

Retyped.

-i-

Lala: Depends on just what time you wanta talk about. I can start talkin about 1910 or 1908.

And all that

Russell: All the way back. You can tell us a little bit even when you were born, went to school.

Lala: I can tell you all the colored bands. Really you take---jazz music wasn't originated by white people. They were originated by the Negroes, and at that time they was called rag time bands. Well, naturally they went up North and was called jazz, see.

Allen: Well, when were you born?

Lala: I was born in '93.

Allen: In '93. So you remember---

Lala: Do I remember!!!

Allen: You remember way back.

Lala: I remember the colored bands they had all around the city of New Orleans. There was the Imperial band, the Superior band, the Olymphina, the Magnolia, Tuxedo band. All colored fellows. They go 'round--in them days when they'd give a dance, and everything the band that would play for the dance would go 'round on a truck, call it a furniture wagon, a ole' time furniture wagon. Remember how they used to move, how they'd move furniture in the old days. On the wagon And they would put sides on there, you know, with a sign where the dance would be that night. In fact the white bands used to do the same thing. Jack Laine used to have three bands called the Reliance band: #1, #2, #3. And that's why how all that stuff was originated-----from the Negroes. And you take most of the time these colored bands---God Almighty, you'd get a band with eight men--seven or eight men for a 1.50 a night--play five hours. That was you know.

Allen: That was a dollar and a half for the whole band or a dollar and a half

Lala: A man, a man. The leader would get three dollars! That was big money.

Russell: I was wondering which part of town were you raised in? Where were you born?

Lala: I was born right here on Conti between Dauphine & Bourbon right where Broussard's Restraunt is. Right in the back yard I was born.

Russell: Were you raised in there?

Lala: I was raised all way, I left there in 1900. My father went in business on Orleans and Villere, and I was around the 5th Ward all my life. Raised in the 5th Ward. And ah, I was

Retyped.

-2-

September 24, 1958

Lala: raised around a lot o' colored musicians. I knew where all the colored musicians lived in the 5th ward mostly--mostly ever' one of 'em, and they all just had more talent. Ya' 'no what I mean? They had bands running 'round the town takin' jobs and everything. Many was the time we used to take a job--four men, six dollars--a dollar and a half apiece. Guitar, bass, clarinet and trumpet. Then that was big money in these days. When the ole' district--when they start puttin' white bands in the old Tenderloin District. That was before the first Worlds War. That's where we all went in there. God Almighty, we got a dollar and a half a night. Go to work at 9:00 o'clock at night, work 'till about 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning. Long as they doing business, we'd stay there. Get paid ever'night, but we were makin' 8, 10, 12 dollars a night tips. Our salary was only a dollar and a half a night; get all the cigarettes, all the drinks, all the eats we want. Nothing to worry about.

Allen: Well, how old were you when you could first go in the district?

Lala: In the district--I was in short pants. Go to work at night time I had to put long pants on top of my short pants because they wouldn't allow nobody--no young fellows wasn't allowed in the district in short pants. I was wearin--'member the ole' days, We used to wear stockings. I put a pair of long pants over my short pants to go to work in them.

(everybody laughs)

Allen: Well you must have been quite young.

Lala: Nothin' but a kid. At least, I was about 14 years old--15 years old.

Russell: Had you started on the cornet--what was--

Lala: I started on trumpet--on trumpet--I started on trumpet.

Russell: Any of your folks play anything? Your mother--

Lala: My father was of the--yeah, he waz a musician. He was one of the originators--uh--
~~organizers**originators**~~ organizers of the musicians union. My father was one of the organizers.

Allen: What was his name?

Lala: Mike Lala

Allen: Another Mike Lala:

Lala: Yeah, my son was named after him.

Retyped.

-3-

September 24, 1958

Lala: Then my cousin was named after my daddy cause my daddy christened him--then his son's named Mike. So that's why they got so damn many Lalas in the Union.

Allen: Oh, yeah, and ah, did your father play rag time?

Lala: Oh, well, in them days they was what you call---it wasn't rag time in them days, my father's days. They were dance bands you know, but there wasn't no pep, you know. Regular legitimate musicians, see! But they played what was called rag time in them days but not as hot as the Negroes. You see my Daddy gave it up, my daddy gave up music, let's see, I was about 10 years old. I'll never forget, I was a young kid. The first time I stood out all night. I played with a bunch of men old enough to be my Daddy, you know. And ah, played a dance. I'll never forget this as long as I live. Right on Dumaine and Moss Street. On the Bayou St. John---I didn't come home that night, next morning I wouldn't get home till 7 o'clock that morning. My daddy was worried and I weren't home man he wanted to grap my cornet----and break it up. Say, that's what you gona' do now, stay out all night. Cause in them days, in these days they got in twelve O'clock, one o'clock--they was early--. You know I was playin' with a bunch of the old fellers--much older than me. Could be my daddy. Jesus God Almighty, man ✓ . After that I though I was tops. Everybody would start hiring me. All them old fellers would come get me, see. Because I could take it. I took lessons from a man by the name of Tony Maggio. And ah, I took music lessons, reading lessons. I went to him and he was wonderful musician. I went to him to learn how to read, you, see, and so I went with my trumpet there, and he seen what I could do with a trumpet there and I say I could do more with a trumpet there than he could. He say I used to amuse him cause he could play, but he never could fake, you know, memorize it. I'd amuse him. And he used say, "you come here to take lessons. Well, the only thing I can do. I'm gona' give you music lessons. Come here without your trumpet and I went there. We (WR: Yeah, yeah, solfege) solfege music. Ya know singing. Solfege music. Then I go so----well, then Jack Laine caught a hold of me. Man, when he caught me, man, then from there I went with Tom Brown. Tom Brown grabbed ahold of me. After Tom Brown grabbed ahold of me, oh ah, after Tom Brown grabbed me, let's see who I grabbed me---. I went away. Went up north. Came down, came back here again--stood here awhile, went back up north. Went back around Chicago. Worked with Santo you know Pecarare (Pecora) and ah, most of the time when I was up in Chicago, you know, lots of these boys

Retyped.

-4-

September 24, 1958

Lala: around here would leave here and they'd go up North and they get the swelled head, you know what I mean. They'd want to quit, you know. Well, them days it wasn't like today. A man would offer you \$20 or \$15 a week more, they'd quit--gone me, I didn't do that, I was smart, see. And ah, when I went up there, I went by myself. Most of these organized bands went up there together. So when they got up there, one feller want to get this feller, and one, you know, break the band up and more naturally they made a fool out of themselves. See, the only ones stuck together was - uh - Nick LaRocca. Me, when I went, I went alone and I'll never forget I didn't have no trouble at all man. Got a job right away. Jimmy Petrillo was president of the Chicago local and his brother Ceasar, Ceasar Petrillo the trombone player. I was up in Chicago. I was at the local. I didn't put my transfer card in---So a fellow says "you want a job for tonight." I said "Yeah". Gimme a job at Lake Geneva. I said "Where in the devil is Lake Geneva. I dunna where Lake Geneva

So finally he said "Well, I'll pick you up." He picked me up and I went on the job. Bunch of men sittin down there. 'Bout 10 or 11 men, never rehearsed; nothin' like that. They introduce me, I sat down. Looked at the music. The first number, I forgot what it was. I'll never forget it as long as I live. And I'm kind of shaky, you know, being with strange men, you know what I mean. I played the first number, the second number. The trombone player sitting next to me was Ceasar Petrillo, Jimmy Petrillo's brother. The first trombone he sez, "what's your name again?" I told him. He sez where you from. I sez "New Orleans." Oh man, that's all. Says, man, wait. Meet me tomorrow at the local. Man. The next morning, the next day I meet him. Introduce me to the fellows. Brought me . Generally at that time, you know-- I dunno if the law is the same now. You had to be in - uh ---Chi--in Chicago or any place six months before you could take a steady job.

WR: It's that way now Too, I think, most places, yeah.

Lala: Still

WR: Sometimes, three months.

Lala: Yeah. Check. Well, I had my transfer card. So finally

I--uh--

[He] brought me in the office a to his brother, you know, and everything. So finally he got something. I can't think of--I think the fellow's name is Phil Burdie, old Italian fellow.

Retyped.

-5-

September 24, 1958

Lala: He had a band at the Chicago Beach Hotel. Now you know where that's at. Don't you?

Russell: Way up North Shore.

J.R. ^{who?} [unintelligible word]

Lala: So, I went out there. Went to work out there. Stood out there about a month. Band goin' over big. They called me up at the local. You wanna know what they done? They took me away from there and they send me up on Broadway and Lawrence. That used to be the Green Mill one time. At that time it was called the Mon Marte Café (sp?). I dunno if ya' remember that?

Russell: No.

Lala: I think it's the Aragon Ballroom right now.

Russell: Oh, yeah, I know that place.

Lala: I went up there, working up there. Whom comes in town--Santo Pecararo [now Pecora]. I'm sleeping. He come in--he was working--in--ah--Bulóxi with Joe Fulco. During this summer the Palace Theatre was closed. Do ya' remember that?

Russell: Yeah!

Lala: You from New Orleans?

Russell: No, but I remember the er--where the Palace Theatre was though.

Lala: So santo comes up there. I wake. Some one knocking on mu door. I'm sleeping, 'bout 10 o'clock in the morning. "Where you come from boy?" "Just Got in town." So we had rehearsal that afternoon. So I brought Santo. There was a booking agent, I can't think of his name. I think it was George Edwards or Benson, oh I'm talkin' about so doggone long ago.

Russell: There are a lot of Benson bands around there.

Allen: Benson, Benson Orchestra of Chicago.

Lala: I think it was Benson. He was a booking agent, ya' know.

Russell: He had a lot of 'em.

Lala: So I brought him up there at the rehearsal and everything. Had a trombone player there. Santo sat in, played a couple o' numbers. Man, right away the leader wanted Santo, though, put him on another job, didn't fire him. So we working there, we go to work at 8 o'clock to 1. Five hours. Was with a big orchestra. Well, he had about 13 men, 12 or 13 men. And after 1 o'clock they keep a Dixieland combination, and we used to get overtime. Well, more naturally, they had another trumpet player, with me, I can't remember that guy's name. It was such a good

September 24, 1958

Retyped.

Lala: job. He was a wonderful musician but he couldn't fake.

Russell: Yeah, from Chicago.

Lala: Yeah, well I, was some trouble. Well, more naturally, he leaves. Our salary was a hundred dollars a week. But our overtime we could get ah 180 or 170 dollars a week. Used to get \$2 an hour overtime. 150, 160, 140, you know what I mean. Long as the people stayed--- till daylight, we stayed.

Russell: About when was that, was that after--quite awhile Tom Brown and-uh-

Lala: Oh, Tom Brown, yeah, it would be--he'd been up there and back to -- this was around 1920. About 1920. [unintelligible word or two] See Tom -- Tom came here to get me when he was up there, but I wouldn't go, you see. Cause I was doin' good here, you know, you know what I mean. I made 'about two trips. I was in New York, in Atlantic City. I had a lot of good jobs, but-uh-you know you take a man that's been used to--I used to get homesick, you see. So the reason why I-uh-I was away-around 1925-26 I was doin' good. My father taken sick. Me being the only son he have a business he had a business. I came back to see him. He was looking bad and everything. He was sinking, so I did go back up North no mo'. So he passed away and he tole' me "Johnny, give it up. Cause you ain't gonna last, that life, you know." He says, ah, you got a business here, take the business over and give it up. So I done what he told me to. But ah, all the while, I wanted to go back in it, you know what I mean, I had so much cause everybody, you know, I was in demand, you see, I could cut the stuff.

Russell: Did you keep playing a little bit on weekends or any time?

Lala: No.

Allen: What year was it you quit?

Lala: I quit in '28, see--in 1928. And never played a job since. It just goes to show ya' manys the time when Santo years back he wanted me he--say, go ahead, practice up. Course, I got my bridge, you know and everything. I can't play. I don't wanna have nothin' to do with that. You know, I'm too old for that you know what I mean? I Just but I always--got in contact with all the musicians. Just like Paul Mares, Leon Roppolo, Georgie Brunis, I was always in contact. Leon's dead, Paul's dead. You heard of Paul Mares? He died. All these boys. Only one now that's goin' as strong as he used to, as he was a little while back, last eight-nine years ago he was goin' very strong.

September 24, 1958

-7-

Retyped.

Russell: Still plays ever night, though?

Lala: He plays--yeah! I remember 'cause I was working for-out Milneburg for Sharkey's brother-in-law, Johnny Carello ^{Corelli? Quarella (at milneburg)} ~~[Carsella]~~. Sharkey didn't even know how to hold a horn. Just know how to play a couple o' numbers, you know, with his left---he's left-handed, you know. I used to tell him "try to play with your right hand." Got in contact, keeping contact with all the boys and everything--

Russell: I was wondering, speaking of names, about your father's name, what is your full name, it might be nice to have it here on the record.

Lala: My name Johnny Lala.

Russell: Any middle name or ah

Lala: N. is my middle name, but I never use it.

Russell: In case there would be any confusion I thought it would be good to have your middle--

Lala: Yeah, yeah, Johnny Lala.

Allen: There are several Johnny Lalas around town.

Lala: Yes, but very few play music.

Allen: Yes, yes.

Lala: You take plenty Mikes, hell of a lot o' Mikes. Plenty Mikes, yeah.

Allen: And they all play, I guess.

Lala: Ever' one of 'em, ever' one of 'em.

Allen: Did your father fake at all, by the way?

Lala: He did, yeah, of yeah,

Allen: He faked.

Lala: Yeah my father's faked. Yeah, he faked and he played by music. He was good in his days. At that time you see. Now I'm talkin' about---God Almighty, years and years ago. Way before 1900-----in the 1800's, in the 1890's. You know what I mean.

Russell: Well Ray Lopez had told me that his father was a good trumpet player in the French Opera orchestra.

Lala: Yes, he was a violin player, I think

Russell: No, I think he played trumpet, too. He might have played some other instrument I'm not real sure. Maybe it is.

Retyped.

-8-

September 24, 1958

Lala: Now tell me something----is Jules Cassard living yet?

Russell: Yes

Allen: He travels with the races or something, or something like that.

Lala: That's what I heard, yeah. Jules and I, we were kids together. Started out, Jules Cassard. Henry Brunies, well Henry came after, you see, and Eddie Edwards, and ah what's his name--that died--Yellow Nunez---remember Yellow Nunez?

Allen: I've got lots of his records.

Russell: Well, what happened to him?

Lala: He died. He can back---

Russell: Do you know when abouts or--

Lala: Beg pardon

Russell: About when did he die, or do you know----

Lala: Well, he died around '20 ah, around 1930 or 31. [1934-D.C.M.]

Russell: Those people that aren't living, we are sort of interested in them, you know because they can't speak for themselves, naturally.

Lala: Yellow, Yellow, you see, his name was Alcide Nunez. We call him Yellow--Alcide Nunez. He was up north for about fifteen years. He came down here and he got on the police force. More to get in the band, you know. They have in the band. You know, the police force. And he died here. Yellow was a very good, ah, wonderful faker. You see in them days we had clarinet players, we had trombone players. But they could read, but they couldn't fake. You understand, they couldn't--in other words what you call legitimate musicians. Play as is. No improvising or nothing and everything. But these boys had such an ear^{and} they had rhythm. Now there is another one, and I don't know if you heard of him, he was one of the, ah, more--uh--the best valve trombone player--rag time trombone player, I think in the---that---I never heard no one play like him---Bill Gallaty.

Russell: I heard 'em talk about him.

Lala: Bill Gallaty, heard about him,

Allen: I've seen his pictures. And his son (Bill Gallaty, Jr.) plays trumpet.

Lala: And his son plays trumpet. Bill would take a valve trombone, tell you and what he wouldn't do with that trombone. He'd take--when his valves wouldn't work--

Retyped.

-9-

September 24, 1958

Allen: Uh, huh--

Lala: Get be broke, he'd take a hair pin and make a spring for it. That son of a gun was a little bitty feller, and he pump that thing man just like a slide. Bill Gallaty. And they was only--at that time I'll tell ya' how many white bands, rag time bands we had here. We had Christian, Frank Christian's band--you heard of him--

Allen: Yes, Emil's brother

Lala: Emil's brother, Emil's brother, right. Bill Gallaty, Tom Brown, Jack Laine, Johnny Fisher, George Schilling was a trombone player with Johnny Fisher then they broke up George Schilling went--went, made his own ba---. You know what I mean, make up his own band up, and at that time I tell ya' who was playing drums for him. He's on the--he's a ex- he's a retired policeman now, Freddie Williams. You heard of him?

Allen: Yes, I've heard of him.

Lala: Yeah, he was a gr--he used to play drums with--ah--with ah--Fisher, and then he ah went with George Schilling. Now that's oh that's 1928 - 1929.

Allen: You were saying you worked with Schilling yourself.

Lala: After I came back here and I was up north, you see, I came back here, stood here about two years see. I was spotting with Schilling, you know, spotting, spot jobs. Schilling had, the town sewed up. I tell ya' how he had the town sewed up with music. See my father had a business. I was always learn how to cut meat from a child. And me being the only son, my daddy always wanted me by him, you know what I mean. I wasn't no papa's boy, but sill and all, but he was the papa and I was the boss. Ever^tthing I said, you know, he wanted me by him. So I came down here and was with George, and I worked with my daddy in the market. So I start spotting with George. He had us going every night, see. At that time I didn't need no money. I didn't need no money. I had everything I wanted, but I just love to play music. So I got tired then I wanted to take a trip again. You see just a young feller. You understand. But like I worked with George Schilling, he had us going every night of the week. Achille Baquet was working with us too.

Allen: Oh.

Lala: Achille Baquet, then after Achille left, you know, I kinda got disgusted, you know. And I left town too. Achille worked with us.

September 24, 1958

Retyped.

Allen: How many cornets did you use with Schilling?

Lala: Two. We had, ah, the first one, he's dead now, Harry Shannon, and then I ah, we had Henry Knecht, with us and we had Dantagnan, playing sax. Had a wonderful little jazz band. At that time we was the----- in them days we were the most of these bands was running around playing nothing but choruses, you know what I mean. But they'd stick on them choruses. And plenty pep. With George we played music. Then we used to mix it in. You know what I mean. Then we'd harmonize it, you see. Them days had that windjamming. You know what I mean. blasting music. But George and I we start playing, jazzin' it. Just like Paul Whiteman came along and made this symphonic, you know jazz. You understand, and that's when we were going big over here. We were going big, because George would take a job, and, ah, someone would come along they'd want to sing. They wanted this and that you know what I mean. Well we had the music, we'd play it. But these other bands, they had maybe about two men could read and the others couldn't. You couldn't go play that stuff, you understand, son, we had, you know. But George had all good men. Everyone read but him. He him his men made him. He said it. He always said it. His men made him.

Allen: Did, ah, who did we have in the rhythm section, then?

Lala: In the rhythm section, we had Johnny Frisco, and ah Eddie Eiermann, he was the bass player

Allen: I know him.

Lala: Huh, Eddie? Lefty?

Allen: He played Buck, yeah Lefty, he played with Bunk Banville once.

Lala: Buck's my uncle.

Allen: Is that right!!

Lala: Buck married my, Buck's got the cornet--the cornet he's got right now. They gave they gave; made me a present of that gold-plated cornet in Chicago. Was Louie Armstrong was the cause of me gettin' that cornet.

Allen: Is that right!

Lala: Louie Armstrong. He brought me up to Harry B. Jay's manufacturers.

Allen: oh, yeah!

Lala: And they made me a present of that horn. Louie Armstrong.

Retyped.

-11-

September 24, 1958

Russell: Yeah, I knew he bought one when he went on the boat, they said.

Lala: And Buck Banville's got that cornet yet. I seen him at a wake about a month ago. He said Johnny, I still got your cornet.

Allen: I haven't seen him in a long time. He was playing piano out at the Plum Pan¹t, you know where that is----

Lala: Yes, Yes

Allen: American Legion Hall

Lala: Yeah, yeah, well, one leg Robbie used to play there, too, you see.

Allen: Who's that?

Lala: Er-----well he died--Robie Ackerlarry (sp?)---you might heard of him.

Allen: no,

Lala: Well, he was secretary of the Musicians Union, white headed feller.

Allen: Never did know him, what'd he play?

Lala: He played piano--play trombone--play accordian. He died---he worked with Bob [or Buck?]
he died.

Allen: Well back to "Happy" Schilling---"Lefty", and ah, what did Frisco play, drum?

Lala: Drums, yeah.

Allen: Drums.

Lala: Then Dantagnan played saxophone.

Allen: uh,huh, and he the piano---no piano or ah

Lala: Well---no. Only when we had a place with -- when we had a place with a piano , I'd play piano.

Allen: you play piano.

Lala: Yes.

Allen: I didn't know that.

Lala: See, when they went in a place--there were two trumpets and they had piano, I'd
Well most of the places never had pianos in them days.

Allen: Oh, yeah.

Lala: Very few places, but wherever we went, you know what I mean. So let me tell you what happened now. When saxophones first got popular, listen to this, we never did have no

Retyped.

-12-

September 24, 1958

Lala: saxophone players here around 1920-1920-1919-1920 there wasn't no saxophone. There was only one saxophone player-- two saxophone players in the city of New Orleans, old man Ramos, and Emil Tasso could play a sax. Dantagnan came along played clarinet and then he bought him a little soprano saxophone, you know.

Russell: Straight----

Lala: And then he come along on the job playing soprano saxophone and clarinet. So finally and he bought him an E flat [alto saxophone]. Now Schilling always did use two trumpets. First and second. Henry was a very good trumpet player. He is always was. Read, powerful, but he was a straight man. Me, I used to do all the, you know.

Allen: uh, huh.

Lala: Play all the hot parts. And saxophone--man that's why, so Dan got his saxophone. E flat. On the steamer "Sidney" or "Capitol" -- at that time was it the "Capitol" or "Sidney"? I dunno what it was. It was the boat. It came down here with a band from up north, up north around Ohio and they had a young feller that looked just like you (RBA). About your age at that time playing a C melody saxophone. And it sound so--so nice, you know what I mean.. So I sez, ah, so "Dan", I sez "Dan", you got your soprano home." "Yeah". I said "let me have it." Let me have it for about a week. "Go ahead--take it". What I was doing was learnin' the positions on the damn-- on the soprano. So finally, bout two weeks after I go to Grunewald I buy a C melody saxophone. I sez "Dog gone it, I'm goin' to play the saxophone. ~~Joe say~~ So one night I go on a job you know, with my cornet. I bring the big C Melody saxophone in the case. Joe say "what you got there?" I started playing the C melody. Well man, that went over big. One trumpet. I played C Melody saxophone for about a year. And went over big. So finally after that, I said, "Well!--course I ruined my lip for trumpet, you know. But--what I don I left it alone and went back on trumpet. Just when I was gettin' ready to go back up north. For about two months I went back on trumpet to get lip. Went back up north again. I went over big. Made nice money, oh, we had a wonderful time, we was happy. All made money, you know what I mean? But me, I didn't need money, them, I was have anxious to play, but still I made the money, too. You get what I talkin' about son.

Allen: Yes, did you have a banjo with Schilling?

Retyped.

-13-

September 24, 1958

Lala: Schilling played trombone, banjo. He doubled up on trombone & banjo.

Allen: Oh, I see.

Lala: See, oh, man, we walk in a place and they got a piano, man, I got on the piano. And Schilling got on the trombone. And some numbers he used the banjo.

Russell: Yeah, he doubled.

Lala: Well, I'll tell ya', talk about a sweet bass player, that's "Lefty" Eiermann, "Eddie".

Allen: Wonderful.

Lala: Wonderful tone. Ooooooooh. Man, yeah we got along fine----we got along wonderful.

Well, I go away, I come back. Still, stay here a couple of months. Schilling take me right away, soon as I get in town. Make room for the Dago. I'll never forget that--he used to like me, George, Yeah, we used to have a nice wonderful time.

Allen: Did they ^{two} did you use cornets for any particular reason?

Lala: Yeah, more for harmony, more for that, you know what I mean, for harmony, you see. We had one saxophone. We used to harmonize, me Knecht. We harmonized. We never both never did play straight. You know what I mean the melody, always.

Allen: Yeah

Lala: If I take the melody, he'd play the sec [ond] you know what I mean, the harmony, you know That's why we got by. You see George--George never read, see. But still he had a wonderful ear. We used to teach him his parts, you know. You know what I mean?

Allen: Yeah

Lala: What I'm saying. You take like George Brunis, the same way. Now I don't know if he reads [no].

END OF REEL I, September 24, 1958

Retyped.

-14-

September 24, 1958

Lala: Baquet left.

Allen: That's when.

Lala: When Gussie [Mueller] left. That's before I went with Schilling. [Lala then with Tom Brown].

Allen: Oh, oh I see.

Russell: Is that when Gussie join Paul Whiteman or where'd he go?

Lala: Oh, well, he joined Paul Whiteman after that? Yes, he did. Yeah, But when that's the time when Gussie left and when Achille left Schilling. Man it broke my heart---because they were wonderful musicians, you know.

Allen: Oh, yeah, well ah did you play with Tom Brown before you went to Chicago?

Lala: Oh, yeah, I played with Tom Brown before I went to Chic---. You see the time Nick LaRocca left here, I was supposed to go up North, but I had to ah--had give parades, and he left here on a Thursday morning and Thursday night, you remember the first parade used to be on a Thursday night in the ole' days.

Russell: Yes, and it still is mostly now.

Lala: Yes, well no, now they got 'em a week ahead of time

Russell: Yeah

Lala: Or two weeks,

Russell: That's the first big--what is it Momus? I think.

Lala: Oh, yes, see, so Nick left with ah Alcide Nunez, Eddie Edwards, Tony Sbarbaro left with 'em. Tony left with 'em. And, ah, they stayed up there, of course when Henry died, you know, when Henry Ragas died, they shipped his body down here, he was laid out right here on Liberty & Dumaine. I'll never forget that as long as I live. Yeah!

Allen: Who was with Tom Brown when you played with him?

Lala: Ah, I'll tell ya' who---ah, Gussie Miller [Mueller], and Tom Brown, Joe Meyers he is a policeman now---

Russell: I don't know him.

Lala: No. Well he's a policeman, I don't know if he's livin' or dead. He was playing drums. Had a feller by the name of Frank Taranto playin guitar, them days. Bro--- that's before banjos ever

Retyped.

-15-

September 24, 1958

Allen: uh-huh

Lala: And "Steve" his brother playing bass, Theodore. We used to call him Theodore, his name's Steve, I don't know, but we called him Ted. Is he--he's still livin'?

Russell: Yeah, you know.

Allen: He had supper with Gussie the other night. Mrs. Tom Br--

Lala: He's in town?

Russell: Yeah, came back in town is what I heard.

Lala: You mean, ah, Steve's in town?

Russell: Yeah

Lala: Big tall feller.

Russell: Yeah,

Lala: With red--

Russell: Yeah, he was here when Tom died,

Lala: He was here when Tom died.

Russell: And he went to Florida, and ah, I don't know, in the spring he went to Florida--about in June.

Allen: Well, have you seen Johnny Bayersdorffer? He's in town.

Lala: I've seen---Johnny's in town? I'll tell ya' when I seen Johnny--about five years ago in a Mardi Gras day.

Allen: uh-huh

Lala: He come up to me, I didn't recognize him, he said "Johnny Lala?" I said "Yes". He said "Do you remember me?" I said "No." He grabbed hold and hugged me and said "I'm Johnny Bayer--" He sure got old lookin' and Johnny is younger than me. Johnny Bayersdorffer. He's in town now.

Allen: He's in town now and lives out in Metarie. I haven't seen him since for--February I don't think myself.

Lala: I seen Johnny about five or six years ago on a Mardi Gras day. He come up to me and stopped me, and I didn't recognize him. I had Johnny with me with Schilling's band.

Allen: Uh, yeah.

Lala: Yeah, and Johnny--at that time Johnny could play just what he was on the

Russell: On the paper. huh? [Russell, you have a remarkable memory]

RETYPED.

Lala: On the paper. All just what's on the sheet he could play. He couldn't fake nothin'. One and he start to gettin' hot. And he formed the band you know with Steve Loyacano, you know Steve Loyacano?

Allen: Yeah

Lala: Feller that's got the hot dog place, and the bowling alley!

Allen: Yeah, the banjo player.

Lala: Banjo player and his brother, ah, played saxophone that crippled feller, Joe

Allen: uh-huh

Lala: Joe, and then he had another a young feller, a brother named Freddie, I think--Freddie Loyacano.

Allen: Yeah, I know him.

Lala: He plays banjo too. Yeah, yeah, because we used to work together out at the Beverly Gardens and everything. Yeah, Johnny Bayersdorffer. And I tell ya' who ah was at that time. Bouchon---he's got thatCoctail Lounge now on Canal Street

Russell: Oh, Lester

Lala: Lester, yeah

Russell: Yeah

Lala: Lester Bouchon

Allen: I think he gave up music business.

Lala: He gave up music. Now, he went in business with his brother--ah, ah, Arthur. They've got the Buccaneer ah Beachcomber and the on Canal by McMahon's you know, back by the cementery about on this side of the banquette.

Russell: Yes, I never did know where it was?

[Bouchon's Guest House } 4403 Canal - 1956, 1958 tel. dir.
Arthur C. Bouchon
J. B. McMahon (uncle) 4800 Canal "]

Lala: Well, you know where McMahon's is, huh? On Canal, the undertaker place

Russell: Oh, yeah,

[Down side of Canal St - should be odd number]

Lala: On this side of the banquette, you know--right by the cementery, you got, they got a wonderful coctail lounge there, got a beautiful place.

Russell: Right there. Didn't know where it was.

Lala: Lester, yeah, do I remember? Jesus God Almighty. Ever' time I think about the good ole' days, here but the beauty part about it thinking about Jack Laine comin' back with Jack Laine

Retyped.

-17-

September 24, 1958

Lala: we was nothin' but kids. We'd have a job---at that time you don't remember the Suburban Race Track over the river, huh?

Russell: No.

Lala: No, I know the Suburban Race Track--Well that--on a Saturday night--it was a race track just like the fair grounds, you see, they had dances on Saturday nights. At six o'clock in the evening we have to get on the corners and maybe we'd play to 2, 3 o'clock in the mornin'.

Russell: Is that Algiers?

Lala: It's in McDonoghville.

Russell: Oh, McDonoghville!!

Lala: Jack Laine would take all of us, and bring us home to his house, he lived on Port Street go to sleep--in the morning we get up in the mornin' his wife have breakfast ready (?) and we have to catch that 9 o'clock train and go out Millneburg. Play all day pick nick for two and a half. From 9 to six in the evenin'. Then from there, jump over the Ferry, go to Algiers, play the Elmira Pleasure Ground, I don't know if you remember that?

Russell: No. I've heard of it.

Lala: We even played funerals over in Gretna. It was the funniest thing--playing funerals in Gretna.

Russell: A regular brass band?

Lala: Brass band, yes sir. They cut it out because soon as we'd leave the cemetary we start playin' the ragtime music, you know, and the families would see that, cryin' and ever'thing.

Russell: Families didn't like it.

Lala: Didn't like it. They cut it out. yeah, we used to play funerals. We didn't know wher-- Jack Laine we didn't know where we'd be with him.

Russell: What kind of funeral marches did ya' use.

Lala: Just the same ole' standard funeral marches they got--that you hear now.

Russell: Would they be written out or some of the hymns?

Lala: Oh, yeah

Russell: Or some of the hymns.

Lala: You see a funeral march is ah, ah, ah, you see when a funeral march is like this, you see, you ah ah like that. (Marches in rhythm of a funeral march)

Retyped.

-18-

September 24, 1958

Russell: Okay, real slow.

Lala: Slow, slow, slow, yeah, very slow. (Scats in rhythm of bass drum) You know what I mean?

Russell: Yeah

Lala: Ysed to play that

Russell: But then you'd start jazzin' up the numbers on the way back.

Lala: On the way back, soon as we leave, get out to the cemetery, man, oh, boy. As much to say "I'm glad you dead, you rascal you". You know what I mean. And all that (unintelligible bit) We used to play "Ballin' The Jack" (hums) and all that. Man them people, them sad people that leave--lose their the poor unfortunate dead, the wife and the children seen all that, course they cut it out.

Allen: Well, what were some of the tunes you played back in those days?

Lala: Well ^{all} what you hear now, like this ah "Tiger Rag"

Allen: uh, huh.

Lala: Well, that wasn't the "Tiger Rag" that time. The name of that was "No. 2". You heard that huh. Heard about that?

Russell: You have any idea who wrote that, or first one, where did you ever hear it first?

Lala: We all knew it from a kid, all right, you take ah, ah, what's this again, now, ah, they got names for all of them now.

Russell: Well, things like "Livery Stable Blues".

Lala: "Livery Stable Blues" is just naturally a blues. A colored blues. All the "niggers" ah would play that blues, you see? And ah, what was that again---"That's a Plenty".

Russell: Yeah

Lala: And what was that--

Russell: "Panama"

Lala: "Panama", yeah, that, we played that "Panama", yeah, "Thats A Plenty" and ah "Sensation".

Russell: Yeah--

Lala: (hums out melody of "Sensation") that, we call that the "Tuxedo Blues". Cause they had a dance hall in the ole' Tenderloin district, you know. And we made that up in there. We was call it the "Tuxedo Blues". Yeah, we was working in there. Tom Brown and I--we were workin'.

Allen: You were workin' in the "Tuxedo" with Tom Brown?

Lala: Yeah, in the "Tuxedo" in the ole tenderloin district. ^{we} Man, worked all around. Anywhere was money, you know what I mean?

Russell: Sure.

Lala: It was really ah and the salary wasn't nothin' like I said, but the tips--we had a remember the ole' time bread boxes they used to have here---

Russell: Yeah, sure.

Lala: Remember the ole' t me phonographs with the horns? Well we have a bread box and they have a horn, an ole' phonograph horn, made a hole in there, you know?

Allen: Put the money in there?

Lala: They had a little kitty on top, yeah, a little cat, you know what I mean [unintelligible 2 or 3 words] Feed the kitty, come throw money in the box, you know (Ha, ha, ha,) (everybody laughs)

Allen: What kind of a place was the Tuxedo Dance Hall?

Lala: Oh Dance hall--just a dance hall. Played music, you could buy the girls a drink, women a drink. Understand then [very soft] You take the women to their room (?)

Allen: Yeah

Russell: Sure, they'd be there to hustle [sell themselves]

Lala: Yeah, yeah, they'd work on "B drinks"----they work on drinks. You see if they they drink, they drink a whiskey. That's before prohibition. Oh, yeah, they wharge you 50 cents for a drink, but they drinking tea.

Russell: Yeah, yeah, sure. They still do that.

Allen: Oh, yeah.

Lala: Tea or "coca coza" or pop in there. You know what I mean, You don't know. If a drunk will catch on to these, you know. That woman would kid use to work for 40 per cent. If she sell a hundred dollars worth of drinks, she make forty dollars. You get what I'm talkin' about. They had girls and they dance. "B drink s" they call 'em. See--most of them "B" drinks.

Russell: Yeah, they still do that.

Lala: They do that sure, but I mean in them places. You know what I mean.

Russell: Yeah

Retyped.

-20-

September 24, 1958

Allen: Dod you ever know a tune named Persian Rose.

Lala: Parisian Rose!

Allen: Yeah, Persian Rose, or something Parisian, maybe

Lala: (hums out melody) Parisian Rose. (hums more melody) That's it? (hums again) Ole Dan Hughes and all them used to play that, man.

Allen: Oh!

Lala: Yeah, Parisian Rose.

Allen: Oh---Dan Hughes who was he?

Lala: He was a trumpet player--he died po' feller, uh----we used to call him "Perisan Rose" cause he used to love it, everywhere man he wanted----ever time fellers they used to play with him, say--oh man every second number he want to play "Parisian Rose" [laughter] It was a waltz and you could play it two-step. (hums it again). "Parisian Rose", yeah. Jesus God yes. I can remember numbers, my boy----since I was a child.

Allen: Do you remember the first tune you ever learned?

Lala: Oh--no, I ah---yeah, on, ah I couldn't so dog gone mahy, I couldn't---

Allen: Yeah---

Lala: I think the first, one of the first (pauses) "In the Good Ole Summer Time." [Lala now sings and scats part of this songs].

Russell: That was one first anyway. [what a memory]

Lala: That was easy, you know.

Allen & Russell: uh, huh.

Lala: Yeah, that's right.

Allen: And what about your first job--who did you play that?

Lala: Oh, you mean a spot job?

Allen: The first job you ever played as a musician.

Lala: The very first job I ever played yes, I do remember they dead, now. A feller by the name of "Alexy", his name was "Alexy" he was a fiddle player. You know where the entrance of the fair ground?

Allen: Yes.

Lala: There was a place there called Stone's Dance Hall.

Retyped.

-21-

September 24, 1958

Allen: uh-huh

Russell: On Gentilly about.

Lala: No, ah on Sauvage Street. On Sauvage Street. Right by the entrance of the fair ground right on before you go in the fair ground, you had a place, a barroom and a hall there. Stone's Dance Hall. That's my first job I played in short pants. Was a feller by the name of "Alexy", his name was "Alexy", but I can't think of his second name. He's--he had one brother play, George. George. He played guitar and "Alexy" played violin, and "Alexy" was old enough to be my granddaddy.

Allen: uh-huh

Lala: You understand, and we just had--a feller by the name we, great God Almighty I'm trying to think of it, played clarinet, oh, he was an ole man and I can't ah think. God Almighty that's--

Allen: Were these guys fakers then?

Lala: Oh, yeah, ever' one of 'em was fakers? Yeah, ever one of 'em. They didn't know nothin' about music.

Allen: And how old were you then?

Lala: I was about fourteen--or thirteen--in short pants.

Allen: uh, huh.

Lala: I can't think of---I'm tryin' to think of their names--I know George and "Alexy" and that's all. "Alexy". I can't think of their

Allen: We'll have to ask somebody. We'll ask somebody--we'll ask Jack Laine--he might know.

Lala: No, I don't think Jack will remember 'em. No, maybe he, no Jack's memory--I can't think of their names--they wasn't no italian fellers now

Russell: Well, what was the very first music you remember hearing, when you were a little kid. Was it ah, of course it might have been your father, I guess at home. I mean any bands you heard like a parades or would they be outside of a dance hall. Anything you might have called jazz or ah ragtime that's---

Lala: Wellmore naturally--every number well you could play in a rag time, you see.

Russell: Even the very first music. Even when you were two of three years old or any thing like that. Remember when you were just a little kid--any kind of music you might have heard.

Retyped.

-22-

September 24, 1958

Lala: Yeah, wait ah "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree"^[1905], that's one of 'em that was big. That was going big. And ah "Coon, Coon, Coon, I Wish My Color Would Change" (says this title in a singing way). "Coon, Coon, Coon,"^[1901] and ah wait, Jesus God Almighty, I can't think now to remember the ah-----

Russell: Do you remember any of the real early parades when you were a boy by either the colored or white bands or anything whatkind of music did they play? Was it more like military music?

Lala: Mostly

Russell: Or was it ah---

Lala: Well the white band was mostly military, but the colored bands, no all popular

Russell: They were jazzing it up then.

Lala: All popular. They'd get in a parade, man, and I'm tell you, man, well you take a the local would have the carnival parades and they didn't have enough musicians in the local to ah fulfill 'em, and more naturally Jack Laine used to ah get um, see. Well Jack would get musicians--he'd go to the cemetery to get them, he'd get them all right--I don't know where he get them at

Russell & Allen laugh

Lala: Yeah, he'd get Oh man, them feller was sitting down go up and down St. Charles Street and Canal Street playing them military marches, we'd come along and play that (snaps his fingers) hot stuff man everybody would be oh there was ---- and I it was something new to see a jazz band marchin'. Just like you see these kids today in the carnival parades, you know, playin' these marches--military marches and then see a little hit band come along

Russell: Yeah

Lala: You know, the same way, you know, just whipping it up. Man had a feller by the name of-- he was one of the best drum bass drum players--nobody wouldn't play a parade with him because he played that hot stuff--don't ya' know you had to have that syncopation beat, you know and his name was Emile Gonzales. I don't know if you heard of him or not, huh,

Allen: Naw!

Lala: Emile Gonzales--he was the only one would take that ah play ah carry that bass drum.

Boy he would syncopate on that boom, boom, boom.

Allen: Did he have a cymbal?

Retyped.

-23-

September 24, 1958

Lala: Cymbal, yeah, yeah, he had ah, ah, ah, wire, ah,

Russell: Little wire beater, wire beater.

Lala: A wire cymbal, yeah, he could carry no-----man he'd go crazy. Just, jus
you know what I mean. With that big cymbal oh--man oh that poor kid he never would stand it
you know. He had the wire cymbal, he used to comealong--just tunk--tunk He was ah Emile
Gonzales--We used to call him a crazy man-----because he'd take that job and nobody else would
n't want it. To play that syncopation and walk--march. It's all right, you (beats out the
beat)--you know what I mean. But he made--yeah, Emile Gonaales, yeah. Used to call him "Putty"

Allen: Call him what?

Lala: "Putty"

Allen: "Putty"?

Lala: "Putty", yeah! George Schilling, he can tell you about him, man. He was a kick. He was
really a kick.

Allen: And what would Jack Laine play?

Lala: Bass drum.

Allen: Did he play bass drum?

Lala: In the parade, yes. He was good, too, now, he was good, but in a dance he played, you
know, trap drum, you see. In the band, you know, but in parades he always played bass drum.
Jack used to get jobs--I swear, I don't know where he get 'em at. We didn't know where we--
all right--nothin tomorrow night. Next day! Very few people had telephones in them days, you
know. He'll come around and git us. Be there tonight--eight o'clock, Quarter to eight.
Always, you know.

Russell: These little brass bands that you had that you were just talkin' about--how many
players would you have---how many musicians?

Lala: In these brass bands, ah you mean for dances or just for marching.

Russell: Oh, no---just out on the streets, like at Mardi Gras.

Lala: Oh, ten, ten---- yeah! that's all---ten, ten, ten, that's all----ten

~~Russell~~ Allen: What lineup would they use?

Lala: I'd tell you what they use. They use two cor---, two trumpets; two drums; clarinet,
one clarinet; ah alto, you understand

Retyped.

-24-

September 24, 1958

Russell: Yeah

Lala: And maybe two altos; and ah bass. See. Now maybe--they might have two trombones sometimes. Now maybe they couldn't get--whate ever it was, it was ten men you know--what the job.

Russell: Yeah--

Lala: And Whenever----he'd make it ten men he'd get two three cornets--or either two three altos, so long as he had the amount of men, you know. And another thing we used to do in them days buddy now I'll give you the dope. We'd get a job----for ten men--we put six good ones in there and all the rest dummies. Give 'em a uniform just to carry it. And we make up money for our ourselves. I'll never forget this feller, Benny Maas--he had charge of the Carnival parades--we was doin' that for quite a while you know, putting dummies in there, getting uniforms and instruments.

Russell: They didn't get paid as much then, huh?

Lala: They didn't get paid nothin', they done it, for fun. And we'd get the money! (everybody laughs)

Lala: So Benny goes on Bourbon St. The old French Opera [House] was on Bourbon Street--somebody put Benny Maas next to it. So he comes to me and he says ah and we was standing up playin' you know--they was getin' off the float and he went and listened and he comes up to me and says now that feller ain't playin. I says he's got a toothache. How come he says what 's the matter with that fellow ain't playin'? I say his foot hurts. So he called me and says come see me gomorrow. So I went to see him the next day and he says--listen, you wanna cut that out now--you got a job with you got for ten men--and I want ten men to play--I don't want no dummies in there. Well we used to make that money ourselves. They was only paying five dollars apiece.

Allen: Yeah

Lala: So what the hell.

Allen: Yeah, all day's work, huh?

Lala: No, the parades---a carnival parade.

Oh,

Allen: Just those were the nightparades.

Lala: The night parades yeah, night parades.

Russell: Yeah

Retyped.

-25-

September 24, 1958

Allen: Well, would they put anything in the horn or give 'em a bad mouthpiece, or something?

Lala: No, give 'em a horn---they put their mouth to it and everything might as well play, they can't tell.

Russell: They wouldn't have to (mumbling)

Lala: ✓ What the devil. They marching and people can't tell. Oh, we used to get by with murder (Russell laughs) What the devil we young and foolish you know what I mean. Yeah, old Bennie Maas he used he call me and say no look

I used to tell, and Yellow Nunez you see we had two bands. Ten here and ten here. One play and one don't. I used tell him fix up with Yellow--he was powerful. I say "Yellow", I say "when you get through playing you get through playing, come on jump with us play with us, you know. Jump from one band to another. Playing, make noise, you know what I mean. Long as they got rhythm, you know. And everybody was well satisfied. They liked it. We used to fix these fellers up they'd come you know what I mean.

Russell: Yeah! Try to help you out

Lala: ✓ They was good days, though.

Allen: You were talkin' about staying out all night long|---

Lala: Yeah

Allen: On Moss street. Who were some of those guys you played with?

Lala: This same bunch I was telling you---this feller Stone--this feller "Alexy"

Allen: Ooooooh. The same guys.

Lala: Yeah, the same guys. That's where they picked me up at--the first job I played was by Stone's.

Allen: Oh, I see.

Lala: See they come got me and after that ah ah I was gettin' too good for them and the other fellers start gettin' me--come gettin' me. You see. I'll never forget when they come along and say, "We got a job Saturday night." Say, yeah. "I want you to play. We got ever'thing--we got drums and everything." Cause when I started they never had no drums. Just guitar, bass, clarinet, and violin.

Russell: Yeah

Retyped.

-26-

September 24, 1958

Lala: Well when you get a job man that had drums, oh Lord, that was alright, man. We had a big band with drums. See! I'll never forget--come on man with that big job--big band--drums and everything. Well, that was big for a kid, you know what I mean.

Russell: Sure.

Lala: Cause most of them bands that we used to play were without drums. The rhythm was bass and guitar.

Allen: How many drummers did they use?

Lala: Two drums--one drummer. Trap drummer.

Allen: One--drummer.

Lala: Yeah, yeah, yeah, trap drummer.

Russell: I think Papa Laine once was telling on some jobs that when ah he'd take his brass band like-out on a picnic they'd take both drummers along, too.

Lala: Well, ^{W.R.:}-----to play a dance job, too.

Lala: Well, no, no, well, wait. When he'd take us out on a picnic, we had to play a parade. You see

Russell: Yeah

Lala: We had to play a parade before the picnic. Marchin' to the picnic, and marchin' back and----and we have to go--and you can't take ah a snare drum.

Russell: Oh, no.

Lala: That's why he used to take two. Yeah, you were right about that. Because we used to play picnics out at the fair grounds and we have to have two drummers. Cause we had to run from here to over there and run from here to there, go play for ah the games and everything, you know what I mean. Yeah,

Russell: In your early dance bands like when Papa Laine would have these different groups--what lineup would he use for a dance?

Lala: For a dance! Bass, drums, snare drums, guitar, clarinet, cornet, and trombone.

Russell: Be a string bass?

Lala: String bass. And after that brass bass got popular with ah, excuse me a second

Russell: Sure.

Lala: You all want to come in. [machine turned off, Lala in bathroom] No---string bass died

Retyped.

-27-

September 24, 1958

Lala: out, but it came back again. You know that?

Russell: Yeah, we heard about that, they switched over.

Lala: The string bass died out and ah, then they came back again. [machine off]

Allen: No, you got 'em on there, I see.

Lala: Well, and I tell you another feller going strong here. Chink Martin.

Russell: Oh, yeah, that's rifht. On tuba and bass.

Lala: Well he's--at that time Chink Martin was ah Jack Laine's bass player, you see.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: String bass player. And parade ah you see used one of 'em ole' time basses, you know what I mean--ah these uh

Russell: Upright tuba.

Lala: Upright tuba--yeah, Chink Martin, yeah. And you might have heard--I'll tell you who you've heard of, "Rag Baby" Stevens.

Russell: Oh, yes.

Lala: "Rag Baby" Stevens, yeah. He died up in Chicago, yeah. He was a comical feller. We had a job you know--white unifor--white pants, blue coats, white shoes, and he take and he take white wash

Russell: On his shoes.

Lala: On his shoes. Comical as can be, man.

Russell: Oh, did you usually have uniforms in the--

Lala: Oh, we had uniforms

Russell: Brass Bands. What about the dance orchestra, did they--

Lala: Had uniforms. Oh, yeah, I'll tell you what--we had to wear uniforms. I'll tell you why--because them dances used to draw such crowds. And everybody could go in there and say they played in the band, played in the band.

Russell: Oh, yeah.

Lala: And they would come--get in for nothin. Oh, no, every dance we had to have uniforms, coats, caps, yeah

Russell: For dances, too.

Lala: Yes sir. Because-uh-everybody wanted to come in there, see I ah went I played I wouldn't

Retyped.

-28-

September 24, 1958

Lala: have no--wear no uniforms, used to make one feller carry the bow, one feller carry the drum, one carry--and you know we had 'bout 15 piece band goin', 20 piece band. At the same time caught on to it. That's why they made us wear uniforms, on account of them, yeah.

(everybody laughs)

Lala: You see we use to play advertising fight.

Allen: Yeah

Lala: Old fight I don't know if you remember that Orleans Club on Bienville.

Russell: No

Lala: It's near Rampart. Between Rampart and Burgandy. Orleans Athletic Club.

Russell: No

Lala: Well we used to advertise on the wagon, you know, for fights, you know, sometime one fellow one feller carry his drums, one feller carry the bass, well they knew the bass player, you know, the other feller carry his snare drum and one feller would carry the bow. Guitar player, "Give one feller the rosin". He'd carry the rosin. Carry the rosin. Carry the rosin for the bass, you know, to get in there. We had fun in them days, you know. Yeah, we called them rosin carriers, you know. Oh, it was a kick, boy. Anything to keep from paying 50cents. Some places it was two bits, sometimes fifty cents. We used to play dances down here, at the old Woodmen of the World, down at Urquhart and Press (Sts.). We'd start around six o'clock in the afternoon advertising around the neighborhood and we start playin' about eight o'clock that night. Twelve o'clock they would have a supper for us. Gumbo, red beans, stew, coffee, we'd play to 4, 5 o'clock in the morning. Two and a half a man. Beer, it was a nickle a glass.

Russell: Yeah, a big glass, too, I guess.

Lala: Well cokes and everything all a nickle, whiskey, before probation now, coffee a nickle ^{10¢} Big piece of cake a nickle. At the dances, now, yeah, that was really the truth, you could ask ah Tom Brown, Tom Brown he's dead--

Russell: Yeah

Lala: Yo could ask---

Russell: Steve [Brown]--he'd know.

Lala: Steve or you could ask Raymond [Lopez], you could ask Gussie [Mueller]. And ask Jack Laine.

Retyped.

-29-

September 24, 1958

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: He can tell you. Jack Laine. Everytime we'd do a job, he'd say . . . have it specify on there, refreshments for musicians. Oh, yeah, they'd have to eat, drink,

Allen: You'd always sign a contract with a job.

Lala: Oh, yeah, contract, but didn't mean nothin. It wasn't ah--well at that time there wasn't in the local [Chapter of the Union] you see. None of 'em, none of 'em was in the local. You see Raymond [Lopez] when he left here, he wasn't in the local. Not here. They joined the local when th--ah

Russell: That's right, in Chicago, I remember when he told me about that too.

Lala: Yeah---no, there was no

Russell: Trying to stop--

Lala: The local--we was the first jazz band that went into the local--Schillings band. We-- when man, when they took us in the local, they was so proud of us, man, because they could get no jazz bands in the local. We couldn't--they couldn't get no jazz bands in the local.

Allen: When did you work with Jules Cassard?

Lala: Oh, God Almighty--I worked with Jules before the first Worlds War.

Allen: And what did he play?

Lala: Jules played/ah baritone, he played ah trombone, Jules played everything, guitar, wonderful guitar player, yeah Jules was very--his daddy was an ole' time musician, too. His daddy used to play a vi--be a violin player. Yeah, Jules, Jules the first Worlds War left. Jules, Jules left here before Tom Brown ever left here.

Allen: Where was he going?

Lala: Who's that?

Allen: Jules

Lala: Up north, He went up north. He was up there before Tom Brown left.

Allen: Didhe leave with the band?

Lala: No, by himself. By himself.

Allen: Yeah

(End of spool)

Lala: I'll tell you who was there, too, Arnold Loyacano

Allen: uh, huh.

Retyped.

-30-

September 24, 1958

Lala: Yeah, Arnold, he was up in Chicago, too. A long time, Arnold, yeah.

Russell: I was gonna

Lala: He had a brother named Bud Loycaano --- I don't know if he's livin' yet. Bud, he was a bass player.

Allen: I think he is sick, [mentally ill], but he's alive.

Lala: Yeah, he's alive--he's pretty old.

Allen: He's sick though, you know.

Lala: Is that so, yeah.

Allen: Yeah

Lala: Bud, yeah, he was a good bass player, man, yeah, Arnold, yeah.

Russell: I was going to ask if you ever played with ah Tom Early?

Lala: Tom Early? I played in Tom Early's weddin'.

Russell: Two weeks ago he died.

Lala: I know Tom died, I played in his weddin'--at ah, at ah, ah, he played bass. I played with him, yeah. I played at his weddin' ah at the hall on Dauphine Between Uraurline and Barracks near, ah Gov. Nicholls in what they used to call the Perserverance Hall [check this] That's the time Joe Mandot was in his full boom. I played with music at Tom Early's weddin'.

Now you know.

Allen: Joe who was in his full boom?

Lala: Joe Mandot.

Allen: Who was he?

Lala: A prize fighter.

Russell; Oh.

Lala: Do you remember, heard of him?

Russell: No.

Lala: On you nev--never heard of him?

Russell: No. Heavy weight? Or what?

Lala: A light weight.

Light weight,
Russell: No, I never did follow except the heavy weights usually

Lala: Yeah, I played music at Tom Early's weddin'. And we had a band, and we all played free

Retyped.

-31-

September 24, 1958

Lala: for that. We played, ah--I played music at Louie Prima's mother's wedding when she got married. A kid playing alto.

Russell: I never did get to meet Tom Early--I used to see him walk by at my place down there on Chartres St. sometimes. We never did get to talk to him, and so I, we should have, but ah unfortunately--it's too late now.

Lala: Tom Early, he played bass, yeah.

Russell: Do you remember anything else much about him---when he started or ah--

Lala: He started around with us young fellers, you know what I mean, playing bass with Joe Polizzi--he's dead now, this feller he was a violin player, Joe Polizzi and ah Johnny Provenzano, he died.

Russell: Oh, yeah

Lala: Did you know Johnny?

Russell: Uh, no, I didn't get to know him, too, I knew of him, though.

Lala: Yeah, Johnny Provenzano, yeah

Allen: What instrument?

Lala: What's that?

Allen: For Johnny Provenzano?

Lala: Trumpet, he played trumpet.

Allen: uh, huh.

Lala: Yeah, Tom Early, yeah, I knew Tom Early well.

Allen: And who else was in the band?

Lala: Ooooooh, at that time,

End of REEL II

Russell: You were talking about the drummer without any fingers.

Lala: Yeah, Pete Massariaf [See soards 1907]. He played drums and he had his fingers was all little nubs, you. See. The way he could hold them--I used to get a kick out of him.

Russell: Yet he was good, huh?

Lala: Yeah, Pete Massariaf. He was a joker.

Allen: He could play rolls, and everything?

Lala: Yeah! The way he holds them sticks in his hand with them nubs. I couldn't understand it. And Pete Massariaf, yeah. There was Joe Polizzi, Pete Massariaf, ah Johnny Provenzano, and a feller by the name of Joe Hogan used to play guitar. Joe Hogan.

Allen: Clarinet player?

Lala: No. He played guitar.

Allen: There was no clarinet player?

Lala: Yeah, ah, ah, clarinet player--I'll tell you who he was----ah wait now, we had so many of them here at that time, wait ah I'm tryin' to think now----the clarinet player, I think his name was Frailes. You see, he got a seat cover place here on Rampart Street, Frailer. Oh God, I'm talkin' about 1913, 1912.

Allen: uh-huh.

Lala: Yeah, around that time. Yeah, that's right, Pete Massariaf, that's right, yeah.

Allen: Did these bands work up arrangements, or

Lala: Yeah, we did!

Allen: Did they ah just fake it entirely, or-----

Lala: We'd take it---yeah, we'd rehearse it. We work 'em out, yeah, we work 'em up, yeah, oh yeah.

Allen: Yeah, did you improvise on the job at all?

Lala: Very, very. That's where every thing was all improvising. Everything was all improvising. That's where jazz was originated, improvising. See.

Allen: But, ah, say you got on a job--would you play a tune you had never played before?

Lala: Naw.

Allen: You'd always rehearse it some.

Lala: We'd rehearse it first, don't worry, and you know what most of us done----rehearse it

Lala: on piano copy.

Russell: Just from the piano copy.

Lala: Piano copy. Go buy a piano copy for 10 cents, we rehearse it, "Good night, Irene", throw it away, after that off the piano copy. Straight off the lead sheet--that's all, off the piano copy. So simple, 'cause we had wonderful ears, wonderful ears. Specially---take Emile Christian and his brother, Frank (Christian) trumpet player. Henry Brunies. Man, you can't beat 'em, couldn't beat 'em.

Allen: Would they play it on the job exactly like they played it in rehearsal?

Lala: Similar----maybe they play better--

Allen: Yeah,

Lala: The more they play the more they----

Allen: Oh, I see.

Lala: Get a lit---you know what I mean?

Allen: uh-huh

Lala: See, fit what goes in you know what I mean, well naturally, well the same way with George Schilling. George Schilling, but he got so we didn't have to have no rehearsal no more because ever one of us could read. You put a piece of that music two or three times, close the books up. I'll never forget we started a job I swear, we bring out music stands and everything and put out books he says "here, put your cigarette stands up." We never opened it. (everybody laughs). Just remember from top to bottom then when this arrangements starts coming out with those tricky arrangements we used to memorize all of that (laughs). I was up in Chicago playing with a big orchestra there and we had an arrangement I'll never forget as long as I live--it was peculiar--the number was "Barney Google". [1923]

Russell: Oh, I remember that.

Lala: Well, "Barney Google", we played "Barney Google" in every tempo mentionable. Every nationality from China, in Jersulam, and in Egypt, (laughing) and in any-all, you know what I mean--

Allen & Russell: uh-huh. Yeah

Lala: Actually, that sheet was about that wide and about that long and about four sides, see. Well we rehearsed that, and they couldn't understand how I could memorize that. And these

Lala: fellows would play it every night about two three times. "Johnny, how could you memorized that?" I'll tell you an incident what happened now----Rudolph Valentino--I worked with Rudolph Valentino, him and his wife. Richard Hudnut's daughter had 'em doing an Argentina dance. They had an act. In Chicago I worked with them. And ah---oh for about two months---well I knowed their routine by heart. So, years, not years, months passed on I'm in Montreal, Canada, during prohibition, more naturally----how's about ah how's about another drink?

Russell: Oh, no thank you, I wouldn't care for one.

Lala: What you want coke?

Allen: I said I just finished one.

Lala: You can have another one?

Allen: No, no, one's a enough.

Lala: You wanta beer?

Russell: No, that's all right, thanks, I, ah, ah

Lala: Well, I'm left Chicago, I'm in Montreal, Canada, during prohibition gettin' all the liquor you want up there, you know. Workin in----I can't think of the hotel now. So, working for the leader, I'm tryin' to think of his name now, I can't---it will come to me!! He didn't know no more about music as a director but like I say when you get jobs, you know what I mean. And anybody can get a job, can get band. So I was sittin' around there workin, and we livin' in the hotel---during those winter months---snow--and all the likker we want--hell, we don't go out. Work, sleep, eat, and drink -- so ah while I'm working in Chicago in ah with ah Rudolph Valentino and got his act and things, we used to play dice----shoot dice and everything during intermissions, you know, well, so, the leader and I didn't get along too good. You know why---'cause he didn't know what's it all about. And he wanted everything so and all his men couldn't stand him.

Russell: His job and all

Lala: But he still, it was his job. See. So I says, I don't have to take that from nobody, cause, me-uh-music means nothin' to me if I hear it once or twice--good night. So he comes to us. He says--look, we got an act, a stiff act. Comin' here pretty soon. I ain't going to tell you all who it is. But I want all you boys to straighten up and that drinking has got to be cut out. We have plenty of rehearsaling to do. We had a man playing trumpet playin'

Lala: wonderful musician, had a good trombone player, two trumpets, one trombone. Ah, so he told us "we got Rudolph Valentino comin' in, and his wife. Now you all had better straighten out and cut that drinking out because we got plenty of rehearsaling". I didn't say nothing. So the day that Rudolph Valentino come in, you know, just for rehearsal about a week before, we all see him down there, he is talking to the leader----

Russell: Yeah

Lala: I'm trying to think of that son of a gun's name before its all over again.

Russell: It'll come to you like you say.

Lala: Yeah, and ah, cause I didn't stay there long, I stayed with him about six weeks, seven weeks at the most. And so he was a little bow-legged short-bow legged fellow. So I see Rudolph and I walked over and I say "Rudolph". "Hello Joh---". "Come here". Made him go in the dressing room. I say "Come here, now listen, you don't know me, huh. I'll tell you later on. Remember, you don't know me." He says "I ought to know you. How many hundred dollars you took me". You know, shootin' dice (everybody laughs). I suz "Rudolph, you don't know me". So, I say I'm gonna ask you a question. How's your routine? He sez, the same as it was in Chicago? "I say, No cutoff,----no adding. The same identical thing, you know. I sez". Ok, that's what I wanted to know." He was a dago, and I was a dago, you know. (everybody laughs, again) All right, first rehearsal Wednesday. Man director, he didn't know a damn thing. Had good men, good readin' men.

Russell: Yeah

Lala: Three saxophones you know,

Russell: Yeah

Lala: Violin, piano, drums, a full rhythm section----so, he start. So I told this trumpet player and the trombone player, "sez don't worry about nothin'." Now, so, I told 'em--- I said look, Johnny whatever you say. So time come for rehearsal--he sat down there--had the sax, and violin ✓ ✓ by the piano, so Rudolph says ah "Listen now, what's a matter with you boys, come on." I says "Yeah, all his stuff was writtin above the staff, you know, high, you know what I mean?" Way above the staff for trumpet, you know what I mean? I was hard

Russell: Yeah

Lala: I said well Rudolph, I says, "We'll go, we'll go." We ain't gonna play it. I says ruin our lips--you see we saving our lip for tonight, you see. We can't work and you know, work the hell out of you at night time, you know what I mean?

Russell: Yeah

Lala: Them dances.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: I says we'll catch it. He says, "Naw, come on. Had about four or five rehearsals, so we just diddled and daddled, you know what I mean. I told the other brass, trumpet and trombone to keep quiet. Cause I know it, you know. I could play it. I says ah, so after that, he says "Listen, you know something, you all need ah more-al just as much rehearsal as the saxophones." I says, "Yeah.", "but the trouble is that we gotta' blow" I says. He said, well I wantta hear something so we started. And then I made a few blunders, I wanted, and I say, "Oh, we get it." So when he has the dress rehearsal afterwards, we, well anyhow, I mean, these boys were powerhouses, I was teaching 'em at nighttime, you know what I mean? Ah, we pop that stuff, man. Rudolph would say, "Fine, that's wonderful", that director, you, know, man his leg straightened out, he was so proud. (everybody laughs). So the first show went on, man went over wonderful, man, went up there, man he got the credit for it.

Russell: Sure

Lala: So, I told him, I says ah Ray--I--that monkey's name comin to---oh, man, that is around 1920, 20 eh-----1920, 21, 22, or something

Russell: Yeah, way back

Lala: I says listen, I'm gona give you my notice". "Give me your notice? Man, why?" 'Cause Rudolph had a month over there. I'm gona give him two weeks notice. That's the second night, he was on, you know. Oh, man, I'm gona' go back to Chicago. I, ah, I got an offer. He says, the feller on the other side, says, "Why don't you stay?" I says, "Naw." I wanta go back---it is too cold here. He says you stay here until this act go and I'll give you 50 dollars a week more. I said "Yeah, I'll stay," You know what I done with that 50 dollars. I split it up with the other two, the other cornet player, and the trombone player.

Russell: That was a nice thing to do.

Sept. 24, 1958

Retrieved

Lala: two months after that the both of 'em were in Chicago after me. The trombone player, and the---- had a little feller by the name of ah----I think the trombone player was named ---I can't think of his name. It was Arthur. I can't think----I'm tryin' to think of that doggone

Russell: He was a Chicago feller, eh?

Lala: No he was from he, he was just eh, eh, eh, he was around Chicago, he was from ah Prin--- ah, Princeton, West Virginia.

Russell: Oh,

Lala: Oh, I'm tryin' to think man.

Russell: I was going to ask, while you are thinking there, maybe it will come to you, did you ever make any records in Chicago or any place?

Lala: No.

Russell: With any of those bands?

Lala: No, no, I ah I'll tell you why. No, ah I could have made some, with Paul Mares and those fellers is, but the trouble is, ah me ah working---the leader, I was working for--his name was George Edwards when I told him I wanted to go to Indian----ah the place where they record them records, he didn't like that. You know what I mean? And an course ah, ah, then I came back, you know what I mean? Didn't bother with nothin like that.

Allen: What were you going to do? Play second cornet to Mares or something?

Lala: Oh, no, I was going to play with the band, understand, take his place, make records, you know.

Allen: Oh.

Lala: With Leon----

Allen: With Leon---

Lala: Leon Roppolo, yeah.

Allen: And where were you going? To Indiana?

Lala: I think it was Indiana. Right, Indiana, yeah. Oh, yeah, I was to make 'em with Leon and Georgie [Brunis] that right, yeah. Yeah, I had plenty of chances, you know what I mean, But--uh--them fellers would get sore, you know what I mean? You had to take off a couple of days, you know what I mean.

Retyped

Russell: Yeah, uh-huh.

Lala: Yeah and, ah, ah, and at that time there was ah, jealousy. Plenty of jealousy. Plenty, plenty jealousy. If you be, I'll be working with you, you know what I mean.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: And a musician come to talk to me and everything and ah I ah say what he want with you. Fella say "All you have to do is give two weeks notice!" you know, didn't have no contract or nothing give him two notice for a feller by the name of ah, he was ah, with Isham Jones, Natoli something, he was Isham Jones' trumpet player. He left Isham Jones and he come and try to get me out of this orchestra. And he's a dago feller.

Russell: It wasn't Louie Panico was it. [Possibly Anthony "Nat" Natoli]

Lala: No---Louie came after this. Louie, no.

Russell: Oh, yeah.

Lala: No, ah, Louie was with Isham Jones-----no, I remember Louie. No.

Russell: But he was around Chicago.

Allen: - - -

Lala: No, never did work with him. Louie, he left Isham Jones, he couldn't speak a word of English when he first started. And I tell you whoever ah, ah, ah, Henry Busse ✓ / He was with Paul Whitman, you see. Henry Busse was with Paul Whitman, too, you know.

Russell: Yeah, that's right, yeah.

Lala: And I worked with him too, yeah. Henry Busse---he died.

Russell: Yeah, not so long ago.

Lala: Yeah, yeah Henry Busse died. His oh, theme song was "Hot Lips". Right?

Russell: I wonder, did you ever write any tunes or compose them or ah

Lala: Well, now I'll tell you.

Russell: Lot of those tunes - -

Lala: Well, now I'll tell you, one number that I composed, but never wrote---you see this woman--this song--this woman sings ah "Joan Stafford". (hums out melody to this song).

Russell: Oh, yeah, ^{use} that in the "Tin Roof Blues" some of that melody.

Lala: That's all the same stuff. They---well, I compose that. ----- that melody.

Retyped

Russell: Yeah, that melody.

Lala: Yes, but I didn't call it that. The name I called it was I couldn't mention it.

Russell: Yeah, I remember. I believe Georgie Brunis said they called it "Rusty Rail", for awhile, too, or something like that.

Lala: No, it wasn't that, we used to call it something----

Allen: Yeah, I know it.

Lala: And then they got this number here that how you call--how you ca---Larry Shields its-- he just composed it and no music to it, ah, ah, "Look at 'em Doin' it Now." ✓

Russell: Oh, yeah.

Lala: It went (hums out melody to this song) Larry Shields composed that number---"Look At 'Em Doin' It" you know, see. Him and ah Nick and Eddie Edwards and ah Henry Ragas that's when they had composed the "Livery Stable Blues," and "Bluin' the Blues", and ah then they came out with "Tiger Rag", well that was "Number 2" we used to call that, "Tiger Rag". They put a lot of names & everything to say they orginated it. Nobody---Alcide Nunez and Nick LaRocca had a big court scrape up.

Russell: That's what I heard.

Lala: Yeah. On account of all them numbers that Nick LaRocca got ah the credit for. Well, Nick ah, has the nerve, you see.

Russell: Yeah

Lala: Have the nerve.

Russell: No.

Lala: Went to court and everything.

Allen: Did you know Johnny Stein?

Lala: Johnny Stein, you mean Emile Stein, ah Emile Stein.

Allen: No, this was a drummer?

Lala: A Drummer, Emile Stein, he used to play in the Palace Theatre

Allen: Oh.

Lala: Emile Stein.

Allen: Oh, well I guess I had the name mixed up.

Lala: Yeah, Emile Stein, yeah. Yeah, that's his name, Emile Stein.

Retyped

Russell: A drummer?

Lala: Yeah, in the Palace theatre, he died, Emile, yeah, ^{he} was kind of a fancy drummer, you know what I mean. They used to put the spot light on him.

Russell: yeah.

Lala: Him and Santo Pecararo, you know, huh. They used to put the spot light over Joe Fulco's head.

Russell: Yeah

Lala: Ah, and ah in the pit you know what I mean? Emile Stein.

Allen: Did he work with Nick LaRocca, is that the same guy?

Lala: Who'se that?

Allen: Emile Stein.

Lala: No, he didn't work with Emile---ah, Nick LaRocca, naw. Emile, no. Emile was always working in a theatre. In the Palace Theatre. He was a good drummer, too, a good dance drummer, too. He was a good vaudeville drummer, flashy.

Allen: Oh, you mentioned playing with Henry Brunies, on what was it Tonti in a dancing school or something.

Lala: Tonti, oh, that's when they first opened up there. That's the time, they used to have two-bit admission, four times a week. Yeah.

Allen: Was that a cabaret or what?

Lala: No, just a dancehall. Ladies free, men, two bits. And they'd have more ladies than men. More girls than men. Two bits. Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Packed in there, I mean four or five hundred people in there. You know what I mean, small place those dance halls, Yeah.

Allen: What year was that about, you were playing?

Lala: Oh, about 1916, 1915, 14, 15, something like that.

Allen: And who was in the band with you?

Lala: Ah, well at that time, let me see,---we had Tony Giardina, Achille Baquet,

Allen: uh-huh

Lala: Henry Brunies, and after I left Emile took---worked, went with 'em---Emile ah Christian. Ah, they had ah Willie Guitar. Was his name Willie Guitar, he played bass, and they had a

Retyped

Lala: feller by the name of "Chippy" to play guitar, but Willie Guitar playing bass, and ah Ernest Giardina played fiddle, no piano. Henry Brunies trombone, and Achille Baquet.

Allen: No drums? Drummer?

Lala: "Tots", a feller by the name of "Tots." "Tots," he's dead oh, he's dead.

Allen: What about ah, you said you had Tony Giardina and Achille Baquet.

Lala: Ernest Giardina was a violin player not Tony Giardina.

Allen: Oh, oh. I got it confused.

Lala: Tony just died about four or five years ago.

Allen: Yeah

Lala: Tony yeah

Allen: I used to listen to him. He was fine.

Lala: He used to play a cla---he ah used to live in Chicago about 15, 18 years and then came down here and opened up a barber shop, you see, he was a barber by trade, you see? He used to play spot work.

Russell: While I think of it there was a young kid came up maybe when you were in Chicago, Emmett Hardy, do you remember him?

Lala: Emmett died, here.

Russell: Did you ever hear him much? What did he play like?

Lala: Emmet was a pretty good player, he was just a beginner and he didn't last long. He died. Emmett. He was a courtin' one of the Boswell sisters. He was about to marry one of the Boswell sisters. Now which one of them, Vet. I know one of them died, you know, lately. There was Vet, Martha, and Connie. But Connie is livin'----the crippled one

Russell: Yeah, the crippled one.

Lala: But he was courtin' one of the Boswell sisters. Emmett he died---yeah, he died---- Emmett died around 1924.

Russell: Was he really remarkable talented

Lala: Yeah, he was a pretty good---talented little feller. Yeah, just started out. He wasn't too well known yet. You know what I mean? He was young, you know what I mean?

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: Course, he was going places, you know. He would have got there just like this feller---

Retyped

Lala: here--that just died there, George Girard.

Russell: Oh, yeah.

Lala: Yeah, he was a pretty good little feller. But he was a newcomer, you see.

Russell: Yeah.

Allen: Well did he have any particular style?

Lala: Yeah, he had a style just ah something like ah Bix Beiderbecke, you know what I mean?

He had a style, you know.

Allen: uh-huh

Lala: Yeah, he had a nice little---clean little style, you know.

Allen: Well, in those days did many of the musicians use mutes?

Lala: Yes. Mutes.

Allen: When were they used?

Lala: Well mostly on ah on waltzes. You know. And then after they used take them little bitty mutes, they had, you know (pause) pull 'em half way out you know and "Wow--wow". You know what I mean?

Allen: Is that that pear shaped mutes? Is that what it is.

Lala: It's pear shaped, yeah.

Russell: Little brass Conn'mute.

Lala: Little brass, little.

Allen: Used come with the Conn cornet

Lala: Yes, yes.

Russell: What kind of a horn did you use?

alaRussell: I used ah---I started on a King, then I went on a Holton, and then when I got to Chicago when they gave me that Harry B. Jay I got rid

Russell: Yeah

Lala: of that Holton. Oh, that Harry B. Jay, man, I stood on that a long time, man.

Russell: Yeah, you used cornet I guess when you started.

Lala: Yeah, cornet, yes.

Russell: Did you ever change over to a trumpet, or---

Lala: Trumpet, yes. Yes, I started on a cornet---

Russell: Yeah,

Retyped

Lala: ...but my trumpet was a Holton then after the Harry B. Jay was a little bit smaller than that and ah I liked that better.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: Them trumpets they all right, they carry, but you can't, you know what I mean. I think the cornet's got a sweeter tone than a trumpet. A trumpet is good for parades, you know what I mean? Brass [band] work you know. But a cornet has got a sweeter tone. I started on a little King cornet about that big. Man----with Tom Brown. Man, ever' time I had a trumpet I had bought a trumpet, too. And everytime I'd go on a job with a trumpet Tom'd say, oh, man, leave that dog gone thing at home. Bring me that other horn you got. You see I was the onliest man in New Orleans that played a slidin' cornet.

Russell: Slide?

Lala: A slidin' cornet. You see I give it to Sharkey about twenty years ago. A sliding cornet.

Russell: George Brunis has one, I took a picture of him playing one.

Lala: Yeah

Russell: But he doesn't play it on his job, he has it at home.

Lala: Yeah, yeah. I had got it from Tony Sbarbaro.

Russell: Yeah

Allen: Well how does it work?

Lala: Just like a trombone. You could make all the notes and everything. Yeah, just like a trombone. Sure, the slide was about this long.

Allen: Seven positions?

Lala: Yeah, just like a trombone. It was more good to play drags on, you know. The Blues like, you know what I mean.

Russell: Yeah

Lala: See what I mean? You could execute 'em faster with a trumpet now.

Russell: If you had to pick a certain trumpet player or cornet as your favorite of all time

Lala: Me?

Russell: Or one or two of them, who would you say were the best you ever heard?

Retyped

Lala: Do you mean in a white

Russell: White, colored, here, or any place in the world.

Lala: Today, right now.

Russell: Today

Lala: Al Hirt

Allen: Al Hirt

Russell: Or in the old days, who would you

Lala: In the old days for white

Russell: It doesn't make any difference--who ever you think was the best one you ever heard or among the best--one or two of them.

Lala: In the old days----I'd say ah Frank Christian.

Russell: He is really outstanding.

Lala: Outstanding. Very powerful, wonderful lip. Frank Christian. And

Allen: And what would make his style wonderful.

Lala: Ah---he never tired--he never get tired. The mo' he play the mo' he could play.

Allen: And did he play a lot of variations? Or was he just a reader.

Lala: Plenty, plenty, plenty variation. He was a good hot trumpet player, you see.

Allen: uh-huh.

Lala: Pretty good, pretty nice. And I'll tell you, I tell you who I did like, I liked Raymond's [Lopez] style, too. Raymond Lopez. Raymond wasn't flashy, but he got a beautiful tone out of the trumpet. He was a left hand trumpet player, too.

Russell: Yeah, I remember. I didn'r know that, until I saw those pictures you

Lala: Yeah, left handed. Yeah. Raymond has a--yeah---I liked Raymond's style. Yes, he had a nice, pretty good style.

Russell: Somebody said Nick LaRocca used to see him play and that's why Nick uses

Lala: I don't know, I don't know, I really don't.

Russell: Is Nick left-handed or right-handed?

Allen: Left-handed

Lala: Left. But really left, but in those years that I am talkin' about, I doubt if Nick knew Raymond. When I'm talkin' about. Maybe he did. But when I'm talkin' about, ya understand.

Retyped

Russell: Yeah

Lala: Maybe he did, I don't know if he knew him. In those years that I am talkin' about, I doubt if Nick knew Ra-----

Allen: Well how did you lip your curnet---did you hold it any special position or anything?

Lala: Same way, just like a professional. Just like a professional. Because I was taught that, you see. I had a trumpet player to teach me.

Russell: Legitimate

Lala: 'No, I used to sit down any kinda way, but they say you gonna hurt yourself doing that. So he held it the instrument like all-----

Allen: Who was Joe Lala, I wanted to ask you?

Lala: Well he was a trumpet player, too. But no relation of mine. He was a trumpet player. He was no relation of mine.

Allen: But, who did he work with?

Lala: Well, he had a little band pickup band himself and he had a job in the Laine's Mill. In McGinty's Cotton Mill. He played spot jobs. Joe Lala. I doubt he's livin' yet. He must be dead. I know what happened. Many's the time, one time he was runnin' with some girl and her boyfriend wanted to come beat me up, thought it was me.

Allen: Oh, no. (laughs)

Lala: Yeah, and I didn't even know the girl.

Russell: Yeah

Lala: I'm talkin about the--- . We used to play on Elysian Fields and Dauphine, that dancing school there, called Luistaina's dance hall. Right next door to the fifth precinct. You don't remember that?

Russell: No, there is a big place there, is that on the down town, down on the river side.

Lala: Yeah, had a gallery all the way around.

Russell: Big gallery, yeah. I was looking at it the other day and somebody was telling me about it.

Lala: That's it, Luistania, yeah. Joe Lala, yeah.

Russell: That was a dancing school?

Retyped

Lala: A dancing school. Well, a dance hall. It was a dancing school we used to call them dancing schools in them days.

Russell: Would it be like a taxi dance hall?

Lala: Yeah, well no taxi no.

Russell: Yeah

Lala: - - - they call them dancing schools. Women was free, men had to pay, see.

Russell: Yeah

Lala: Yeah, that's all, but it wasn't no tag dance.

Russell: No.

Lala: No tag dance.

Allen: No what about Pansy Laine, did you ever work with him?

Lala: Yeah, Pansy Laine, I----well, when I was playing with the old man, when I was first went with the old man, Laine, Pansy had the band, the number 3 band. And he was playing drums. And Pansy had the hottest band better than. Manuel was playing with the old man, you know, Manuel Mello, you know.

Allen: uh-huh

Lala: We was the number 3 band with the young kids, and we was hotter than all of them. Everybody want number 3, number 3. And that's how he had them in number 3. Number 1, number 2, and number 3. Yeah. There was Pansy, myself, "Yellow" Nunez and ----- (end of spool) oh, wait, I'm tryin' to think this feller by the name of Paul Vinerella playing bass, and ah Jules Cassard playing valve trombone----boy, we knocked them dead---man. We was in demand, then.

Allen: Oh, who did you play with in Atlantic City, you mentioned that awhile ago?

Lala: Oh, ah, in Atlantic City I was working with a small combination----five piece combination--wait now, I'm tryin' to think--they were boys from ah, from ah, West ah---Dud[ley] Mecum, I know his name was Dud[ley] Mecum, the piano player.

Russell: They was from over in the east or north.

Lala: Yes, ah, and ah, had a little feller by the name of ah (snaps his fingers)---used to play drums, he's from Chillicothe, Ohio, where -uh-Ted Lewis was born. Ah, oh, I can't think. I know Dud Mecum was the piano player and we had a five piece combination. Man we were makin' money.

Retyped

Allen: He wrote the words to "Angry", Dudley Mecum?

Lala: Dud Mecum, "Angry". Did he write the words?

Allen: Yeah

Lala: "Angry don't be"-----We're the boys---they used to sing it----we're the boys from New Orleans.

Russell: Yeah, they still sing those words.

Lala: We----

Russell: Oh, excuse me. Did you ever work with any of the other Brunies brothers---Richard?

Lala: Richard---yeah, Richard, Merritt, Abbie, Sure. Richard was a powerful trumpet player.

Russell: That's what I've heard.

Lala: A iron lip. He had an iron lip. Richard, yeah. And Merritt, and ah Abbie. Well, I ah had Georgie with me when he was in short pants. Playing parades in short pants.

Russell: Oh, yeah. I've seen pictures of him that way, too.

Lala: Oh--ah---give me a beer there, baby. How's about a coke?

Russell: No, not for me.

Allen: I maybe I could stand a beer, now.

Lala: Now, well, two beers then.

Russell: Nothing for me, that's alright, thank you anyway.

Lala: Yeah, Georgie, yeah.

Allen: Oh, what religion are you, did you hear any music in the churches, or anything?

Lala: Well, I'm a Catholic.

Allen: Well, they--uh--

Lala: A Falstaff (beer)

Allen: didn't, you didn't play any religious music in the church or anything like that, huh?

Lala: Well, more naturally ah, I played such diff---, well I tell you, I played a lot of wedding in the small country towns where we had churches and everything, and ah, they had an organ [with his wife?]. See. And the only thing I remember playing one time is--was "Ava Maria."

Allen: Oh, yeah.

Russell: Yeah

Retyped

Lala: trumpet and organ for a weddings. That's in ah, in these small country towns around Grand Island there and ah, and ah, and ah, what's the name of this, "The Bride's Bouquet" ah "The Bridal Bouquet Waltz". That's all I remember.

Russell: There's one thing. I always forget to ask about where you went to school or ah did you go to one of the parochial schools or something?

Lala: Public Schools.

Russell: Public Schools.

Lala: No, I went, to I'll tell you about it, I'm ashamed to tell you when I left school, I thought I knew too much.

Russell: That's alright, I wish you would.

Lala: The fourth grade. You see, when I was goin' to school, I was a young kid and ah I used to, ah ever' time they had a little shindig, I'd either play harmonica or play trumpet, and the teacher would play piano, you know. When I was a young kid.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: Yeah, something like that, yeah. But I never went to no college or nothin' like that, but I ah, ah, didn't finish grammar grades.

Russell: Well, lots of people do better sometime if they haven't had much education.

Lala: Yeah, and right now you take a pencil and paper, and if anybody can outfiger' me they are good. I can, I can,

END OF REEL III, Sept. 24, 1958

Sept. 24, 1958

Russell: Yeah, and ah--Manuel Perez was your teacher, you say?

Lala: He was one of my teachers; I had about four, five.

Russell: Yeah, I know.

Lala: My first teacher was Barras, and ol' Frenchman-he died. Then, after, I went to Tony Maggio, and after he left here--he was working at the Palace theatre...

Russell: He's the one that made you learn Solfege?

Lala: Solfege, right. And he left--went to California, and stayed out there and raised a family and had a big job, and everything. Then I went with Manuel Perez, a colored feller; Manuel was one of the sweetest colored trumpet players in the city of New Orleans. He wasn't hot, but--he wasn't what you call hot, but he was sweet.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: A real, real "carry the melody", you know what I mean. And he had good hot men with him. Now you take Joe Oliver, at that time, was a young feller; and another feller by the name of Freddy Keppard--I don't know if you heard of him.

Russell: Yeah.

Allen: I know his brother.

Lala: Ah-Louie?

Allen: Uh-huh, yeah.

Lala: Yeah, yeah--ask Louie about me, then.

Allen: Yeah, I will.

Lala: Yeah, yeah-Louie. So, Freddy, he went up North, and said he died up there.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Lala: And there was Bidney Bechet--have you heard about him?

Russell: Oh, yes--the clarinetist.

Lala: Clarinetist--Sidney Bechet. There was Jimmie Noone--and then we had George Baquet--that was Achille's brother.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: Know him?

stood [stayed]

Allen: Yeah.

Lala: We had a colored feller; his name was Valto.

Russell: A violin player.

Lala: A violin player. He was a very tall, tall feller, with a big moustache. In them days they would give dances in the houses, and they had three pieces- violin, guitar, and bass. In them days they used to throw sand on the floor to dance with.

Russell: Sand?

Lala: Yes, sir.

Russell: On a wood floor?

Lala: Yes, sir, sand, so they could slide.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: And that son of a gun would pull that violin; with all them feet on that sand, you could still hear the violin-Valto.

Russell: Big tone *on it*

Lala: I mean he got a tone out a violin.

Allen: Who was in the Superior band; do you remember any of those guys?

Lala: Well, I'll tell you-they'd switch from one to the other--they had the Superior, they had the Olympia, they had the Imperial, they had the Magnolia, and they had the Tuxedo band-that's colored.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: Main colored bands. They'd wear uniforms and have their names on 'em. Who was in it?-they would leave one band and go to the other, you see. *understand.*

Allen: Oh, yeah.

Lala: You get it?

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: You understand, they'd leave one and go to the other, that's all; they get in a argument, fight, and stuff. *think they'd leave.* That was the same way like us white fellers.

Russell: Yeah.

Sept; 24, 1958

Pittsburgh

Lala: We'd pull away from one feller-get in a fight, get in a argument-quit. Didn't have to give no notice or nothin'-no local, understand, you know what I mean? So that's all; you can't ever tell. And then they had this Prof. Robichaux, you know..he was called Professor; you heard about him, uh?

Russell & Allen: Yeah, I've heard of him.

Lala: And then they had Kid Ory; he come out later, around-Ory. And ah, but-Joe Oliver. And you heard of Buddy Petit?

Russell: Yeah. Never got to hear him play.

Lala: You heard about Sam Morgan? I knew 'em all.

Russell: Yeah-he made some records, there were some records.

Lala: Chris Kelly, and all *.....* I knew 'em all, cause I was just around 'em. And that's why I got all of 'em, you know what I mean?

Allen: Well, who was the best one for blues?

Lala: In fact, every one of 'em was good.

Allen: They were?

Lala: This Joe Oliver was good, he was good, Oliver. Then-right after, Louie came along afterwards-Armstrong; Louie came *.....* Streckfus, that owns the steamer.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: They made Louie. *was taught how* Louie used to play trumpet in the Waif Home, in the Waifs' Home.

Russell:

Lala: Down here where they put the bad kids.

Russell: Yeah, out the end of Canal St.

Lala: Yeah, in the Waif's Home.

Allen: Did you know him down here, or did you meet him in Chicago?

Lala: Who?

Allen: Louie.

Lala: I know Louie from up--down here.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Lala: Everytime he comes, he come to see me.

Retapped

Allen: Oh, yeah.

Lala: The last time I seen him when he was ah-he was down here when he was King of the Carnival[Zulus]--I don't know if you remember that?

Russell: Yeah- 1949, I guess.

Lala: '49, yeah. They, I've seen him once after that, yeah; everytime he comes down here, he never miss, he never miss come to see me. Yeah, ah, all those colored boys--you see, I was raised around 'em, from little up, you see. And we had another, ah, ah, violin player, named [Armand J.] Piron.

Russell: Oh, yes, he was crippled.

Lala: Yeah, a crippled feller-Piron; he was out at Tranchina's for a long time-Piron--you heard about him?

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: Yeah, Piron. And he had a, had a little drum player--a little piano player with him that went crazy-he was a wonderful little piano player.

Allen: Oh, yeah, I know who. *YOU MEAN.*

Lala: Ah, I can't think of anybody's...

Allen: Played like this, with his fingers sticking out?

Lala: Yeah.

Allen: Is that the one?

Lala: Yeah, he went crazy.

Allen: Steve Lewis.

Lala: I can't ah--who?

Allen: Steve Lewis.

Lala: Right-Steve; yeah, he went crazy. That's the ^{no lie} one-Steve, yeah. And he had a trombo--ah, saxophone player by the name of Warner[Warnicke]; Warner, I don't know if he's dead.

Allen: He's dead; I saw his grave the other day.

Lala: Yeah, Warner's dead, huh?

Allen: Yeah, Louie Warner.

Lala: Louie Warner-he died?

[asked RBA about this Oct 1994. Said Steve Lewis played with middle fingers of both hands extended, (like the gesture "shooting the bird") Perhaps he didn't use his middle fingers to play. -D.C.A.]

Sept. 24, 1958

Retyped

Allen: Uh-huh; I saw his grave the other day.

Lala: Cause when I talked--the reason why--when I got this saxophone from Dantagnan--the B flat soprano--I went by Louie, and Louie taught me the positions on it.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Lala: Louie Warner--he died, huh?

Allen: Yeah; and Meppard's got, ah--Louie Keppard has a write-up on his death.

Lala: Uh-huh. Well, Louie, Louie--well, Jesus--you ask Louie if he knows me, man. Everytime he sees me, he grabs my hand, and, "Well, thank God we are here yet, eh, you Johnny". Yeah, Louie--well, well.

Allen: Did you know Tio, that played...?

Lala: Tio--yeah, sure I knew Tio; well, I guess I did know him. Yeah, man. Then we had another colored feller by the name of "Sugar Lip" Johnny [Smith]--he died.

Allen: Huh. Was he a hot man, or..?

Lala: He was pretty hot--yeah.

Russell: Called him "Sugar Lip"?

Lala: Yeah, "Sugar Lip" Johnny. ^{There} We had another feller we called Bunk, Black Bunk [Johnson]--he was a colored feller. Pretty good on trumpet--yeah. Jazz it, ragtime, you know what I mean? Wonderful on blues--oh, they had rhythm; you got to hand it to 'em, they had the rhythm. See, course, I ^{will} say the whites improved on it--you understand.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: The whites did improve on it; ^{yeah} you; you see, when them fellers went up north, you know, they couldn't write that stuff--Nick and them other fellers went up there, they couldn't--^{any, had} a long time ^{before} age they started writing that kind of music. When they started writing that swing music, that jazz, you know what I mean--man, the fellers could hardly read it. Now now they can read anything.

Russell: Yeah, it would be hard to write some of that down, though.

Portuguese
Lala: Well, yeah-well, most of that stuff ain't written, you know?-no, most of that stuff he ain't never ^(n.d) they don't write that stuff. But ah, you know what I mean, improvising-it's just got to come to you.

Allen: What did Buhk play like? Did he play up high, or low, or...?

Lala: Just like ah, ah, like Joe Oliver, but--Joe Oliver was a very good
I'll never forget when I was in Chicago--Joe Oliver and Louie Armstrong were working together at the Black and Tan--on the Southside. And I walked in there and when they see me, boy, they got off that stand, man, and they ^{come} ~~come~~ down there to the table, and--at that time, colored and white, you know--Black and Tan, they used call it-white and colored *used to be there*.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Lala: Man, man, did we have a time. Stood all night together, man--start talking about good red beans and gumbo and everything--they didn't know how to cook it up there; now they cook all that stuff. My daddy sent me some salt meat, some this and that, some--and ah, up North in them days, you couldn't find no coffee with chicory, in them days.

Russell: Oh, no, still can't find it.

Lala: So--no, you can't find it, now--^(n.d) had my daddy send me about five pounds of coffee--man, send me--even send me a coffee pot, to drip it and everything, you know what I mean. Yeah, man. Well, those was good days, my boy.

Allen: You know, you said something about Ted Weems, too, the other day.

Lala: Well, I worked with Ted Weems and Art Weems in the Mason-Dixon orchestra--that's before he ever organized, ^(n.d) see--the Mason-Dixon orchestra.

Allen: And where was that?

Lala: That was around..West Virginia.

Allen: Did you have any New Orleans fellers in the band?

Lala: Ah, no--yeah, ah-well, I was the only one--and they did have one, ah, the one, the one that sent for me; his name was Jack Weber. He was a co--he was a New Orleans man.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Pittsburgh

Lala: He sent for me to play with that orchestra, where he was working. So, after-- he was ah, a very good musician, but he was like-I say, ah, he was like these "wormy" fellers, you know-they never satisfied, you know. And He'd have him a ~~gr~~ job, a good job and everyting, and ah, then he'd be writing to Every Tom, Dick, and Harry for a job, telling them he played sax and-doubled on sax and clarinet, and he was a good hot man on 'em. He ~~established~~ that. *I think that this and* So, allright, he'd write every different feller, you know. So, finally, you know what they done?-they sent for hem. And he left me there with these men, you know what I mean-these fellers from around Virginia. Me, I didn't like it, you know. They'd come along, had one night's stay there, you see.

Russell: Oh, yeah.

Lala: The Mason-Dixon orchestra--I got talking to them, they grab ahold of me. I went off with them--stood with them about four months and then I, ah didn't like that--going here one night, two nights, traveling and living on the train. Going through coal mines and everyting, you know. Oh, what I mean-- in them days, you know, you never had the convenience like you got now, in hotels. *as if it was* Jesus God Almighty! We went through them *tunnels* towns, man, full of smoke, man, you know. *which I mean, ah, etc.*

Russell: Oh, yeah.

Lala: Man, you know what I mean.

Allen: What about Eddie Rolland-you mentioned him?

Lala: Yeah, Eddie Rolland-his ah his brother's got this Rol-- . Now, he can tell you plenty. His brother has this ah, Rolland Key, Key Place; you know, this Rolland, the Hey Man?

Russell: Oh, sure.

Lala: Yeah, Red Rolland, Eddie Rolland. You can ask him; you go around this Rolland and ask for his brother.

Allen: Did you work with him?

Lala: Yeah, Eddie-I worked with Eddie, I worked with Eddie--in cabarets and all around.

fitting

Lala: Now, Eddie, now there's a peculiar man- a wonderful ear. You can take him and whistle off a number and ^{write it down,} ~~and~~ ^{yeah,} whistle it, hum it, and ah he'd write it down. Still, he couldn't read music. You give him a piece of music, he couldn't read it--but he could write it.

Russell: Oh, yeah-put it down.

Allen: That's funny.

Lala: Huh?

Allen: That's funny.

Lala: [✓] Ain't that odd, though?

Russell: Take his time I guess, and when he wrote it down.

Lala: He could play it, but he wouldn't read a peice of musi, or nothing, he'd sit down like this. He was one Tom Brown and ^{Aw I can't tell you} all would joke about this-- I'll tell you a joke about Tom Brown--he'd sit down like this.

Russell: With his legs crossed?

Lala: Lazy. [✓] *When I went* Sit at the piano, play accompaniment on the piano, chords and everything. Tom Brown-I'll never forget this-went up to the local one day, and Tom was sittin' up, and ah, Rolland was there-Ed, ah, ^RRed Rolland was there, cause [Tom] Red Brown had done Red ^RRolland something and an, I said, "Hello, Red." Well, he and Tom ~~didn't~~ ^{didn't} get along so good; they used to work together and that. They had little arguments and ^{that} everything. I say, "Tom, you know something-look at you boy. I come in here, I say now, "Hello, Red"; he don't answer me." And Tom says, "To tell the truth, he's too damn lazy to answer you. (laughs from everybody) I never will forget that long as I live. Everybody ^{was} ⁱⁿ ^{which he was} scream up there. But ah, boy-but he was pretty good, Red. Everytime Red would ^{we was in} get a room in Chicago-everytime he'd get through eating he'd go weigh himself on the scales; he'd go weigh himself-he was a tall, skinny feller. Oh, he was a kick, man.

Allen: When were you in Chicago with him?

Lala: I warked with him in Chicago-God Almighty-at the Arsonia Cafe; it was on North Clark and North Avenue.

Retyped

Allen: Is that Fritzel's place?

Lala: No, not Fritzel--are you talkin' about Mike Fritzel?

Allen: Yeah.

Lala: Oh, no, that's in the Loop.

Allen: Oh, I've got it confused.

Lala: Friar's Inn. He used to--Mike Fritzel used run the Friar's Inn.

Allen: I thought he had the Arsonia.

Lala: Arsonia--I think--yeah, it was Mike had it--at first, that was before--yeah.

Then, after~~h~~, he went--he married Zelda Dunn; she died, I think. Yeah,

Mike Fritzel, he had the, the Friar's Inn in the Loop, though.

Russell: Mike just died a year--withi~~n~~g--in the last year.

Lala: He did!

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: He was married to Zelda Dunn.

Russell: Never knew him.

Lala: His wife was Zelda Dunn.

Allen: Was she a singer?

Lala: She was a singer, yeah. Yeah, she used to work down here, right here on

Canal Street--on Canal and Burgundy, in them little *tab* shows at the

Columbia Theatre there. You see, my wife--I don't want ^{to} break ^{it} my wife belonged

belonged to the local, you see. Cut it off.

Russell: Cut it off. (Machine off)

Russell: Kelly's Stable.

Lala: It was on ah, on ah, ah..

Russell: Rush Street, or near there.

Lala: On the *side you go to it as you go in the livery stable*

Russell: Yeah, I've heard all about how you go in the livery stable.

Lala: You go up one step--you go up the steps. They got second floor, then they got

third floor, they used on Saturday nights, ^{and} on Sunday nights--all on the

big nights. You see, no dance--there was no singing.

Russell: Just a band.

Lala: Just band; there was four, that's all.

Russell: And you worked there for a while?

Lala: Sure! And do you know, we used to make about 200 dollars a week.

Russell: In tips, and all.

Lala: In tips and all. On Saturday night, we'd stay on this floor-we'd play for dancing. They we'd go right upstairs and play for the others. Now they drinking down there.

Russell: About when did you work..?

Lala: During Prohibition.

Russell: During Prohibition.

Lala: Prohibition, right--~~was~~ about '23.

Russell: Uh-huh.

Lala: Kelly's Stable.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: And you walk in that place-you know, like you go around on Front Street here-- you know, like around...

Russell
& Allent: Yeah.

Lala: Well, that's where you go.

Russell: Just like an old stable.

Lala: It wasn't no fancy place.

Russell: Somebody told me he was a musician, too.

Lala: He was a musician, yeah; he used to play trombone, yeah. Yeah, but he never played, or nothin'.

Allent: What was his first name?

Lala: Bert-I think it was Bert.

Russell: Yeah, Bert.

Lala: Yeah, Bert-yeah.

Russell: Yeah, Bert Kelly.

Lala: Yeah, I recollect.

Retyped

Allen: Didn't Gus Maeller play with him?

Lala: No.

Russell: No!

Lala: No, I don't know about Gus Miller.

Allen: I believe, at the White City, or something.

Lala: Me, ah, ah--me and ah Yellow Nunez worked there together--Yellow Nunez, Alcide Nunez.

Russell: Oh, I was going to ask you--this is changing the subject again--you were talking about some of the old colored trumpet players--did you remember anybody by the name of Buddy Bolden? Ever..hear...?

Lala: Buddy Bolden, yeah.

Russell: Eh, heard...?

Lala: Yeah, yeah, I remember h~~am~~-heah. Buddy Bolden, yeah-yeah.

Allen: How was he?

Russell: Anything about all ^{him}

Lala: Very good, very good--he was a very good hot man, you know what I mean? Plenty rhythm.

Allen: Soft?

Lala: That's all they had--both. He played soft. You know what I mean.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Lala: In them days, they didn't let you play soft, unless you play in a small place--well, you could play soft. You know what I mean? They like for you--you see, the, ah playing loud, is advertising, the people--draw the people in. You understand?

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: On the contract^{ed}, they used to make up play on the outside about half an hour before they went inside for a dance. In some places they make us go, go walk around, or bring us around on the truck, around the neighborhood.

Russell: To advertise--yeah.

Lala: We never had no television, no radios, nothin', no--didn't put it in the

Retyped

Lala: newspaper. They did now and then, ^{put} posters on the corners, you know what I mean.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: *What about the boys*

Allen: What about Buddy Petit; was he loud or soft?

Lala: Very good-both. Buddy was a ^{pretty} great hot man-yeah, Buddy. Chris Kelly, Sam Morgan-oh, yeah, I knew all of em'; they were all good in their class-you know what I mean? They were good in their class, yeah.

Allen: Oh, I wanted to ask you--you say you worked in the District?

Lala: Oh, yeah-I can tell you every place in the District.

Allen: Yeah. Did you have bands in the houses, or were they just ah...?

Lala: Oh, no. In the dance halls, in the barrooms.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Lala: In the barrooms-then the dance hall, in the back, or either on the side.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Lala: Not in no house. *to 1st JAMA*

Allen: Well, what kind of music would they have in the houses?

Lala: Pianos, pianolas. Nickelodeons not no phonographs though. Pianolas.

Russell: Yeah, yeah, I know.

Lala: Them little bitty -- some had them little bitty nichelodeons, some had them pianolas, you know what I mean put nickels in.

Russell: Yeah, I've seen those old things.

Lala: I used to see times I seen the time come when these sportin' houses on Basin Street would have "live" guys in there. Ship guys, Norwegians spendin' money. The landlady used to call up, "Johnny, what time you get off?" "I dunno". "Try soon as you get over here." I get over there and take one of these fellers that sing, you know what I mean, this and that. About two hours time and make us fifty or sixty dollars apiece.

Russell: You just played the piano or---?

Lala: Yeah, piano, and the feller singing.

Allen: And you were solo pianist there, eh?

Lala: Well I was playing trumpet, but I could play piano, you know what I mean? Because you take anybody as long as there was noise, you know, what the hell.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: Cause you get tired, you know what I mean, you want to hear somebody to go out and get them a "Last Night was the End of the World" and all this and ah "Break the News to Mother", and all this, you know what I mean?

Russell: All sentimental tunes.

Lala: Oh, sentimental, those fellers drinkin' sentimental,

Allen: What about Lula White, do you remember her?

Lala: Sure. She was an octoroon, sure. That's who I'm talkin' about Lula White. Ida Shea, Lula White, Willie Piazza----Willie Piazza and Lula White, they were octoroons, you know.

Lula White didn't have no white woman in there, see. But she had negroes, but you couldn't tell they were colored all right. All beautiful and nothin' but white men went in there.

Russell: I was lookin' at a picture of Basin Street last night. That fire house that was on down hear,

Lala: Down near Conti, yeah

Russell: Yeah, how many--about--how do those houses run, it was about next to the corner, or two or three doors from it, where was it?

Lala: Is the Firehouse still there?

Russell: No, I just wondered where it was, I couldn't tell on the picture.

Lala: The fire house is right ah on the corner, here. Here's the barroom there [Broadway Cabaret?], then the fire house and then there wuz all sportin' houses there,

Russell: Yeah, it's about----

Lala: Sportin' houses all around in the back of Krauss [dept. store], on back of Krauss, you know where Krauss is?

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: On Canal

Russell: Tom Anderson's, yeah.

Lala: Yeah, Tom Anderson's. Then you had the "Hundred and One Ranch," and you had "The Villa", what you was called the "Tuxedo", then you had Peggy Armstead called the "Tango", and you had

Pete
Lala: Yeah the "Hundred and One Ranch", yeah and then you had [Geo.] Fewclothes, then you had ah Billy Rice, then you had the Casino, was run by this, used to be ah chief of police, Chief Long, ah, that's before your time, he was the chief of police, but he ran that Casino. Called th
Casino.

Russell: Those Lala's that run a place were no relation of yours, were they?

Lala: Distant cousins, Lala's, distant cousins, Lala's, yeah. There was Johnny Lala, yeah, then his brother was Theodore Lala, yeah, they--they--they on ah ah on Franklin between Canal and Iberville----

Russell: Yeah ✓

Allen: ✓ "25", yeah, "Big 25." I was in there

Russell: ✓ Somebody called Pete Lala, and somebody told me his name was

Lala: Pete Lala.

Russell: Was it really Lala?

Lala: No, it was Pete Ciacca.

Russell: Yeah, that's what I-----

Lala: Pete Ciacca. He ah they called him Pete Lala because his mother married a Lala when he was about five or six years old.

Russell: His name really wasn't lala?

Lala: His name was Pete Ciacca.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: He died owing me about five hundred dollars, God bless his soul.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: He was a rich man one time, too.

Allen: And you, ah, did you play in his place?

Lala: Naw. He had--I didn't play there, because he had colored musicians.

Allen: Oh, he had colored.

Lala: He had white business, but he had colored, he didn't never hire no white band, yeah, there was only two placed here that hire white places [bands] that was the Tuxedo, the Villa, and the Armstead, and ah, the Tango. Peggy Armstead. But Pete Lala-uh-he had all white business, now, but he always hired colored men. Pete Lala. Well now his name was ah Pete, Peter

Sept. 24, 1958

Retyped
Lala: Ciacca. Well sure.

Allen: Well, who played in those places, do you remember the names?

Lala: All, these same colored fellers.....that I mentioned just now.

Allen: uh-huh.

Lala: Joe Oliver, Manuel Perez, Buddy Petit, Sam Morgan, Chris Kelly, all of 'em.

Allen: Who played in the white places?

Lala: Oh, in the white places, there was so many of 'em. God Almighty, I'll tell you let me think, well ah, Merrit Brunies, myself, Tom Brown, Emil Gonzales, Red Rolland, Jules Cassard, uh, all of us.

Russell: Yes, yeah, yeah, ^{yeah}/yeah, yeah, yeah,

Lala: We had we ah at that time you could quit here tonight and go to work tomorrow, you understand ah, you know what I mean?

Russell: Yeah, yeah.

Lala: You get what I'm talkin' about. Did have no Union much in them days. You know what I mean?

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: We could.

Russell: Did Tom Brown's whole band sort of when they played . . .

Lala: Yeah.

Russell: . . . sort of get the same group?

Lala: Yeah, same group.

Russell: What how about Nick LaRocca and any of that group, did he have an organized band then?

Lala: No. Well Nick never had no band when he left here. Nick was just goin' around, sitting around, I don't think Nick---when Nick left here, Nick never even played no job that he got paid. He used to go around sitting in just for fun. He had the nerve, I tell ya'.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: But Nick's no hot man, now. He never--he if you ever heard his records. He's not a hot a man. Nick's not no hot man. He was straight.

Russell: I've heard his records.

Lala: When Nick, when he left here, he wasn't ah, he didn't even have no band, either he ah just

Petty
Lala: went--just picked up anybody that would leave.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: He just went up and made good and he was so damn---dog gone proud of it ah that he stick it out. Yeah, he never had no band.

Allen: Well, if he wasn't a hot man, how did he compose tunes?

Lala: He never composed a thing. All that stuff, that he's got records, got credit for is stuff that we used down here, like I'm tellin' ya'. He gave the name, all that. "Panama".

Russell: "Tiger Rag"----

Lala: We used to call it "Meatballs."

Lala: "Panama."

Allen: "Panama".

Lala: Yeah. "Tiger Rag", we used to call that "Number 2". "That's A-Plenty", we used to call ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, "Eccentric." [confused]

Allen: uh-huh.

Lala: We call it "That's A-Plenty".

Russell: Let's see, "Original Dixieland One-Step", did you have a name for that?

Lala: No, no. We didn't know what Dixieland meant. Until he went up there.

Russell: Well, did you have another name for that? Or do you remember that for "Sensation" or any other----

Lala: "Sensation" we used to call it "Tuxedo". That was made up in the Tuxedo Dance

Russell: That's right, that's right, you told----

Lala: Yeah, "Sensation", that was "Tuxedo", yeah.

Allen: Well, who made that up?

Lala: We all made it up down here.

Allen: uh-huh.

Lala: Nick went up there with that stuff, and Eddie Edwards know it, and "Yellow" Nunez knew it; that's where they had the court scrape. Yellow said you ain't never compose nothin' like that, we all been playing that down there for years. You get it, now?

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: That's where that big court scrape come up on account of all that. "Bluin' the Blues",

Lala: and ah "Livery Stable Blues", and all of that, we all played that blues down here.

Allen: uh-huh.

Lala: They had a big court scrape, him and "Yellow" Nunez--but he won, though, you see, Nick won. Cause "Yellow" didn't have no--you know what I mean--no education and Nick did have much edu----

Russell: ✓ have them copyrighted and ah----

Lala: Yeah, he was smart. He had the money to do it.

Allen: Where was "Yellow" from?

Lala: Here!

Allen: From New Orleans, huh?

Lala: Yeah,

Allen: I just wondered--I know there are so many Nunezes around.

Lala: Yeah, yeah, he's from here. He used to drive, you know what ah "Yellow" used to do when he was working with Jack Laine and them. What you think he and Chink Martin I wouldn't like for Chink to hear there

Russell: We'll turn it off.

[Yellow Nunez and Chink Martin drove a garbage wagon]

[Talking about improvising a new tune]

Lala: And how, for watch that, he suz, we used to make up, ya know--just pick em up come on, let's go. And we used follow one another. Just like they do at rehearsal, you know.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: ✓ The Blues, it was nothin' but the different chords, that's all, Ya understand. Different chords. And you know what I mean it was so simple, when you got a good ear. And if anything sound good then we repeat it, we'd add more to it and everything.

Allen: When did "High Society" come out?

Lala: Oooooooh, "High Society" come out since--I don't know, myself. But the one that put that clarinet solo in there was ole---uh ole [Alphonse] Picou. He's livin' yet.

Russell: Yeah

Lala: Picou

Russell: Yeah, I met him

Lala: Yeah

Russell: Picou. He is the one that originated that variation, that Picou, yeah.

Allen: Well, one thing I don't understand---now Achille Baquet, ah he played with Jack Laine---

Lala: Yeah!

Allen: And you said George Baquet was his brother, huh?

Lala: ✓ Yeah, but but Achille was ah

Russell: He was Creole. (end of spool)

Allen: Well, he's dead now.

[Lala unintelligible here. Talking very softly.]

Russell: Yeah, yeah.

Lala: But he never did play with colored fellers. Let me tell you what happened one time on a trolley route, can you take it off?

Russell: Yeah, sure.

[Machine off. Story about Arnold Metoyer was caught "passing"]

Lala: Yeah, yeah.

Russell: There.

Allen: What about Joe Fulco, you were going to tell me ah.

Lala: Oh, you talkin', that was one of the finest Vaudeville directors in the city of New Orleans---in the United States. Who made him was Emile Tosso.

Allen: uh-huh

Russell: Did he play any instrument or just---

Lala: Violin.

Russell: Oh, I didn't get. . . .

Lala: But talk about a wonderful director---Vaudeville director, an act could come in here five or six acts could come in here at twelve o'clock and they had to go on at two o'clock he done have them rehearsed and everything.

Allen: Well who did he use in his band?

Lala: Oh, he had that time, he had ah Santo Pecorar [Pecora], Leo Broekhoven, ah, Joe Maggio, on bass, this feller Wilson I'm telling you about was a piano player, Emil Stein, and ah

Lala: [Jos?] Bevinetto on clarinet oh, yeah, a wonderful, wonderful director. A vaudeville director couldn't beat him. Yeah, Joe Fulco, yeah. Yeah.

Allen: And what about

Lala: Emile Tosso made him.

Allen: ,And you said Eddie Cherrie replaced ah

Lala: Achille--after Achille left us. Yeah, and went up North--ah, went on to California.

Allen: And what style did Eddie---

Lala: Naw, Achille when he left us he went up North first.

Russell: Went up North first. That's right, in New York.

Lala: Yeah, he played the same style as Achille.

Allen: Well, ^{was} would that a straight style or----

Lala: Both! Both! He was hot, good reader and everything.

Russell: You say Dave Perkins was just straight----

Lala: Straight, he was a straight reader, he wasn't no hot man.

Russell: He played with ah in the band.

Lala: Was legitime - - -

Russell: He played with some of those bands---

Lala: Yeah, oh yeah.

Russell: And Metoyer the same, was [Arnold] Metoyer a straight or hot man?

Lala: He was a very straight man, but a sweet tone, wonderful tone, straight. That's all he carried the melody, that was the main thing. Then we--I done all, the supervising all the improvising and everything.

Russell: You played the hot stuff.

Lala: Yeah, yeah, Dave Perkins was good.

Russell: What was out at Spanish Fort, you mentioned that once, did you ever play out at Spanish Fort or- - -

Lala: Sure I played out at Spanish Fort. We played out there for the dancing, out there and everything. We had ah we used to play ah ah ah from six to eight we play ah all overtures and marches, and everything, and from 8 to 10:30 to eleven we have ah ah ah dance band, you know, not the whole band, you know.

Russell: Yes. Did the overtures though was a big brass band?

Lala: Yeah, yeah, all brass. It would be around sixteen, eighteen, twenty men, you know.

Russell: Yeah

Lala: Then the dance band have about eight, about eight or nine, you know, regular dance band.

You know. Well-uh-they always kept me for the dance band.

Russell: Yeah.

Lala: They had men in there.

Russell: Would that have been Papa Laine's band?

Lala: No, no, and there was ah at that time, Tosso had it.

Russell: Oh, sure.

Lala: Yeah, Tosso.

Russell: That's right, sure.

Lala: Yeah, Tosso had it. That's right Tosso.

Allen: Who were some of the musicians who got their start with you?

Lala: That I got my start with?

Allen: No that that you gave 'em their start.

Lala: Well take Irving Fazola, take Sharkey, Leon Prima, take my cousin--Mike Lala, ah there was plenty of them got their start but they never kept it up. There was one feller by the name of ah he was a very good theatre man, a very good, good musician, little [Al] Famularo his name was. Kinda look on the style of you. He was a young feller at that time. Very good musician.

Allen: A cornet player?

Lala: Yeah, a cornet player. But he couldn't play no hot stuff. Now he turn out to be hot.

The last I seen him was about twenty years ago, in Texas about twenty-five years ago in Texas in Houston. Yeah, oh, brother I'm tryin' to think. Man, there is sooooo many of them, my boy.

Allen: Did you ever have Tony Parenti?

Lala: Tony Parenti? Yeah. We started together, Tony Parenti. I tell you who I--Frank Froeba, ya' ever heard of him?

Allen: Oh, yeah on records.

Lala: huh?

Allen: Sure.

Lala: Well, I was the one---the first job he ever had was with me, Frank Froeba. Tell me he's up North, doing good, going big.

Allen: Oh, yeah. What about Monk? Did you ever know Monk Hazel?

Lala: Who, Monk Hazel. I was the one that started him off.

Allen: uh-huh.

Lala: Huh, Hazel. Sure, that's the one that---and he knows more than anybody else

Russell: On cornet, did he start?

Lala: No, drums. He never played no cornet with me.

Russell: Drums!

Lala: He played around with a cornet, he plays that melophone, no, he never fooled with that
just
he with me played drums. Monk Hazel, yeah.

Russell: Yeah

Lala: And ah, little Elery, Elery ah [Maser]

End of Reel IV, Sept. 24, 1958

