

AL MORGAN

Reel I [of 2]

August 19, 1958 Also present: William Russell

[Russell:] O.K., I guess it's going if you want to give your name. You don't have to get close; just sit back and relax.

[Morgan:] O. K.

[Russell:] It'll pick up anything in the room.

[Morgan:] Well, my name is Al Morgan.

[Russell:] Is [there?] any middle name by the way?

[Morgan:] No, well they--my full name--call me Albert, but I've always--everybody--I went [with says ?] they liked Al--

[Russell:] That's right. That's all I ever heard.

[Morgan:] For short. (Laughs)

[Russell:] [?] I didn't know until last night I heard somebody call you Albert. When were you born? Remember your birth date?

[Morgan:] Oh yes, I was born, about forty-two years ago. That's August the nineteenth, by the way, today is my birthday. (Laughs)

[Russell:] [?] Oh my! What a time to hit [?]
What was the year then? Let me see, nineteen--

[Morgan:] Oh boy, let me see. We have to go--

[Russell:] Forty-two--

[Morgan:] Back, that should be from now, about--

[Russell:] 1916, would that be about--

[Morgan:] 19--uh--about 1912--

[Russell:] 1912.

[Morgan:] Something like that.

[Russell:] Yeah, well, anyway--

[Morgan:] Just about. Well, it's close.

[Russell:] Yeah, do you remember your first music you ever heard when you were a kid? Was it your brothers' playing or [your folks?]

[Morgan:] Well, yes, I remember lots about my brothers' playing, way before I ever started, you see. Because--

[Russell:] You can just sit back there if you like. [This is a ?] long distance microphone.

[Morgan:] My brother Sam, specially. He was the oldest one, and he have always played the trumpet, see. And I--from a young kid I used to like to hear him play and the band he had then during those years when I was a kid. I was crazy about bass playing, you see.

[Russell:] [?]

[Morgan:] So, perhaps you've heard of the Simon Marrero--

[Russell:] Oh, yes, I know Lawrence [Marrero--

[Morgan:] Yes, yes, the brother--

[Russell:] He's a good friend of mine, Lawrence--

[Morgan:] He had another brother--

[Russell:] John Marrero--

[Morgan:] John, John--

[Russell:] He died--

[Morgan:] That's right. Used to play with the [Original] Tuxedo Band, wasn't it?

[Russell:] He went to New York and died in the 1940's.

[Morgan:] Oh, is that so?

[Russell:] [Many ?] years ago.

[Morgan:] I see, I'm sorry to hear that.

[Russell:] But Lawrence is living there [in New Orleans], and--

[Morgan:] That's the same--'40, '40--that's the same year I was in New York. Around Ryan's, Jimmy Ryan's--

[Russell:] I never met him, but I remember when I was there in 19--I was there exactly 1940, and they said, "John Marrero lives up wh--at--Red Allen knew where he was. [But I never got to meet him?]. It seems like just, oh, two or three years later he was dead. I'm pretty sure [of it; it was?] [19]43 he died. That's when I met Lawrence [Marrero], in 1942. [I believe he [was-wasn't?] dead by then?].

[Morgan:] Well, I do remember the first--this is why I say-- mention Simon, because he was the first man that I had in mind, of playing bass, you see.

[Russell:] You remember the father, Billy Marrero?

[Morgan:] No, I don't remember the father, but I've heard a lot of him, you see.

[Russell:] [He was in?] the Superior Band [i.e., as bassist and manager].

[Morgan:] Yes, [some?] say he was a great bass player--

[Russell:] Oh, I was going to ask you, what part of town--

[Morgan:] In those days.

[Russell:] Where were you born? In what part of town were you raised?

[Morgan:] I was raised around Ursuline and Dauphine [Streets], around that territory. That's more the French part of town--

[Russell:] [?] French Quarter [?]

[Morgan:] Italian, you know. Near the French Market, up there. Because Sam used to live there; Ursuline and Dauphine, near Bourbon.

[Cf ANOJ files and Soard's...City Directories]

[Russell:] Sam's wife still lives on Ursuline, I believe, back--

[Morgan:] But a little further back--

[Russell:] Back near [Marais ?].

[Morgan:] But they still live in that same--yeah.

[Russell:] Back near (background noise--speech unintelligible) or Marais.

[It was on Dumaine on a corner, if I remember correctly--RBA, Apr. 7, 1972.]

[Morgan:] They've always lived around in that--the French Market part of town.

[Russell:] Can you remember the earliest band you heard? Were they your brother's [?]. Did your mother and father play anything, by the way.

[Morgan:] No.

[Russell:] Were they musical? Sing any at all?

[Morgan:] No, my--all my people was Baptist, you know. The religion type of people. I think it's--everything when they start this music business, it started with Sam [Morgan] and then on the brothers picked it up.

[Russell:] Sam was the oldest one then.

[Morgan:] Yes he was--the oldest one, then Robert, the one that died not very long ago, last--

[Russell:] [Unintelligible.]

[Morgan:] No, I know you don't know him. Well he never did play music, see. And then Isaiah, Andrew, and myself.

[Russell:] [Those were the only two that I know of ?]

[Morgan:] Yeah.

[Russell:] Can you remember any of the early bands you heard aside from your brother's band?

[Morgan:] Well, yes, you mean the recordings?

[Russell:] No, just really early--when you were a kid; maybe too young to go to a dance even.

[Morgan:] Yes, oh yes, I--

[Russell:] The parades [or?] what you heard when you were [a kid ?].

[Morgan:] Oh yes, I used to watch parades; [some of ?] the most fabulous things, you know, [and ?] fascinating, you know. Gee, I've enjoyed parades. Sometimes the boys used to get pretty rough, following those second liners there, you know. People had--youngsters had bad ideas during those days. [The ?] different gangs would meet [at ?] parades and start fights and so on like that. I guess the music was driving them wild during those days.

[Russell:] I've heard that they cross from one ward to another, and the other gang wouldn't want 'em to come in to their territory or something [of that kind ?].

[Morgan:] Yes.

[Russell:] Nothing like that goes on now, but the parades are still pretty good.

[Morgan:] Oh yes, yeah, I remember all the funerals and so on like that, and how they would play going and coming back.

[Russell:] Yeah, they still have all that.

[Morgan:] I've heard many people ask about those stories of New Orleans, and all the bands and what they do, and if it's true, and so I says, "Why sure." Right on Jimmy Ryan's on 52nd Street I used to meet lots of kids, college kids, and they would ask me about different things like that. Say "Well, it's true." As much as I could think back, you know, think of.

[Russell:] When you started in music, what was your first instrument? Did you start on bass?

[Morgan:] Yes, my first instrument was bass, because it was fascinating to me. I used to watch--sit there and watch--Simon Marrero, and my brother, my oldest brother [Sam Morgan], used to [always say ?], "Don't bother that man." (laughs.) "Let him play his instrument." So, I'll never forget, Simon told my brother one day, he says, "Sam," he say, "You don't know,

this boy might be a great bass player some day," he says--

[Russell:] [Unintelligible.]

[Morgan:] "Let him go, if he want to learn." And another fellow, used to play trombone, his name was, I think, Hank, Hank,

[Russell:] All I knew was Jim Robinson, later on in--played for years [?].

[Morgan:] No, before Jim Robinson. Hank is--Yank, Yank, or Hank--

[Russell:] Oh, Yank Johnson--

[Morgan:] Yes, from Algiers.

[Russell:] Yeah, two brothers, Buddy Johnson and--

[Morgan:] Yes, Buddy Johnson, that's right--

[Russell:] Yank played trombone.

[Morgan:] That's right--

[Russell:] He died a long time ago, and nobody I've ever talked to knew anything about him. You're the first one that's mentioned him since Bunk Johnson used to talk about him.

[Morgan:] Is that so? Yes, oh, wonderful trombone [player ?].

[Russell:] So Yank was in that band.

[Morgan:] Yes, he was. His drummer then was Alfred--Alfred--oh Jeez, I forgot the last name--

[Russell:] Would it be Alfred Williams?

[Morgan:] Of that guy; he was a fine drummer.

[Russell:] Would it be Alfred Williams by any chance?

[Morgan:] Could be--

[Russell:] He came out with Ory and Professor [Manuel] Manetta--

[Morgan:] Yes, yes, yes.

[Russell:] in 1919. He still plays parades with the Eureka Band.

[Morgan:] Oh is that so? (Laughs.)

[Russell:] [Unintelligible.] I saw him not over a month ago.

[Morgan:] Oh he's a wonderful drummer, that guy. My brother had some fine men with him. And during that time, let me see, who played guitar; I'm trying to think who played--it wasn't guitar then, it was banjo. It was Johnny--Johnny Dave--Johnny Dave--

[Russell:] Was there a fellow by the name of [Narvin] Kimball who played; there was an old man [Henry] Kimball, bass player--

[Morgan:] Oh yes, I know, old man Kimball, and his son.

[Russell:] [Unintelligible.]

[Morgan:] But he wasn't playing with my brother then, no, it was--

[Russell:] [He was a bit ?] later, I believe, [his son is ?].

[Morgan:] It was a fellow by the name of Dave, Johnny Dave--I don't know, it's something like that--

[Russell:] Your older brother will know anyway.

[Morgan:] Yeah. Let me see, now. Before--the bass player was working with him during those big days of my brother--

[Russell:] You know Sidney Brown. He's known as Jim Little--

[Morgan:] No--Jim Little. Yeah, well, Jim Little was in Isaiah's band, see.

[Russell:] That's right. There were the two Morgan bands.

[Morgan:] Yeah, see, they was two Morgan bands; that's what I'm trying to break down now, and I-- [Johnny Dave was with the second band. Cf. other interviews on first band. RBA, Apr. 6, 1972.]

[Russell:] I don't have all that straight, but I'm sure Isaiah could straighten us out on that. He'll give us a good account of that.

[Morgan:] I'm trying to think of the bass player Sam had. He was a little guy, and he had a great big bass. The first time I ever saw a console bass. [Was a ?] great big thing.

[Russell:] Couldn't have been Chester Zardis [who ?] [unintelligible].

[Morgan:] No, let me see. I know his name; he was a very fine bass player. He was the first guy outside of Simon Marrero that--and old man Kimball--

that I've ever saw finger bass correctly, you see.

[Russell:] [Unintelligible.] Jimmy Brown, you remember him?

[Morgan:] Let me see, Jimmy Brown, Jimmy Brown.

[Russell:] He played with Manuel Perez sometimes.

[Morgan:] Manuel Perez, Jimmy Brown, I don't know. Those names now is really gone from me. I used to know that name.

[Russell:] Are there any other bass players you can--you remember Jimmy Johnson when you were a kid?

[Morgan:] Jimmy Johnson, yes, Mr. Johnson. I always called him Mr. Johnson; he was a bass player. Yes, he was another one.

[Russell:] He played uptown mostly, with--

[Morgan:] He was a fine bass player too, yes, he did. All those men used to read very good. They were good readers like old man Kimball, and Jimmy [Johnson], and this fellow that I'm telling you was [with ?] my brother, then. And then Simon--later on when I got with Simon Marrero. He was the first one started me to reading and showed me how to bow bass. And I'll never forget, and he was always right. He says, "Al, listen, what I'm showing you. Always remember to learn [the ?] [to ?] bow; that's what these thing's for."

[Russell:] Like you did last night [with ?].

[Morgan:] He says, "Bow." He says, "Always learn the bow of the bass." And I started with him, and I used to practically live at his house, and I learned a lot from him. He used to repair his own bass, and take them down, and I learned everything about a bass fooling with him, when I was [under his teaching ?].

[Russell:] How old were you when you first started playing [bass ?].

[Morgan:] I was in my teens.

[Russell:] You could reach it [the bass] all right.

[Morgan:] Yes, oh yeah, I could reach.

[Russell:] [You hear some of ?] oh, Johnny Lindsay was another bass player around; came from across the [Mississippi] River.

[Morgan:] Yes, Johnny--but I don't remember Johnny Lindsay as a bass player.

[Russell:] He played trombone.

[Morgan:] Trombone, that's right; now I remember him, but I heard he was bass player, [?] with Piron--no, I don't remember Johnny Lindsay playing bass with Piron.

[Russell:] He played trombone with him I think.

[Morgan:] Well, maybe, yes, yes, he did, because the bass player with Piron, I remember, was Edcudero [i.e., Clarence Ysegurre]; he's a Cuban guy [Cf. other sources, e.g. Peter Bocage interviews?] 'cause he played string bass and bass horn. By the way, when I was with Davy Jones, and he had his band on the Astoria Roof, well he's the first one give me the first lesson on the bass horn; he started me playing bass tuba.

[Russell:] Oh, I heard one rumor once that when you made those records you were so young you had to practically stand on a box, but that it's true.

[I didn't know whether ?] to believe it or not.

[Morgan:] (Laughs.) No, no, I was very young though. He started me on [unintelligible.] bass. "Cause I couldn't read very well, matter of fact I just knowed a couple of notes, I've always known my instrument, see, because it's the first thing they started me from: the old foundation and--

[Russell:] When you started, did you have a three-string bass or four?

[Morgan:] No, but I could play three string. I started with four. Simon Marrero was the one was the one--that's the first thing he told me, he say "You got to play the right type of bass; you got to learn to play the E-string--they all play." That's a funny thing. He say, "It's note[s] on all strings." So I started because--I tell you why: he had a bass method [book]-that's why--you heard this man say I used to pack my book around all the time.

I had to pack the book to watch the notes. I was very serious about this thing, the positions and the different keys and other things. I was studying hard, the hard way, you know, because I didn't have very much teaching right then and there, you know. So, but then I started playing around like the rest of the guys.

[Russell:] Oh, you want to get in? I'll turn it off for a second.

(Machine off.) You might tell us a little bit more about that job at the Astoria Hotel, or what did they call it, ballroom really?

[Morgan:] Yes, it was the Astoria Roof.

[Russell:] Oh, [they got ?] a roof up there?

[Morgan:] Yeah, well no, that's what they called it. [Apparently it was not really a roof.]

[Russell:] They did call it--

[Morgan:] Astoria Roof. Davy Jones developed a very fine band up there. It was one of the trombone player of Celestin's there--Tuxedo--fellow was the trombone--

[Russell:] BÉBÉ Ridgley--[Cf. other sources on Ridgley's Tuxedo.]

[Morgan:] [BÉBÉ ?] Yeah, that's the guy. And we had a nice little band for a long time up there, then. I stayed with him almost--was about to learn to play that bass horn pretty fair. And then--[why ?] the big thing that happened to me, and started me on my real music career, right out of that Astoria Roof: Fate Marable stepped in there. He saw me so--I'll never forget it--one night he come down, and he say, "Kid, I've heard a lot of talk of you so I had to come down and look you over. I can see now what the people want[ed ?]" he says, "I'd like to take you on the boat with me." So I told him, I says, "Well, Mr. Marable, say, I don't read." But he says, "Well, that's all right," he says, "Many of 'em from here, every one I taken from here couldn't read, but you will, if you stick with me a long time." I say, "Well, I don't know, I'll try." So he come back again and

after. So I made up my mind to go with him.

[Russell:] About what year was that?

[Morgan:] That was in the early--the late twenties, the late twenties.

[Russell:] Before we go on to that boat and all, do you remember the very first job you ever played, and the first band you ever [unintelligible]?

[Morgan:] Yeah, well, it was during the time I was learning--when I first started, I bought the bass about the day after Lent, right after Mardi Gras. This Simon Marreró, he sold me a bass for seven dollars, and I will never forget. I had been working as a shoe shine boy then out on Royal, St. Charles Street, like that in those little shoe shine stand, and I made nice money. I had about forty dollars, then, and I give him money to buy me a bow and strings and paid him for the bass so I never [will ?] forget. He bought everything, and strung the bass up.

[Russell:] Only seven dollars for thebass?

[Morgan:] Yeah, for the bass. Yeah, I paid him for the rest of the stuff; he bought me strings and a bow and the resin, everything I had to go with it, and he strung it up for me. He says, "Well, now, right from here you gonna start your scales." And he got one of those, you see, bass methods [books] that have a keyboard on it, a fingerboard--

[Russell:] Yeah, a fingerboard--

[Morgan:] See, apiano has a keyboard, see. And so he cut that out; it was a piece of paper; and [SM] pasted it on my fingerboard. And from there--we went from there. I started studying that thing, and he showed me the different keys like you see guys [when they say, you ?] [unintelligible], you study that. Those are the notes you supposed to make the changes [on ?].

[Russell:] When you started, were you bowing mostly, or picking?

[Morgan:] Mostly bowing, because he wanted me to start [with ?]--that's the--you get the sound of the bass better like that, see, when you bowing it. So I did pretty good during the Lenten months, and when the season it opened

up that Easter, first job I had was with my brother Isaiah. (Laughs.)
[He brought me out ?] with his little band. Just that one job, you know,
I played with him. He had a little gig we call them nowadays, so, one of
those picnics out on the--

[Russell:] [Milneburg or some place ?]--

[Morgan:] Milneburg, yeah. And I went with him; I did pretty good. I used
to go to rehearsals, you know, with different little groups, and carry on
just to get in practice like that, you know. I couldn't play with the
fast bands then, but I found myself, and the first tune I remember playing
was "The Sheik of Araby." (Laughs.) It was my first tune.

[Russell:] By the time you got on the boat, were most of the people picking
[most of the ?] time [or bowing ?]?

[Morgan:] When I was on the boat, I was moving pretty nicely, see, but I
didn't know how to read very fast then, you see. And Fate [Marable] used to
take me and the bass player who was with them during that time. See, he had
a bass player with him [already ?]. I was the second bass player.

[Russell:] He had Pops Foster, I know.

[Morgan:] Not then. When I was--there was a fellow was by the name of Cecil
Scott, his name was, out of St. Louis [Missouri]. [Cf. other sources on
Cecil's name. Thornton ? RBA, Apr. 10, 1972.] Oh, hee was a wonderful--
he played bass; he played flute; he played everything. He was just a
fanatic of instruments, you know. Well, he was playing tuba then, you see,
and I just played the bass--string bass. I'll never forget; he was playing
four-valve, big bass tuba. We used to sit there and Fate Marable--we had
two pianos: [J. Burroughs] Lovingood, and Fate Marable himself right there.
And they used to set me between bass and those two pianos, and in the
morning he'd get up--I get up for breakfast on that boat, and after breakfast
just him [Fate Marable] and I, the piano, would go downstairs and sit on the

bandstand. That's why he really could--I'll never forget that man, he's dead and gone, but I've always admired him for that, and thanked him.

[Russell:] [He helped you ?]

[Morgan:] Because he really did; he helped me. He drilled me from the time, from seven o'clock in the morning up until noon; it was time to ear, then the big band rehearsed, see. But the way he used to do: he marked my music, marked the fingering on my instrument. And I knowed a little bass horn; I could play it on either instrument then, see. I got so--coming up--the bass horn and the string bass. "Cause I knew--that's one good thing about it: I started learning the instrument, to know the fingering of the instrument, see. Then, and he just put the fingering under the music, you see; now these same notes, just like that, that's what you supposed to play. And we started, he played the bass on the piano and everything like that, and up I went. And I stayed with him four years.

[Russell:] Four years on the boat.

[Morgan:] And he said, "When I turn you loose, you can go," he said, "but don't leave until I tell you you can go." He say, "They all leave me." That's the way he always said, He always said, "Everyone I've had, sooner or later, they'll leave." And that was true. So finally I started getting wires from Red Allen in New York: you see, I was in St. Louis. So [I went ?] the first year, that last year, I said, "Well, maybe I might go to New York." So finally I was wi--just before I left the boat, and I went to Oklahoma City. Yeah, I left the boat one year, and I went to Oklahoma City with Alvin "Fats" Wall. I didn't go down to New Orleans, then, see. And the following summer I went back on the boat. A boy by the name of Eugene Hill, Slim they called him. Used to--he's out in Minnesota now, that's, he's around Chicago now. I saw him, not very long ago--

[Russell:] What did he play?

[Morgan:] Drums--

[Russell:] He was a drummer--

[Morgan:] He was a drummer, yes. And, wh--God's gift to the music world; that's what he always said (Laughs): "I am Eugene Hill, God's gift to the music world." So him and I, we went out to Oklahoma City [i.e., to join the band of?] a fellow by the name of Alvin "Fats" Wall--fine musician--and that's where I ran into another fast group, all fine musicians, young and they could read. But I was ready to go, I was ready for them, and I think that helped me a hundred per cent, 'cause when I left there to come back on the boat, I was really walking. I could sit right in there with Fate and them, and he would just laugh, and say, "Oh yeah, you getting slick now, huh?" (Laughs.) That's what he used to tell me. So I made one season with them in St. Louis, and so I told them, I says, "I got a wire from Red Allen, I think I'm going to New York [City]." He [Fate] says, "Well, Al," he says, "I must tell you, you ready. You just go ahead on, if you want to go, it's O.K., I won't stop you, but I want you to go when you was right." He say, "You ready, and tell them I sent you." Just like that. (Laughs.) That's the way he used to talk: "You tell them I sent you." So when I left there I had my bass horn and bass fiddle and I could play both of them. As years rolled by, I got to New York [City], started getting around with fast company, everybody--I [must be rated] because everybody was somebody, I sat in and played with the best around New York.

[Russell:] Do you remember those records you made with Red Allen--

[Morgan:] Yeah, Billy Banks, all the Dixieland groups. I made a lot of recordings with them, and I played with some of the best bands and different combinations, like Tommy Dorsey, Mound City Blues Blowers, Tommy Dorsey and all those guys, Coleman Hawkins.

[Russell:] I'm trying to think. Did you belong to any big bands during the thirties?

[Morgan:] Yes, Cab Calloway.

[Russell:] That's what I was trying to think of.

[Morgan:] Yeah, Cab Calloway. That was my first big band.

[Russell:] Who was the other bass player was with him--in New York, now.
Makes so many records.

[Morgan:] Oh, Hinton--

[Russell:] Hinton--

[Morgan:] Hinton, Milton Hinton--

[Russell:] [That's why I ?] had you confused; I knew he[M.H.] was with him
[Calloway], and I couldn't remember--

[Morgan:] Milton Hinton--

[Russell:] You were [before him ?].

[Morgan:] No, yeah, after I left, [and ?] [then ?] Hinton took my place
because I was right here in California. See, I stayed out in California
'round [nineteen] thirty-four. I didn't go back with Cab. I come out here
with Cab long time ago. Then I went back East in forty, little before the
War [World War II], see? I went back with the Les Hite band from here, from
the West Coast, the great Les Hite. We went to the Golden Gate. That's
when Golden Gate was in New York [City] then, a big place. I stayed with
Les for a short while. [Unintelligible.] I got back to New York, everybody
wanted me to stay there so I decided I would just stay in New York. And
that's where Jimmy Ryan['s] come in, see. Now we on the right--

[Russell:] That's where I first heard you--

[Morgan:] Road. (Laughs.) So, when I first went in Jimmy Ryan['s], Jimmy
Ryan['s] wasn't anything. It just was a little place, wasn't known at all.
We made it popular then. It was Zutty Singleton; I was with Zutty
Singleton, [drums]; and Joe Eldridge [sax], Roy Eldridge brother; and Don
Frye, Don Frye, pianist. He's still there, I heard. He's been there for
many years.

[Russell:] I first heard him [with ?] Zutty down at the [Village] Vanguard.

[Morgan:] Yeah, Village Vanguard, yeah. That's where I first heard him. At

Village Vanguard.

[Russell:] And when did you go to Boston?

[Morgan:] Well, right after I closed at ^JJimmy Ryan's, and--think it was during the War then, so this fellow Sabby Lewis, from Boston, had a very fine little eight-piece swinging band. They were all fine musicians; they played a lot of modern, good swing music, see. So I met him--it was my closing week. We was one block apart: he was at Kelly's Stable, and I was down to Ryan's, you see. So I passed by, and I heard a little band swinging, so I walked in. (Laughs.) [Kelly say ?] we always drop in different clubs when you were around the streets, see, so I stood [i.e., stayed] up there a long time, and the guys were all looking at me and laughing. So when they come down off the stand, I introduced myself to them. So Sabby says, "Oh, yeah, [unintelligible] you're the one used to play with Cab [unintelligible]" and so on. So he says, "Well, what are you doing now?" I says, "I'm closing down here this week." He says, "You are!" He says, "well, listen," he says, "My bass player, he's got to go back to Boston to go to the Navy, where they're drafting him in the Army--the Navy. So would you like to take that job, or come sit in with--stay with us? We have two more weeks here before we leave, see." I says, "Well, maybe I would; I'll let you know," He says, "We're having a rehearsal tomorrow, would you come down and rehearse with us?" I says, "Yes, gladly." And he says, "No, stay in and play a set with us." I said, "Well, all right." And I sat in with them and played a set, and man, and so they had a lot of music. They had plenty music; that's all they did, was reading, you know. Heavy arrangements. For a small group, they played--they sound like a big band, that big band sound, see. 'Cause they had two trumpets, three saxophones, and three rhythm, see. Baritone, tenor, and alto; that's how they--oh boy, they used to really jump. So I sat in and played with them, and Sabby says, "That's wonderful," he said, "Will you come make rehearsal

with us tomorrow?" I said, "O.K., I'll sit in." Then I started rehearsing with the guys, and so that week before the boy--when they left, and I closed down there [at Jimmy Ryan's], then I opened up with them. I stayed there, Kelly's Stable, two weeks. When they got ready to go back to Boston--so he [S. Lewis] asked me to go to Boston. That was a problem then, see. I said, "Well, I don't want to leave New York." He says, "Well, would you just go to Boston, open up with us, since you've played with the band; you understand it and everything; just open up with us; stay a week. If you don't like it, you don't have to stay, you know, till we can get somebody, you know, like that, around Boston." I said, "O.K., because going to Boston, that means I have to do a lot of things; I bought up a lot of things. I have a nice little apartment and everything, you know." So I had to tear down and pack up and go [with them ?]. (Laughs.) So when I got clear, I went up there for one week, to stay, and I stayed eighteen years.

[Russell:] That long?

[Morgan:] Yeah, eighteen years.

[Russell:] When did you come out here [about ?]?

[Morgan:] I come back about a year ago. See, when I went back to Boston during--a little after the war [World War II], and after all the boys and everybody started on this modern jazz kick. So some of the boys feel though that they wasn't a little bit up on everything that happened, so they--Boston is the greatest field for music, you know, schools, and all those conservatories--so [gee ?] then I looked back myself, I say, "Well, I been playing a long time, and I know practically every type of music there is." Coming up, during my time, I played Dixieland, I played swing, and here is this modern jazz come in, so everybody's going to study. I says, "Well, I'm going to join in the rest of them. It's nothing to do. I didn't do anything in the daytime, so I went [on studying ?]. I would

up three and a half years in New England Conservatory, see. And that's where [unintelligible] my very good training. So then I played progressive music. Matter of fact, I like all music, all types of music. It's all good when it's played good; that's right. Most people will ask you, what do you like, do you like this jazz better, or--it's all good when it's played good. That's right, Dixieland, they have good Dixieland and they have bad Dixieland. I've heard some Dixieland bands, just terrible. I know some guys (laughs) probably will eat my head off, but it's true.

[Russell:] [Unintelligible.]

[Morgan:] It's true. I've heard some bad swing; I've heard some bad progressive jazz. And it's--rock 'n' roll, everything, I like it all, [as] long as it's good. Because that soul of music, regardless of what type of music there is. I played lots of semi-classics in the school symphonies, you know, [the ones going ?]--and, it's just good music. Once you're a musician and you get that in your soul and your love of music. It's--you've got to learn to love any type, and know it.

[Russell:] Let's see, just about--I was going to ask you to make a little message to your brothers, if you'd like. I'm not--

[Morgan:] Yes--

End of Reel I.