

Albert Nicholas
Reel I [of IV]
June 26, 1972

Also Present: Hans Lychou, Lars I. Edegran and
Richard B. Allen

Notes by Richard B. Allen Digest by Elizabeth Wetzel
Checked by Lars I. Edegran and Richard B. Allen Retype by Evelyn W.
Seidule

RBA states that Mike Casimir had made an interview with AN before. [See copy in ANOJ]. Joseph was AN's middle name, but he dropped it. He is AN, Jr. The interview is taking place at 931 Chartres. Alan Ward stated that AN took lessons from Lorenzo Tio. Jimmie Noone, AN, Barney Bigard, and Omer Simeon were the four major students of Tio. [In chronological order?]

When AN was 12 or 13 years old, he would hear Johnny Dodds uptown with KO's band. They would play at Miss (Betsy) Cole's lawn parties. AN admired JD's playing. JD would play with Kid Ory. AN doesn't think JD took lessons from anybody downtown. JD was very popular. JD's son ^{Ruby} Dodds is a taxi driver in N.O. On JD, Jr. in the taxi. He is a sharp guy. AN doesn't know how JD got started. On Sundays, Miss Cole held penny parties, c. 1912, for youngsters. AN was about 12 years old. AN was learning cl then. AN took JD's place with King Oliver in 1924. [Cf. below, p.2] AN was a kid. KO sent for BB, Paul Barbarin, Luis Russell, and AN. George Filhe, tb, now dead, was with KO then. Kid Ory came from California to play tb only, not sax. [Cf. Walter C. Allen & Brian Rust, King Joe Oliver.] Zue Robertson, from N. O., went to Chicago [around 1924?] Louis [Armstrong] was already in Chicago. They were to play at the Royal Gardens, [i.e., another name for Lincoln Gardens], but it burned down. One night at the Plantation, a bomb, which was planted on the roof, went off just before the revue, during the summer. This was a ganster era. He doesn't remember Frankie "Half Pint" Jaxon clearly.

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Dickie Wells and Jimm [?] were dancers in their revue. There was also a girl, a good singer and dancer. There was a blues singer [Ada Brown] of St. Louis. She sounded like and was big like Bessie Smith. Around 1924-1925 [sic]. There was a revue of dancing girls and also individual artists like singers and tap dancers. Bill Robinson danced there. Tumblers appeared. Every two weeks they would change the show. The stars were changed but the chorus remained the same. Ada Brown was the singer at the Plantation. RBA thinks her cousin was James Scott. Tommy Ladnier was with King [Oliver] before TL went to Europe. L[A] left to go to Fletcher Henderson's band in 1924. [Cf. LA's biographies] TL went with Sam Wooding. Bob Shaffner joined KO after TL. LA and AN were in the KO band at the same time. KO's band toured in Pennsylvania and Indiana. Both tours were two weeks long. The musicians union was just starting then. Union fees to join were about \$5 or \$10. There was no union in N.O. Rudy Jackson played in KO's band with AN. AN came before BB and PB in 1923. AN had a band at Tom Anderson's at Rampart and Iberville. Jimmie Noone came down for Mardi Gras. AN was just learning the alto sax. BB was playing tenor sax; AN on cl; LR; PB; Willie Santiago; Arnold Metoyer, tp player, who was good. People thought he was Manuel Perez. JN was very pleased with the band, and told Joe Oliver back in Chicago about it. JO sent for AN first. AN made a tour in Indiana with JO for two weeks then came back to N.O. In 1924 KO sent for the band. Johnny Lindsay, tb [not b], went on tour with the band too. AN took Buster Bailey's place and RJ played tenor.

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discipline in his band. JO wanted music soft enough to hear the feet [of the dancers]. AN notes that jazz bands here play loud, perhaps to attract the public. RESTRICT FOR 50 YEARS:

END RESTRICTION. "as [Kid] Ory and them did in the old days." Buddy Petit had a hell of a band. AN joined BP when AN was a kid. BP was way ahead of his time. One could hear the guitar and bass; there was no piano. BP did not blast. Morris French was the tb'ist. The loud music played now is good for the public, because it makes them come in.

AN sat in at Preservation Hall with Kid Thomas, tp, played soft. [Ordinarily plays loud!!! I heard him on June 28, 1972. Cf records for clue. RBA, June 29, 1972] On dynamics. On vibrato and learning music (i.e., reading). He studied reading with Tio but no clarinet at age 9. At 11 AN played cl. He had watched his Uncle [Wooden] Joe [Nicholas]. Within one week he was playing. Breathing is important in playing. "Pap" Tio [uncle of Lorenzo Tio, Jr. Cf. (Luis) Tio Reel ?] told him to read ahead. "We all do that".

[Albert Nicholas uses hand vibrato. Cf RBA notes (late 1969, early 1970?) RBA, June 29, 1972]

AN gets vibrato with the throat and lips. AN played some classical music while he was away. They used a straight sound (i.e., minimum vibrato). On blending, using same vibrato. Charlie Holmes played 3rd alto, AN 1st, in 1929. AN played alto for 2 years then played 1st tenor until 1940. When Greely Walton came into the band [on ts] AN switched to first tenor. Teddy Hill played ts in 1929. Later 2 tenors and 2 altos, Red Allen, Otis Johnson, [Shelton] Hemphill,

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and LA made it 4 tps. AN also played baritone sax plus all clarinet work in the band. Jay C. Higginbottom, tb; George Washington, tb; Wilbur De Paris, tb; G Washington was from [Florida or Georgia?] [John Chilton, Who's Who...] [Born Brunswick, Ga., and raised in Jacksonville, Fla.] G Washington was a good arranger. He was a good straight trombone player.

The band learned 2 numbers/week from various arranger. They played exactly what was written. Luis Russell, Bingie Madison and G Washington were arrangers. BM studied arranging. His arrangements were easy when they got used to them [Cf. Pops Foster (story?)] The band toured for 2 months as booked by Joe Glaser. They would tour in the East, West, South. They would buy new arrangements when the band came back. The band rehearsed by section for 1/2 hour, then the band together. Pops [Louis Armstrong] would direct, and give certain solo parts to the band. At night they put one of the numbers in the 1st set, and then play it again before the end of the night. They were good at memorizing. LA was the greatest man for memorizing. He would stick his handkerchief in his horn and run through a new number and then he had the song memorized. LA was a good reader. He played FH's 1st, 2nd, and 3rd trumpet books. LA made FH's band. He had a good memory. When the 4 tps played in unison, the others sounded like little boys.

AN admired Artie Shaw, AN's favorite. Benny Goodman was mechanical. AS had a beautiful sound. He was a great musician. All the cl'ists imitated BG.

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Edmond Hall had soul, guts. Pee Wee Russell had guts. He had something different on cl. There were many others. Jimmy Dorsey was good too, he had his own thing, too. Barney Bigard played good, too, when he was with Duke [Ellington]. BB didn't play cl in N.O.

In 1926, AN went to China. BB took his place. Then BB improved on cl. There were no N.O. saxists before AN. Ed Allen's band was on the boat with Gene Sedric from St. Louis. Ray Bauduc, a salesman at Werlein's, sold AN a sax. There were no teachers. AN tried it out. In 2 days he could read the fingering. In 2-3 weeks he was playing it. BB had ss, got ts. Inside of a few months they became a good section. They were cutting them [i.e., playing better than other sections] In New York Paul Whiteman's saxist taught AN a lot on sax. Lorenzo Tio was a good teacher. Had a different style, especially on Eb cl. He was AN's idol. He could transpose anything at sight.

He was with [A.J.] Piron at Tranchina's. This band didn't play funky jazz. This was the first [New Orleans] record on Columbia in 1922 or 1923 in New York? [Cf. Discographies]. AN was disappointed with LT in N.Y. [1930] He wasn't playing as much as AN had heard him. BB agreed. LT played good s with Louis Warnick in Piron's band.

Big Eye Louis Nelson on C cl [not C melody sax]. Sounded like a violin. Later he switched to Bb cl according to LIE and RBA.

[Luis] "Papa" Tio was the uncle of LT, AN thinks [See above]. PT was making cigars. He was old, but he was still a fine teacher.

[End of Reel I]

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[Luis] "Papa" Tio was the uncle of LT, AN thinks [See above]. PT was making cigars. He was old, but he was still a fine teacher.

[End of Reel I]

Albert Nicholas
Reel II [of IV]
June 26, 1972

Also Present: Hans Lychou, Lars I. Edegran
and Richard B. Allen

Notes by Richard B. Allen Digest by Elizabeth Wetzel
Checked by Lars I. Edegran and Richard B. Allen Retype by Evelyn W. Seidule

They play records. Luis Russell, "Panama" [Pae R 963, 10" 78] had LR as arranger. Personnel: Greely Walter, [ts solo]; Pops Foster, b; Charlie Holmes, [as solo]. Europeans are getting on LR kick. AN doubts that musicians today can play these numbers. LR had an original band. The band played a natural style. The band had a unique style, only 9 pieces. [or 10. Cf. discographies]. New Orleans men mostly in the band. FH complimented LR and advised him never to change. LR's band got as big a hand as Duke [Ellington]. After a while after getting other arrangements, and adding men, the band was losing its originality. LR wanted to make it just like the bigger bands. The men then started leaving. It got a natural sound on numbers like "Panama" and "Louisiana Swing". AN went with Chick Webb for nine months. AN [and others] came back with Louis [Armstrong]. [LA "fronted the band] It was not distinctive. LA was featured. LA gave 16 bars or a chorus to other members ometimes.

Record played: "Saratoga Drag" [Br 80038, 10" 78] by Luis Russell. AN has not heard it in years. On Jelly Roll Morton records. [LIE talking about another, a more recent AN record which AN brought.] Made in Stuttgart. Henry Owen, drummer is English. B'ist and p'ist are Swiss. On record made in Poland by AN, given to AN on his return. On dub of record which AN made in France.

Play "The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise", recorded in 1960 in [?]. AN's style changed with the times. Turns and phrasing were different. LIE comments that AN's tone could be heard better

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on this record.

Young pianist is Swiss and is only 23 years old. Joe Turner who is living in Paris was teaching this pianist at the time.

In 1925 [AN recorded with] Richard M. Jones [Chicago Hottentots, Vo [1008] making "All Night Shags" and "Spanish Shawl" which was first song AN made with [Richard M.] "My Knee" Jones.

Played "All Night Shags". The record is very worn. Johnny St. Cyr [bj]. Drums and string b, didn't record in early days. AN only played with RMJ on records. RMJ was composing then and didn't have a band. At c. 12 years old AN knew RMJ in New Orleans.

JSC was free lancing when "All Night Shags" was recorded. [JSC] recorded with Jimmie Noone and others. One's style automatically changes with the times. AN's kids broke AN's records when the kids were small.

[Play [RMJ's] "29th and Dearborn" on OK 8260 [10' 78]. Recorded about the same time. [Cf. King Oliver, "Chimes Blues" LA is solo] AN says he is "doing all right" on this record.

AN's favorite tp when he was a kid was Manuel Perez who never recorded. MP had the Onward Brass Band. AN also like Andrew Kimball, a powerful tp player. [Big] names when AN was coming up were: Big Eye Louis Nelson, [Lorenzo] Tio, AK, King Oliver, MP and others. AK with MP's [Onward] Brass Band. Vic Gaspard, tb, baritone; [was also a name?]. His brother Oak Gaspard played b. VG older than AN's father. AN played first in Maple Leaf Band with the Gaspards. AN, Sr. was a chemist. He played p for kicks. They thought AN was

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delicate and small. AN, Sr. was a chemist in N. Y. He analyzed medicine in N. O. drugstore. AN, Sr. didn't like drinking. He talked about bad liquor which was prevalent in Prohibition times. LIE plays JRM's "Fickle Fay Creep". There is little cl [clearly audible] on record. LIE says it was made in October 1930 in N.Y. with Ward Pinkett, Greechie Fields, Bernard Addison, Bill Beason, Billy Taylor [(Sr.)]. AN says that it is AN on cl on "FFC". He also made "Blue Blood Blues". He recorded with JRM 2 sessions during that year; he was then with LR band. AN thought he heard G. Fields, tb, and Tommy Benford [not Beason. Cf. Discographies]

Played "Gambling Jack". [Lars, we should copy your "Gambling Jack" RBA] AN confirms himself and WP on record. AN didn't make any with Cozy Cole on JRM recordings. BA is on g. "Jelly was hell, too...."

Play "Oil Well" [JRM, June 1930 session.] AN didn't play. AN didn't play sax with JRM; AN only played cl. AN is not on this. AN made records with Fats Waller in 1931. AN has one with Jack Teagarden, Jay C. Higginbottom, one of Fletcher [Henderson]'s tp players, Red Allen, AN on as, cl, white ts player. Paul Whiteman to record next that day. JT played vibes. Everyone was surprized. FW said to leave in vibes. Kaiser Marshall was on d, and, AN thinks, Pops Foster was on b, and a singer. FW hadn't slept that night. He asked PF, AN, RA, [Jay C.] Higginbottom to record the next day. It was a good session. They made four numbers at the session.

End of Reel II

Albert Nicholas
Reel III [of IV]
June 26, 1972

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Richard B. Allen

Notes by Richard B. Allen Digest by Elizabeth Wetzel
Checked by Lars I. Edegran and Richard B. Allen Retype by Evelyn W.
Seidule

Background record playing ["If Only Someone...." ?] JRM picked up odd musicians for his recordings. Jelly Roll Morton had no band. AN likes the session with JRM in New York in 1939 with Red Allen, Claude Jones, including "Big Lip Blues" and "[Good] Old New York". JRM was writing "Sweet Substitute" when they came. Red Allen kidded JRM. There were no titles on the songs. On Zutty Singleton who was too loud. JRM made ZS play at reasonable volume "so the musicians can be heard". JRM was a funny man.

On a corner [in New York?] an old timer was discussing "Battle Ax" a drummer as the greatest. JRM came over and said "BA" couldn't play a damn thing" and that "BA was a juggler" and not a drummer because he kept throwing his sticks in the air. JRM was clever and knew his facts. He would always have the last word.

On Willie "The Lion" Smith and JRM at the Rhythm Club on 133rd St. JRM "cut" W"TL"S. JRM played the Steinway piano there at a fast speed. On JRM's tunes on the radio which Tommy Dorsey was broadcasting from a hotel. JRM's sister got royalties from Morton's compositions after JRM's death. JRM was heartbroken at the end, because the royalties were tied up.

According to JRM (he) was in California c. 1916-1917. He was a pioneer of jazz. On JRM in Memphis. [Cf. Riv 12"LP on Benny Frenchy]. JRM was a "lemon pool player". He was in Memphis about 3 or 4 days before playing piano. JRM played "The Pearl" in contest with another piano player. JRM won a few hundred dollars. JRM said he was the King of Jazz.

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AN met JRM for the first time in Chicago when AN went to join King Oliver. AN played with JRM first. Paul Barbarin, Luis Russell, Barney [Bigard] and AN went two weeks early. JRM hired AN, BB and PB to play a gig. JRM paid LR to stay home. [George] Mitch[ell] on trumpet. AN didn't ask the price for the jobs. JRM paid \$50 to AN. AN expected to split it as he had been making thirty-five dollars a week plus tips, at Tom Anderson's in New Orleans but JRM told them he paid his musicians well. JRM wanted them to join his band. AN played 2 gigs with JRM at \$50/man/gig.

During the first week with King Oliver the band was not together. JRM would comment on this quality each week. After 2 or 3 months the band got together. They played JRM's tunes. JRM said they finally had it. JRM sat in LR's place and the band played a JRM tune. Each person at the Plantation moved in rhythm. Waiters, hat check girls, all bouncing, moved in rhythm. The band was there two years. Members were Bob Shoffner, tp; Darnell Howard; [Kid] Ory; Bud Scott; LR; PB; BB; King Oliver. Fletcher [Henderson] thought the band was good.

One night a bomb went off just before the revue. Only set-ups were available. The customers would bring their own bottle and put it under the table, this being prohibition time. Al Capone, other gangsters, and their bodyguards would frequent the place. They were big spenders, and gave good tips, like \$50 for one song. Bert Cobb, the treasurer of the band would split up the tips, and the band made over \$100 a piece each week just from the tips alone. BC played tuba only. He sat with the reed section. Bud Scott, tenor banjo and guitar; [Kid] Ory and [King] Oliver sat on one side. Joe Oliver

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wanted no noise. Everybody said he had a [great band?] JO didn't want to go to N. Y. He started losing his teeth and got pyorrhea. JO died brokenhearted because he couldn't play anymore. LA eclipsed KO. In 1929 LA was playing with Earl Hines [as a member of LA's band] songs like "West End Blues", "Monday Date". Arrangers for the Oliver band were LR and BS. BS was on tenor bj, g.

Billy Paige went to China with ^{Wanda Snow} [~~Amos~~ ?], AN, and Teddy Weatherford. Jack Carter, d, was the leader of the band which played at the Plaza Hotel in Shanghai. The band was playing commercial music. BP was the arranger for the band.

King Oliver's band played all types of music. The revue was at 12 and another time during the night. There was a lot of dancing. The music was bouncing, slow, medium, and fast. No waltzes were played there; everybody wanted jazz.

JO was sensitive about his flat feet and his black color. During one of JO's solos JRM passed and said, "Hi, Blondie". [AN lit a cigarette lighter as he walked by the microphone at this point.] Once BB drew a foot and put it on JO's music rack. JO was mad and said if he found out who had drawn the foot, he would fire the person, but he never found out. JRM always had an answer for a joke. He liked to kid, and would always have the last word. JO and JRM were close friends.

When AN went to N.Y., JRM was in the money. He had a band and good clothes and a diamond ring. He got a new black Lincoln and put it in the garage that night. The next afternoon everyone asked where

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his car was, and JRM told them that it was repossessed. He then went to the garage and drove it around the corner so everyone could see it. JRM got a Lincoln Continental every year.

When AN went to Chicago, JRM didn't have a band. He was recording using different musicians. After AN left for Shanghai in 1926 JRM recorded with Omer Simeon on cl. The records were very good. JRM loved to play. JRM was a composer [as his principal vocation.] In N.Y. JRM had a band when AN came.

JRM said he wouldn't work for peanuts on 52nd Street as did Count Basie and others. One night JRM went to listen on 52nd Street. Sarah Vaughn was singing at the Famous Door. JRM was respected by all including Fats Waller. JRM didn't smoke or drink. JRM wouldn't play there when he was asked. The group then moved down the block and heard John Kirby's band at Jimmy Ryan's with Maxine Sullivan singing. JRM played with JK. Billy Kyle was in the band and JRM took his place in JK's band. Even when JRM had no money he wouldn't play on 52nd Street because he was too proud.

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Reel IV [of IV]
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Seidule

Once the Luis Russell band was working the whole year around at the Saratoga Club, Roseland Ballroom, theatres, in Washington, D.C. and on tour. They were tired, and hadn't had one night off in a year. [Luis] Russell put another band in the Saratoga Club for two weeks. Jelly Roll Morton took the band on tour. He gave LR \$50 a night to stay home because JRM said he didn't need LR. The members of the band were: Pops Foster; Red Allen; Otis Johnson, tp; Jay C. Higginbottom, tb; Greely Walton; AN; Charlie Holmes, reeds. They used LR arrangements and JRM arrangements. The band rehearsed privately, and rented 3 second-hand Cadillacs. At Wilkes-Barre, Pa., JRM had had a bad band the year before. The hall, which was in the park, held 500 people. The band was supposed to play two nights. LR wasn't mentioned in connection with the band. The people stood outside and listened. People then started coming in, and after one half-hour the place was almost full. At intermission the band was questioned. JRM was proud of the band. The next night before the band started, the place was full, and after the first number there was a line outside. JRM told the owner that he was booked up for the whole year. He paid \$40 a night. This was c. 1935-36. [Cf other sources on date.] JRM told LR that he had a good band but that he didn't know what to do with it.

On hard times in JRM's life.

JRM didn't drink on late session. [1939? 1940?] He allowed men to drink, but not to get drunk. JRM never smoked cigarettes.

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JRM would never lose an argument. He was a great man.

Chick Webb had a good band and a good name. AN played 7-8 months with CW. AN got tired of playing the same arrangements with LR. He rejoined Luis Russell later, in 1934 or 1935 or 1936.

Ward Pinkett was very good.

On Bernard Addison's band at Adrian Rollini's Tap Room [Cf. John Chilton's Who's Who ...] AN recorded with BA. AN was at this place after leaving CW. In 1936.

Louis Armstrong came from Chicago to make a tour with Luis Russell's band and AN rejoined the LR band then and stayed until 1940.

Barney Bigard and AN were the best solo cl'ists in N.Y. Edmond Hall on sax with Claude Hopkins. Later on cl. Became known later on.

The Alex Hill band was only a recording group.

Bingy Madison, LR, George Washington, Chappie Willett of Philadelphia, Penn., were all arrangers for LR's band. [according to AN on June 26, 1972, RBA] Joe Glaser had some white arrangers. JG had one suit. In 1936 JG had nothing. LR lost band when JG took over. JG had a small space in [Irving] Mollois' office. The next year JG had a office in Radio City. The next year he had the whole floor. Then he had people in Hollywood. JG knew good music. JG had an enterprise of singers and dancers. He became a multi-millionaire. LR's band with AN made one movie with Morton Downy, an Irish tenor, c. 1933/1934, in N.Y. There was a lot of plot. LR was in a music

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store. The band played in street clothes, and played one number with MD, and one number for dancing. AN saw the movie at Radio City. LIE saw a short movie with LA and LR's band. They played one tune only. This movie was made later. J.C. Higginbottom.

San Sebastian's Cotton Club in [Culver City] California, had two reviews, 1 white and 1 colored, for two months with Louis Armstrong. "Skeleton In the Closet" Chappie [W's] arrangement. Recorded the song for Decca. Lee Collins, s'ist; [Teddy Purnell]. LC played about one month with LR band.

RA and O Johnson. LC could play but couldn't read well enough to stay with the band, so he went back to N.O. OJ was on 3rd [tp]. He didn't do any solo work. RA did the solo work. Bill Dillard was the 1st [tp]. Shelton "Scad" Hemphill b tp and Duke Ellington. Two books of arrangements with LR, one for RA, and one for LA.

On program. The band used the same program on tour. There were three books of music. 5 sets of 8 numbers or 40 numbers a night. They would mix in some different numbers sometimes. The band would also play requests. They had a huge book. There were few heads. They played mostly arrangements. They played the Fox at Grand Terrace in Chicago for two weeks. In the band, people wouldn't like one tune or the other, but LA said that all the tunes were good. During intermission, LA, PB, Pops Foster, LR, Lee Blair stayed on the stand and played "Bir Mir Bist Du Shon". LA played ad lib 8 choruses. People went crazy. The audience thought it was part of the act and the band had to keep it in the book for 2 weeks. Joe Louis, the heavyweight champion of the world was at the

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Grand Terrace. The Maple Leaf Band was AN's first band job with Oak Gaspard and his brother Vic, tb, c. 1915. All were reading music. Used stocks of pop tunes. The band played the red book and the green book of music.

LA was on the boat with Fate Marable for 3 or 4 years. LA learned from FM how to read on the boat. He sat in with AN at Tom Anderson's band. LA read the red book and didn't miss a note. AN amazed. AN knew LA when he was sent to Jones [Waif's Home].

LA and his band made a record of "St. Louis Blues" with Leonard Bernstein and the N.Y. Symphony [Columbia label], in the Hollywood Bowl. LA was said to be an inspiration to the band. The director praised LA so highly that LA was choked up. W.C. Handy was there too.

AN never played with Johnny Dodds. JD never played with reading bands. JD never played sax.

AN knew Jimmie Noone as a child in N.O. With Charlie Cooke's band in Chicago. JN had a fluid sound. BB and AN tried to steal from AN at Apex Club, all the musicians would go there. JN did not play the sax.

There were no battles of music in Chicago, the battles were in N.O. Kid Rena and Sharkey Bonano, 2 band leaders, used wagons on Sunday afternoon to advertise for that night. They would get the pople in the neighborhood to follow them in a second line and would follow the band all over.

AN played one or two parades with Manuel Perez. AN played the Eb cl. AN learned on Eb clarinet. Easier to reach the 4 keys on. Started on the Albert system. Horn broken in Egypt. [Defective tape?] c. 1927-1928. To Paris to get it fixed. On Albert system. Jimmy Dorsey. [

?]

A man in a classical band got AN to try his Boehm Cl, saying "It's a better instrument." AN replied "It's too hard." The fellow said "It's easy, just practice at least two hours a day." AN took it home and learned the fingering. A month later when he got his Albert system back he had forgotten how to play it.

AN liked the Boehm system better. Some cl players didn't want to change because it would put them out for a while when they learned the new system: Jimmy Dorsey, Ed Hall, Barney Bigard, Jimmie Noone. RBA comments that no one played faster than JN who played [improved] Albert system.

[End of interview]

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Also present: Hans Lychou, LIE, RBA

RBA states that Mike Casimir had made an interview with AN before. [See copy in ANOJ]. Joseph was AN's middle name, but he dropped it. He is AN, Jr. The interview is taking place at 931 Chartres. Alan Ward stated that AN took lessons from Lorenzo Tio. Jimmie Noone, ^{AD} Barney Bigard, and Omer Simeon were the 4 major students of Tio. [In chronological order?]

When AN was 12 or 13 years old, he would hear Johnny Dodds uptown with KO's band. They would play at Miss (Betsy) Cole's lawn parties. AN admired JD's playing. JD would play with Kid Ory. AN doesn't think JD took lessons from anybody downtown. JD was 4 years older than AN. JD had a unique style of his own. JD was very popular. JD's son Ruby Dodds is a taxi driver in N.O. On JD, Jr. in the taxi. He is a sharp guy. AN doesn't know how JD got started. On Sundays, Miss Cole held penny parties, c. 1912 for youngsters. AN was about 12 years old. AN was learning cl. then. AN took JD's place with King Oliver in 1924. AN was a kid. KO sent BB, Paul Barbarin Luis Russell, and AN. George Filhe, tb, now dead, was with KO then. Kid Ory came from California to play tb only, not sax. [Cf. Walter C. Allen & Brian Rust, King Joe Oliver.] Zue Robertson, from N.O. went to Chicago [around 1924?] Louis [Armstrong] was already in Chicago. They were to play at the Royal Gardens, [i.e., another name for Lincoln Gardens], but it burned down. One night at the Plantation, a bomb, which was planted on the roof, went off just before the revue, during the summer. This was a gangster era. AN doesn't remember Frankie "Half Pint" Jaxon clearly.

Dickie Wells & Jimmy [?] were dancers in their revue. There was also a girl, a good singer and dancer. There was a blues singer

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[Ada Brown] of St. Louis. She sounded like & was big like Bessie Smith. Around 1924-1925 [sic.]. There was a revue of 10 dancing girls and also individual artists like singers and tap dancers. Bill Robinson danced there. Tumblers appeared. Every two weeks they would change the show. The stars were changed but the chorus remained the same. Ada Brown was the singer at the Plantation. RBA thinks her cousin was James Scott. Tommy Ladnier was with King [Oliver] before TL went to Europe. L[A] left to go to Fletcher Henderson's band in 1924. [Cf. LA's biographies.] TL went with Sam Wooding. Bob Sh^Offner joined KO after TL. LA & AN were in the KO band at the same time. KO's band toured in Pennsylvania and Indiana. Both tours were two weeks long. The musicians union was just starting then. Union fees to join were about \$5 or \$10. There was no union in N.O. Rudy Jackson played in KO's band with AN. AN came before BB & PB in 1923. AN had a band at Tom Anderson's at Rampart & Iberville. Jimmie Noone came down for Mardi Gras. AN was just learning the alto sax. BB was playing tenor sax; AN on cl; LR; PB; Willie Santiago; Arnold Metoyer, tp player, who was good. People thought he was Manuel Perez. JN was very pleased with the band, and told Joe Oliver back in Chicago about it. JO sent for AN first. AN made a tour in Indiana with JO for two weeks then came back to N.O. In 1924 KØ sent for the band. Johnny Lindsay, tb, [not b], went on tour with the band too. AN took Buster Bailey's place and RJ played tenor.

JO's band played arrangements which were stocks. They were skeleton in nature, just to keep them together. JO didn't want to hear any one person, wanted to hear the whole band. He wanted everyone to blend together. JO was a good leader and was sharp. He had

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discipline in his band. JO wanted music soft enough to hear the feet [of the dancers]. AN notes that jazz bands here play loud, perhaps to attract the public. Restrict for 50 years:

as [Kid] Ory and them did in the old days. Buddy Petit had a hell of a band, AN joined BP when AN was a kid. BP was way ahead of his time. One could hear the guitar and bass; there was no piano. BP did not blast. Morris French was the tb'ist. The loud music played now is good for the public, because it makes them come in.

AN sat in at Preservation Hall with Kid Thomas, tp, played soft. [Ordinarily plays loud!!! I heard him on June 28, 1972. Cf. records for clue. RBA, June 29, 1972.] On dynamics. On vibrato and learning music (i.e., reading). He studied reading with Tio but with no clarinet at age 9. At 11 AN played cl. He had watched his Uncle [Wooden] Joe [Nicholas]. Within one week he was playing. Breathing is important in playing instrument. AN thinks 8 bars ahead when playing. "Papa" Tio [Uncle of Lorenzo Tio, Jr. Cf. Luis Tio] told him to read ahead. "We all do that".

[Albert Nicholas uses hand vibrato. Cf. RBA notes, (late 1969, early 1970?) RBA, June 29, 1972.]

AN gets vibrato with the throat & lips. An played some classical music while he was away. They used a straight sound (i.e., minimum vibrato). On using blending, Same vibrato. Charlie Holmes played 3rd alto, AN ist, in 1929. An played alto for 2 years then played 1st tenor until 1940. When Greely Walton came into the band [on ts], AN switched to first tenor. Teddy Hill played ts in 1929. Later 2 tenors and 2 altos Red Allen, Otis Johnson, [Shelton] Hemphill, and LA made it 4 tps. AN also played baritone sax plus all clarinet work in the band.

Jay C. Higginbottom, tb: George Washington, tb: Wilbur De Paris, tb:

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GWashington was from [Florida or Georgia?] [John Chilton, Who's Who...]
 [Born Brunswick, Ga., and raised in Jacksonville, Fla.] G.Washington
 was a good arranger. He was a good straight trombone player.

The band learned 2 numbers/week from various arrangers. They
 played exactly what was written. Luis Russell, Bingie Madison &
 G.Washington were arrangers. BM studied arranging. His arrangements
 were easy when they got used to them. [Cf. Pops Foster (story?)]
 The band toured for 2 months as booked by Joe Glaser. They would tour
 in the East, West, South. They would buy new arr'ments when the
 band came back. The band rehearsed by section for 1/2 hour, then
 the band together. Pops [Louis Armstrong] would direct, and give
 certain solo parts to the band. At night they put one of the numbers
 in the 1st set, and then play it again before the end of the night.
 They were good at memorizing. LA was the greatest man for memorizing.
 He would stick his handkerchief in his horn and run through a new
 number and then he had the song memorized. LA was a good reader.
 He played FH's 1st, 2nd, and 3rd trumpet books. LA made FH's band.
 He had a good memory. When the 4 tps played in unison, the others
 sounded like little boys.

AN admired Artie Shaw, AN's favorite. Benny Goodman was
 mechanical. AS had a beautiful sound. He was a great musician.
 All the cl'ists imitated BG.

Edmond Hall had soul, guts. Pee Wee Russell had guts. He
 had something different on cl. There were many others. Jimmy
 Dorsey was good too, he had his own thing too. Barney Bigard played
 good too when he was with Duke [Ellington]. BB didn't play cl in N.O.

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In 1926, AN went to China. BB took his place. Then BB improved on cl. There were no N.O. sax'ists before AN. Ed Allen's band was on the boat with Gene Sedric from St. Louis. Ray Bauduc, a salesman at Werlein's, sold AN a sax. There were no teachers. AN tried it out. In 2 days he could read the fingering. In 2-3 weeks was playing it. BB had ss, got ts. Inside of a few months, the became a good section. They were cutting thin [i.e., playing better than other sax sections.] In New York Paul Whiteman's saxist taught AN a lot on sax. Lorenzo Tio was a good teacher. Had a different style, especially on Eb cl. He was AN's idol. He could transpose anything at sight.

He was with [A.J.] Piron at Tranchina's. This band didn't play funky jazz. This was the first [New Orleans] band ~~to~~ record. It was on Columbia in 1922 or 1923 in New York? [Cf. Discographies] AN was disappointed with LT in N.Y. [c.1930] He wasn't playing as much as AN had heard him. BB agreed. LT played good s with Louis Warnick in Piron's band.

Big Eye Louis Nelson on C cl. [not C melody sax] Sounded like a violin. Later he switched to Bb cl. According to LIE and RBA.

[Luis] "Papa" Tio was the uncle of LT, AN thinks [See above]. PT was making cigars. He was old ,but he was still a fine teacher.

[End of Reel I]

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Also present: Hans Lychou, LIE, RBA

They play records. Luis Russell, "Panama" [Page R963, 10* 78] had Luis as arranger. Personnel: Greely Walton, [ts solo], Pops Foster, b; Charlie Holmes, [as solo]. Europeans are getting on LR kick. AN doubts that musicians today can play these numbers. LR had an original band. The band played a natural style. Only 9 pieces [or 10 Cf. Discographies] The band had a unique style. New Orleans mostly in the band. FH complimented LR and advised him to change. LR's band got as big a hand as Duke [Ellington]. After a while after getting other arrangements, and adding men, the band was losing its originality. LR wanted to make it just like the bigger bands. The men then started leaving. It got a natural sound on numbers like 'Panama' and 'Louisiana Swing'. AN went with Chick Webb for nine months. AN [and others] came back with Louis [Armstrong]. [LA 'fronted' the band.] It was not distinctive. LA was featured. LA gave 16 bars or a chorus to other members sometimes. Record played: 'Saratoga' Drag' [Br 80038, 10'78] by Luis Russell. AN has not heard it in years. On Jelly Roll Morton records. [LIE talking about another a more recent AN record which AN brought.] Made in Stuttgart. Henry Owen, drummer, is English. B'ist & p'ist are Swiss. On record made in Poland by AN given to AN on his return last year. On dub of record which AN made in France.

Played "The World is Waiting for the Sunrise , recorded 1960 in [?] AN's style changed with the times. Turns and phrasing were different. LIE comments that AN's tone could be heard better on this record.

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Young p'ist is Swiss and is only 23 years old. Joe Turnew who is living in Paris, was teaching this p'ist at the time.

In 1925, [AN recorded with] Richard M. Jones [Chicago Hottentots, Vo 1008] making 'All Night Shags' & 'Spanish Shawl' which was the 1st song AN made with [Richard M.] 'My Knee' Jones.

Played ' All Night Shags'. The record is very worn. Johnny St. Cyr [bj], drums, & string b, didn't record in early days. AN only played with RMJ on records. RMJ was composing then and didn't have a band. At c. 12 years old, AN knew RMJ. ^{who} JSC was free lancing when ' All Night Shags' was recorded. [JSC] recorded with Jimmie Noone and others. One's style automatically changes with the times. AN's kids broke AN's records when the kids were small.

Played [RMJ's] '29th and Dearborn' on OK 8260. [10' 78]. Recorded about the same time. [Cf. King Oliver, "Chimes Blues' LA is solos] AN ~~was~~ he is 'doin all right' on this record.

AN's favorite tp when he was a kid was Manuel Perez who never recorded. MP had the Onward Brass Band. AN also liked Anderw Kimball, a powerful tp player. [Big] names when AN was coming up were: Big Eye Louis Nelson, [Lorenzo] Tio, AK, King Oliver, MP, & others. AK with MP's [Onward] Brass Band. Vic Gaspard, tb, baritone [was also a name?] His brother Oak Gaspard played b. VG older than AN's father. AN played first in the Maple Leaf Band with the Gaspards. AN Sr. was a chemist. He played p for kicks. They thought AN was delicate & Small. AN Sr. didn't like drinking. He talked about bad liquor which was prevalent in Prohibition

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times. LIE plays JRM's ["Fickle Fay Creep"] There is little cl
 [clearly audible] on record. LIE says it was made in October, 1930,
 in N.Y. with Ward Pinkett, Geechie Fields, Bernard Addison, Bill Beason,
 Billy Taylor [(Sr.)]. AN says that it is on "FFC." He also made
 "Blue Blood Blues". He recorded with JRM 2 sessions during that year;
 he was then with LR band. AN thought he heard G. Fields, tb, and Tommy
 Benford [not Beason. Cf. Discographies]

Played "Gambling Jack" [Lars, we should copy your "Gambling Jack" RBA]
 AN confirms himself & WP on record. AN didn't make any with Cozy Cole
 on JRM recordings. BA is on g. "Jelly was hell, too. ..."

Play "Oil Well" JRM, June 1930 session. AN didn't play sax with
 JRM; AN only played cl. AN is not on this. AN made records with Fats
 Waller in 1931. AN has one with Jack Teagarden, Jay C. Higginbottom,
 one of Fletcher [Henderson]'s tp players, Red Allen, AN on as, cl, white
 ts player. Paul Whiteman to record next day. JT played vibes. Everyone
 was surprised. FW said to leave in vibes. Kaiser Marshall was on d,
 and AN thinks Pops Foster was on b., and a singer. FW hadn't slept that
 night. He asked PF, AN, RA, [Jay C.] Higginbottom to record the next
 day. IT was a good session. They made four numbers at the session.

End of REEL II

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Also Present: Hans Lychou, ^{works} LIE, RBA

Background record playing [If Only Someone..."] ?]. JRM picked up odd musicians for his recordings. JRM had no band. AN likes the session with JRM in New York, 1939 with Red Allen, Claude Jones, including "Big Lip Blues", and "[Good] Old New York". JRM was writing "Sweet Substitute" when they came. Red Allen kidded JRM. There were ^{no} titles on the songs. On Zutty Singleton who was too loud. JRM made ZS play at reasonable volume "So the musicians ^{can} ~~could~~ be heard". JRM was a funny man.

On a corner [In New York] an old timer was discussing "Battle Ax" a drummer as the greatest. JRM came over and said "BA" "couldn't play a damn thing" and that "BA" was a juggler and not a drummer because he kept throwing his sticks in the air. JRM was clever and knew his facts. He would always have the last word.

On Willie "The Lion" Smith and JRM at the Rhythm Club on 133rd st. JRM "cut" W"tl"s. JRM played the Steinway piano there at fast speed. On JRM's tunes on the radio which Tommy Dorsey was broadcasting from a hotel. JRM's sister got royalties from Morton's compositions after JRM's death. JRM was heartbroken at the end, because the royalties were tied up.

According to JRM, he was in California c. 1916-1917. He was a pioneer of jazz. On JRM in Memphis. [Cf. Riv 12" LP on Benny Frenchy]. JRM was a "Lemon pool player". He was in Memphis about 3 or 4 days before playing piano. JRM played "The Pearls" in contest with another piano player. JRM won a few hundred dollars. JRM said he was the King of Jazz.

AN for the first time, met JRM in Chicago when AN went to join King Oliver. AN played with JRM first. Paul Barbarin, Luis Russell, Barney [Bigard] & AN went two weeks early. JRM hired AN, BB, & PB to

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play a gig. JRM paid LR to stay home. [George] Mitchell^e on trumpet. AN didn't ask the price for the jobs. JRM paid \$50 to AN. AN expected to split it as he had been making thirty-five dollars a week plus tips, at Tom Anderson's^{in howlison,} but JRM told them he paid his musicians well. JRM wanted them to join his band. AN played 2 gigs with JRM at \$50/man/gig. During the first week with King Oliver the band was not together. JRM would comment on this quality each week. After 2 or 3 months the band got together. They played JRM's tunes. JRM said they finally had it. JRM sat in LR's place and the band played a JRM tune. Each person at the Plantation moved in rhythm. Waiters, hat check girls, all bouncing, moved in rhythm. The band was there two years. MEMbers were Bob Shoffner, tp; Darnell Howard; [Kid] Ory; Bud Scott; LR; PB; BB; King Oliver. Fletcher [Henderson] thought the band was good.

One night a bomb went off just before the revue. Only set-ups were available. The customers would bring their own bottle and put it under the table, this being the prohibition time. Al Capone, other gangsters, and their bodyguards would frequent the place. They were big spenders, and gave good tips, like \$50 for one song. Bert Cobb, the treasurer of the band would split up the tips, and the band made over \$100 a piece each week just from the tips alone. BC played tuba only. He sat with the reed section. Bud Scott, tenor banjo and guitar; [Kid] Ory & [King] Oliver sat on one side. Joe Oliver wanted no noise. Everybody said he had a [great band?] JO didn't want to go to N.Y. He started losing his teeth and got pyorrhea. JO died ^{broken hearted because he could not play anymore} in 1929, ^{LA} LA was playing with Earl Hines [as a member of LA's band] songs like "West End Blues", "Monday Date". Arrangers for the Oliver band were LR and BS. BS was on tenor banjo, guitar. Billy Paige went to China with [Amos ?], AN, and Teddy

Weatherford. Jack Carter, d, was the leader of the band which played at the Plaza Hotel in Shanghai. The band was playing commercial music. BP was the arr'er for the band.

The Revue was at 12. King Oliver's band played all types of music. There was a lot of dancing. The music was ^{bouncing} bounding, slow, medium, and fast. No waltzes were played there; everybody wanted jazz.

JO was sensitive about his flat feet and his black color. During one of JO's solos JRM passed and said "Hi, Blondie." [An lit cigarette lighter as he walked by the microphone, at this point.] Once BB drew a foot and put it on JO's music rack. JO was mad and said if he found out who had drawn the foot, he would fire the person, but he never found out. JRM always had answer for a joke. He liked to kid, and would always have the last word. JO and JRM were close friends.

When AN went to N.Y., JRM was in the money. He had a band and good clothes and a diamond ring. He got a new black Lincoln and put it in the garage at night. The next afternoon everyone asked where his car was, and JRM told them that it was repossessed. JRM got a Lincoln Continental every year. He then went to the garage and drove it around the corner so everyone could see it.

When AN went to Chicago, JRM didn't have a band. He was recording using different musicians. After AN left for Shanghai in 1926, JRM recorded with Omer Simeon on cl. The records were very good. JRM loved to play. JRM was a composer [as his principle vocation]. In N.Y. JRM had a band, when AN came.

JRM said he wouldn't work for peanuts on 52nd St. as did Count Basie and others. One night, JRM went to listen on 52nd St. Sarah Vaughn was singing at the Famous Door. JRM was respected by all including Fats Waller. JRM didn't smoke or drink. JRM wouldn't play there when he was asked. The group then moved down the blok and heard John Kirby's

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band at Jimmy Ryan's with Maxine Sullivan singing. JRM played with JK. Billy Kyle was in the band and JRM took his place in JK's band. Even when JRM had no money he wouldn't play on 52nd St because he was too proud.

[End of Reel III]

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Also present! Hans Lychou, LIE, RBA.

Once the Luis Russell band was working the whole year around at the Saratoga Club, Roseland Ballroom, and theatres, in Washington, D.C., and on tour. They were tired, and hadn't had one night off in a year. [Luis] Russell put another band in the Saratoga Club for 2 weeks. Jelly Roll Morton took the band on tour. He gave LR \$50/ night to stay home, because JRM said he didn't need LR. The members of the band were: Pops Foster; Red Allen, Otis Johnson, tp; Jay C. Higginbottom, tb; Greely Walton, AN, Charlie Homes, reeds. They used LR arrangements, and JRM arrangements. The band rehearsed privately, and rented 3 second-hand Cadillacs. At Wilkes-Barre, Pa., JRM had had a bad band the year before. The hall, which was in the park, held 500 people. The band was supposed to play two nights. LR wasn't mentioned in connection with the band. They people stood outside and listened. People then started coming in, and after one half-hour, the place was almost full. At intermission the band was questioned. JRM was proud of the band. The next night before the band started, the place was full, and after the first number, there was a line outside. JRM told the owner that he was booked up for the whole year. He paid \$40/night. This was c. 1935-36. [Cf. other sources on date.] JRM told LR that he had a good band but that he didn't know what to do with it.

On hard times in JRM's life.

JRM didn't drink on late session. [1939? 1940?] He allowed men to drink, but not to get drunk. JRM never smoked cigarettes. JRM would never lose an argument. He was a great man.

Chick Webb had a good band & a good name. AN played 7-8 months with CW. AN got tired of playing the same arrangements with LR. He rejoined Luis Russell later, in 1934, 1935, or 1936.

Ward Pinkett was very good.

On Bernard Addison's band at Adrian Rollini's Tap Room [Cf. John Chilton's Who's Who...] AN recorded with BA. AN was at this place after leaving CW. In 1936.

Louis Armstrong came from Chicago to make a tour with Luis Russell's band and AN rejoined the LR band then and stayed till 1940. Barney Bigard and AN were the best solo cl'ists in N.W. Edmond Hall on sax with Claude Hopkins. Later on cl. Became known later on.

The Alex Hill Band was only a recording group.

Bingy Madison, LR, George Washington, Chappie Willett, of Philadelphia Penn. were all arrangers for LR's band, [acc. to AN on June 26, 1972.RBA] Joe Glaser had some white arrangers. JG had one suit. In 1936, JG had nothing. LR lost band when JG took over. JG had a small space in [Irving] Millois office. The next year JG had an office in Radio City. The next year he had the whole floor. Then he had people in Hollywood. JG knew good music. JE had an enterprise of singers and dancers. He became a multimillionaire. LR's band with AN made one movie with Morton Downy, an Irish Tenor, cl 1933/1934, in N.Y. There was a lot of plat. LR was in a music store. The band played in street clothes, and played one number with MD, and one number for dancing. AN saw the movie at Radio City. LIE was a short movie with LA and LR's band. They played one tune only. This movie was made later. J.C. Higginbottom.

Sam Sebastian's Cotton Club in [Culver City] California, had two reviews, 1 white and 1 colored, for 2 months with Louis Armstrong. "Skeleton in the Closet" Chappie [W's] arr'ment. Recorded the song for Decca. Lee Collins, s'ist; [Teddy Purnell]. LC played about one month with LR Band.

RA and Otis Johnson. LC could play but couldn't read well enough to stay with the band, so he went back to N. O. OJ. was on 3rd [tp]. He

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didn't do any solo work. RA did the solo work. Bill Dillard was the 1st [tp]. Shelton "Scad" Hemphill b tp and Duke Ellington. 2 books of arrangements with LR, one for RA, and one for LA.

On program. The band used the same program on tour. There were three books of music. 5 sets of 8 numbers of 40 numbers a night. They would mix in some different numbers sometimes. The band would also play requests. They had a huge book. There were few heads. They played mostly arrangements. They played the Fox at Grand Terrace in Chicago for two weeks. In the band, people wouldn't like one tune or the other, but LA said that all the tunes were good. During intermission, LA, PB, Pops Foster, LR, Lee Blair, stayed on the stand and played "Bir Mir Bist Du Shon". LA played ad lib 8 choruses. People went crazy. The audience thought it was part of the act and the band had to keep it in the book for 2 weeks. Joe Louis, the heavyweight champion of the world was at the Grand Terrace. The Maple Leaf Band was AN's first band job with Oak Gaspard and his brother Vic, tb, c. 1915. All were reading music. Used stocks of pop tunes. The band played the red book and the green book of music.

LA was on the boat with Fate Marable for 3 or 4 years. LA learned from FM how to read on the boat. He sat in with AN at Tom Anderson's band. LA read the red book and didn't miss a note. AN amazed, AN knew LA when he was sent to Jones [Waifs' Home].

LA and his band made a record of "St. Louis Blues" with Leonard Bernstein and the N.Y. Symphony. [Columbia label], in the Hollywood Bowl. LA was said to be an inspiration to the band. The director praised LA so highly that LA was choked up. W.C. Handy was there too.

AN never played with Johnny Dadds. JD never played with reading bands. JD never played sax.

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AN knew Jimmie Noone as a child in N.O. With Charlie Cooke's band in Chicago. JN had a fluid sound. BB and AN tried to steal from AN at Apex Club, all the musicians would go there. JN did not play the sax.

There were no battles of music in Chicago, the battles were in N.O. Ed Rena and Sharkey Bonano, 2 band leaders, used wagons on Sunday afternoon to advertise for that night. They would get the people in the neighborhood to follow them in a second line and would follow the band all over.

AN played one or two parades with Manuel Perez. AN played the Eb cl. AN learned on Eb cl. Easier to reach the 4 keys on. Started on the Albert system. Horn broken in Egypt. [Defective tape?] c. 1927-1928. To Paris to get fixed. On Albert system. Jimmy Dorsey. f

?]

A man in a classical band got AN to try his Boehm cl, saying "It's a better instrument." AN replied "It's too hard." The fellow said "It's easy, just practise at least two hours a day." AN took it home and learned the fingering. A month later when he got his Albert system back he had forgotten how to play it.

AN liked the Boehm system better. Some cl. players didn't want to change because it would put them out for a while when they learned the new system: Jimmy Dorsey, Ed Hall, Barney Bigard, Jimmie Noone. RBA comments that no one played faster than JN who played [improved] Albert system.

[End of Interview]