twenty-seven,] [twenty-eight.]

[Souchon:] When you were that old, huh? You were already on the road though, [unintelligible]?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yes, well you see, that was in--

[Souchon:] That was in Chicago when you--

[Loyacano:] Uh-huh. That was the time when the bands were using tubas so I figured they weren't using much bass fiddles anymore and that it let--well, it reduced the field down to only a few chances of playing so before they did, before they came to the climax, I was

ready. I went to Hamburg and I bought myself a tuba and I started taking lessons from him and naturally I knew all the music and everything. The only thing I had to worry about was the keys [valves ?] and the lip. [The] pressure on the lip to make the different tones, you know. [The] rest of it I could read. Now in a short while I was playing with Buddy Fisher [spelling ?], playing both tuba and string bass and for which I was compensated with additional money, doubling [See Glossary] money. The Chicago local--

[Souchon:] That was still in Chicago?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah.

[Souchon:] Well, let's come back to New Orleans; we are ahead of ourselves a little bit. Suppose we say that around seventeen or eighteen years old, you were playing a lot of music then?

[Loyacano:] Oh yes, yes.

[Souchon:] Did you have a regular outfit then?

[Loyacano:] No, you see, Jack Laine, he practically had the city sewed up as far as musicians are concerned and work is concerned, so they wasn't an over abundance of good men. Course they used to call them "squeegees", the guys that really couldn't hit the ball, they'd call "squeegees". They referred to a fiddle player as a "squeege²" fiddler, well, he had no bow technique or anything and he'd get off on tones and things like that.

[Souchon:] Well, I wanted to ask you, too: when you were a kid playing bass did you use a bow?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yes.

[Souchon:] When did you start slapping it, do you remember that?

[Loyacano:] Well, that when I joined the [New Orleans] Rhythm Kings about 1922.

[Souchon:] Well, when you were with Jack Laine's outfit here in New

Orleans playing that and he had all that bunch of bands, you would march too--you marched with the bands?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yes. But, you see, they never did put all the kids together in the street band that I can remember.

[Souchon:] They scattered them through [the parades ?] [the marching bands ?]?

[Loyacano:] Yes, Carnival time Jack Laine had, oh, practically all of the bands that he could gather together to make it, you see, and that's all they played was Dixieland because that's all they knew. Nothing else.

[Souchon:] Well, then, for dances the same thing, though, they split them up--the kids? [And when they had all the kids ?]

[Loyacano:] No, sometimes all the kids played with the possibly two grown-ups, old man Laine, Jack. I remember when I had a fight with "Pansy" [Laine, Jackson] on the Canal Street Ferry, you see, he cut this--see that cut?

[Souchon:] Yeah, you told me about that--how did that happen, was it--

[Loyacano:] Well, he was looking for trouble and I tried to give it to him before I could put it on his jaw he ripped me with a knife. I didn't know he had a knife.

[Souchon:] Well, you're damn lucky he didn't cut your tendons, man.

[Loyacano:] Yeah, I was lucky because I had this hand stirred up, because in those days I could fight, too, and he knew it so I guess that's why he came after me with the knife. He wouldn't have stood a chance as far as battling was concerned because I worked out with all these fighters around here. I used to work out with Kid Greeves [spelling see Ring Record Book] and Joe Mandot. Oh, all those good fighters down at the Orleans Athletic Club.

[Souchon:] How much did you weigh then, one twenty six [pounds]?

[Loyacano:] No, I weighed--yes, around the featherweight limit, but I had one fight and then my mother told Louis Bernier that--

[Souchon:] You fought professionally one time?

[Loyacano:] Yeah. I used to go down and take a beating every day after school, but I learned to fight, I learned to protect myself. I used to train with the champion bantam weight in the South, Jack Hurley. [Spelling--see Ring Record Book]. He later became a great fighter. He was then too, when I worked with him, he taught me lots and well I didn't--I tell you if my folks would let me go, I might have been the featherweight champion of the world, because I got so working out with these different fellows that it was a question of defend yourself or take it and I didn't want to get hit anymore oftener than was necessary.

[Souchon:] Do you know how many of them were walking on their heels all those good [fighters ?]?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yes, but they couldn't hit me solid, none of them hit me solid, none of them ever knocked me down, and I worked out with those fellows for about two years. I loved it, liked to fight. So, after while my mother had me all sewed up with Louis Bernier [spelling ?], why they barred me out of the place. I decided that I did gain something out of the whole experiment [i.e., experience ?] anyway, because of the fact that I could fight, I could defend myself. I never went around looking for any trouble with anybody, but when anybody looked for trouble with me, they got it. You know--

[Souchon:] What did "Pansy" play, a cornet?

[Loyacano:] "Pansy" Laine? He played drums at that time.

[Souchon:] He did.

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah, it was years and years later before he ever took up--he used to play [alto--from Souchon] peckhorn, yeah, he played in

the band. Half the time he wouldn't play, he was too lazy, just walk along because his daddy was the boss.

[Souchon:] Tell me a little bit about your memory of Jack's style. I've never heard him play drum. Do you remember it at all?

[Loyacano:] Who, Jack Laine?

[Souchon:] Yeah.

[Loyacano:] Well you mean orchestra, huh?

[Souchon:] No, I mean band work either for dance or for--

[Loyacano:] Marching?

[Souchon:] Marching, yeah.

[Loyacano:] Well, he's--he played steady, nothing sensational.

[Souchon:] Didn't drag?

[Loyacano:] No, nothing sensational.

[Souchon:] [Did he play a ?] good march?

[Loyacano:] No, he played a good rhythmic bass drum and a real steady beat.

[Souchon:] I have pictures of him in two different parades. One of them he is playing the bass drum and the other one he is playing the snare. He played them both in the marching bands.

[Loyacano:] It was his choice, yes, either one. You see, Jack was never considered a good Dixieland drummer when you start figuring out fellows like Pete [Massarini or Mazarina] and Ragbaby Stevens and Didi Stevens and Paul De Droit and Johnny Stein--guys of that type that would really --well, I remember the time when Didi Stevens--see, they had ten men for a Carnival parade band and Didi Stevens would make those "niggers" dance just by playing the march, didn't need the band. Oh, did you know at that time that there was a fellow with a billard cue that used to beat those "niggers" back?

[Souchon:] No.

[Loyacano:] Oh, sure, that was--

[Souchon:] [Unintelligible] y'all and follow your band?

[Loyacano:] Oh, they kill each other--

[Souchon:] Second line for y'all, huh?

[Loyacano:] Yeah, [they wanted to get in with it ?]. It was a hot band, you see, Celotex, the Celotex Corporation, and I don't know whether it was a police band, I don't quite remember. This Italian fellow that had an Italian Brizzi eri [spelling ?] outfit, they were just like the Brizzi eri--well that's where the Margiottas [Sal and Tony] learned to play too, but they played strictly march music and none of the "niggers" wanted to get around these guys because was nothing to it, just a march and they used to call Jack Laine's first band--was the Reliance Band cause the "niggers" would call it a "Riliance." "Let me get at that 'Riliance' band." They'd all rush in and they had to take clubs and beat them back, separate them, sure.

[Souchon:] What about the first group that played in the Reliance Band that's [Lawrence] Vega on trumpet, was it?

[Loyacano:] Well, you see, I don't ever remember Jack only having one band. He had, well like I said before, he had the cream of the crop and he could switch them around and he was fair about the whole thing. He had several trumpet players and well enough to make four or five bands and instead of giving one man all the work, he'd switch. He had a fellow named Pete Dintrans played terrific trumpet, too.

[Souchon:] Wasn't there a valve trombonist that played with him--

[Loyacano:] Oh, Bill Gallaty, yeah, he was the champ. I never heard anybody play like him.

[Souchon:] Was he the daddy of this Gallaty boy that's playing trumpet?

[Loyacano:] Bill Gallaty playing trumpet, yeah. Today you see this Pete Dintrons--I never seen a man yet play a trumpet on the side of his mouth; that's where he played it; that's the way he learned to play it; that's where he got his embouchure and he couldn't play in the center but Vega--ah Louis Armstrong at his best or Buddy Bolden or any of them, none of them topped Vega in my category.

[Souchon:] That so?

[Loyacano:] No, sir, not only I, but many, many other old time musicians would swear that Vega was the greatest. He had it all over these other fellows because of the fact that he read music to first start off and you talk about hitting C's, D's, and E's above the staff, he did that when I was a kid. Oh yes, he used to play tunes like the "Wild Cherry Rag" and the "Black and White Rag" that was real difficult to play. I mean it was difficult even for a string, and yet he used to run those things to death.

[Souchon:] What about this fantastic story about this fellow by the name of Willie Guitar, who played a bass and lived on Music Street?

[Loyacano:] That's true.

[Souchon:] Is that true?

[Loyacano:] Yes, that's true.

[Souchon:] He played in Jack's band too?

[Loyacano:] Yeah, sometimes he wore a red flannel undershirt, too; that's true, in the summertime.

[Souchon:] Well now what [was] the outfit that you remember that you played with in New Orleans before you left here, before you left town?

[Loyacano:] Oh well, I was working with Tommy Brown then.

[Souchon:] Tommy Brown had a regular outfit here?

[Loyacano:] Yeah, I was playing guitar with him then. You see, they had

Gus Mueller on clarinet, Raymond Lopez on trumpet, Tommy Brown on trombone, Bill Lambert on drums and Steve Brown on bass and myself on guitar. That was the band. Well, those days Tommy had cut deeply into Jack Laine as far as work was concerned, we had quite a bit of work and we got more money with Tommy Brown than we did with Jack, for the same number of hours but, as you know, dollar and a half all day long at Milneburg or West End--

[Souchon:] What about baseball games, y'all played out at Heinemann Park?

[Loyacano:] Well, I can't quite remember vividly whether we did or not. I suppose we did because we played everything around here and across the river, Metairie and all in there.

[Souchon:] You played at--what's the name of that park in Metairie begins with an E, I think, that's no longer there?

[Loyacano:] Oh, is that Electra Park?

[Souchon:] No, it's another one right over the--

[Loyacano:] Eastman.

[Souchon:] Eastman Park. You played there?

[Loyacano:] Oh yes we played all that. Sometime or another we played all around.

[Souchon:] Did y'all ever play any fraternity dances at Tulane?

[Loyacano:] That I don't remember, of ever playing up there.

[Souchon:] What about prize fights?

[Loyacano:] Well, yes we played on the wagon for prize fights.

[Souchon:] Never played in the fights--in the inside the arena?

[Loyacano:] No, there wasn't reason to have a band in there.

[Souchon:] Oh yeah, I heard [Happy] Schilling's any number of times--

[Loyacano:] Well that must have been later on I mean because we--

[Souchon:] Oh, it was later on. I would say it was maybe around 1920, around that time.

[Loyacano:] Oh yeah, that was later. I remember that later on they played in; but I don't ever remember playing inside, even when Lou Rose had the Winter Garden--they used to put the fights on there.

[Souchon:] Yeah, that's on Baronne Street.

[Loyacano:] Yeah, that right. We never did play in there, and that was a good place they had a big stage where the ring was set up and had a box they could have given us to play in.

[Souchon:] You never did play down at the Dauphine--the theater either did you?

[Loyacano:] Dauphine Theater, I don't know whether we did or not. I not sure on that score.

[Souchon:] That's where Sophie Tucker made her debut in New Orleans, you know, down there.

[Loyacano:] Oh yeah, well, the Dauphine used to be a pretty good theater. I don't remember playing there we might of, we played everything else I guess we played the Dauphine, too.

[Souchon:] Well, then, when 1915 came along and the District [Red Light] was still open down there, incidentally, did you play in the District at all?

[Loyacano:] I worked down there, I think I was subbing for somebody that was sick. I never cared for that kind of work, Doc.

[Souchon:] Where was it, one of these places like the Pup or the Cadillac or the [San Sou A ?]?

[Loyacano:] That was for Peggy Armstead. I think that was Iberville and Franklin [Streets] and the Brunies were playing that, Merritt and Henry, and I was playing piano with them, at that time, but I--

[Souchon:] Did you ever play at the Halfway House.

[Loyacano:] For steady, you mean? No.

[Souchon:] I mean even subbing for somebody?

[Loyacano:] Oh yeah, I played several times out there but not as a steady job, you see, I didn't care for those long hours.

[Souchon:] What about Bucktown?

[Loyacano:] Bucktown--plenty of times, plenty of times.

[Souchon:] Well I wonder if I'm correct in my memory. The one place they had those dances was up on stilts and they had one door and one pair of steps leading down and there was fights that started around there all the time.

[Loyacano:] Well there used to be Brunings's pavillion. The Brunings were the sheriffs out there and anybody started a fight got beat up and put in jail. And they broke the fighting up pretty quickly.

[Souchon:] That's Bruning, not Brunies?

[Loyacano:] Bruning, no, not Brunies, Bruning. They had a little tiny old foot bridge across the Seventeenth Street canal at that time.

[Souchon:] What about this place near City Park, "Over the Rhine," you ever remember that place there?

[Loyacano:] No.

[Souchon:] There was a restaurant right across from there; they had a bar and a restaurant there.

[Loyacano:] I didn't play there, no.

[Souchon:] Did you ever play out at what do you call that--

END OF REEL I
ARNOLD LOYACANO
SEPTEMBER 29, 1956

[Souchon:] . . . like, "Over the Rhine" [Cafe]. You ever remember that place there?

[Loyacano:] No--

[Souchon:] There's a restaurant right across from there; they had a bar and a restaurant there.

[Loyacano:] I didn't play there, no.

[Souchon:] Did you ever play out at--what do you call that--dance, nickel-a-dance place at West End--I mean at--yeah, at West End, that they had. They had Tranchina's Restaurant--[Tokio or Tokyo Gardens?]

[Loyacano:] Oh, yes, yes.

[Souchon:] And across from this, right across the street from it was this nickel-a-dance place in there.

[Loyacano:] Yes.

[Souchon:] Did you ever play [there ?]?

[Loyacano:] Yes, I played out there.

[Souchon:] That was Johnny Bayersdorffer's outfit, wasn't it?

[Loyacano:] Bayersdorffer's--

[Souchon:] Yeah.

[Loyacano:] Well, [Tom] Brown played out there, too, [with his own band and with Bayersdorffer?] but it looked like the band, when they had Raymond [Lopez] and Gus Mueller and [Billy] Lambert and those, they didn't care for those hard jobs; they were all trying to suck along on easy work.

[Souchon:] Uh-huh. Well, was there any rule like play a half-hour and quit ten [minutes]? You'd play until you got tired, and then you'd rest a while, or what?

[Loyacano:] No, it wasn't a question of play tired until you rest, even--when they had lawn parties and balls and--well, matter of fact, any kind of music that you might play in any of those places, you played according to how the crowd was; many [operators of] lawn parties would come up and stop the band, because the more you played, the less they drank, and the less they drank, the less ~~money~~^{woney} the club made.

So, naturally, when you played for those clubs they would tell you [to] stop, and, oh, it was nothing, ten or fifteen minutes--play fifteen and rest fifteen, at that [Similar to New Orleans dance halls of the 1950's] time. /But there wasn't any limitation set on how much to play and how much to take off--not at that time there wasn't. I know many times when we played out in the [Irish] Channel there--we'd play those lawn parties--pitched battles would start about 11:30 [P.M.] and that was the end.

[Souchon:] That was the end of the party?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah; the band usually--sure, the band usually played up on a shed, you know, about seven or eight feet from the ground, and when they'd start throwing pop bottles and beer bottles and whiskey bottles, it's time to get down the back way--down the back.

[Souchon:] Then, what happened when you all left for Chicago? How'd the whole business start, as far as you remember?

[Loyacano:] Well, I'm positive on that, because, you see, we were playing on the tailgate, on the [advertising] wagon, and a fellow named--

[Souchon:] On Canal Street?

[Loyacano:] Uh-huh. A fellow named Joe Gorham [spelling?], he was managing a woman dancer by the name of Myrtle Howard, and she was appearing at West End--at that time, they had a theater out there--

[Souchon:] Yeah.

[Loyacano:] And she was a big-time act. So, this fellow asked us if we'd consider going to Chicago. Well--

[Souchon:] He just heard you the one time, on the wagon?

[Loyacano:] That's all; he only heard about two tunes, and that was it, he was sold. So he made an appointment, and instead of Tommy Brown going to see Myrtle Howard, who was staying at the old Grunewald Hotel [now the Roosevelt], Raymond Lopez and I went to see her, and Raymond did the talking. And we were awarded the job right away.

In the meantime, Joe Gorham had gotten in touch with Smiley Corbett [spelling?] and told him what a find he had, so Corbett said all right, he'd send the transportation. So he sent the transportation, and in that time it took us twenty-nine hours to ride it--I think it was \$18.50 round trip.

[Souchon:] Was that called the Panama Limited [Illinois Central Railroad train] then, or no?

[Loyacano:] No, I don't remember it being called the Panama Limited at that time; they had one good train, but I think that was an extra-fare train--I think--I'm pretty sure the fare was \$18.50 round trip.

[Souchon:] Well, who--then when you all spoke to the lady, what's her name?

[Loyacano:] Oh, Myrtle Howard?

[Souchon:] Yeah. Does she--you all made arrangements with her [at the hotel there ?]

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah, yeah.

[Souchon:] You were going to back her up, or what?

[Loyacano:] No, no, no, no; we were to go up there as a band; this was an attraction.

[Souchon:] I know, but not with her act, huh?

[Loyacano:] No, no--

[Souchon:] You had your own act?

[Loyacano:] No, she had too good a bookings to fool around with us; she didn't want anything like that; she was a big vaudeville star when she was appearing here. But she was instrumental, through her manager, Gorham [spelling?] in getting us up to Chicago, and when we went to Chicago--

[Souchon:] Wait a minute, now--who was the whole band?

[Loyacano:] Well, there was Lopez on trumpet, Gus Mueller on clarinet, Tommy Brown on trombone, I was playing piano, and Bill Lambert on drums; there was no bass; they only wanted five.

[Souchon:] It went under the name of Brown's Band?

[Loyacano:] It was Brown's band, yes--

[Souchon:] But they didn't call it Brown's Band from Dixieland, then, at that time?

[Loyacano:] No, they--we left here with Raymond Lopez, not Tommy Brown; Raymond was the boss.

[Souchon:] Raymond signed the contract?

[Loyacano:] That's right; Raymond was the boss.

[Souchon:] Uh-huh. And then you all went to Chicago and opened up where?

[Loyacano:] Opened up at the Lamb's Cafe, Randolph and Clark [Streets].

[Souchon:] How long a contract [did] you have?

[Loyacano:] Well, as far as they were concerned, they wanted to give us a contract [for] the rest of our life, at that particular time, after about four or five weeks; but the start of the thing was [that] we followed a gypsies tring ensemble in there, so you can imagine with those guys blowing their brains out--

[Souchon:] What kind of a looking place was it?

[Loyacano:] Oh, beautiful place.

[Souchon:] I mean what--marble floors and?--

[Loyacano:] Well, it was tile floor and marble all around the sides; and every note you'd hit would reverberate back about six times.

[Souchon:] They had a bar in there, or what?

[Loyacano:] Well, it was--

[Souchon:] A restaurant?

[Loyacano:] No, it was more of a cafe--strictly drinks; they had what you call a--

[Souchon:] Dancing?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah, yeah--you know [Joe] Frisco?

[Souchon:] Yeah.

[Loyacano:] Well, Frisco used to come in there and dance for dimes; I'm out money shilling for him; I shilled many times a quarter and didn't get it back.

[Souchon:] I'll be damned.

[Loyacano:] Sure. You see, we followed this gypsy ensemble that played soft, dreamy gypsy music, see, and when we come in there the contrast was too great, because those guys was blowing their brains out and everybody was sitting there holding their ears. But--

[Souchon:] In other words, you all didn't go over good right away?

[Loyacano:] No, we didn't go over good; they were figuring about sending those "ragamatazzy jazzy" guys where they got them from; Smiley Corbett [sp.?] wouldn't even speak to us, he was so mad.

[Souchon:] Well, then, when did you all catch on?

[Loyacano:] Well, down the street, in the middle of the block was--let's see--I think it was [Cohen's or Comb's ?] Grand Opera House--that was big-time vaudeville--and Bert Swan and Charlie Mack came to town, and so they came over there to hear this "jazzy band"--incidentally, that's where the word "jazz" came from.

[Souchon:] How?--

[Loyacano:] "Jaccy band"--clangy, jazzy, anything that was--

[Souchon:] Who put it on you all, do you remember?

[Loyacano:] Well, who knows? It just grew up around Randolph and Clark.

[Souchon:] They were using it in Chicago before you all came up?

[Loyacano:] No, no, they didn't even know how to spell it; they first spelled it J-A-Z, then J-A-Z-Z, then J-A-S, then J-A-S-S, and it finally stuck and was recognized, they tell me, by Webster, put in the dictionary as a word. But that's where it originated, contrary to what Tommy Brown says about it; I know, I was there; that's where it originated. I think that little fellow--three years ago, when I was in Chicago with Sharkey [Bonana], I saw that same little Jewish guy that sold papers there, and he knows, he knows.

[Souchon:] Is that by Lamb's, there?

[Loyacano:] Yeah, on Clark Street, right on the corner.

[Souchon:] On Clark, over there to the left?

[Loyacano:] Right on the corner. I went to look him up, to see if he was still there.

He knows where the word "jazz" came from, too--not 22nd Street.

[Souchon:] What street was Lamb on?

[Loyacano:] Oh, Randolph and Clark.

[Souchon:] Right in the Loop, then.

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah, right downtown. So, Bert Swan and Charlie Mack came in there, and a fellow named John Wilmus [spelling?] was the manager; so they told Johnny Wilmus that--"Hey, where did you get this band from?" That's according to Charlie Mack's statement. Said, "Oh, don't say anything about them; we're sending them back." So Mack said, "Why, you're crazy; this is something different; you don't understand what these guys are doing; they're really playing my type of music." So--

[Souchon:] Those were the blackface comedians?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah--the first ones, Swan and Mack; Swan and Mack [were] before Moran and Mack.

[Souchon:] Yeah.

[Loyacano:] And they were big-time performers, too--headliners. So, they got up there, and they asked us if we knew the "Yellow Dog Rag," [Check ^{for Original 7, 4, 1, 5} Possibly he means "Yellow Dog Blues."] and that was one of their big numbers. So, they got up on the floor and we played the "Yellow Dog Rag" and they sang it, and that was it.

[Souchon:] They began packing it in there?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yes.

[Souchon:] Did you have any other big-time people from the shows that came over there?

[Loyacano:] Oh, it was loaded every night; it got to be an attraction whereas one performer would ask the other if he'd heard that band over there, and if he'd say: "No," he'd say go over and hear them. Oh, yeah--Irving Berlin, and--what's the name of these dancers?--oh, it was right on the tip of my tongue right now--they were the big-time dancers of all time around that--

[Souchon:] Men?

[Loyacano:] No, a man and his wife. I remember her--Castle, Irene Castle.

[Souchon:] Irene Castle. [Irene and Vernon Castle]

[Loyacano:] Uh-huh. She used to come in there with a monkey on her shoulder--live monkey. And they danced a couple of times to the music, and they said it was great; well, we could of went with them, but whowanted to go? Nobody wanted to go; it wouldn't have been any better anyhow, because by that time everybody signed up, except me, to a contract. And I didn't want anybody to sign a contract, because I said, "These guys are smarter than you are." Had a fellow named Joe Levy was booking agent; he gave a long, syrupy talk, you know, and I was the only one didn't sign a contract. I can prove that. The rest of them signed--

[Souchon:] You were suspicious of what was going on?

[Loyacano:] Sure; he offered us toomuch--I mean--

[Souchon:] Why, to leave there and go to New York, you mean?

[Loyacano:] No, no; he would give us so much more money a week each three months, and we could do this and we could do that. And when it come time to sign the contract, read the contract, I guess I was the only one read it; he was offering us nothing, so I said, "I can do better without a contract." And that way, I figured I could make him look up to me instead of me looking down [sic] to him, see. So, because we weren't in the union at that time, and I could quit on a moment's notice, and if I quit, then the band was hooked--no piano player, they couldn't play, that was for sure.

[Souchon:] [And ?] nobody up there was playing that style, at all?

[Loyacano:] Oh, no, no, never heard of it, no.

[Souchon:] Then how come you all left Lamb's?

[Loyacano:] Well--

[Souchon:] How long were you at Lamb's, you remember that?

[Loyacano:] Well, we started there on May 18, 1915 and we were in New York in September. The reason for the New York fiasco, and for ever leaving the Lamb's was [that] a

fellow named Harry Fitzgerald, a big booking agent from New York, came there and he told us how swell the band was and everything, and he'd give us the world with a fence around it, and [we] didn't [wouldn't ?] even see the fence. He's another guy I didn't sign a contract with; they did, but not me. I told them, "No, I don't want any contract, don't want anything else; I want to feel like anytime you don't come up with the amount of money you promised me, I'm either going to get that money or I'm not going to play." Because I was holding the reins that time, and the rest of them were, too; they were in demand. So, the bunch of jackasses, they give in their notice, they sneaked out, they broke the contract, ran away to New York. And I knew that wasn't the right thing to do--

[Souchon:] You mean the band?

[Loyacano:] Yeah, the whole outfit.

[Souchon:] Well, who'd they take on bass, then, if you didn't go with them?

[Loyacano:] Well, no, I went with them, but I didn't want to go; I didn't want to break the contract they had with--

[Souchon:] Lamb's?

[Loyacano:] At the Lamb's, with Joe Levy. I told them--

[Souchon:] Were they treating you all right there?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yes--

[Souchon:] Where did you live in Chicago when you were playing there?

[Loyacano:] Well, I lived several different places; I--where did I live? I lived at the Congress Hotel on Harrison and Wabash Avenue; that's an old-timer that's probably out of business by now, too.

[Souchon:] Well, the Congress is still going, but it's extended all the way over on Michigan now.

[Loyacano:] Oh, this hotel was on Wabash on the northwest corner.

[Souchon:] All right. Well, now it's extended all the way to Michigan Avenue, and--

[Loyacano:] No, did I say Congress? No, that's not the name of it, that's not the name of it; I can't--

[Souchon:] It doesn't matter. You were near your place of work, though?

[Loyacano:] Well, about six blocks. I can't think, right off-hand, what the name of that hotel was--Commercial, that's the name of it, that's the name now.

[Souchon:] Well, Arnold, when you all went to New York, where did you open up there?

[Loyacano:] Well, we went to New York; we was supposed to be in the Town Topics show; oh, they had such celebrities as Trixie Friganza and Lou Hearn [sp.?]--all big-time star acts. And we were supposed to be on the stage with them; however, when we got there--and I called these fellows' attention to the fact; I said, "Well, there's your Harry Fitzgerald; you're supposed to be in the show; you're working in a restaurant." It was a monstrous place, the Century Theater; it was up at 62nd [Street] and Central Park West, and it took in a whole square--one square of ground; it wasn't a day I came in there I didn't get lost. I'm telling you, I got lost; every day I'd have to ask somebody how I could find my way around. And after even intermissions and stuff, I was afraid to leave there because the place was so big and there were so many dressing rooms and stage entrances and things, well, I kept repeatedly getting lost in the joint.

[Souchon:] But you all opened up in the restaurant instead of on the stage?

[Loyacano:] That's right, that's right, and then I called their attention to it; I said, "Well, where's this Harry Fitzgerald? You fellows signed your contracts with him. I didn't sign anything with him; I got nothing to lose."

[Souchon:] Well, did you have the same group with you then?

[Loyacano:] Same crowd, sure.

[Souchon:] Larry Shields wasn't with you then?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yes, Larry was with us.

[Souchon:] Well, the, what became of Gus?

[Loyacano:] What became of Gus? In the meantime, Bert Kelly was playing over at the Sherman Hotel, which was across the street from the Lamb's, and Bert Kelly wanted a clarinet player like Gussie Mueller, so Raymond Lopez got in touch with Larry Shields and sent for him--of course, Kelly paid the expense and all--and they brought Larry Shields up there. I hate to say this, but it's true: Larry Shields couldn't cut it with the band, because the band was reading.

[Souchon:] You mean the Sherman House?--

[Loyacano:] Sherman House was reading all music; Larry couldn't play music.

[Souchon:] Whose band was that?

[Loyacano:] Bert Kelly.

[Souchon:] Uh-huh. That's not Peck Kelly?

[Loyacano:] No, no--Bert Kelly, a banjo player. And they--at that time, they had skating in the Sherman Hotel, in the cocktail--[well ?] cocktail lounge; it was a restaurant and cafe. So, Bert Kelly came over and told Raymond about it, expressed his dissatisfaction. Gussie was listening; Gussie said, "Well, I'll tell you what I'll do: I'll take the job"--and I guess the job paid twice as much money as we were getting. So, he said--

[Souchon:] Was he a reader? Could he read?

[Loyacano:] Gussie?

[Souchon:] Uh-huh.

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah, yeah. You remember I told you he was in the school orchestra, [while he or when he ?] was reading music?

[Souchon:] That's right, yeah, yeah.

[Loyacano:] So Gus went in there, and he swapped jobs, that's all; he just swapped with Larry.

[Souchon:] No hard feelings in the band when Larry [came in ?]??

[Loyacano:] No, no, it was agreed--well, it was a thing to keep Larry Shields in Chicago, to keep from sending him back home. Because, who could he play with, except us? That was the only band he could play with; the rest of them were all strictly note men.

[Souchon:] Did he fit all right with you all?

[Loyacano:] Oh, sure, sure.

[Souchon:] Well, then, you stayed then at this restaurant in New York for how long?

[Loyacano:] Oh, I don't know.

[Souchon:] Approximately?

[Loyacano:] Possibly four weeks, and that was it. In the meantime, I told Raymond, I said, "We're not going to make it here; these people are not going for this stuff." So we went down to Reisenweber's [Cafe]; it was up there; Sophie Tucker was on; it was a big place, and Sophie Tucker was working upstairs. It was so big they had a terrace around it, on the two story. So, we saw Mr. Schultz--I'm pretty sure that was his name--the manager, and we told him what we had, and he said, "All right." He said: "I'll tell you what I'll do: I'll give you boys a contract for two weeks and \$25 a man a week." Well, after the money we was getting in Chicago, that was peanuts.

[Souchon:] Well, how much money were you getting at the--what do you call it?--the Century--is that what you called it?

[Loyacano:] Oh, the Century Theater.

[Souchon:] Century Theater, how much were you getting?

[Loyacano:] Oh, we were getting \$50, I think, a week. So, none of them were interested. We could have had all the gravy that the [Original] Dixieland [Jazz] Band got, because we were there before them, and we could have been hired before them, and we could have worked the place. And I told them--well, we had a meeting and we talked it over, and I

said, "Well, why don't we just go and take the job and wire [Joe] Frisco? We can pitch in a couple of dollars apiece and get Frisco up here to do that dance, that Frisco dance he did, and his girl friend, Loretta McDermott," that lived in New York, up in the Bronx--153rd Street; and it would have been peaches for her--right in the neighborhood. So, the boys said no, wasn't enough money, wasn't this and wasn't that, so I said, "All right, do what you please." And then we got out of the job, and there wasn't anything else that was brewing around, Harry Fitzgerald turned out to be the kind of guy I thought he was. And so I got aboard a boat, a United Fruit Company liner, and came on down to New Orleans.

[Souchon:] Well, when did you--didn't you travel with that group under the name, in a vaudeville thing, called the "Five Rubes"?

[Loyacano:] Oh, the "Musical Rubes"--yeah.

[Machine off]

[Souchon:] I forget where we were.

[Loyacano:] We was with the "Musical Rubes."

[Souchon:] That's right, that's right. Well, how did that come about?

[Loyacano:] Well--

[Souchon:] That was out of New York?

[Loyacano:] That was in New York, yes. So, you see, the uniform originated in Chicago at the Lamb's, for that "Musical Rubes."

[Souchon:] Oh, you had to dress up in--

[Loyacano:] Oh, sure, sure; they figured that they'd put a lot of corn shocks and a haystack and all of that; they figured that making rubes out of us was the proper thing in the big city, so it started there. They didn't call it "Musical Rubes"; they called it "Brown's Band from Dixieland." But then, when we played vaudeville up there they called it "Musical Rubes." And the big city of New York didn't know what we were doing.

[Souchon:] They didn't?

[Loyacano:] No, they were worse than Chicago; they were calling it-- everything that wasn't good was what they called us--(laughs) clanky and--

[Souchon:] How long--were you in a vaudeville thing for the "Musical Rubes"?

[Loyacano:] Yeah, yeah; we played, oh, I guess it must have been about a month--six weeks at the absolute most. They brought us from one end of New York--

[Souchon:] Was it a chain of picture shows?

[Loyacano:] Yeah, theaters [owned ?] They brought us from the north end to the south end and across over into Brooklyn and down in Long Island and everywhere else; we were playing all the houses never heard of, and the closest we ever got to the Palace Theater was [when] we played one of those Sunday concerts. They used to have Sunday concerts in New York at that time; you know, about ten acts for \$.50; place [was] packed. Well, one day we played the Columbia [Theater]--used to be a burlesque house, on 47th [Street] and Broadway--that was right across the street, you might say, from the Palace--big shot. And we got a terrific hand, so we wondered what happened, how did we come to get this hand. So we started asking around; we come to find out that every music publisher and singer--you know how they used to have a piano player to accompany singers to plug the song pluggers, song pluggers, at that time?

[Souchon:] Yeah.

[Loyacano:] They were all in there, and they were the only ones who knew what we were doing; the audience didn't, so I guess when they started applauding the audience took it up, and that was it.

[Souchon:] All you needed was a claque plugging [for ?] you.

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah, they had--that night they all got together, and they were talking about how much money they was going to charge.

[Instead ?] couple of weeks later they were--I was on the boat; I told them, "I don't want to fiddle around here with you guys; if this is the way it's going to be, I can do better in New Orleans." Which I did. Of course--

[Souchon:] How long did you stay in New Orleans then?

[Loyacano:] Well, you see, Gus Mueller, when he found out that the band was breaking up--and it definitely was--he got a-hold of Raymond Lopez, and Raymond went back to work with Kelly in Chicago. Bill Lambert came down here, Larry Shields came down here and Tommy Brown, he went back to Chicago; he hooked on with Ray Miller, "Black and White Melody Boys." So that really was the finish of Brown's band. No head--

[Souchon:] What year do you think that was, about 1915?

[Loyacano:] No, that was [19]16.

[Souchon:] '16.

[Loyacano:] Yeah. Then I went back to Chicago with Happy Schilling; had Happy Schilling and Georgie Barth, Johnny Fischer, and I, and Johnny-- let's see, I think it was Johnny Frisco was the drummer--no, Williams was the drummer in that outfit. Then we went to work in a place called the Arsonia, Mike Fritzel's joint; it was on Madison near Palina [Streets]. And we did all right there, until they booted us out of there, so we went down to the corner and went to work for Tommy Thomas. And everybody was well-satisfied; you see, Brown's band had already paved the way, and then the Dixieland Band came in--incidentally, that's where they got the name from, the Original Dixieland [Jazz] Band, because everybody said [that] there's another Dixieland band in town. They worked on 35th Street-- Schiller [Cafe]. And it wasn't hard to break through in 1916--I'm pretty sure it was '16 when I went back there with the other band, with Schilling.

And we lived on Warren Avenue and Palina; one morning I got up--[unintelligible] it was about ten o'clock, because they closed up at one o'clock; they had a one o'clock closing law in Chicago--and a woman, sitting on the front porch, that I had talked with told me, "What happened? Did you boys finish up over there at the corner?" I said, "Not that I know of." And she said, "Well, three of your boys are gone." And they were: Happy Schilling--

[Souchon:] Just picked up and left?

[Loyacano:] Just picked up and left; told--didn't even tell me.

[Souchon:] Well; who was managing that outfit?

[Loyacano:] Happy Schilling!

[Souchon:] He and Fischer left?--

[Loyacano:] And Freddie Williams.

[Souchon:] Piano player, Williams?

[Loyacano:] Yeah. And--

[Souchon:] What, did they go back to New Orleans?

[Loyacano:] No, Williams was the drummer. Yeah, he came back; Williams--

[Souchon:] You were playing the piano with him, still?

[Loyacano:] Yeah. Georgie Barth was the trumpet player. So, I looked around, and I asked the woman, landlady, "Let's take a look at their room," and sure enough. So I went over to the cafe and the colored fellow [who was] cleaning up, and I asked him, and he said, "Oh, they come in and took the drums and everything." I didn't know a thing about it. So I was hooked; I went to see Tommy Thomas, so Tommy said, "Well, what are we goint to do?" I said, "I don't know; I can't just go out in the park and pick up men, but if we can get along for tonight and tomorrow night, I feel confident--

[Souchon:] Who else did you have? Did you have anybody? You had just Georgie Barth?--

[Loyacano:] Oh, no, just me!

[Souchon:] The others--not three--four of them had gone?

[Loyacano:] ~~XXX~~ Sure, all the band left but me; left me high and dry. So I told him, "In a couple of nights I can get you another Dixieland band; I feel confident that I can." So I got in touch with my brother [Jefferson] Jack [Loyacano], and told him to get a-hold of some or the fellows that he thought could play. So, he got a-hold of four other guys and I wired them the money and they caught the train and came on up. Fellow named [unintelligible] Weber played clarinet; Freddie Neuroth played trumpet; Red Roland played clarinet, later; Jack played trombone; and Johnny Frisco played drums and I played piano. So he was only without his Dixieland music for two nights and, luckily, they started on Friday; the two big nights were yet to come, see, so he really didn't lose anything.

[Souchon:] You all worked there how long?

[Loyacano:] Oh, for Tommy we worked there a long while; I guess about a year and a half we worked for Tommy.

[Souchon:] You weren't married then, huh?

[Loyacano:] No. Then, along came the war [World War I].

[Souchon:] Now hold right there.

[Machine off]

[Loyacano:] --mentioned a couple that I had completely forgotten about.

[Souchon:] This is September 29, 1956; we are at 815 Aline Street, New Orleans, Louisiana--an informal interview with Mr. Arnold Loyacano. This is Reel II, continued. Now, Arnold, we were just about to begin to talk about when you brought this bunch of boys up from New Orleans to play when this bunch had skipped town on you.

[Loyacano:] Yeah, yeah.

[Souchon:] You say you played there about a year and a half?

[Loyacano:] That was Tommy Thomas's; yes, we--

[Souchon:] What did you all call yourself?

[Loyacano:] The Crescent City Jazz Band--from New Orleans, the Crescent City.

[Souchon:] You were the leader?

[Loyacano:] Oh, leader--what such leader as there was, everybody was the leader.

[Souchon:] They didn't pay you double, huh?

[Loyacano:] No, no; I was just the guy that coaxed all the trouble onto myself and got in between the boss and the band--I was in the middle all the time. For a while, everything was great, and then they wanted a raise. So I went to the boss and tried to get a raise, and I couldn't. Oh, then, "we should look for another job"--WE should look for another job!--and I was the guy that had to get up--watch out, Doc--I was the guy that had to get up in the morning and look for another job for them--cold, freezing mornings and everyghing else, and getting nothing out of it. So I figured, well, shucks, I'm not going to get up and look for jobs, either. So, the band drifted apart. We worked at Mickey Frank's Tile Bar--that was a place on Clark Street and Ohio, Clark and Ohio. Well, we had a good job there; everything was going great. (Machine off) All right? Yeah, everyghing was going great until the guys started--we used to operate on Sunday, Sunday night. Course, it was against the law, but you know, they used to operate anyhow. And they had a service bar, special service bar and up above that special service bar they had some cupboards up there loaded with whiskey. And they had a hasp on the thing, and if you stuck your hand in there, which you could, you could pull out a pint of whiskey. Well, I didn't know those fellows was stealing the man's whiskey.

[Souchon:] The boys in your band?

[Loyacano:] Yes. I didn't know they--

[Souchon:] I was going to ask you how much drinking they were doing.

[Loyacano:] Well, they weren't doing much drinking on the job, because I didn't allow it; they got paid to work and I wanted them to work. And so--I didn't mind if they took drinks, but nobody got drunk; I didn't want that. So, the man come to me and gave me my two weeks' notice. I said, "What for?" He said, "You got thieves in your band; they been stealing all my whiskey." So he--

END OF REEL II

[Loyacano:] So he opened up the thing and showed me all the whiskey gone; I didn't know who took it, so the only thing I could do would be to--the only thing that really would be justifiable would be to fire the whole outfit. Well, if I fired the whole outfit, there I'd be again, my myself, and by myself I wasn't much good, and I knew that. So, I told him, "All right, [if] that's the case [we'll ?] take the notice and it's O.K." We got out of there and we went down about four blocks away, at the old Casino Gardens --Ray Angavar [spelling ?] owned that place; it was down in the basement; there's a garage there, I think, now; that's [Casino Gardens] done away with. Well, anyhow, I went down to see Ray Angavar, and he said all right, so we started working there. Well, [we] made a couple of changes then; Ragbaby Stevens was playing drums. And on night I come to find out that Ragbaby Stevens was the leader of the band; he was telling everybody what to do--I was just the guy that got the job and paid off, you know. So, we stayed there a long, long time. It didn't make any difference to me who the leader was, or who was giving orders and who weren't; I didn't care; many times I'd much prefer to just be the fellow who has to show up there and play, and when the bell rings, go home; I didn't want all that trouble on my shoulders. Well, then along came the war. Well, there wasn't anything else to do but go, and I went and signed up and went through the examination and everything. So I decided, well, my numbers going to be up anyway, I might as well jump in, so I quit there and I joined up at the Army.

[Souchon:] How old were you when you enlisted?

[Loyacano:] Well, I was twenty-six, twenty-six years old. I enlisted, and they pulled me out of here of a Sunday morning; went

down to Rockford, Illinois--Camp Grant--and there's where I had all my training there. And I was promoted, and I was with a training caderie. It was an easy job; I worked from five in the morning till ten at night--and these fellows think they got it tough. That's [O.K.?]--from five in the morning till ten at night.

[Souchon:] Were you playing music in the service, at all?

[Loyacano:] No; I could have played with the band; they asked me. But I guess I slipped up on a good one; if I had known that the band, the way [they ?] were treated and everything else. I would have signed up with the band; I would much prefer to have been with them. But--

[Souchon:] Yeah, They really were on the gravy train [in those bands ?].

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah; all they--

[Souchon:] The only thing bad [was that] you had to get up first and march around the parade ground.

[Loyacano:] Well, they didn't do that too often out there, Doc; mostly a bugle corps--most of the time, bugle corps, they'd blow all the calls, from "First Call" on--everything. The band usually played the "Star-Spangled Banner" at night [when they] take the flag down, but except for that, the band didn't play.

[Souchon:] You didn't do any jamming or anything while you were in the service?

[Loyacano:] No, no, that was forgotten about.

[Souchon:] You know that little bunch that I play with, that string group ["6 & 7/8 Band"]? Four out of the seven of us found ourselves in the same regiment, two of us in the same outfit, the same battery--and brought our instruments all the way to France with us.

[Loyacano:] Well, you was in the Field Artillery too, huh?

[Souchon:] Yeah--Washington Artillery [down there ?].

[Loyacano:] That's where the good men go; they do the most damage.

[Souchon:] Well, now, let me ask you this: after the service, when you got out--do you remember about what year it was? 1919, was it, or '18?

[Loyacano:] No, it was '19.

[Souchon:] '19.

[Loyacano:] February 20.

[Souchon:] Now then, when did you join the Friars outfit--the New Orleans Rhythm Kings?

[Loyacano:] Well, I wasn't too keen to join anybody at that time; I was more anxious to get home and see what home looked like, because I hadn't seen home in so long, and--well, all my brothers were in the Service and I knew that my mother must have been lonesome, and all that, for us. Course, that crazy Jack [Loyacano], you know, he'd write home and tell them how tough it was; me, I'd always write home and tell them how easy it was, and yet, they [were] beating my brains out. I figured, "Well, what's the use of worrying everybody?"

[Souchon:] That's a good idea; I never wrote them an unhappy letter the whole time I was away.

[Loyacano:] Well, it's not going to change anything. I--

[Souchon:] It's just going to make the old folks worry, that's all.

[Loyacano:] Sure. So, I figured I wanted to go home. I made one slip-up there: I found out later that I could of had my transportation from Camp Grant, at Rockford, Illinois to New Orleans for free, see, but I found that out too late. And then I came down to New Orleans here, and I stayed around a while, but I didn't like the town anymore; I'd much prefer to [have] been up there, because

they had four seasons up there: spring, summer, autumn and winter, and [all you had--?]

[Souchon:] I liked that, too.

[Loyacano:] Yes, I got so that the cold didn't mean a thing to me; after being in the Army and laying out in that cold and snow and everything else, I guess my skin toughened up and got used to it, because when I was discharged, it was cold weather, and I didn't seem to mind it--well, it was just like summer, as far as I was concerned; I didn't feel cold.

[Souchon:] Well, then, you were down in New Orleans and you decided to go back to Chicago?

[Loyacano:] Yes.

[Souchon:] Did you have an offer to play, or you just went back cold?

[Loyacano:] Well, now, let me see: I--

[Souchon:] I'm trying to find out the stuff that led you into the Friars.

[Loyacano:] Well, I went back to Chicago--I think I went back on my own hook; I'm not positive about that; I'm not clear on it. Anyway, I was working and I got a call from [Leon] Roppolo, I think it was; they were organizing the New Orleans Rhythm Kings.

[Souchon:] They organized in New Orleans, did they?

[Loyacano:] No, up in Chicago; they were up there. You see,

[George] Brunis and Roppolo--

[Souchon:] Paul Mares?

[Loyancano:] And Paul, yeah, Paul Mares--the three of them, they needed five more men. So, they called me and I went over to Harrison's--Tommy Harrison's place on the West Side; that's where they were living--I talked the whole thing over. And they had a

fellow named Jack Pettis, Frankie Snyder, and Elmer Schoebel--course, they didn't know many people around there, and although they have never given me any credit for it, I got as many men for the band--as a matter of fact, I got more men for the band than they did.

[Souchon:] Fill-ins from Chicago, you mean?

[Loyacano:] Sure, because I'd been around there a couple of years, and I knew. So I got a-hold of Elmer Schoebel and Jack Pettis and Frankie Snyder, and we worked with seven men for a long time. And I think that that band--well, that revolutionized jazz music; I think that band did more for jazz music than even Paul Whiteman, because. . . . It was only a short time we got ahold of Lewie Black; I knew Lewie and I called him--

[Souchon:] Banjo?

[Loyacano:] Banjo, uh-huh. I called him in Davenport, Iowa and asked him if he wanted a job, and closed all the arrangements--and I had nothing to do with the band; I only played bass with them; they asked me if I could get a man. So, I knew that Lewie was one of the ranking men in the country, at that time, and he'd be an asset to the band if we could get ahold of him. Oh, what else could I do? Nothing--there wasn't anything else to do but try. So, he jumped it like a hungry fish after the bait; he said, "O.K., I'll be down there to start tomorrow night." We had a little afternoon rehearsal, and he started. But that band, that band had something that no other jazz band had. None of them read--Schoebel read, and I read--I mean, like Paul, Paul could take a piano score and--

[Souchon:] Well, you know what the "niggers" call that? "Spelling."

[Loyacano:] "Spelling," yeah.

[Souchon:] Instread of reading, when you got to fight it like that,

they call it "spelling" [their music ?]

[Loyacano:] Yeah. Well, Paul could buy a piano copy for a dime, and he could struggle around with it and get the melody. Well, after all, that was all that was necessary for him to get. But after he got the melody, then he could improvise it into something that was out of this world; it didn't even sound like the piece anymore. Then Schoebel used to pick out the different notes that the different instruments would play to play in harmony. Prior to that time, they all did solo; there was no harmony--every man for himself. And that's where the "Farewell Blues" originated, too, see, right there in Friars Inn.

[Souchon:] Who wrote that?

[Loyacano:] Well, who did write it?

[Souchon:] How many of them wrote it?

[Loyacano:] Yeah. Everybody had something to say, and when it came time to collect, why, "Rapp" and Paul [and Schoebel ?], I think, is the ones had put their names on it; but they didn't split with anybody else, although everybody else put something in there. You see, if it hadn't been for Elmer Schoebel picking out the harmony, there'd never been any "Farewell Blues." And Schoebel would give them a note and say, "This is your note and this is your note," and then, so they'd blow it. And they hit upon the idea that it sound like a train whistle, so they start monkeying around with it, and the first thing you know, they had the "Farewell Blues." And of course, the more they played the "Farewell Blues" the better it got, better they played it. A fellow that was kind of manager there for Mike Fritzel at Friars Inn, a fellow named Sammy Mueller [spelling ?]--now, I don't know how true that is, but he told me

that he bought the "Farewell Blues" from them for \$100 in cash, and later on gave it back to them, because he didn't know what to do with it. Of course, I never seen any of the \$100 either. But anyway, that's where the "Farewell Blues" originated, and that's how it originated--blowing tones that sounded like a train whistle. Course, the rest was somebody put in two bars here, and let's try this and try that, and between the whole crowd the "Farewell Blues" was born and progressed. But--

[Souchon:] Well, now, how long were you all in Friars Inn?

[Loyacano:] Well, I don't know; like I told you before, I wasn't there too long myself when it began to wear on me; I never was much for those all-night deals; I didn't care about working all night. The money was good; made a \$150-200 a week, maybe \$50 tips included, added in to all of that. But after all, what good was the money if you didn't feel like you wanted it? I would much rather play for some place for \$40 a week and get the kicks out of playing.

[Souchon:] Well, the records you cut with them, they weren't the first records that you made, were they?

[Loyacano:] No, no, I cut some records with Jimmy Durante in 1919.

[Souchon:] You did? What group was that?

[Loyacano:] Jimmy Durante's band.

[Souchon:] Didn't they call themselves the Original New Orleans Jazz Band, or something like that? [See discographies under ^{original}New Orleans Jazz Band]

[Loyacano:] I don't know what the name of the thing was on the label, but we made the Emersons. And they had a piano up there [that] at that time was worth \$1500--the biggest thing you ever seen.

[Souchon:] How many pieces, how many band--how many pieces in the

band?

[Loyacano:] Well, we had five men; I played drums with that outfit.

[Souchon:] And you cut how many sides?

[Loyacano:] Oh, I think it was four sides.

[Souchon:] And you cut--you played drums, you say, with them?

[Loyacano:] Yes. This "Lazy Daddy" tune that the [Original] Dixieland [Jazz] Band stole, that belonged to my brother Jack; see, Jack was playing trombone; [Alfred] Pansy Laine was playing trumpet--Jack was playing trombone, that's right; Pansy Laine, trumpet--and Baquet, Achille Baquet was playing clarinet; Jimmy played piano and I played drums.

[Souchon:] What was the name of it? Durante's?--

[Loyacano:] Jimmy Durante.

[Souchon:] Yeah. Well, his band, did he call it "Jimmy Durante's Band"?

[Loyacano:] Yeah, yeah. That was at 125th Street and 7th Avenue, in the Alamo [Cafe].

[Souchon:] You recorded that in New York?

[Loyacano:] Yes, [at the] Emerson Studios [Phonograph Company 3].

[Souchon:] That was when you up there with [Tom] Brown's outfit?

[Loyacano:] Oh, no, with Durante.

[Souchon:] No, but I mean, I thought maybe you had busted loose and gone with them.

[Loyacano:] Oh, no, no, I went there with Durante from New Orleans here. (I think I skipped myself somewhere; I got a little premature.) After the New Orleans Rhythm Kings--or before the New Orleans Rhythm Kings, I should say, I was with Durante, in 1919. And I quit--

[Souchon:] He came to New Orleans, Durante?

[Loyacano:] Durante? No, no, he sent a telegram here, to my brother Jack, who he had know before the war, you see--he used to call Jack "Old Professor Hick," "Old Hick"--and he asked Jack if he could get some men, and so Jack got the men; he got Pansy Laine and me.

[Souchon:] Was he any good on piano, Durante?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah, he's a good musician; reads well, too; plays for singers and all that.

[Souchon:] Was he as nuts then as he is now?

[Loyacano:] Worse! he was worse.

[Souchon:] Did he hit the bottle?

[Loyacano:] No, Jimmy wasn't a drinking man.

[Souchon:] He wasn't, huh?

[Loyacano:] No. We used to come out of the Alamo at one o'clock, and he'd start down 125th Street, and he'd walk out in the middle of the street and wave his hands and say, "Good night, boys!", and he was gone again. And he'd go as far as we could hear him and holler "good night, boy." You see, he lived on Park Avenue with his family--the old Park Avenue, where the New York Central trains used to come in; they were underground, you see, and it's all open there. He lived there with his folks. I've been over to his house many times. He was Italian; mother was a nice old lady. Course--

[Souchon:] Didn't you all have a nickname for him then, about his nose? [Didn't you all have a ?]?

[Loyacano:] No, no; they used to call him "Big-nose Jimmy" and "Big-feet Jimmy." Did you ever notice his feet?

[Souchon:] No.

[Loyacano:] He had long feet, yes sir!

[Souchon:] Well, those were the first sides you cut, then, huh?

[Loyacano:] Well, yes.

[Souchon:] Well, didn't you cut some sides--you weren't in on that Halfway House?--

[Loyacano:] No.

[Souchon:] Wait now--the recording is "Barataria" and "Pussy Cat"?

[Joe Loyacano on trombone]

[Loyacano:] No, I wasn't in on that, no.

[Souchon:] You didn't take part in the four sides that [Johnny] Bayersdorfer cut--"Waffle Man Blues" and "I Wonder Where My Easy Rider's Riding Tonight"?

[Loyacano:] No, I wasn't in on that.

[Souchon:] Did you play--cut any with Sharkey [Bonano], except recently, in the old days?

[Loyacano:] No.

[Souchon:] Never did, huh?

[Loyacano:] No; I knew Sharkey, But I never did play in his band or I didn't make any records with him.

[Souchon:] Well, now, when you cut your records with the Rhythm Kings, you were still working for them at Friars, huh?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yes, but you see, the bass wouldn't take; the bass wouldn't take, and the clarinet had to sit up on a high chair and play into a long horn. Not like today; everything was different. Course--

[Souchon:] But you're on those sides just the same? [Leaving] [See side 16 and 17]

[Loyacano:] Well, the bass went along to give them moral encouragement, I guess, help them--

[Souchon:] Did you hit it soft because if you hit it hard it would

jump the needle off the track?

[Loyacano:] Yeah; it would snap like a firecracker. Course, later on they did away with all that, too. But after the Rhythm Kings--see, I knew I didn't want that long job, and I was kind of--well, I just didn't want it; I wasn't used to working all night and come out there six, seven, eight o'clock on a Sunday morning, and it was like a bunch of owls, and the sun would shine in your eyes and blind you. It was too hard, too hard--

[Souchon:] How long did you work there?

[Loyacano:] Oh, I must have worked there about a year and a half or two; I disremember right now just how long I did work there, but--

[Souchon:] When you left there, did you still stay in music?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah, sure, sure.

[Souchon:] Where?

[Loyacano:] When I left the Rhythm Kings, I went over to the Playhouse Theater, on Michigan Avenue, and I worked there. I worked in the pit, and then I'd double on the stage, and I was actually getting more money for the two jobs than I was for the Rhythm Kings, all night.

[Souchon:] Uh-huh. Well, did you have a day show and a night show?

[Loyacano:] No, we had only two matinees a week.

[Souchon:] And then every night, huh? But that was over at eleven o'clock, wasn't it?

[Loyacano:] Why, sure, ten minutes to eleven or so. You see, I'd play the show in the pit, and Roscoe Ales [spelling ?] was the last act--they didn't have any finale; it was the last act and--or did they? I don't know now, I think they did have an ensemble for a finale. And I stayed right up on the stage and

finished up till the curtain come down, and took the--I had two basses, one on the stage and one down in the pit, because it was too much trouble trying to get through those cramped quarters, you know, and it was too much trouble trying to get through those little passageways and all. Anyway, I worked there, and I used to go over there and see my boy friends and ask them if they were tuned up yet. I'd be out on the street eleven o'clock, ten after eleven; shucks, they didn't even have their horns warmed by that time. I'd go home and try to catch up on some sleep.

[Souchon:] Well, did you take any daytime job, other than the music then.

[Loyacano:] No, no.

[Souchon:] You were doing all right with your double job?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah, Well, I was making big money at the Playhouse and 'cause--I belonged to the union at that time; I had to, because if you weren't in the union they wouldn't hire you--I was getting pit money and I was getting stage money, too, so I was doing all right.

[Souchon:] Well, Arnold, did--who took your place with the Rhythm Kings?

[Loyacano:] Oh, Steve Brown.

[Souchon:] Steve Brown.

[Loyacano:] Yes, he was in town.

[Souchon:] Was he as good a bass player as people say he is?

[Loyacano:] Well, he was very good, in my estimation, one of the best until better men came along and then made him look bad. But he did play with some fine bands; he played with Art Kassel for a long time [and] he played with Jean Goldkette in Detroit, a long time. He played good, very good.

[Souchon:] You know, he's supposed to be the first one that ever slapped a bass on a record.

[Loyacano:] Well, that's possible.

[Souchon:] And I think it was with Jean Goldkette's orchestra.

[On "Dinah"]

[Loyacano:] Yeah, it's possible that he is.

[Souchon:] Because I think they had perfected the recording mechanism so they could do that then.

[Loyacano:] Oh, that was later, after the Rhythm Kings; it must have been, because it wasn't any good--course, I used to pick the bass with the Rhythm Kings.

[Souchon:] Well, can't you remember as far back as you know that they always--they didn't always pick it, but they always at some time or other picked the bass.

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah, sure, sure.

[Souchon:] In fact, they picked it more than they used the bow, way, way back.

[Loyacano:] Sure, sure, because the bow was a separate technique; that was a technique in itself. After I went to Chicago and I was there about a year and a half or so, I went over to Zweifel [spelling ?] and I took [lessons on] the bow for six months--nothing else, just bow technique. And--

[Souchon:] Did you ever teach music?

[Loyacano:] No, I didn't teach, but--incidentally, that great bow technique that I had, when I tried out for the [Chicago] Symphony in 1938 and '39, they kept me because of the fact that I had a good bow hand; that's what he told me--Arthur Zach was the conductor; he said, "I like you technique and you're going to stay," and they were turning them away just like raindrops; right and left they

were leaving there with the bass. [But he said--?]

[Souchon:] You've had no desire to play symphony any more?

[Loyacano:] Well, there wasn't anything in it. What kind of money could you make playing it?

[Souchon:] But I mean now that they are having a come-back, and all that?

[Loyacano:] Well, no, it's too precise; it's too much work for the money you receive--all them rehearsals and dress rehearsals, and there's a pressure on you that you dassent make a mistake; it's like TV or radio. If you make a record--I remember one time we made some records with Sharkey, we took nineteen takes--nineteen!

[Souchon:] On one tune?

[Loyacano:] Nineteen takes on the same tune. Now--

[Souchon:] That was for Capitol?

[Loyacano:] Yes; it was with Lizzie Miles, too. They just couldn't seem to fit the thing together; they were always blowing it up; after about the first fifteen [or] eighteen bars that was it. The guy [recording director ?] was getting mad; he said, "You better take some time out." So we took some time out, ten or fifteen minutes; came back and the first take was perfect.

[Souchon:] Sure.

[Loyacano:] Passed it.

[Souchon:] That's like--that's the same thing as forgetting a word you want to think of, and when you change the subject the work will pop into your head.

[Loyacano:] That's right, that's right. Well, you can make mistakes on records, but you can't do that on TV.

[Souchon:] Now, Arnold, when you left the Rhythm Kings and played in that pit orchestra--where was it, the Palace, you said?

[Loyacano:] No, that was at the Playhouse Theater.

[Souchon:] Playhouse, yeah. How long did you work there, a couple of years?

[Loyacano:] No, I worked there only for the duration of the run of the show--I don't know just how long; I never did make any mental notations of how long it did run--but it ran quite a while. And when the show closed, Roscoe Ales [spelling ?] had some good bookings and I went out in vaudeville with him.

[Souchon:] What was he, a dance[r]?

[Loyacano:] Yes.

[Souchon:] And he had a band back of him on the stage?

[Loyacano:] Yes.

[Souchon:] [They were ?] not New Orleans men?

[Loyacano:] No.

[Souchon:] Did they play anything like Dixie[land]?

[Loyacano:] No.

[Souchon:] They didn't, huh?

[Loyacano:] No Dixie, no; he wanted it note for note like it was.

[Souchon:] What was it, soft-shoe stuff he was doing?

[Loyacano:] No, he was doing "eccentric" dancing, and they had to-- well, the drummer had to spot him: when he put his foot down, he had to give him the crash or the drums--you know, [for a spot his foot ?], and this, that and the other. I was playing drums with that band. And I was out with him for about six or seven months, and I said 'shucks'--him and I got into it one day; he said I didn't and I said I did, and I told him I'd played for just as good a dancers as he was. So we came back into Chicago, and [when] we got back to Chicago, I quit; I told him, "I'm through." So--

[Souchon:] Then what happened?

[Loyacano:] Well, let me see now--where did I go from there? I just can't think right off-hand where I did go from Roscoe Ales.

[Souchon:] Well, now, can I ask this now? Did you continue in music for many years after that?

[Loyacano:] Oh, sure, sure--

[Souchon:] How long was it before you came back to New Orleans to live?

[Loyacano:] Well, I came here in 1949.

[Souchon:] That's when you came back permanently?

[Loyacano:] In May--

[Souchon:] When did you marry Rose?

[Loyacano:] Oh, that was September 25, 1924.

[Souchon:] In Chicago?

[Loyacano:] Crown Point.

[Souchon:] Crown Point, eh?

[Loyacano:] Yeah, Crown Point, Indiana.

[Souchon:] Where was she from, Indiana?

[Loyacano:] She was from Richmond, Indiana.

[Souchon:] Uh-huh. What was her name before you married her?

[Loyacano:] Smith.

[Souchon:] Rose Smith.

[Loyacano:] Yeah--common old Smith name. She was managing the Washington Hotel coffee shop, and I met her, and it didn't take me long to find out that she was in love with me moreso that I was with her. I don't know why.

[Souchon:] Well, what--she was too nice to you when you went in to eat?

[Loyacano:] Well, it was obvious; I couldn't even--

[Souchon:] I'm not going to play this part of the tape back for Rose, either.

[Loyacano:] It was obvious; she told me many, many times, says, "I didn't like you when I first met you, but you grew on me." I don't think that's true; I think she's just--

[Souchon:] You all never had any children, huh, Arnold?

[Loyacano:] No, no children, no. Cost a lot of money, Doc, and I was making good money--

[Souchon:] I guess you spent a lot of money for expenses, trying to find out why, huh?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yes, yes. Well, I had specialists: I had women specialists, baby specialists; I took her to Dr. Stovell [spelling ?] in Minneapolis and I was making good money, and I didn't care. But they didn't seem to know what the trouble was; they even tested me out, said, "It ain't you." So I said, "Well, if it ain't me, it must be her." So, I don't know. I finally got a-hold of Dr. Oates [spelling ?], and Dr. Oates says, "Well, there's only one way that you could have a child; that would be to inject the semen into the womb and cause it." So I said, "Well, never mind; that's un-natural, I don't want it that way." Then they asked me why I didn't adopt a child; I told them I didn't want to. I was the of the type that I would always know that that wasn't my kid; I don't know, I just can't help it.

[Souchon:] Arnold, does Rose like music?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah, but she likes the better class of music.

[Souchon:] Symphony, and stuff like that?

[Loyacano:] Yeah. You see, Rose was a great dancer; you wouldn't think that, but when I married Rose, she weighed 136 pounds; she was really built--everything. But after a while, it seemed like the--

well, I consulted the doctor; I became worried when she went down to about 112 pounds for no reason at all. So, the doctor told me that he thought it was the let-down from the strenuous exercise and no exercise at all, and not eating. You know, I seen Rose the time when she could take a sirloin and really do justice to it.

[Souchon:] Destroy it.

[Loyacano:] Destroy it is right! But she kept going down and down; I was worried; I didn't think it was natural--

[Souchon:] But does she object to Dixieland music?

[Loyacano:] She doesn't particularly like it; she likes more of the opera or symphony or sentimental ballads, something with a nice, flowing melody; she don't care for Dixieland. I think the reason why Rose don't care much for Dixieland is because they play too loud. I think if she would of heard the Rhythm Kings she would have liked them.

[Souchon:] Well, that's a mistake that all the bands make now, Arnold; they don't have to blow their brains out to play good jazz.

[Loyacano:] Oh, well, you see, it was a second nature with the New Orleans Rhythm Kings because of the fact that at Friars Inn you could almost reach up and touch the ceiling, and if you blew--

[Souchon:] You had to restrain it?

[Loyacano:] Oh, Lord, if you played loud, you'd drive everybody out of the place.

[Souchon:] Did Mares use a mute?

[Loyacano:] Paul?

[Souchon:] Uh-huh.

[Loyacano:] Oh, yes, he used a mute and he used an old felt hat that he had a slot cut in that he'd drop it halfway over his trumpet. I don't know who suggested that, but somebody in the band suggested

it--rather than have--because Paul used to always complain that he couldn't keep his lip up unless he blew. So they said, "Well, why don't you muffle it and just leave that little space where the tone comes out?" So he put the felt hat over the horn and cut it and left a little space where the tone could come out, and he could play hard as--blow his brains out, but that muted it, you see; and also, the trumpet came through with a good trumpet tone. And Brunis--well, Brunis, he didn't have to blow so loud. Rap, once in a while he'd get over the traces; he'd blow real loud every--
[Souchon:] Do you consider him as great as people make him out today?

[Loyacano:] Roppolo?

[Souchon:] Uh-huh.

[Loyacano:] I think that Roppolo had a style all his own; Shields was a copyist; Rap never could--I don't think--

[Souchon:] [I'm talking ?] about tone.

[Loyacano:] Tone? At times it was beautiful; when he played sub-tone in the low register, if he didn't squeak he could really play it beautiful. Rap's playing was an individualist--I'd call him an individual stylist; the records will prove that.

[Souchon:] At the time he was working with you all, he was behaving himself all right?

[Loyacano:] Oh, he was smoking muggles [marijuana].

[Souchon:] He was, huh?

[Loyacano:] Yeah.

[Souchon:] Was he drinking, too?

[Loyacano:] Yes, he was smoking muggles and drinking, too. Even when they had the second edition of the Rhythm Kings, he was a member of it, and that's where he went crazy, you know--in

Minneapolis. I was instrumental in having him arrested and sent home. You see, there was a hold-up up by Loring [spelling ?] Park, where I lived on Oak Grove [St. or Ave ?]--and Rap lived on Oak Grove, too, but west of me--and the fellow's description tallied with Rap's, although I know Rap didn't do it, because Rap was working with us, he couldn't have done it. So, one night Rap don't show up; he comes up missing, and everybody's wondering. We got a-hold of his wife; [she] said, "I don't know where he is. . . ."

END OF REEL III
ARNOLD LOYACANO
SEPTEMBER 29, 1956

[Loyacano:] We got a-hold of his wife; [she] said, "I don't know where he is; he went to work," and all this. So I got a-hold of the police department and told them that Rap would answer to the description of this guy almost, and I said, "I think he's lost his memory, he's had a lapse of memory," and I said, "If you see him, don't shoot him, just pick him up." And I [said ?] them my name and address and telephone [and said], "If you'll call me, I'll come down and identify him for you." So, they finally caught him; he was in a grocery store--combination grocery and fruit--he was eating bananas, picking them off the stalk. So, the banana people, the man that owned the place, he didn't know who Rap was, but he had read the description of the burglar, highwayman--I think he killed that boy that he stuck up, or he injured him very badly, because he was badly wanted by the law--and they called up and told the law, "I think your man is here." Well, they came in; they grabbed Rap and he took them down to jail. He didn't even--

[Souchon:] Was he disoriented?

[Loyacano:] Why, he didn't even know he was going to jail!

[Souchon:] I know; he didn't know what was happening.

[Loyacano:] No; he was just eating bananas off a stalk.

[Souchon:] Had he been wandering around or what?

[Loyacano:] Wandering around in the cold, with a little, short overcoat on. The only trouble, though, you see: he hocked one of his clarinets for a pistol, and he had that pistol in his pocket.

[Souchon:] Oh, that's bad.

[Loyacano:] And we had an awful lot of talking to do to get him squared up. Course, it was easy when we got the manager of the barroom to go down there--McCluskey [or McCloskey ?].

[Souchon:] He testified he was playing?

[Loyacano:] He went down--sure, he went down to the police station and well, he's a well-known man around town, anyhow, and I think that possibly he's--

[Souchon:] That was in Minneapolis?

[Loyacano:] Yes.

[Souchon:] What year, do you remember?

[Loyacano:] Well, no, I can't just say off-hand what year it was.

[Souchon:] It wasn't 1920, was it?

[Loyacano:] No--

[Souchon:] Later than that?

[Loyacano:] Yeah, that was about [19]30--oh, I'd say '38, maybe '39--about that time; it'd be about that time.

[Machine off]

[Loyacano:] No, on second thought, I'm pretty positive it was in the fall of 1924, or possibly '25, but I'm pretty positive it was in 1924 that we were in Minneapolis.

[Souchon:] You remember the name of the place where you played up there?

[Loyacano:] We played the Marigold Ballroom--yeah. I also slipped up on a good one.

[Souchon:] What's that?

[Loyacano:] Sig Meyer's band.

[Souchon:] Oh, you were telling me about him.

[Loyacano:] You asked me sometime ago about what happened when I left the Playhouse. Well, I worked the Playhouse, and it was through the New Orleans Rhythm Kings at Friars Inn that I went to work with Sig Meyer. When Sig approached me about the thing he didn't offer me much money, but he offered me a short job, and that

was 8:30 till 12:00 [P.M.]; it was five sessions a week: Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday night, Sunday night and Sunday afternoon--three hours on Sunday afternoon. Now, we kept dickering back and forth with Sig Meyer about the job; I told him I didn't need the job, [that] he needed me worse than I needed the job. So, we finally got together and so we finally, I finally settled for \$95 a week, and I was a couple of months with him and he gave me five dollars raise, because I knew that [the] other fellows were getting a [\$]100, and I knowed darn good and well that what I added to the band was worth the other [\$]5, and Sig knew it, so I--

[Souchon:] Was that a big band, Arnold?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yes, it was ten men.

[Souchon:] That was the day when the swing was starting to come in, instead of jazz.

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah--ten men. Oh, Sig had some good men in his band; he had fellows like Volly deFaut, Muggsy Spanier, Bob Puselli ^{Pacelli} *See John Steiner to ABC, Feb. 7, 1979 and Jan. 4, 1979*
[spelling ?]--you haven't heard much of him recently; he [?] in the last twenty years or so, I think Bob is just wrapped up--he went in for the motion picture business; he didn't care too much about the music. Shorty Williamson, Georgie Petroni ³ [spelling ?] Earl Andrews-- *See John Steiner to ABC, Feb. 7, 1979 and Jan. 4, 1979*

[Souchon:] Sig played fiddle?

[Loyacano:] Sig played fiddle, yes. I was with the band, too--

[Souchon:] Did he double on anything else?

[Loyacano:] No, a good part of the time he just waved his bow, but Sig was a good, schooled musician. I think that he would have--

[Souchon:] Well, you were with him a long time, weren't you?

[Loyacano:] I was with him fifty-three months.

[Souchon:] Good night!

[Loyacano:] Did you ever hear of a fellow named Marvin Saxby?

[Souchon:] Yeah!

[Loyacano:] Well, Saxby was the guitar player. Saxby was an exceptional, outstanding guy at that time--as a matter of fact, when the first amplifiers came out, Lyon and Healy [music company] hired Saxby to demonstrate them, in the afternoon. I understand the pay was pretty good; course, I don't know what he got, but he said he was getting well-paid. So, I stayed with Sig four years and five months, and then, my good friend, Muggsy, he was the cause of me leaving Sig. Because, you see, I was the highest-priced man in the band, after all those years; I was getting real money. And Sig paid in check; I made the mistake one night of cashing my check at the drug store on the corner, and devil-faced Muggsy Spanier saw it, and that started the trouble. Sig didn't want me to quit, but I told him I didn't want to work with people like that, and I knew he wouldn't fire Muggsy, so--all right. Rap worked with Sig, too, you know--Roppolo.

[Souchon:] Did he?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yeah.

[Souchon:] In the same band with you?

[Loyacano:] No, that was just before I joined them. Sig had about the fastest band in Chicago at that time; [unintelligible].

[Souchon:] Was Roppolo a reader, too?

[Loyacano:] No--

[Souchon:] No, huh?

[Loyacano:] No, he couldn't read a note big as a bass fiddle.

[Souchon:] How did he play a sax? Did you like his sax style all right?

[Loyacano:] Well, he played all right, but I've heard better.

[Souchon:] You liked his clarinet playing?

[Loyacano:] Better, much better, yeah.

[Souchon:] Have you ever heard him and Charlie Cordilla work together?

[Loyacano:] No.

[Souchon:] Never have, huh?

[Loyacano:] No, I don't think I have; I don't remember it.

[Souchon:] Because those were the last records that Rap was on was the Halfway House, you see--and, that's when--Charlie was telling me some cute things that happened with Rap, that he got mad and didn't show up for a session. [restricted part.]

[Loyacano:] Well, you see, that gives you some slight idea of how serious they were about musicians and the music [played ?].

[Souchon:] Well, one thing that keeps coming to my mind, and I'm glad I thought of it before this tape runs out--I noticed, in looking at all the old records--which is the only way that I can really look back and remember these fellows--the number of times the same fellows played with different bands. Was it because they were having fights and squabbles, and quitting and going to somebody else, or what?

[Loyacano:] Well, if there,--if the records were made here, some of these bands still adhered to the old principle: they'd hire the same man to play with three, four, five different bands because he's good, because they think he's the best. But there is no such a thing

as "the best."

[Souchon:] Well, you know what I'm trying to lead up to is this: you take what's going on in New Orleans today, it's the same damn thing; you'll find the same musicians [playing ?] with all different kinds of bands.

[Loyacano:] Yeah, because they think he's the best.

[Souchon:] No, sometimes you hear them around here: "I wouldn't play with so and so." You know that kind of business there?

[Loyacano:] Yeah, that's just so much talk; I've heard it, too. They call the man all kind of dirty names and everything else, and wouldn't play with him--like Chink Martin: he said he wouldn't play with Sharkey [Bonano] again if he was the last man in the world.

[Souchon:] Well, what happened between them?

[Loyacano:] I don't know. But when I saw Chink Martin on Royal Street, and he was working with Sharkey, I said, "What happened, the world coming to and end? Sharkey [unintelligible] you told me that you wouldn't work with Sharkey if he was the last man in the world. You must be all by yourself." He walked away; he didn't answer me or anything, he just walked away, and I think he's sore at me ever since.

[Souchon:] He's not with Sharkey on this trip, is he?

[Loyacano:] No, no--

[Souchon:] You know who Sharkey's got with him? I don't.

[Loyacano:] Bunny Franks.

[Souchon:] Oh, has he?

[Loyacano:] Yeah, got Bunny Franks.

[Souchon:] And who else?

[Loyacano:] Oh, I don't know who else. Somebody told me; I don't know; I didn't even see him; somebody--

*The story
P. 180-183
is back
in the
2020 by Al
Reel may be
relevant here.*

[Souchon:] I just found out last week that he was gone, because I've got his sister-in-law, Mrs. Ziegler [spelling ?], in Mercy [Hospital] between life and death--a heart attack.

[Loyacano:] I didn't know he was gone, either.

[Souchon:] Tell me he won't be back until after the next year, because he's got contracts--he's now at the

[Loyacano:] Central America trip?

[Souchon:] No, he's going to Canada, New York--

[Loyacano:] Well, he's all right, as far as the word goes, but he's another crazy guy.

[Souchon:] I don't understand that; that boy's a fine trumpet player,--

[Loyacano:] [Unintelligible], Doc, he don't know when he's well-off; that's his trouble.

[Souchon:] That's right.

[Loyacano:] He won't--thinks what he don't know, nobody else knows. But as far as travel and experience on the road, not only with bands [but] with shows, with almost every kind of entertainment, I could give him cards and spades and beat him, because I--all told, I spent about twelve, fifteen years just on the road alone, so I know darn good and well he hasn't--

[Souchon:] What other businesses have you been in, other than the musician business?

[Loyacano:] Well, that's all, except for a year and a half I worked for the government. But I never cared for anything else but music; I preferred to play music because it was easy, because the remuneration [sic] was big, and it was a clean job, and except for a few cafes where I had to inhale all that smoke and stink every night--my jobs were mostly in dance halls, or in theaters,

because I picked them that way; I didn't try to jump the gun; I'd wait until the job was open and then I applied for it, or they asked me. I wanted to stay out of cafes, you see--I worked for a long time in Henry [Gendren ?] [Jenman's ?], but he worked the cream of the crop, because he was working for Bouchet [spelling ?], and Bouchet has one of the most beautiful, I think it's the most beautiful cafe in the world, out there in Northbrook, Illinois. The grounds are, well, the grounds are worth better than a million dollars, alone; it's a beautiful place.

[Souchon:] [I've] never seen it.

[Loyacano:] Oh, [you] haven't seen any cafe until you see that; that's really big. He has a river running through his property--a small river--and he has these gondolas and gondoliers dressed like Italians--they are Italians, but dressed just like over in Naples, in Italy--and they ride the people up and down on the river at night in those gondolas, and--

[Souchon:] You ever been to Europe?

[Loyacano:] Oh, yes.

[Souchon:] With a band, or?--

[Loyacano:] No, not with no band, no; I was over there with the Army.

[Souchon:] Arnold, have you ever been stranded any place?

[Loyacano:] No--you mean with no money?

[Souchon:] [With not enough dough ?] to get home?

[Loyacano:] Oh, no, oh, no.

[Souchon:] How many musicians had to write home or wire home?--

[Loyacano:] Like I told you before--

[Souchon:] And send a collect telegram?

[Loyacano:] With [Tom] Brown's band, I always--even until today,

if I go to Jackson, Mississippi, or two hundred miles or four hundred miles, I always want to have enough in my pocket that I won't have to walk, so that I [can] ride back, I won't have to take and thumb my way on highways, either. Or else, if I can't make it that way, I won't go. Uh-uh; I never was where I had to--

[Souchon:] Well, Arnold, I've been sweating you for almost two hours, and I think we're going to call it a day, and thank you so very much, because I realize I've just begun to scratch the surface of all your store of knowledge. We had hoped to have Bud Loyacano in on this, but he lives across the river and I couldn't get over there--I have an obstetrical case that may bust loose--so we're going to resume this another time when we can have the two of them together, Arnold Loyacano and Bud, where they will probably stimulate each other into much more memories than we have. And I surely thank you.

[Loyacano:] Yeah. You bring up some names that I don't know, I guess.

[Souchon:] Thanks again, Arnold.

[Loyacano:] You're entirely welcome, Doc.

END OF REEL IV
ARNOLD LOYACANO
SEPTEMBER 29, 1956