

JULIUS HANDY

Reel I

May 9, 1973

Notes by Richard B. Allen

Checked by Richard B. Allen

Also Present: Evelyn W. Seidule, Richard B. Allen

Digest by Annelisa S. Clark

Retyped by Evelyn W. Seidule

Interview was held at 825 North Robertson, residence of Julius Handy, who was the brother of "Captain" John Handy, Jr. and Sylvester Handy.

JH says his father, [John Handy, Sr.] led a band for about seventeen years which included Tom Albert. His father had the first parades in Mississippi until his brother, JHJr passed [JHJr's funeral?], and that was the greatest [funeral?] in Mississippi. JHJr and SH were the greatest in his eyes [among musicians] but Louis Armstrong was also the greatest. [JH is ambiguous on greatest.] JH's brothers raised him to be what he is today and they asked him to "carry on" if they passed first.

People followed behind his father's band. JH can't recall any others from [New Orleans] who played with his father. "Cap" [JHJr] had just started on clarinet when he came "over here" [to N.O.] with Tom Albert. JHJr also played with Toots [sp?] Johnson's [of Baton Rouge] and other bands. Then JHJr formed his own band called the Louisiana Shakers. JH says "he [JHJr.] used to shake all over the city". SH then came over to New Orleans. SH played with the [Original?] Tuxedo [Orchestra?] and many other bands. Then "they" [JHJr and SH] began to get JH to play at the LaVida and the Budweiser when he wasn't playing [at home]. JH was playing for rich people's parties, etc. [in Pass Christian area]. JH was in his early forties when he came to New Orleans. He played with various bands.

Then JH formed his own band and began to play for Miss Bernice at Roman and Palmyra. They used to call it the Madam Queen Beer

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Parlor. He had Kid Clayton [trumpet] who played with him a long time. Billie [piano] and DeDe [trumpet] [Pierce] were his honeys. He also hired Booker T. Glass, drummer. This was before BTG's son [Nowell "Papa" Glass] started playing. JH comments on his book with phone numbers of musicians he'd call to play [See xeroxes in ANOJ files.] These numbers are probably not remembered by the musicians now. He mentions Chester Jones and Alvin Alcorn as being in the book. JH says Teddy [Theodore] Riley used to doubt himself and was afraid he couldn't play things. This was when he was young. JH appreciated the fact that TR now gives him all the credit for being out on Bourbon Street. TR plays trumpet.

JH knows that someone will like his playing so he doesn't worry about what other banjoists are doing. He plays the way he knows how to play. JH's father taught him not to imitate anyone. He is told he is the loudest banjo player in New Orleans. This depends on putting the fingers on the strings a certain way and has nothing to do with strength. His father taught him a certain way.

When JH was about fourteen years old, he and his brothers used to go out "over the lake" and play with three cousins. The cousins played guitar, mandolin and clarinet while JH and JHjr played guitar and mandolin and SH on his father's bass. They would go around the lakefront [which lake?] and serenade the rich people at their houses on the lake. They would be given a dollar or perhaps five dollars tip by the people. Out of the money they made, totaling maybe twenty-five dollars, they each kept perhaps fifteen or twenty cents, and they

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gave the rest to their parents. Their father did not want to spoil them by giving them too much money. They were kept clean and nicely clothed but did not carry much money around. Their father kept plenty of food in his house. SH got this habit of stocking lots of food for guests in his house from his father.

JH has one sister whom he says is a doll. His mother played the piano. The sister plays organ and piano for church. The cousins with whom they played were distant cousins on his father's side and are all dead now. JH knows more about his family than SH or "Cap" did. While SH and JHJr. were on the go all the time, JH was a polio victim and was not allowed to ^{work} work but had to stay with his father. His father didn't want him to get married. SH and "Cap" were happy go lucky and went their own way while JH was not allowed to wrestle or get any exercise. JH now wishes he had gotten more exercise. JH spent a lot of time "banging" on the piano. His father never "let on" that this annoyed him. His father never stopped the children from playing. This was how his father had learned to play.

Professor Randolph of Meridian, Mississippi was the son of the man who had a school at their home which they went to. When Professor Randolph (the younger) heard them play, he asked their father to let them go to the Haven Institute in Meridian where he was principal. All three went. They did not have to pay tuition and were taught their [regular courses?] plus music. JH was the youngest on

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on campus. JH complained about the food. He ate with [principal's family]. JH was twelve years old. "Cap" and SH lived in the dormitory while JH stayed at the principal's house.

The birthdates of JH, SH, and JHJr. were in the family Bible. JH was three years younger than SH who was two years younger than JHJr. Their birthdates were changed "by the census". JH now has a birth certificate which he sent to Washington [D.C.] for. The flood of 1915 took their furniture and Bible. JH was born in 1907, they "they" have him as 1904. JH's birthday is February 15. JH thinks "Cap's" birthday was in June but can't remember SH or his sister's. JH sometimes has to call his ex-wife to find out Junior's [his son's?] birthday. [Cf. JHJr and SH interviews]

JH's father was given a violin which was said to be 115 years old. Someone had told his father to put a rattlesnake rattler in the violin to increase the volume of the sound. His father used two rattlers. JH was afraid of the rattles and his father used to scare him with them. One must let the rattles dry for a while before putting them in the violin.

JH has a banjo which was his father's banjoist's instrument. The man is now dead. His son gave JH the banjo which is a Vega banjo. The banjoist was Joseph Saucier. A man named Edgar Saucier, who played trumpet, was with JH's father for a long time.

JH used to "get his kicks" in the following manner. When he learned his banjo better, JH got to play with Jeanette Salvant Kimball who played piano between silent films. When JH played with

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Jeannette Kimball, he didn't have to pay to get into the theater. The charge was ten or fifteen cents. JK and Marguarite Booth, who now lives in Oakland, California, had similar style on the piano. JK was and still is great. JH learned a lot from her.

JH gives George Guesnon credit for helping him. "Cap" played "over the lake" with Sam Morgan and other bands. He would tell other banjoists that his little brother [JH] could "cut" them any time [in a joking manner?]. "Cap" would tell them what key to play in as JH was limited. This helped JH. His father would have a big dinner and the whole band would come to eat. GG would take his time and teach JH different chords at these times. "Little Dad" [Clarence Vincent] would come over with Sam Morgan and helped JH. "Guy-A" [Butler Rapp] also helped. [Henry] Kimball, bassist, was in Celestin's band. He was the father of Narvin Kimball, and spent time teaching JH also. People in New Orleans were crazy about "Cap's" clarinet. "Cap" didn't want to cut wood for their father.

JH thinks music is the best thing, short of "the old man up-stairs". Playing music does not make one not a Christian. JH feels the heart being right gives the inspiration and is the thing that counts. JH says one should make one's money by the sweat of one's brow. Playing music makes one perspire. SH wouldn't put on a sweater when he was wet from playing music.

JH says that for about two or three weeks before SH died, he wouldn't eat. SH wouldn't remember JH visiting him. SH's wife would arrange for JH to come over and eat a meal in front of SH so that

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SH would eat, too. SH loved to play checkers. SH requested that if JH outlived him, JH would arrange a second line [i.e., at his funeral] for him. JH requested the same of SH if SH were to outlive him. JH says this made him feel very good that he was able to fulfill that promise. SH died and they, "[Kid] Claiborne" [real name Yoshio Toyama] and JH, got together a band for the funeral. SH and "Cap" died about a year and a half apart. [See next reel on the organization of JHJr.'s funeral.]

END OF REEL I

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Reel II

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Notes by Richard B. Allen

Checked by Richard B. Allen

Also Present: Evelyn W. Seidule, Richard B. Allen

Digest by Annelisa S. Clark

Retyped by Evelyn W. Seidule

RBA identified tape as Reel II of Sylvester Handy [!!!]

RBA says Fred and Filly Paquette laregly organized Cap's funeral. JH agrees and says he was grieving and really didn't know much of what was going on. JH was pleased to see the number of people there. This was the first time "those people" [the people of Pass Christian?] ever had a band to come into the church. The Olympia Band came into the church playing like they usually do. [Cf. other sources on funerals.] JH says when [Paul] Barbarin died the Catholic people [church] didn't allow the band to come into the church. [Cf. notes.] JH says normally if the dead person is not a Catholic, the Catholic Church doesn't tone its bells when a procession goes by. Because [Mable] "Cap's" wife is a great Catholic and because he was so "great" over there [Pass Christian], the Catholic Church and all the other churches, both White and Colored [sic], toned their bells when "Cap's" body passed. This was the first time people over the lake ever heard of this.

JH says the band was wonderful. They played from the church all the way to the cemetery which is about a mile or a bit more from the church. JH says "they" [people of Pass Christian?] didn't know anything about a second line. Some "real" second liners from New Orleans were brought over there in free buses. All you could see was people, they were up in trees and on top of houses. [Cf. John Handy, Jr. folder.] One of the high sher^piffs over there said it was one of the biggest funerals in Mississippi. They'd never had anything

like it.

JH says that people will treat you nicely everywhere you go if you treat yourself nicely. "It" [attitude toward self] is the most important thing. You can't change yourself.

Kid Howard, Chester Jones and so many others had their churches [i.e. were members of churches?] His mother had her church, too, and would ask them to play at her church. JH says they were walways glad to because they got a good dinner from his mother afterwards. Chester [Jones] and [Kid] Howard would ask when the church would have services again; they always wanted to come back so they could have another dinner. All of them--SH, "Cap", [Kid] Howard, JH, Albert Walters and others--enjoyed playing at churches for no chzrge. They played ^{during} ~~ruing~~ the service. They played only spirituals. They learned a lot of spirituals there, and this was a lot of help to them in learning music as they would hear the spirituals sung.

JH gets bored talking to his neighbors all the time as some people do. He prefers to sit in his house and amuse himself with records, T.V., his musicial instruments, etc. He's afraid some of his neighbors think he is stuck-up. His daughter worries that he is sitting around thinking about Sylvester [Handy] and "Cap". He just enjoys listening to Sylvester's and Cap's records, but not in a morbid way.

JH recorded with Frank Naundorf, trombone, but he [FN] and the

union had some problems and the records haven't been issued yet. The [records are held by union?] They had [John] "Smitty" [Smith], piano, [Andy] Anderson, trumpet, and others. JH sang a couple of the numbers that were recorded. They recorded at FN's house, probably on Plum Street. JH sang a blues and one other number. They enjoyed playing. Recording didn't worry JH.

"Cap" didn't worry about anybody or anything. SH and JH were like that too. They didn't worry about who was the best or greatest musician because someone always liked their playing. "Cap", Andrew Morgan, Homer Eugene and one of two others did something at Tulane University. JH took Cap "up there" because "Cap" didn't know how to get to Tulane. RBA mentions that "Cap" worked at Tulane. Lars [Edegran] played piano, and this was a jam session [at Tulane].

JH had [fraternity] parties sewed up during the late 1940's and 1950's. "All on Jackson Avenue--" [interrupted] JH moved to New Orleans around 1929. [Cf. Reel I] JH played [Fraternity] dances on Broadway and Audubon Streets. JH likes playing for parties. He met many people and got good pay for any overtime after the normal four hours. This was why JH could get any musicians he wanted. JH would split his tips with his men. He used from two to four men. When it was only two, they used guitar and piano.

There is plenty of real Dixieland compositions not being played on Bourbon Street. JH sometimes sits in with a band and finds the correct way of playing a number is not the way the others are playing, so he has to conform.

JH has a collection of records which includes some by Dukes of Dixeland records and Fats Waller.

JH's father used to play Dixieland numbers. He used to hit JH on the head with his bow when JH "made the wrong numbers" [i.e., notes?] It's hard for JH to conform his playing to something that is wrong to him. "If you're going to do something, do it just like its supposed to be did....You can't fool everybody with music."

JH went to a party two or three weeks ago at Preservation Hall. JH didn't take his banjo because he knew "Claiborne's" wife [i.e., Keiko Toyamo] would have her banjo there. JH "took over from" [i.e., followed] [Willie] Batiste. An elderly white clarinetist heard him and asked who he was. The man said he recognized that JH had to be a Handy. It may have been Raymond Burke or Luke Schiro, but JH didn't know. It was probably Burke. The man said JH was the only banjo player who would "make him play".

JH is in the union, he's "in the books" and he has [business] cards out, therefore he feels that, if people want him to play, they can call him. He doesn't want to just wander around looking for jobs. JH says grief has knocked the spirit out of him, and he feels he should rest. The last job JH played was with Joe Gordon about one or two months ago for Papa [Albert] French in Metairie. [i.e., they were sent as substitutes on the job by AF?] They had a pianist and guitarist also. JH sang a few numbers. Then some ladies would sing different songs. JH could accompany them correctly, this is a good

thing to be able to do.

JH says lots of people don't know what music is but its the greatest thing in the world. JH played a "project" [i.e. musicians union sponsored job] one night on the third [psychiatric] floor of Charity Hospital last year. Music's effect "amused" [sic] JH. People get the blues, and they play the same record over and over again because it means something to them while others get tired of it. At the hospital they played an old number. A lady started singing it. When she started singing the nurses and the doctors came up to the band. When the number was over [] asked them to play it again. They did. The lady came back and sang it again. It turned out the lady had sung that number on Bourbon Street. She had "snapped". Singing helped the woman. JH doesn't know if the lady made progress after than or "fell back". Then she asked for different numbers. The doctor asked to have JH's band back. One night a lady took JH's mike [microphone]. A nurse got it back for him.

Tom Albert used to come see JH's father. JH's father heard of TA through some trombonist. Punch [Miller] used to play with JH's father several times. When PM could no longer go "over there", he referred TA to John Handy, Sr. TA replaced PM. TA and JH's father became good friends. The Gulf coast used to be a great summer resort. TA used to enjoy the Gulf coast. When "Cap" moved

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to New Orleans, he stayed with TA free of charge. TA had a little band in New Orleans, and "Cap" started playing with him. This is how "Cap" met Kid Howard, Kid Ory, and others. [Cf. JHJr. interview] "Cap" went to Baton Rouge for a long time. When he returned to New Orleans, he started playing with various people. TA wouldn't go to bed until he knew where "Cap" was, then he'd call JHSr. The Handys had a telephone which was the old crank type. Their number was 184.

The family had a phonograph. JH's father used to make them [i.e., the children?] shine it. They also had a piano. "Cap", Sylvester and JH played music--[interrupted]. Television is mentioned. The radio came in the 1920's. [RBA is joking about remembering radio in the 1920's]. JH says some people today think that radio and T.V. are old.

[END OF REEL]

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Also present: Richard B. Allen
Evelyn W. Seidule

Notes by Richard B. Allen
Checked by Richard B. Allen

Digest by Bonnie C. Nelson

JH, Sr. = John Handy, Sr. JH = Julius Handy

RBA asks about Frank Towles , [tb], and JH replies that he used to play with his father [JH,Sr.]. JH adds that [Willie] Pick [Davis],g, Selby Thomas,b, and Moliere Melancon, tp, also played with his father, vl. JH states that Moliere Melancon got high all the time and missed jobs, so his father replaced him with Tom Albert, who was " a great guy."

RBA asks who MM sounded like. JH replies that he played on Punch [Miller]'s style. "He had a lot of fingering", but he missed a lot of jobs. He was a "good, little trumpet player."

RBA then asks about Willie Davis,g, but JH can't remember him. [See above.]

RBA asks what "Pick"used to play with. "Pick" played with a flat pick that was made from the thick part of a lady's comb. Parts of the comb were filed down by guitarists, and picks made from them, because they couldn't be bought at the time. Whale bones from corsets were also used to make picks.

JH's cousin, Charlie Watson, called "Charlie Blue", played drums with JH, Sr. JH says that "Charlie Blue" was also a good baseball player. JH doesn't know when CW quit playing with JH, Sr. RBA asks how old JH, Sr. was when he quit playing. JH recalls

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that it was around World War I. JH, Sr. was about two years too old to go to the war, and "Cap" [John Handy, Jr.] was too young. JH believes they were taking men between the ages of 18-45; he adds that "Cap" was very anxious to go.

JH says that Paul Maurice, cl, from Bay St. Louis, also used to play with his father. "He was a great clarinet player." Sumner Labat also played clarinet with JH, Sr.

JH recalls that when Harry Fairconnetue, banjo, and JH wanted to draw a big crowd, they played in a way called "two banjos bucking at each other" [i.e., competing.] HF and JH would be at opposite ends of the band. It wasn't like Preservation Hall, with everybody soloing. "You can bore people like that." Harry [Fairconnetue] would take a solo, and then the whole band would complete it. Then the band played another number, and on the next number JH played a solo.

A discussion then follows about the banjo and guitar, and how they can be used to compliment each other when playing the same notes. JH says that in such a case, the banjo played E flat, the guitar played E flat, "and so on." But the chords are different. JH comments that it is complicated for him to switch from the banjo to the guitar and back again. JH played both, but he says he didn't "really switch" from one to the other because he always wanted to play the banjo. JH, Sr. had every

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instrument in their house but the banjo.

Sylvester Handy played slide trombone also [in addition to bass.]

JH worked in a grocery store for \$7.00 a week, still wanting a banjo. JH, Sr. told Mr. Temple from Bay St. Louis to bring a banjo for JH. The banjo cost fifty dollars. A discussion follows on the expense and quality of banjos. JH says that [Albert] "Papa" French's banjo cost six hundred dollars. JH prefers old banjos to new as the old ones "hold the sound" and have more value.

JH's banjo had a calf-skin head. Now most [banjoists] are using plastic heads. JH says that he would want an original head, no matter the cost, in order to hear the old sound. He believes the head is also bigger on old banjos. Although calf-skin heads will shrink in the rain, and plastic heads do not, JH still prefers original heads.

Edward Watson, Charlie Watson, ("Charlie Blue"), Harry, and Henry Watson were all brothers and cousins of the Handys. Charlie played drums, Eddie played guitar, and clarinet for a while, and Henry played banjo.

A Jackson played bass with JH, Sr. His late daughter, Anita, played piano, and her brother, Joseph Jackson, also played piano. [See also JJ interview.]

"It was no problem to get anyone to play." Jeanette [Kimball] was always ready to play the piano.

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On Sundays, the people would go for excursions across the lake and return about 6 o'clock. The elder [ly] people used to tell their daughters that they could go by "Old Man John Handy's house", but no further. When JH was about 12 or 14, "they" would put a badge on JH, Sr. and tell him to arrest anybody. JH, Sr. was respected by everyone.

The family had a piano, records, a phonograph, and all had a good time. This made a lot of good musicians. At these get-togethers, they taught each other, and, says JH, "that's what made so many of us so great."

Joseph Jackson is in the New Orleans [local chapter of the union] because he was brought to New Orleans by [John] "Cap" [Handy, Jr.] to play jobs. If JJ got a good job today, he would call JH. SH and JH often played with JJ. "Cap" played a lot across the lake at one time. If he had a job across the lake, he would refuse last minute offers from [Kid] Sheik [Colar] to play at Preservation Hall.

The morning before "Cap" died, some teenagers wanted him to come by the Peter Claver Club over in Pass [Christian] to jam with them. He didn't feel well, but hated to turn anybody down, and so he went.

JH says that his father took him everywhere. EWS states that it was a shame that the [Gulf] Coast died in the Thirties.

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JH replies that he has gotten other jobs playing for people uptown. Mr. Keil [sp?] of Royal Antiques called him to play on New Year's Eve and would call him again on the 18th or 20th of January to remind him to play the following year on New Year's Eve.

JH bought his piano for thirty-five dollars and hauled it for twenty-five dollars to one of the uptown parties at which he played. Sylvester [Handy] moved it in his truck. The people giving the party stated that they had to have a piano. Albert Walters, trumpet, was supposed to play with JH at the party. He couldn't, so his son, "Piggy" Walters, played trumpet at the party. JH continues to describe the party at length. There was ice on the lawn so that people could ski. Al Hirt was there, too. AH played several numbers. It was a very nice party, and the people applauded their playing. JH speaks about how meaningful applause is when you are putting out everything that you have. He says that it is the public that should be pleased, not yourself [or a nightclub owner?].

When asked what his favorite numbers are, JH replies that he loves Dixieland, Progressive, and practically all other numbers except rock and roll. He says that on the previous Sunday, he was supposed to jam with a sax player, but when the player went into rock and roll, it was "one solid blow" without

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a change so JH quit playing.

JH then mentions a [television program] he had recently enjoyed when "Duke Ellington and all the guys" came on. He also describes Benny Goodman as a "kick". [Was BG on this program? RBA, July 19, 1974.] JH says that age has nothing to do with one's work.

He goes on to say that because of a festival [i.e., a Creole Fiesta Association activity] held on the previous Sunday, many musicians, who usually would come to his house, didn't. JH didn't have a trumpet player, and JH's drummer asked JH to play the piano. He did, and his neighbors were surprised, as they didn't know that he could play the piano as well as he could.

JH comments that "Punch" [Miller] played until he passed out [i.e., died? PM did not drink for many years. Cf. PM interviews. RBA, July 19, 1974.] He then adds that the father of some friends of his worked hard as a mailman, even though he was urged to quit. After he quit, about the fourth week, he passed [on] just sitting around. It's good to be active. JH says that when he was "disabled to work", he kept up his interest in music which was his life. If he got one night a week [a music job], JH ~~was~~ satisfied.

When asked what kind of work he did in the day, JH replies that he was a delivery man. His hardest jobs were handling boxes of canned goods and other staples, and working for a packing house. JH's father never allowed him to work hard

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[see Reel 1 above], and JH couldn't get adjusted to it.

RBA asks what instrument JH first played on the Gulf Coast, and JH replies that it was the piano. His mother had a "pump organ" [i.e., harmonium], and played for the church. JH played blues on it, but his mother objected to his playing the blues. His sister watched out, and warned him when his mother was coming. However, some neighbors told his mother that JH was playing blues on the organ. He would confess, and so he would not be punished.

His father then bought a Kimball [sp?] piano. JH says that his father would buy any instrument he thought they [i.e., his children?] wanted to play.

End of Reel 111

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Reel IV
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Also present: Richard B. Allen
Evelyn W. Seidule

Notes by Richard B. Allen
Checked by Richard B. Allen

Digest by Bonnie Nelson

JH, Sr. = John Handy, Sr. JH = Julius Handy JH, Jr. = John Handy, Jr. =
"Cap"

The Pass = Pass Christian

JH again talks of his love of playing on his mother's organ [i.e., harmonium. See notes on Reel III.] His mother was told about his playing the blues by "other people". She threatened him with a beating. At that time, blues, says JH, were slow numbers, and so were recognized [since church songs were faster?.]

JH mentions the La Vida, the Budweiser, and the Music Box on Carondelet and Canal [i.e., taxi-dance halls.] "They had the five-minute slow drag, the fox trot, and this and that" [which the band played.] You paid fifteen cents for a five-minute slow drag, ten cents for a fast number, and a nickel for a fast, fast number. There were more ten-cent dances, but they [the customers] requested more five-minute slow drags than anything else.

RBA asks what kind of playing was done when the Handy brothers played together, when "Cap" [John Handy, Jr.] played the mandolin. JH says they played "mostly the same Dixieland." JH played chords. "Cap" would lead, playing the melody in single notes. "Cap" played the mandolin as he played the sax; he would lead every number. JH did not play solos. Sylvester

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also played only chords [i.e., broken chords?] on his bass rather than ever taking a hot [solo]. The three brothers played together until "Cap" was about 28 to 33 years old. Then JH got a band over the lake, and he called for "Cap" when he was available.

JH played with Edgar Saucier's father's band, i.e. August Saucier's band, Sumner Labat's band, and "Gigger's" band. "Gigger" was a bassist and August Saucier's brother-in-law. JH, Paul Maurice, "Gigger", and Walter Benoit, tp, played with Sumner Labat. Labat had no steady personnel, but he called different players together whenever he got a job.

Sometimes, they had what is called a jam session in New Orleans. They would have a fish fry and have "gumbo and this and that." The people would cook, and then "we'd eat and play and didn't know when to stop playing and all that. It was a kick."

EWS asks if it bothered JH that he was over there [on the Gulf Coast], and his brothers were here. JH replies that it did not. JH says that he was "'Cap's' preference", and "Cap" would send for JH. "Cap", [Kid] Howard, and George Guesnon would meet JH at the L&N [Railroad] Station. "Cap" took JH to play at the Hummingbird, the Astoria, the Pelican, and other

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places. He recalls going to a restaurant on Iberville near Marais, Douglas' Restaurant, with homemade tables. They ate there when they did not go to the Elite.

JH says that things aren't the same now. Musicians used to get "high" on the job and fall asleep on the sidewalk. Friends would take their money and instruments for safekeeping. This can't be done now.

Frank Towles came to JH, Sr.'s house often. JH, Sr. held rehearsals twice a week. JH says that this is why "a bunch of those fellows got to be so good." Tom Albert did not rehearse with them. JH, Sr. told TA about the numbers when TA came over to the Pass [i.e., Pass Christian from New Orleans.] TA got to the Pass about four or five hours before a job, and JH, Sr. went over the numbers with him.

A discussion of train schedules follows. JH says that it took two to two and a half hours to get from New Orleans to the Pass on the train. JH then discusses automobile travel to Pass Christian.

JH mentions a trumpet player from Norco or environs who also lived in New Orleans, but JH can't remember his name. JH says that he worked with Douglas Hood, one playing the banjo, and the other, piano. They would alternate playing these instruments

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according to who got the job.

JH remembers playing with the late "Big Head" Eddie Johnson, sax, for a long time. JH also played with Sidney Cates, banjo. Sometimes they both played banjo in a band, or one played the banjo, and the other, the guitar. They played in a full[-size] band. SC would sometimes not feel like playing an entire job and would sneak off, as SC was a carpenter also. Many musicians doubled on different instruments, especially on strings.

RBA asks what kinds of dances were done when JH was growing up. JH mentions the black bottom, two-step, the waltz, and the schottische. EWS suggests the one-step, and JH agrees. Now, says JH, few musicians, except the older ones, can play a schottische, and many can't play a waltz.

JH says that he loves to hear Lawrence Welk. He has a wonderful band.

He recalls that "we" [JH and other musicians] played a melody [i.e., medley] of waltzes. People used to dance to the waltzes, and the best dancers got a cake. JH says that he played "the cake walk, and the schottische, and this and that." People also danced the Charleston and black bottom for prizes, such as cakes.

JH now refuses to play with bands that he isn't going to "qualify with" or fit in with, as rock and roll bands. JH knows

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that he can usually fit in at places like Crazy Shirley's or similar places.

RBA asks if JH ever played in any dining rooms or like places. JH says that he used to play "behind" symphony orchestras that came to the auditorium. Leon Godchaux called JH to meet him at the Roosevelt Hotel, and LG hired JH's six piece band. JH's band was to follow an orchestra that was made up of about 104 pieces. JH was reluctant to play with his small band, and was afraid his musicians would get "cold feet." When they went to play, JH says that the auditorium was packed, but the people were so bored with the big orchestra.

Leon Godchaux offered JH's band a drink. When JH's band played, the people liked it very much; JH's band "woke everybody up." JH mentions playing for parties at the Roosevelt, Jung [Hotel], Monteleone Hotel, Lenfant's [a restaurant], and Heinemann [Baseball] Park, renamed Pelican Stadium.

RBA asks if JH ever played in any hotels on the Gulf Coast. JH says that he played at the Mexican Gulf Hotel in the Pass, the Buena Vista in Biloxi, and in nearly all of the hotels in Biloxi.

JH recalls playing at a private party in the Pass. After the party, some people wanted to take "Cap", Sylvester, and JH

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for a ride. They did this after stopping at the Handy home, and getting permission from JH, Sr. At about one o' clock, they got to Biloxi and stopped to get something to eat. One of the people who took them for the ride got out of the car and ordered a meal for everyone. But when they all started to go in, the Handys were stopped because "colored" were not allowed. The others cancelled all of the dinners, but then the "big man" [i.e., the owner?] allowed them to come in. The Handy brothers were encouraged to play their instruments, and did so after receiving permission from the "big man." Some movie stars and othes^r were there, and people started throwing money on the floor. One movie star who tipped them heavily, and handed them the money, told them not to pick up tips from the floor as it was demeaning. The brothers left the money on the floor and departed. "Cap" was upset about leaving the money on the floor and about how much they could have had.

RBA asks what Mardi Gras was like in the Pass when JH was growing up. JH says that it was wonderful. Albert Alexander and his [employees?] built floats, and "we" [the Handy brothers?] played on them. There were only two or three floats, but "people always did have a wonderful time over there" [in Pass Christian.]

After excursions to the Pass, waiters sold food to the

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people on the train before it left, returning to New Orleans. There were thick, fresh fish sandwiches and potato salad. Sandwiches were ten and fifteen cents, and the people bought many of them.

JH says that there were [Mardi Gras] kings and queens in the Pass. JH played for balls, at churches and at schools, both "white and colored." JH was hired frequently.

JH recalls how easy it was to catch fish, crabs, and shrimp. "Cap", Sylvester, and JH used to catch crabs in sand beds in the shallow water. JH, Sr. caught shrimp in a net and flounder at night with a spear. JH says that he was "crazy about mullets."

END OF INTERVIEW