

[Allen:] This is Dick Allen. We're doing an interview today.
What's your name? You tell me.

[Zander:] Marjorie Zander.

[Allen:] All right. And what's your name, man?

[Bailey:] David Bailey.

[Allen:] David Bailey. Today is October--

[Bailey:] Twenty-fifth.

[Allen:] Twenty-fifth, 1959. Our address--we're up here on
South Robertson--

[Bailey:] 3418 South Robertson.

[Allen:] 3418 South Robertson--I even knew what street we were
on today. We usually start off by asking a guy his exact date
of birth.

[Bailey:] The what?

[Allen:] The exact date of birth.

[Bailey:] Birth? You mean when he was born?

[Allen:] Yeah.

[Bailey:] Well, I couldn't tell you that.

[Allen:] You don't know.

[Bailey:] No, because my mama and daddy died when I was a
baby, and I don't remember Mama and Daddy. There was two old
ladies [who knew ?] my mammy and daddy before I were born--
and by me traveling, going to play music, you know, going
out of town--but I still got my birth certificate, I got it
upstairs here. By me traveling, playing music, going out of
town--I wrote to Washington, went down to the new City Hall--
you know, the courthouse on Royal Street--paid \$4.00; [had
to go all ?] the way to Washington, come back and they say the
record was burnt up; come back again, had to go to the new City

Hall, back there. So they found my marriage certificate when I got married, so now I got the right dope. I'm age sixty-nine now.

[Allen:] Oh, you never knew that [unintelligible]. You just have turned 69, huh?

[Bailey:] Yeah, just made it. They found my record from when I got married.

[Allen:] What was your birthday?

[Bailey:] It was on January 28.

[Allen:] January 28?

[Bailey:] Yeah--28th.

[Allen:] Mine's the 29th. We're almost birthday pals.

[Bailey:] I've got my marriage thing up there. That's the same as a birth certificate, you know.

[Allen:] We'll take a look at that, if you--

[Bailey:] Huh?

[Allen:] We'll take a look at that, if--when you--

[Bailey:] [Unintelligible].

[Allen:] Don't do it now, don't bother--okay, you want to get it? Okay. (Machine off.) Now where were you born, anyhow?

[Bailey:] Right here in New Orleans.

[Allen:] Right here in New Orleans? What neighborhood?

[Bailey:] Third and St. Thomas [Streets], my step-daddy's told me.

[Allen:] Third and St. Thomas.

[Bailey:] Yes, that's what my step-daddy told me, before he died. See, my mother was married twice; after my mother and daddy separated, she married a Johnson. He's dead, too.

[Allen:] That must be Duck Ernest's father?

[Bailey:] That's my brother, Ernest. See, we're by the same mother, but different father.

[Allen:] I see.

[Bailey:] He's a Johnson and I'm a Bailey. In other words, they claim when you're by the same mother you're whole brothers, [by the mother's side ?]. We're by the same mother, but different fathers.

[Allen:] I see.

[Bailey:] By the same mother, you're whole [brothers], but by the same father and a different mother, you're only half. I haven't seen him since 1927.

[Allen:] Where is he now?

[Bailey:] He was in [Boley ?], Oklahoma. He came back here once in 1927 to see me; he wanted to get me to go there and play in a band with him, and I didn't want to leave. I was still working right at that [Sarah Mayo] hospital, where I'm working now. He wanted to build up a home for me, and all, and I didn't want to leave. I suppose he just got mad, and that's why he wouldn't write to me. Unless night have lost the letters, you know--my address. I got it from my niece, his daughter; she was operated on there at the hospital where I work. I got it from her, but I moved uptown from down here, and I lost it, I can't find it. I had a little book. Now the only way I can get his address again is try to get in touch with my niece, try to locate here, and get it again--try to write him. [E.] now dead

[Allen:] We'd like to see him.

according to D.B. 1967

[Bailey:] Man, it's been a long time. You know how many years that's been?

[Allen:] How long?

[Bailey:] 1927. This is [19]59--that's right around thirty-two years, isn't it?

[Allen:] That's right. What year were you born in? Let's get that straight.

[Bailey:] January.

[Allen:] What year, though?

[Bailey:] I got it on the--I can't think--

[Allen:] You've got it on the thing.

[Bailey:] That's what I say. [John H.] McNeil [his landlord see Reel II p. 31] must be got it; he must have it.

[Allen:] Well, he'll be back, then. Let's see--

[Bailey:] It's the birth certificate, you know.

[Allen:] Do you remember the--

[Bailey:] I remember when I got married; I got married in 1910.

[Allen:] Do you remember the Spanish-American War?

[Bailey:] No, I don't remember nothing about that. There ain't but two wars I remember, and that's World War I and this one we had, World War II. I heard talk of the Spanish-American War: I had a grandpa--my grandpa, he [unintelligible] [had a big old ?]--I forget what they called it, those big old guns--

[Allen:] The Artillery, maybe, huh?

[Bailey:] No, sir, I forget what they called them things.

[Unintelligible]. I forget what they called them.

[Zander:] Cannon, you mean?

[Bailey:] Huh? They had a [little old camp?] [place there, my aunt had ?]. Musket, I believe they called them musket.

[Allen:] Muskets, in those days, huh?

[Bailey:] Yeah. Used them in the Spanish-American War. That's one war I don't know nothing about.

[Allen:] I thought maybe you remembered that from a kid; from your days as a kid, you might remember--

[Bailey:] No. I heard people talking about it when I was growing up. Ain't but the two wars I know: that was World War I and World War II. And I was scheduled to go to World War I; The week peace was declared, I was to leave that next week.

[Allen:] How old were you when you were married?

[Bailey:] Twenty-one. I got examined in that big white school right down there on Dryades, between Clio and Thalia--that big white--

[Allen:] Oh, yeah, I know that school.

[Bailey:] That's where I got examined at.

[Allen:] When you were young, what was the first music or singing that you remember hearing?

[Bailey:] First music, singing?

[Allen:] Music or singing.

[Bailey:] Well, I tell you, I didn't pay much attention to anything like that, I was so busy getting up in the game myself, you know. I know I used to play in the show, I used to play in church, I used to play in concerts, you know--sing, dance, buck dance--I used to be a great buck dancer [Make movie of buck dance], sing. This nickel show, used to be back on Louisiana and Howard [now LaSalle Street]--I used to play there every Friday night with a seven-piece orchestra. That's when they had the Charleston out. Played with a fellow named Foster Lewis, and Dude Lewis.

[Allen:] I knew Dude, man; he used to play with Joe Avery and Wilbert Tillman. That's a guy I knew, Dude.

[Bailey:] Yeah, he's dead.

[private]

[Allen:] I have a record in my collection of him.

[Bailey:] His brother--they call him Fostair--he's dead too--
the trombone player.

[Allen:] I never knew Fostair. Both buried?

[Bailey:] Fostair.

[Allen:] Where are they buried?

[Bailey:] Greenwood Cemetery, both of them buried there.

[Allen:] Up there--

[Bailey:] Up in Carrollton, up around there where I used to live.

[Allen:] Green Street. That's where--

[Bailey:] Yeah, Green Street. Greenwood Cemetery. That's
where my step-daddy buried at, and I've got a son-in-law buried
up there too.

[Allen:] Wesley Dimes is buried up there too.

[Bailey:] Wesley Dimes--he's dead?

[Allen:] Wesley Dimes was killed in Baton Rouge. You didn't
know that? Years ago.

[Bailey:] Yeah. I didn't know he was dead. Little trumpet
player. He was good. He used to play with [unintelligible]
brother

[Allen:] Yeah, I saw his grave up there.

[Bailey:] [He's up there ?]?

[Allen:] Yes.

[Bailey:] How he got killed?

[Allen:] He was killed by a policeman in Baton Rouge.

[Bailey:] Yeah?

[Allen:] Shot him. That's what I heard.

[Bailey:] I wonder how come.

[Allen:] Something to do with his wife, I think, or something.

I don't know. You used to work with him in the Liberty Bell, somebody told me.

[Bailey:] I didn't know that boy was dead. He's been dead, huh? A policeman shot him in Baton Rouge.

[Allen:] That's what I heard. He's been dead for quite a while. I wrote it all down, from the grave, you know--all that.

[Bailey:] He used to be a nice kid; I know he was a nice little trumpet player, Wesley Dimes. Yeah, I remember him.

[Allen:] I guess it was Eddie Morris told me about it, you know. He used to be with you, huh, in that band?

[Bailey:] Yeah. His picture's on that--didn't you see his picture on there? Didn't I show you that? The band?

[Allen:] No.

[Bailey:] I never showed you the picture of the band?

[Allen:] No. You got a picture of the Liberty Bell?

[Bailey:] No, I mean of Eddie Morris, when he was playing with us.

[Allen:] Oh, yeah, that picture of the--

[Bailey:] ^EGibson [Brass Band].

[Allen:] Gibson or the Jackson [Brass Band], I don't remember which it was.

[Bailey:] I never did play with the Liberty Bell. I played with the--I didn't play with them regularly, but the most I ever played with my brother ^hwo had was in the Young Tuxedo [Orchestra]. We was running this town, almost; wasn't none of them bands, hardly, [could play anything with us ?] we had a good band. We used to play [at the unintelligible ?] the time Palm Gardens was open there--Eighth and Rampart [Streets]. We

used to play there all the time. Then we used to play for the Bulls. I played with Jack Carey for quite a while, and I played with Chris Kelly about six years. Played with Papa Celestin the time the District was open, down there at Fewclothes. He was running two bands. I played with him six months down there. And the last job I played with Chris Kelly was on the Steamer Capitol, in 1921.

[Allen:] Let's start back at the beginning. That might make it come out in better order, you know. What was your very first instrument you played?

[Bailey:] Drum.

[Allen:] Drum.

[Bailey:] That's the first thing I took up. But I played-- I learned [to read] [music ?] after that.

[Allen:] You played another instrument, huh?

[Bailey:] I played a harmonica, jews harp, flute, fife, piccolo, bass viol a little bit, guitar, piano..

[Allen:] Can you still play harmonica much?

[Bailey:] Play the fool out of it.

[Allen:] Do you want to make some records? I think I can fix you up. I'll bring my boy around some time.

[Bailey:] All right. Yeah, I can play it. I don't know how I'll make out with it with them new teeth, but after I get used to them teeth--if I can't make it, I'll have to take the teeth out, [play it like that ?]. But the harmonica I used to play was Marine Band [brand].

[Allen:] Oh, yeah?

[Bailey:] Uh-huh. [I'd get ?] a Marine Band--[in the key of] "C".

[Allen:] Well, get in practice and phone me at Tulane, uh--

[Bailey:] You'll have to give me that number. You'll have to write it down for me.

[Allen:] Okay, we'll write it down. Hold on a second. (Machine off.)

[Bailey:] --just with a guitar.

[Allen:] You played a big wedding just with a--

[Bailey:] Harmonica and guitar. Fellow by the name of Eddy Bowles. He got married and then he moved--went to Iowa. You know where Leidenheimer's Bakery Shop there on Melpomene and Simon Bolivar? Leidenheimer's Bakery?

[Allen:] I can't place--Oh yeah, I know; that's at Melponene. Is that the one?

[Bailey:] There's a big two-room house--two story house, right in the back between Simon Bolivar and Liberty. We played a wedding up there--the house was packed and jammed--harmonica and a guitar. And I had a derby put over the harmonica, and that guy played with the knife [a technique of guitar playing]. You talk about some music--we made some money that night.

[Allen:] Put a derby over the harmonica?

[Bailey:] Yeah, that's right.

[Allen:] I never heard of that.

[Bailey:] Either a can--get a can, anything. [Unintelligible].

Be playing this. You ever seen a trumpet player put derbies over?--

[Allen:] Yeah, sure.

[Bailey:] And I made that harmonica talk. I can play [it] with my nose--[played it with my nostrils ?]. Learned all that when I was a kid. I can imitate a train on a harmonica, I can

imitate a train on my snare drum. And I can take the 'trap--you know, the whole set--and play the whole part of "High Society" right on there, on the trap drums. I just let you know that I'm playing it and that I'm starting off--you understand? Play the whole thing, just by myself.

[Allen:] Can you play the drums and the harmonica at the same time?

[Bailey:] Sure, if I had the rack [for the harmonica]; I'd have to have the rack--sure.

[Allen:] Do you have a rack?

[Bailey:] No, I don't have no rack.

[Allen:] We'll have to get you one--we'll make you one out of a clothes hanger, or something.

[Bailey:] I believe you can buy those things.

[Allen:] Yeah, you can buy them; I had one one time.

[Bailey:] Sure, I can play; I could take a [harmonica and play a harmonica ?]. I likes music, you know. To do good at something you got to like it; I guess that's why I do like that.

[Allen:] When you were getting started, did you just pick up drums by yourself at first, or did you have a teacher?

[Bailey:] No teacher--just pick it up.

[Allen:] That's at first? Now, about how old were you when you started on drums?

[Bailey:] I don't know; I don't know that.

[Allen:] Well, were you wearing long pants when you started?

[Bailey:] Oh, no, I was in kid in short pants; I started out when I was a little bitty something--I [just come up to there ?].

[Allen:] About three feet high or so, huh, something like that?

[Bailey:] I guess so, yeah. Learned on tubs, tin [pans ?],
[cans ?],
and boxes.

[Allen:] Oh, yeah, I see.

[Bailey:] Many night people would throw water at me at night;
I'd be on people's steps, twelve o'clock at night, whistling,
and playing sticks. I was working at the old Magazine Market,
down there at the old Magazine Market. I got up to Philip and
Annunciation. They used to have those little [sticks ?] in
between the [cars ?], you know, hold your leg over like
[unintelligible]. I seen [a ?] [unintelligible] and left
that little old meat [unintelligible]. When I got back and he
said, "I'll bet you've been playing drums. If I didn't like
you--you are a good boy--I'd fire you, [but I'll let this by." ?].
I was about an hour and something late going back there. Kept
on 'til I learned, 'til my brother said, "Well, I'm going to
buy a little cheap drum, cheap set." Went down to the pawn
shop, got me a little cheap old snare drum; finally got me a
little old bass drum [on it ?]. Come home and made up a little
band, [and I was going to start out, see ?].

[Allen:] When you cut--

[Bailey:] Know when I started trying to taking lessons? 1921.
I was playing with Chris Kelly. I was learning good; I was
reading music; I can read it. Everybody in the band could read.
You see, the trombone player was from over the river; he used
to buy music and rearrange it--fellow named Harrison Barnes;
he used to work for the Southern Pacific--and that guy was a good
musician. Everybody in the band read. We had Willie Foster,
[Pops] George Foster's brother, playing--you know he could read. And

we got that and he showed me my drum part--we used to rehearsal right down here by that cemetery right down on Orleans Street, somewhere down there. I was hitting it--made note for note, but they told me I wouldn't need the no music no more, so I just stopped. But every once in a while I'd look it over; I [got five pieces of drum music right ?] home now in my dresser drawer. The last night I played on the steamer Capital the people all stopped dancing; they all come around me. "Where that drummer come from?" White man on the boat say, "Fellow, do you read music right off?" I said, "No, sir, I just tak^[in'] lessons now." He says, "By golly, my drummer ain't got nothing on you but the Xylophone." You know the thing built like a table, you play with those little balls. I told him, I say, "You allow me a break, I'll play that." "I'll have to give it to you," he said, "You're a drummer." I've played places where they had to get the people back off of me, to give me room to play. I told them if they don't get the policeman to get them back, I won't play. On that ferry there, the Louisiana [Avenue] Ferry, the Napoleon [Avenue] Ferry was running, he said, "Play a number on the band on the ferry," people was crowding around there like sardines. I used to play these dances and lawn parties, couldn't play. I played in Port Arthur, Texas, played there with the Black Eagle Band, my brother and I.

[Allen:] With Evan?

[Bailey:] Yeah, I played with Evan. Sure, I played with him, but first we whet there with our band.

[Allen:] Which was the Black Eagle? I'm going to try to get that straight. Is that Evan Thomas's Black Eagle? Or was that your--

[Bailey:] E. T. Thomas, they call him there; that was his band. But we went over there, you know, and so we went there and we stayed four months. I think it was headquarter^[s]ed in Lafayette. Put up four months over there and so--his band--the music [shop] people took his brother's drum and the Fellows banjo away from them; hadn't finished paying for them, you know. So they got us to join them. So I went over there two more months and stayed, finished out. When we got into Port Arthur [Texas], playing on a truck, a boy jumped on me and said, "Man, just look at that man play." Jumped up there and jumped right down on my whistle--I had a big whistle, about that long, you blow; like go the Southern Pacific and he broke it all up. Cost me nearly five dollars. I never cared about no drum player, though, don't care about no drum player. When we'd meet these bands, years ago, we used to go out and we used to advertise in these furniture wagons, before the automobile and all that stuff come up playing things like that. When we'd meet one, like that, at a corner, I'd see a band, I'd say, "Let's go down there; let's get him." Go down there and buck for about a hour, two hours. I liked that. They couldn't do nothing with me. I played in the E.R.A. band one year. We were rehearsing right here on Melpomene, between Liberty and LaSalle. The fellow that was already playing with the E.R.A. Band, the snare drum player, was supposed to be reading, not learning like I was trying to do, reading. I got in there. I don't know what happened to the bass drum player and they hired me. The professor had a little stick put the book on here. I said, "What's that for?" He said, "That's for you." I said, "I don't need that. This gift I got is from the Almighty God. Whatever God gives somebody, nobody can't take it away. All I want the professor to do is to show me my drum part. I gonna make note for note." The professor showed me the drum part in there.

and they started off, [I was] right there with them. First march they played was "Success." Then they played "Little Rastus." Then they played [unintelligible], and "Success" (scats). I mean it, I was right there on them. They got another part that comes into it, and I was playing it on the bass drum, I played 'em on that part, so they put him--switched him on the big drum, put me on the little one. And I beat him on the little one. Played all three of them marches, and they put him out of the band. And the rumor came out, he said when he could catch me what he was going to do to me, you know. I was playing at Third and Franklin now every night--three nights a week, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. So I was prepared for him, if he had come. He come up there once, but he never said nothing to me. That boy stopped speaking to me for about two years, a year or two years. Last time I seen him, I was working on the E.R.A., I met him at City Park. He's dead now, fellow they call Dave Ogden, drummer.

[Allen:] Dave what?

[Bailey:] Dave Ogden. You don't know him?

[Allen:] Didn't he work with the Maple Leaf [Orchestra]?

[Bailey:] No, I don't know where he was working at.

[Allen:] I think I know his son, but I--

[Bailey:] Yeah, he got a son. His son--

[Allen:] Son drank some wine with me some, you know, at some parade. He was knocked out of his mind, drinking all that wine.

[Bailey:] Yeah, he used to play on drums too, his son used to play drums. A tall boy. I don't know if he's still playing; last time I see him we was playing a funeral, way down on--and he told me that he was writing insurance. Both of them boys that I played with, I played at Third and Franklin. Louis Robinson, call him "Big Eye"

Lenois (v sp)
Louie," you know Zeb [Lenois], the clarinet player?

[Allen:] Uh-huh.

[Bailey:] Both of them dead. They both dead.

[Allen:] It was Big Eye Louie, the clarinet player, I knew.

[Bailey:] No, he was a piano player.

[Allen:] Big Eye Louie what?

[Bailey:] His name was Louis Robinson, used to call him Big Eye Louis.

[Allen:] I knew Big Eye Louis [Nelson], the clarinet player, but not the piano player.

[Bailey:] Not him. He's from downtown.

[Allen:] And Zeb used to work with Rena, that's the one. My teacher used to work with him, Manuel Manetta. You know "Hoss" from across the river?

[Bailey:] I know Manuel Manetta. That was kilt Zeb. He drink so much. Fight so much that wine.

[Allen:] That ol' wine will do it every time. When you were starting off, what kind of sticks did you have?

[Bailey:] Huh?

[Allen:] What did you use for sticks when you were a kid, for drum sticks?

[Bailey:] [I used to get sticks ?] used to cut them with a knife and make them. Buy a piece of wood and trim it down. And I could play--I would play with--play with anything.

[Allen:] Who did you--

[Bailey:] I went to rehearsal Friday night. They come and got me. I didn't want to go and they begged me to go. I went Thursday night, they come and got me about quarter to eight but they had me

home for about ten after ten. I had them fellows all hollering down there, give me a drum solo, you know I play by myself. All they do is give the the chance and I play up--make all kind of explosions play.

[Allen:] You can do that in the street. Man, he has the crowd jumping when he does that too.

[Bailey:] I had them hollering. But I know I've been playing music quite a number of years, been playing a long time now. Never took a tally. If I'd a took a tally from when I started, I'd really know. I was talking to some fellow some time back, he asked me if I ever broke a drum in my life. I told him I never broke a drum head in my life. I broke sticks; they'd wear out from beating on pans, but I never broke a drum head. He told me some place where I send to Chicago, something about they would give to see a drummer never broke a head. And I never broke a drum head in my life. They're either going to break from the weather, or I forget to unwind 'em, from being too tight, pop like there. Say, play on a drum break 'em, I never broke--fellows break them for breakfast, dinner, and supper. Them things cost a lot of money, them heads. Cost you about eighteen, nineteen dollars for one big head. If you break that old drum head. I been playing quite a while.

[Allen:] When you started off playing, did you hear any bands of music that you remember, from way back?

[Bailey:] Oh, yeah. Used to have the Onward Band here, the Onward Band, the Imperial, and Frankie Duson. I heard them Frankie Duson.

[Allen:] Who's Frankie Duson?

[Bailey:] I believe he's dead. And I remember Eddy Bolden [no doubt he means Buddy Bolden], used to play in the band when I was

a kid.

[Allen:] Eddy Bolden? Who was he?

[Bailey:] Trumpet player. That guy, you could hear him about seven, eight, nine blocks [all by himself ?]. He's dead. I remember when [John] Robichaux one time in Lincoln Park, he was playing up there. [Unintelligible] used to go up in a balloon, and all that stuff.

[Allen:] Who went up in a balloon?

[Bailey:] Buddy Bottley. Fellow called Buddy Bottley. They had Robichaux's Brass Band, used to be the Excelsior. He used to have a good orchestra. Talking about bands, that man had a band,

[Allen:] Who do you think started all this ragtime music?

[Bailey:] I don't know. I know one thing: it originated from right here in New Orleans. That's where it came from, right in New Orleans. Started right here.

[Allen:] Did Robichaux have a--

[Bailey:] Robichaux's band was mostly a musical [reading] band. They played, you know, ragtime, but mostly music. Good band. They were a good band. It was something on the order of like Duke Ellington. They had a Number One band. They used to play nothing but strictly [written] music. They could play. But they could jazz it up sometimes.

[Allen:] Where did this Eddy Bolden live? [Should have asked was he related to Buddy Bolden]

[Bailey:] I don't know where he lived. He was a tall, brown-skinned fellow, slim. He's dead.

[Allen:] And who did he play with?

[Bailey:] He used to have his own band.

[Allen:] Had his own band?

[Bailey:] Uh-huh. Brass band. I don't know about orchestra.

[Allen:] You know any of the guys in the band?

[Bailey:] No. I was small, I was walking around after them.

You ever heard of Bab Frank?

[Allen:] Piccolo player?

[Bailey:] Yeah.

[Allen:] Sure.

[Bailey:] I think he was with [Kid] Ory. Wasn't he?

[Allen:] I don't remember.

[Bailey:] Ory Band. Bab Frank.

[Allen:] I know he played some, at--

[Bailey:] No, I believe Bab Frank had his band with Frank Keelin

[real name: Campbell (?)], trumpet player; I think he was playing with him. They played out at the National Park a couple of times.

[Allen:] I know he had a band with Charlie McCurdy, the clarinet player, for a while. I've seen a picture of that. You remember Charlie McCurdy?

[Bailey:] I remember. What becom~~en~~ of him?

[Allen:] I believe he's passed [on] too.

[Bailey:] I remember Charlie McCurdy. Sidney Desvigne--I mean that Sidney Vigne--was a good clarinet player. He got killed by a meat truck, down on Canal Street. He was drunk. Coming from the lake.

[Allen:] I heard about that.

[Bailey:] I believe it was a colored fellow, run over him, with a truck loaded down with meat; mashed him flat. And this fellow Walter Brundy, used to play with Robichaux, he's a clarinet player, and was a drum player.

[Allen:] Walter who?

[Bailey:] Walter Brundy. He got killed in Natchez, Mississippi.

[Allen:] Oh, yeah, Walter Brundy, yeah.

[Bailey:] Walter Brundy.

[Allen:] He was mostly a drummer, but he took up clarinet later--
is that the guy?

[Bailey:] Yeah.

[Allen:] Played with the Superior, too?

[Bailey:] I don't know about the Superior, I know he played
with Robichaux. I remember the Superior Band, and the Imperial.
He got killed in Natchez, Mississippi.

[Allen:] Which fire was that?

[Bailey:] After we left from there; he was drunk, you know, on
Christmas eve night. We was in Natchez. Undertaker's truck
killed him, undertaker truck.

[Allen:] I thought maybe he was killed in that big fire up
there--

[Bailey:] Oh, no. We had been there just before that fire started.

[Allen:] When Walter Barnes got killed, I'm talking about. You
remember Walter Barnes?

[Bailey:] What [did] he play?

[Allen:] He played saxophone, clarinet, and he had a band. He
was around Natchez, Vicksburg.

[Bailey:] I don't remember Walter Barnes.

[Allen:] He got--there was something like two hundred and fifty
people killed that day--when the Rhythm Club burned up.

[Bailey:] I remember that. That was way back under the Hill,
wasn't it?

[Allen:] Yeah.

[Bailey:] I believe that hall they got burned up in, that's the

hall we played at.

[Allen:] Rhythm Club.

[Bailey:] It's way back, way back under the hill. I believe we played that same hall, had left there about a month or so before that happened.

[Allen:] Charlie Love told me he was with a band up there in that same hall.

[Bailey:] That was right, left there a couple of months before that happened.

[Allen:] Was Love in the same band you were with?

[Bailey:] No.

[Allen:] Not then.

[Bailey:] Uh-uh. We left there right before that happened. And this boy, he was crossing the street and the undertaker's truck hit him. That's the reason I quit getting drunk. I drink a bottle of beer every once in a while, but I don't fool with no more whiskey, wine, nothing like that--going on about seventeen, eighteen years now. Don't go to no beer parlors, nothing like that; go in there and get a bottle of beer and bring it out and bring it home and drink it. I don't drink much of that; I don't care for it. Well, now, you see, like to killed me, so I just gave it up. The last time like to carried me away; had me down [sick] three times. I got down on my knees and prayed to Almighty God and asked Him to spare me this time. Not any more--I don't care for it any more. As I say, in other words, I was just injuring myself and making the bar man rich, so I just cut it out. I wasn't born that way; it wasn't no birthmark. No use of fooling myself when you know it's against you. Carnival Day, when we played for the Garden District [Club], they stop right down

there at Eganias and Annunciation [Streets], stay there one hour, from one to two. White fellow come to me with a fifth of whiskey, "Shorty, you want a shot?" I said, "Uh-uh." "You want a beer?" "I'll take a beer." [Unintelligible] "Want another one?" "No, thank you, I don't want another." "Come on, man, take a shot." "I don't want it." Ain't no use trying to insisting, I said, "Well, I know when something's against me, no use of me fooling with it." I'm gonna be the one to suffer, not him. So I just stopped. [Allen:] I could never make it through Carnival Day with one beer, I'll tell you that.

[Bailey:] Huh?

[Allen:] I could never make it through Carnival Day with one beer.

[Bailey:] That was enough--I'd done drunk one already, and the one that he offered me again, that was two. That's enough. You can't [play that [Rhythm ?] when you're drunk; that's one thing. That manager we got don't allow nobody in the band drunk, get drunk. He tells you, if you want to drink, drink after you're off duty; don't come on no job and drink. If you want to drink a beer, the man says if you want to get a beer before the parade starts, go in there and get your beer and come on out and get in your band. That's right; that's in order. You can't play music when you're drunk; I don't care how good a musician you are. And then sometimes it causes confusion; fooling with that liquor makes you contrary, see; everybody can't take it. You see, when liquor's in that individual, worth is out; there's no worth there.

[Unintelligible] liquor, some people can't control, they do a lot of things they've never don in their life; it makes them do things they don't want to do. And after they're sober and they come to,

then they're sorry about it, but it's too late. So I quit.
'Cause when I was drinking, I wouldn't allow nobody to fool with me. When I was drinking, as long as you don't say nothing to me, it was all right. But let a fellow say something, [ready to ?] make a humbug, first thing you know, I'd be taking somebody's life or they'd be taking mine. I just stopped. And I've [hurt ?] a many of them when I'd get there drinking. So I stopped. Just quit. I cut it out. That's the best way. You know something against you, man can't control himself when he use it, don't fool with it. Now some people can drink ever so much, and you know, go right on around--lot of folks can control theirself, but some people can't control ~~the~~ theirself when they're drinking, and some of them are just like a hog, don't know when they got enough. They'd be drinking till it run out of their nose and mouth, still they want more.

[Allen:] Did any of the old-time musicians here used to drink?

[Bailey:] Huh?

[Allen:] Any of the musicians use to drink, in the old days, here?

[Bailey:] I don't remember no whole lot of old ones; most all them I know of is dead. Now, looka there: had Chris Kelly, Sam Morgan, Jack Carey--I don't know about his brother, Mutt, I don't know if he's dead; he was in California--

[Allen:] He's dead.

[Bailey:] Willie ["Kaiser"] Joseph, he got killed in [unintelligible], he got killed by a truck, hit and run driver, car. And my barber he's a old banjo player, he used to play with us, he died; he's been dead going on two years--First and Liberty--Nelson Joseph--we used to play together [in ?] the Young Tuxedo--he died. And