PAUL BARBARIN

I [of 5]-Digest-Retyped

March 27, 1957

Also present: Richard B. Allen, William Russell, Robert Campbell

[Compare Cher South Lour, Rachin Container]

Raul Barbarin was born May 5, 1901 in New Orleans, at the corner of Barracks [street] and St. Claude [Avenue]. He remembers having heard Buddy Bolden playing for a banquet at Perseverance Hall, which was on Villere [Street] between Annette [Street] and St. Bernard [Avenue]; PB was living on Urquhart [Street], one block away from Villere. and between the same streets; PB says the year was aboxut 1906 or 1907. PB used to got to Milneberg, where there were many camps; there were picnics every day, and bands were hired to play & at those picnics, so that withere might be several bands playing in the area at the same time. Rogers [sp?], a cousin of PB, was killed tinder the wheels of "Smoky Mary", the slow train which made the trip to Milneberg in those times. PB says there was much more fun when he was young. There were many bands of all kinds; there were white and colored bands. PB recalls Christian's Band; he doesn't know if Emile Christian had anything to do with that band or not; the Christian Band played a lot at Elysian Fierlds and Dauphine [Lusitania Hall (sp?)?]; they would always play a little music on the gallery outside before going in for their job as was customary. Bands played in palaces [like choir lofts] near the ceilings of dance halls, not on main floor bandstands, such as there are today. No pianos were used [in dance halls] then; bass and guitar (or banjo)were used instead. PB felt odd when he first played in a band having a piano. Pianos were used in the red light district, at places such as Pete Lala's, the 101 Ranch, Buddy Fewclothes' [actually, Foucault, Henry Ponce's, and Rices.

In the old days, bands sat in a straight line on the bandstand [leading here], in this order: bass, guitar, clarinet, cornet, trombone, drums.

PB says that a person could hear bands playing from a distance of at least oneand-a-half miles in the old days. PAUL BARBARIN
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PB began drumming by using chair rungs as sticks accompanying his whistling; he and other young friends, including a whistler and a comb player, would play on the corners where they hung out; sometimes the police would chase them away for disturbing the peace.

PB knew Dave DePass, [clarinet,] who played with the Young Olympia [Band], with [Buddy, or rather, Yank?] Johnson.

PB was in Chicago for the second time when Chris Kelly died, sometime during the 'twenties. [Cf. Walter C. Allen and Brian Rust, King Joe Oliver.] Kelly looked a lot like "Big Ike" [Robinson], trombonist, who lives on Claiborne near Dumaine. . . . [restricted material] Kelly had a lot of gold in his teeth, and was always smiling. PB evades a question from RBA on CK's dress.

PB says "Red Happy" [Bolton] was a very good drummer. [Leading on Bolton] Mack Murray [spelling?] was also very good, a sensational drummer; he had a lot of gadgets which he used for playing drum breaks; on one particular rag, he let a chain drop [on his drum?] for a particular effect. The last time PB heard him play was on [South] Rampart between Julia [Street] and Howard [Avenue], with a four-piece band; PB was a youngster then. Mack Murray has been dead for many years. WR says "Baby" Dodds said Mack Murray inspired him, and was his favorite drummer. Mack Murray used the body of a banjo, with snares attached, as a snare drum. PB talks about the other drum and cymbal equipment Mack Murray used.

PB thinks Baby Bodds was probably the first drummer he heard play on the rim and the shell of his [snare and/or bass?] drum.

Drummers like [of the same era] Mack Murray and Jean Vigne always played two-beat; the first time PB heard four-beat drumming was by Red Happy, playing with King Oliver and [Kid] Ory at Economy Hall; the band was playing the blues. PB says he returned

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to two-beat drumming because dancers can get the feel of the rhythm better from two-beat than from four-beat, especially at the beginning of a number.

WR heard that Red Happy Bolton was in reform school with Louis [Armstrong];

PB says Red Happy was older than Louis. WR says Lee Collins told him Red Happy
did allot of scat singing; PB agrees, saying he was a really sensational drummer;
however, PB says he was "uncouth" [i.e., rude]; PB felt sorry for the treatment
Red Happy gave Mack Lacy [sp?]; he would borrow drum equipment from Lacy and never
return it. Red Happy was tough, but "he didn't fool with "[Black] Benny" [Williams].
Black Benny, also a drummer, would sometimes start a fight even while playing a
parade; he might set his bass drum down to fight; he might hit a person with his
mallet [i.e, drum beater] even if the person got too close to his drum. PB says
he heard that Benny could get permission to get out of jail to play parades; he
would return afterwards. Benny didn't kill anyone, nor did he steal; he was just
"mischievous." After Benny became a nice, quiet person, he was killed by some girl,
at Gravier and Franklin.

Red Happy Bolton played with Ory and Oliver['s band]. Mack Lacy played a smooth style of drumming, something like PB's kid brother [Louis Barbarin], although PB considers Lacy a better drummer; in fact, his favorite of old-time drummers was Lacy, although hardly anyone, with the possible exception of Baby Dodds, was mentions Lacy; WR says Roy Palmer talked about Lacy, too. Lacy traveled a lot with Mack and Makk. Lacy was known as "Little Mack".

Old man Louis Cottrell [Sr.] was a great street drummer; he played snare drum on the street; his playing could be eagily heard; he didn't "keep it a secret", as street drummers today do, says PB. Cottrell played with the Excelsior Brass Band. [Clay] Jiles was the bass drummer in that band; PB says he was great playing marches, but he didn't play other things with a jazz beat, the way PB likes it.

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Black Benny was a good bass drummer, but PB thinks he was over-rated; PB says [Harry] "Red" Allen [Jr.] played bass drum as well as Benny; PB thinks Beany earned his reputation as a great bass drummer because he was well known and he fought a lot. He couldn't compare with Jean Vigne or Ernest Trepagnier as bass drummers; PB was playing at the time of his comparision; he was working at Tom Anarderson's then. Trepagnier played with a jazz beat [PB demonstratives by beating on his leg and stomping on the floor.].

WR mentions PB's playing with King Oliver and with Louis Armstrong in Chicago.

WR asks if PB is still currently at the Dream Room [Bourbon Street, New Orleans];

PB says WR doesn't have to force himself to come hear him there. (WR departs.)

All the [organized bands in the old times] had uniforms; PB talks about them; he mentions the green uniform of the Eagle Band (dance orchestra). PB mentions that the O.B.B.'s (i.e., Onward Brass Band) and the Excelsior Brass Band were two of the main brass bands in New Orleans. The bands wore dark caps for all occasions; today, bands wear white caps for parades and dark caps for funerals. PB says bands should have some sort of uniform. He mentions John Casimir.

End of Reel I

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March 27, 1957 Also present: Richard B. Allen, Robert Campbell

Talk of uniforms continues [from Reel I].

Labor Day parades were nice; every available band was used. PB says the parades usually started at Canal and the river; he outlines the rest of the route; most of the time they would end at Perseverance Hall. Both white and colored bands particiëpated.

PB describes some of the uniforms of some of the pleasure clubs, such as the Jolly Boys, and the one to which Dooky Chase belongs. The members selected a new uniform every year [as contrasted to the Benevolent Associations? RBA.] Talk about umbrellas, baskets, cabbages with cigars stuck in them-things carried by members of the pleasure clubs. He mentions the [Mardi Gras] Indians.

RBA mentions Marcus (arvey; PB says the Onward Brass Band, of which his uncle, Louis Artidore, was a member, had plumed hats such as the ones worn by Garvey and his followers; PB says Danny [Barker] has a picture of Artidore, clarinet in hand, wearing such a hat.

PB describes the black, shroud-like coverings sometimes worn by the horses which pulled the hearses. PB describes the hearses of the time. [Cf. Danny Barker, reel ?] PB lists the order of relatives and officials in funeral processions; the old-time order was the same as the present. The band, if any, always led the entire procession; members of the [social and/or aid] society to which the dead person might have belonged, if any, marched immediately following the band. PB talks about the decline of societies, and the accompanying decline of the practice of having bands playing for funerals. Any organization a man belonged to would provide a band for his funeral; he might belong to more than one, so there would often be more than one band playing for him.

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PB says the first number played after the band and body parted company used to be"[Oh,] Didn't He Ramble". RBA says he hears funeral bands playing [Paul Barbarin's composition,] "Bourbon Street Parade," sometimes as the first number; PB says that is not appropriate, not right to do. RBA says he took Nathaniel Shilkret to a funeral; the first number the band played, before they picked up the body and the rest of the prosession, was "Bourbon Street Parade"; it was a Zula funeral; PB says they should have played something like "Sing On", "Lily of the Valley", or "[We Shall] Walk Through the Streets of the City". PB says "[When] The Saints Go Marching In" would be appropriate fo play after leaving the cemetery; he himself would play that first, or perhaps, "Sing On". He thinks the band should get further away from the cemetery before playing things like "Bourbon Street Parade." The bands of the past generally played hymns on the way to pick up the body; "Just A Closer Walk With Thee" and "Just A Little While To Stay Here" were used frequently; PB says the latter is very appropriate. He thinks bands should play quietly on the way to pick up the bddy.

When asked if he thinks it possible to organize a good brass band, perhaps as good as the Onward, PB says yes; asked about a baritone [horn] player, PB says he would get Adolphe Alexander [Jr.], who can still play in spite of having had a stroke; PB would get Ricard [Alexis] or Walter Pichon [usually a pianist] to play alto [horn]. Pichon played alto in the past with [Henry] "Red" Allen [Jr.], over the river., RBA suggests John [Casimir] as the player for E flat clarinet; PB says Wille [J.]

Humphrey and Louis Cottrell [Jr.] also paly that instrument, and he would use Cottrell. He would used Alvin Alcorn as one of the trumpets. Termo saxophone and alto saxophone have replaced baritone horn and alto horn, respectively; there are not many players of the latter two; PB says the saxophones are not adequate substitutes. [Cf. notes on later Onward Brass Band.RBA.]

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PB agrees with RC that bands take the first step to their music on the right foot. [Different from almost all others--PRC].

PB dodn't work regularly in the red light *district; he played relief for Louis Cottrell [Rr.] at Rice's, and for Henry Zeno at Pete Lala's, when Joe Oliver (later "King"Oliver) had the band there; he relieved Ernest Rodgers [sp?] at Fewclothes a few times, and worked at the 101 Ranch.

PB explains that Pete Lala's was not the same was the [Big] 25, which was operated by John Lala's. The 25 always had a crowd on Monday, which was called "Blae Monday" because nobody went to work. A prize would be awarded to the woman who could kick a ham hung up for the purpose. All societies also held their banquets on Monday, in the afternoon. PB said the band would play "Get Out Of Here" or ["Home Sweet Home"] at the end of the affairs.

End of Reel II

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March 27, 1957 Also present! Richard B. Allen, Robert Campbell, William Russell

PB was told that his uncle, his mother's brother, Louis Arthidore was one of the finest clarinetist in New Orleans; he played with the Onward Brass Band many years ago. PB's father, Isidor [sp?] John Barbarian, was also in that band, playing cornet at the time. Manuel Perez was not leader then; it was before his time. The Onward played all the big parades. Isidor Barbarin later played the alto [horn], which PB is now called melophone. [Two different instruments of the same range, pitch, and tone, but different shapes--PRC].

PB lists his siblings? a brother, Lucien Barbarin, is dead; a younger brother,
Louis Barbarin, plays [drums] with the "Papa" Celestin band, now under the direction
of Eddie Pierson; another brother, Willie Barbarin, is a trumpeter, but prefers
his day job to playing music. PB can not comprehend this. Willie is the youngest;
he is around forty-seven kyears old. Louis is just about a couple of years younger
than PB. PB's sister, Rose, who died a couple of years ago, was the mother of
Danny Exer, guitarist and banjo palyer, who has played with many big bands; Danny
is still in New York, where, says PB, "He's trying to get his book together, which
I hope he does, because I'M tired of hearing about that book". PB also has a couple
of [other] nephews; one, Charlie Barbarin, is a trumpet player; he is the son of
Lucien Barbarin; Louis Barbarin, son of PB's brother Louis, is a wonderful trombone
player, and now in New York, working for the Post Office.

In PB's youth a person could hear sounds from distances better than today because there was less interference from buildings (there were less of them) and noises (e.g., from automobiles, as there were nonme). Some of the bands in those times were: the Golden Leaf Band, Maple Leaf Band, Supreme Band, Crescent City Band, Olympia Band, and the Eagle Band. Later came the bands of the "kids": Kid Punwh [Miller], Kid Rena, Kid "T-Boy" Remy, Kid Clayton, Chris Kelly, and Kid Shots [Louis Madeson]. The use of the name "Kid" was a fad, says PB; perhaps it was because the

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men so named had started their music careers when they were quite young. WR suggests that many prize fighters were called kids. [Cf. also Kid Ory, reel ?] PB recalls the personnels of gvarious bands; he does not recall the members of the Golden Leaf, Maple Leaf, and Supreme Bands; in the Imperial Band were: Manuel Perez [trumpet or cornet, and] leader; Buddy Johnson, trombone; "Bebé" Matthews, drums; George Baquet, clarimet; Willie Santiago, guitar; Jimmy Brown, bass. In the Superior Band: Mack Murray [sp?], drums; Eddie Atkins, trombone; "Big Eye" Louis [Nelson], clarinet; Bunk Johnson, cornet; Rene Batiste (who always had a cigar in his mouth), guitar; Billy Marrero, known as Billy Marrero, bass (Marrero was the father of a family of musicians, including Lawrence, Simon and John Marrero [and Eddie Marrero--PRC]; all the family played [plucked] string instruments. In the Eagle Band: Joe "King" Oliver, cornet; Bob Lyons, bass; Frankie Duson, trombone; Henry Zeno, drums; Lorenzo Staulz, guitar; [Willie?] Warner, clarinet. PB says those bands exosted a long time ago; bands which formed in later years included the Young Olympia Band, a terrific band; PB thinks they were better [ie., hotter? RBA] than the older bands he named. Personnel of the Young Olympia: Simon Marrero, bass; John Marrero, guitar; (at one time) Jimmie Noone, clarinetisk; Buddy Petit, cornet; Yank Johnson (boother of Buddy Johnson), trombone; "Little Mack" Lacy, drums (considered by PB as one of the greatest drummers, although usually unrecognized). He was a smooth drummer; he played clean; he didn't make a lot of noise; he filled all the empty spaces [in the music], ahad a wonderful beat and kept good time. Sidney Bechet played [clarinet?] in the Young Olympia later; Arnold DePass was later the drummer; DePass was replaced by "Rabbit" [Ed Robertson, according to Jim Whitney], who came through New Orleans with a minstrel show. PB thingks he himself replaced "Rabbit"; Bechet was in the band then; the others were the Marrergs, Petit, Johnson and Bechet. Reminded of Freddy Keppard, PB says he

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hadn't mentioned the [earlier] Olympia Band; Keppard bandsmen were: Eddie Vincent, trombone; (at one time) Jean Wigne, drums; Lorenzo Tio [Jr.], clarinet; a guitarist, now dead; a bass player.

Asked about pianist Frank "Dude [Robertson]" Amacker, PB says he played in the District at Pete Lala's and other places, played in a style similar to that of Steve Lewis, and was pretyty good. RBA says Amacker now lives at 520 Burgundy.

PB's first instrument was clarinet; he always admired clarinetists; however,

he could't execute fast enough, so he took up drums. He was self-instructed on drums, beginning by playing with knives and forks in the kitchen; his goldfather, Paul Chaligny, was his instructor on clarinet; Chaligy died a few years ago.

WR says [Albert] Glenny told him the first bass player he ever heard plucking the lass [instead of bowing] was Johnny Prudent [sp?], with whom PB played early in his career. Prudent heard that PB had acquired a drum set, so he hired PB to play a ballyhoo (for a plitical rally) the same day PB got the drums; pay was a dollar-and-a-quarter; that was PB's first mausic job.

PB thinks the last name of "Long-head Bob" was Thompson.

WR heard that "Rabbit" since played with Ma Rainey; PB said he was with minstrel shows. PB saw the Al G. Fields minstrel show at the Tulane Theater. One tune PB remembers from the time he drummed on chairs was "Mr. Brown, Mr. Brown Had a Violin." A minstrel number from the same time was from Al G. Fields'show; it was "Where The Sun Is Always Shining Down South" (PB sings part of it). (PB sings part of "Mr. Brown Had a Violin.") The songs PB mentioned were popular songs of the time; other popular songs he mentions are "Poor Butterfly", "Memories", and "[It's Only A Shanty In Old] Shanty Town"; [he scats parts of each]. The last three tunes weren't used in minstrels, as far as PB knows.

Music in minstrel shows was alwaxys lively. PB talks about minstrels.

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PB was about fifteen years old when he began actually playing on drums.

[Abrupt change of subject here; maybe from ankother reel--PRC]

RC asks about the [physical]lineup of bands behind grand marchals. A tuba and two trombones were [in the] first [rank]. There were baritone horns and alto horms then; the baritone and alto were in the second rank; the E flat clarinet and one of the trumpets were in the third rank; then came the other two trumpets; in the last rank were the two drums. In the olds days [?], the lineup was: two trombones; tuba and baritone; alto and clarinet; three trumpets; two drums.

[Confusing here, RBA.] PB likes the lineup of the Eureka [Brass] Band, lead by Percy Humphrey; the three trumpets are in the back, with the drums [in front of the trumpets. RBA.] PB mentions the [old] Onward Brass Band; he mentions George Baquet. In a brass band, the bass drummer is alwasy on the right side of the snare drummer.

If there were more than one band in a funeral, each band hadilts own grand marshal; more than one band meant that more than one organization was marching, and each had a band and a grand marshal. PB says a lot of organizations have given up providing music at funerals because the second liners create too much of a nuisance. [Is this particularly true in Downtown New Orleans where PB lives? RBA.]

PB doesn't know of antother name for the tune, "Gket Out Of Here."

PB didn't work at [Jose] Arlington's; he did wok at Tom Anderson's, but not at Anderson's Annex. RBA mentions the Big 25. PB talks about the interior of Tom Anderson's. The Big 25 looked like a honky tonk compared to Anderson's.

End of Reel III

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PB says he hopes his record [for Atlantic?] sellswell; he and RC agree that "he" [i.e., Nesuhi Ertegun] is a good boy. PB says the company started small and has grown a lot; RC said the company was in a room at the Jefferson Hotel at first. RC says Ahmet [Ertegun] is a smart fellow.

PB tells a story about how some fellos from the Irish Channel fied together all the coats of the band with which PB was working at Milneburg; he says Sidney Bechet was so angry he could have jumped in the lake.

PB tells about the time Chris Kelly, trumpet player, saved his life; At a picnic held by Kelly's boss, who operated a lumber yeard, Kelly's band, including PB, was furnishing the music; a woman was flirtatiously winking at PB; her escort discovered her perfidy and became very angrey, whereupon she blamed PB, who says he was completely innocent. The excort threatened PB, but Kelly pulled a gun out and told the man PB had trouble with his eyes and had to blink until that time PB "hadn't blinked a blink", but he began. The situation was settled without violence. PB says he was too young to even be thinking about flirting; the year was around 1916 or 1917.

When PB played drums in the band of Walter "Blue" [Robertson], the other personnel were: ["Blue", trumpet]; Buddy Manaday [sp?], guitar; "Tit" Rouchon, bass; Emile Barnes, clarinet; Ambrose [Powers], trombone. PB says Ambrose's wife [i.e,, widow] lives at D'Abadie and Prieur. PB worked with Ambrose in various other pickup bands.

A five-piece band worked every night at [Tom] Anderson's, playing for dancing.

Talk of interior, placement of beer kegs, size of beer glasses, cost, then and now, etc.

PB worked on the steamer President with Walter Pichon in later years. [the 1930's?

RBA.]

PB went to Chicago in 1918 [or 1917? Cf. Walter C. Allen and Brian Rust, King Joe Oliver.]; he hoboed on a freight train part of the way. He left New Orleans

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because music business was at a standstill; he says he left before the District was closed, so RBA concludes that the closing of the District had nothing to do with the decline of the music business in New Orleans. When he arrived in Chicago, PB went to the home of his sister; in a few days he began working at the stockyards, moving from packing house to packing house as he disliked each job. While taliking on a corner one time later on, PB says a band leader named Roy Wolfsgale [spt] mentioned that he needed a drummer; when he learned that PB could play, but had no drums, Wolfsgale invited PB to try out for the job on the drums at the job; the regular drummer, Scotty, was usually drunk; PB played, was gired, sent for his drums. Edith Wilson was also working at the place, called Richburg [sp?], which was on Cottage Grove between Thirty-ninth and Fortieth, near the carbarn. The place was a cabaret.

Leaving the Richburg, FB joined the band at the Royal Garden, led by [tronbonist]

Eddie Venson; others in the band: Bill Johnson [bass], Jimmie Noone [clarinet];

Lottie Taylor, piano. The band first sent [to New Orleans] for Buddy Petit, but he wouldn't joing them; then PB told them about [Joæ] "King" Oliver, who accepted the job. The Royal Garden was a big place, something like the Dream Room [where PB was then playing in New Orleans, now called Your Father's Mustache--1967--PRC]. A description of the interior ensues. It was a dance hall and barroom. There were from many parts of the United States patrons who had moved to Chicago. Virg[il7] Williams operated the place; PB says he now operates a big motel in Wisconsin. When PB first went with the band, a woman named Geraldine (now dead) was playing violin with them; others at the time: PB, Johnson,

Lottie Taylor, and Venson. Lottie Taylor was afrom Kentucky. The band played from [nine?] [P.M.] to four A.M.. The band played "Darktown Strutters' Ball", "some of These Days"--[interrupation by RBA] PB tells about the night Joe Oliver was crowned [and dubbed] "king"; Oliver played a blues, which he, [Kid] Ory, Red Happy [Bolton]

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and others in Ory and Oliver's band played in New Orleans; he used a Conn mute, made his horn talk; the people enjoyed it so much they threw their hats away. King Jones, a West Indian still around Chicago, was the announcer [master of ceremonies] at the place; he crowned Joe Oliver king. It was the first night the band, with Oliver, played at the place. The tune Oliver played was "I'm Not Rough" (PB sings and of scats some/it). [Cf. RBA, Lecture IX, October , 1966, reel ?, and RBA's notes c. 1954.]

PB thinks he returned [to New Orleans] in 1921; he joined the Tennessee Ten in Chicago in 1920 and traveled extensively, including trips to Cleveland [Ohio], Connecticut and New York [New York]. The Tennessee Ten played blues almost exclusively; they played by head; they presented an act of about twenty minutes.

PB says guitar and string bass were used in jazz bands before banjo and tuba;

(Willie Santiago, Kid Rena, and [Albert] Glenny are mantioned); tuba began to be used about 1922, when big bands came into being; bands in the East, however, didn't use string bass at all; PB realls that when they [i.e., Luis Russell's band] went to New York, with "Pope" Foster in the band, Chick Webb's band, playing opposite themm, used a tuba, played by Elmer James. [Cf. discographies.] Brass bands [in New Orleans] did, of course, use tuba; PB says he heard that "Duck" Ernest [Johnson] played string bass in a brass band.

The manager of Tom Anderson's was a nice white man named Callahan, or something like that.

PBK played an engagement in St. Louis with King Oliver's band. There were good bands in St. Louis, including those of Dewey Jackson, Charlie Creath, and Jeeter-Pillars band, which was run by two brothers, both saxophone players.

In Kansas City [Missouri], PB first met [drummer] Jo Jones, who was playing in a small place called the Reno Club; some others in the band were: [Walter] Page [bass], and "Hot Lips" Page [trumpet]. [Probably Count Basie's band. RBA.] PB didn't

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know Reuben Roddy, said to have played with Walter Page's Blue Devils, according to RBA; Roddy now plays with the Eureka [Brass Band of New Orleans].

Talk of the types of dancing most popular at the time PB was playing at the Royal Garden; PB says people were jitterbugging around 1918, that there were jitterbug contests held every Tuesday of the Royal Garden, and the contests were usually won by a fellow named McBride. The tune usually played for the contests was "Sweet Georgia Brown." [copyright 1925--PRC].

PB says Paddy Harmon got the idea for his wa-wa mute from Joe Oliver's use of a mute as PB describes it [earlier on this reel]; PB thinks Harmon made millions from the idea, and he should have given Oliver something.

End of Reel IV

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Also present: Richard B. Allen, Robert Campbell

Continue talk of interiors of barroms, cabarets, etc. RBA says Danny
Barker [nephew of PB] could probably paint picture of the places, as Barker is
also a painter, as well as a guitarist; PB says he thinks Danny could paint Tom
Anderson's place, that he thinks Danny would remember it. PB says Anderson's
was lighted by electric chandeliers; there were no spittoons; all the barrooms
had sawdust on the floors then. The bandstand was k in the barroom; PB describes
the room.

End of Reel V