

LEMON NASH

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I [of 3]

September 28, 1960 Also present: Richard B. Allen, Marjorie
T. Zander.

Lemon Nash sings and accompanies himself on the ukelele:

1. "The Bow-legged Rooster and the Dukk-legged Hen"
2. A medley of "Good Morning, Captain" ("The Midnight Special") and a variation of "Raise a Ruckus Tonight"
3. "Who Stole the Lock Off the Henhouse Door?"
4. "The Preacher and the Bear"
5. "The Big Rock Candy Mountain"

LN says he learned "The Big Rock Candy Mountain" when he was travelling with a medicine show called Big Indian Man [i. e., Chief?] and Western Cowboy [Cf. below, reel III.]; he learned it from a man from West Virginia. LN talks about his hoboining days; he hoboed to Asheville, North Carolina, where he got a job at the Eagle Theater, singing and playing the ukelele. He and the guitarist also played and sang at a club operated by some policemen. After being around Asheville about two months, LN had enough money to return to New Orleans. LN says the other hoboies sang and told jokes; one of the songs was "Sitting at the Water Tank Waiting for a Train." LN tells a story about a bum asking for a handout.

LN plays the ukelele and sings:

6. "Casey Jones"

LN says [Richard] "Rabbit" Brown sang "The Downfall of the Lion" at Tom Anderson's; "Rabbit" also sang other songs of his own, such as "Gyp, the Blood," which was about a killing which

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occured [in the red light district] when LN^{LN} was quite young.
Chief of Police David Hennessy, subject of the "Who Killa Da
Chief?" saying and "The Downfall of the Lion" is mentioned.
[Cf. Lyle Saxon et al, ^GBumbo Ya-Ya. RBA.]

LN heard "Trouble, Trouble" sung by Mamie Smith at the
Entertainers Cabaret. He plays the ukelele and sings:

7. "Trouble, Trouble" [Cf. Bessie Smith, "Down Hearted
Blues," Co A-3844 and other blues. RBA.]
8. "Shots and Shells Are Ringing Upon the Battlefield"

RBA asks about "Barrelhouse," a guitarist and singer who played
at house parties and fish fries; LN says he will find out about
him. "Barrelhouse" was noted for singing "I Got a Nickel, You
Got a Dime, Let's Get Together and Buy Some Wine, Shake, Shake, Babe."

LN plays the ukelele and sings:

9. "I Got a Nickel, You Got a Dime"

LN talks about the keys in which he plays, and the chords he
uses. He demonstrates some of the chords. He prefers the key of
B flat to all others. "Rabbit" played only three chords: C, D,
and G. His favorite key was D. [PRC. Please check this key.]

LN worked on the railroad after a show he had been working
with became stranded. LN got the job in Cresson, Pennsylvania; he
was about seventeen years old then, and a good worker; he was soon
put in charge of the tools.

End of Teel I

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Also present: Richard B. Allen, Marjorie
T. Zander.

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When LN worked on the railroad in Pennsylvania, he heard the men sing "all them old sad songs." One of the songs was "My Home's In Boston City, Boys," which is about the Boston Burglar [and is also known as "The Boston Burglar"].

LN plays the ukelele and sings: [All songs played with fingers only unless indicated.]

1. "I Left My Gal In the Mountain" [fragmentary?]

LN said Ed Reese, from Port Gibson, Mississippi, sang that song all the time; Reese was "one of the best hammer guys that they had on the railroad." Reese sang it in rhythm with his hammering.

LN plays the ukelele and sings:

2. "Sailing, Sailing"

LN uses a felt pick when he plays Dixieland jazz.

3. "Bourbon Street Parade" [using felt pick]

LN remembers Willie Jackson and Nooky Johnson; LN says Jackson became famous while performing at the Iroquois Theater on Rampart Street; the last theater Jackson worked in before leaving town was the ^{Lyric} Lake Theater, on Iberville Street.

LN has heard that Clarence Williams was one of the first persons to record in New Orleans; the song was "Brown Skin (Who You For?)" [Cf. discographies.]; he says Williams was one of the best pianists in New Orleans until Steve Lewis came along. LN says Williams died in Chicago, but RBA disagrees, saying Williams is alive in New York, but is sick.

LN tells the story of how Williams wrote "Brown Skin (Who You For?)".

LN plays the ukelele and sings:

4. "Brown Skin (Who You For?)"

LN recalls that Willie Jackson sang "Don't Leave Me, Daddy," and

that is was Jackson't best number.

LN plays the ukelele and sings:

5. "Don't Leave Me, Daddy" [by Joe Verges of New Orleans].

LN gives a bit of Louisiana folklore. [Cf. Walter Coquille Br.,
10" 78.]

LN mentions some other tunes Willie Jackson featured, including
"Sweet Georgie Brown" and "All By Myself." Jackson also sang "That
Ought to Get It," (which LN scats); LN says Steve Lewis made a record-
ing of that tune.

LN plays ukelele and sings:

6. "You Tell Me Your Dream"

LN first heard that song sung by a quartet at the Tumble Inn; at
Tchoupitoulas and Thalia [streets]; some of the quartet members were:
Monkey Joe [i. e., Jesse Goleman? Cf. discographies. RBA.], Al Whitney,
and the late Vic Little; of the latter, LN says he was the best tenor
singer in New Orleans. LN was called to accompany them on guitar
frequently.

LN plays the ukelele and sings a World War I number the quarter
sang:

7. "If You Could Fight Like You Could Love" [uses felt pick]

The first blues LN ever paid any attention to was "See, See Rider."

LN plays ukelele and sings one of his own compositions:

8. "She Was Born in New Orleans"

LN recalls that he heard "See, See Rider" played on guitar and
sung by a woman from Oklahoma; LN thinks she was Indian; her name was
Anna; LN was a boy at the time.

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LN plays uk^ulele and sings:

9. "See, See Rider"

LN talks about the physical plant of the medicine show he worked in, and about some of the acts.

End of Reel II

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Also present: Richard B. Allen, Marjorie T. Zander

LN tells about a killing and the theft of his raincoat and hat at a dance he was playing in Knoxville, Tennessee. He was with a nine-piece band at the time; the band had headquarters in Nashville, Tennessee. LN broadcasted on radio station WSM in Nashville for a music store in that city. LN talks about how bad people in Knoxville were. LN says the white and colored people in Knoxville get along fine together, but there is much fighting among the colored people.

LN tells about an act he and a comedian called "Pork Chop" did; no matter what tune "Pork Chop" requested, LN would play "Yankee Doodle." (See Reel II Above.)

LN talks about his travels with a medicine show around 1923; the show was called the Big Chief Indian and Western Cowboy. LN says he made \$25.00 a night with the show. This was the most money LN ever made in his life. He says they would sell between \$1,000 and \$2,000 worth of medicine per show; one time they sold \$3,000 worth. LN demonstrates the spiel given at the medicine show.

LN confirms that he will be 63 years old his next birthday, April 22, 1961. (He was born in 1898).

LN joined the Merchant Marine around 1943. He had been working as a janitor when Pearl Harbor was bombed. He and Earl Roach [piano?] had been working at the (Old?) Absinthe House; then LN [and Roach?] worked at Pat O'Brien's. LN heard that Roach lived in Hawaii for a while, but he also heard that Roach has recently returned to New Orleans. LN and RBA agree that Roach is a funny man. One of Roach's featured numbers was "I'm Looking for a Banana with a Cherry." LN says another song Roach features, and one he and Roach used to do together, is "Two Old Maids in a Folding Bed." LN says that when he and Roach began

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working together, he was playing ukelele and Roach was blowing his fists to imitate a trumpet. LN says Roach is about two years older than himself. Roach and LN played together at the Tumble Inn, located at Tchoupitoulas and Thalia (streets). LN (with Roach?) worked at the Tumble Inn in 1922; he played only guitar then.

LN mentions Professor Cook (who worked at) the Hummingbird (Cabaret). (cf. George Guesnon, Kid Clayton, or John Handy. RBA) LN says Joe Toy, a tap dancer who frequents Bourbon Street, and who had danced at the Entertainers' and at Tom Anderson's, not only is older than LN, but is the son of Lulu White, who operated a famous house (of prostitution) at 235 North Basin Street (location given by RBA).

RBA mentions seeing drummer Joe White in Jackson (Mississippi) recently. LN says White was a "tough" drummer, and that he and "(Red) Happy" (Bolton) were the best drummers in New Orleans. (When was JW in New Orleans? RBA.) "Happy" played at the Lyric Theater with (John) Robichaux. LN mentions Willie Jackson and "the old Memphis comedian," the late "Lollipop." [SONES] "Lollipop" was buried in Georgia; he was from Atlanta. LN says a lot of comedians come from Georgia because there were once many slaves in the state, and the manner in which a lot of them spoke was funny and they said funny things. "Lollipop" imitated some of the dialects as part of his act. LN says J. B. King, another comedian, was from Georgia; LN heard that Amos and Andy (i.e., Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll?) are also from Georgia. RBA says "Pigmeat" Markham is a funny man. (See Jazz Record Magazine.) He mentions Buck and Bubbles, and Butterbeans and Susie. (LN is not familiar with Markham or Buck and Bubbles. RBA.)

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LN tells how he almost made \$1,000.00 for writing a singing commercial for a brand of whiskey; he didn't write the commercial because he was busy working at a bar operated by people who helped him up when he was down.

LN talks about some of his experiences in the Merchant Marine.

(Note that LN & RBA are drinking whiskey during the interview.)

End of Reel III