

BILL BOURGEOIS
Reel II [of 3]--Digest--Retype
December 10, 1959

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Also present: Richard B. Allen, Florence Mars.

BB tells of going to Dan Leblanc's for afternoon sessions with other sax players, reading things Leblanc had written.

In 1936, BB, on his own, went to New York City, and worked various clubs. Sharkey came to town to play at Nick's and got BB to play clarinet with him, Henry Adler, drums; Georgie Brunis, trombone; they made a movie short for Warner Bros. Sharkey made a lot of records but never used BB on them; he used mostly Joe Marsala, who led his own band. BB was to go with Glenn Miller, replacing Fazola, but the death of his father in 1939 prevented that. He also had another offer from Irving Aaronson. He didn't go back to New York until recently.

BB speaks, but does not play, on Sharkey's record of "Mudhole Blues" BB went with Fazola, who was nervous, to Fazola's first record session (and first job) with Bob Crosby. Crosby asked for tune suggestions, so BB suggested "March of the Bob Cats" (not known as that then) which New Orleans school children sing as "John McDonogh" [i.e., "Maryland, My Maryland"]. (BB says Celestin originated the trumpet chorus). [cf. orchestration]

Sharkey's band at Nick's included: Del Zane, piano; [from Philadelphia]; Turk Bradley, bass; Johnny Castaing, drums (replacing Adler); The band later added Clayton "Sunshine" Duerr on guitar. Sharkey's records with Armand Hug, piano; Meyer Weinberg and Dave Winstein, saxes; Julian Laine, trombone and Angie Schellang, drums were made in New Orleans. [Chas. Delauney's New Hot Discography lists

Bill Bourjois (g & bj)] which BB says is a misprint. Some of the New York records, including "Mudhole Blues", on which BB speaks, had Clyde Hart, piano; Santo Pecora, trombone; Frank Federico, guitar; Thurman Tesque [sp ?] and Ben Pollack, drums. Some had Moe Zudacoff [Buddy Morrow], trombone; Eddie Condon, guitar; Joe Marsala, clarinet; and Joe Bushkin, piano. BB says Sharkey didn't use Georgie Brunis much on the records because Sharkey and Brunis "were always at each other's throats".

With BB's band at the Famous Door, alternating with Sharkey [late 1940's] were George Hartman, bass and trumpet; the late Roger Johnson, drums; Charlie Hewitt, piano; Jackie Blaine, vocals; Billy McCrea, Irish tenor. [BB, flute (cl, ts?)] His job was to play anything but Dixieland.

BB gave George Girard his first job on Bourbon Street; Girard never forgot him. Girard is not much of a reader, according to BB.

BB liked Jimmy Dorsey (with Red Nichols) and Don Murray (with Bix Beiderbecke). BB said he never tried to copy a style, but everyone is subconsciously influenced, e.g., Leon "Rap" Rappolo's and Sidney Arodin's influence on so many New Orleans clarinetists. BB says Sidney Arodin originated false fingering on the clarinet.

BB says there is an article in METRONOME, about 1937-38, saying BB and Buddy Rich were "youngsters to watch".

BB worked with Ernest Stephen's band in his early days, and with

many other local bands. BB went on the road with Frank Silva [sp?] one year, sponsored by Teche Greyhound Corporation. BB even played in barns in which people danced on the mud.

Al Ballanco, trumpet; Earl Dantin, trumpet; Tony Costa, tenor; Federico [&] Castaing, drums.

BB later played with Louis Prima at the Beverly Gardens, which Leon Prima owned; Louis Prima had a band; BB took over Prima's band when Prima went to New York. Also in this band were Federico & Castaing.

The band at Pete Herman's around 1940, when BB quit his job as a leader and became a welder, included all 4-F's - Irwin Dennis, piano; Charlie Stowe (still there, too), drums. Originally there in BB's band were Louis Escobedo [sp?], trumpet; Bob Doyle, piano; Lonny Mitchell, replaced by Johnny Bell, bass. Louis Escobedo was replaced by Bill McIlhenny [sp ?].

BB then joined Fazola's [cl, sax] band at the Plaza Club, at that time consisting of: Al Hirt, trumpet; Julian Laine, trombone; Slick Hirt, trombone; John Reiniger, saxophone; Steve Giarratano, saxophone; BB, saxophone; Wimpy Miller, trumpet; Pete Landerman, piano; [Charlie Duke, drums and Bunny Franks, bass (possibly)].

BB then worked at the St. Charles Theatre; then the 500 Club. He worked on the steamer "President" with [Tony] Almerico during

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World War II. With him were Bouchon, tenor sax; Shorty Reese, tenor sax; BB (lead), alto sax; Fazola, alto sax and clarinet; Bubby Castigliola, trombone; Red Bolman, trumpet; Howard Reed, g-trumpet; Alex Coulonge, the elder, bass (who died recently); Joe Salvagio, piano; Abbie Brunis, drums.

Fazola quit Horace Heidt to come back home, so his mother could keep him on a strict diet; he would eat his diet food at home and go out and eat too. BB says he died of over-eating, not from alcohol.

BB says Chink Martin is at least 75 years old.

Sharkey had a band at Pete Herman's before BB even went there. The band included Charlie Cordilla, clarinet and saxophone, Freddie Neumann, piano; Chink Martin, bass; and another reed man named Ray; and Sidney Arodin, clarinet and saxophone.

One of BB's daughters is a nun, and a very good singer with a wide range.

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BB played a lot with [Alfred] "Pansy" Laine in the old days, at the Eagles Home on Esplanade, every Saturday. Very loud band. Chink Martin's brother, William Abraham played bass. Laine had a special officer's badge and a gun; he would threaten to shoot anyone who made a bad note again. Abraham was terrified. In those days all bands were loud. Laine liked to play Marches such as lc ["Under the] Double Eagle" in jazz time. He used megaphones for the clarinet, also a tin bucket, [6" or 8" in diameter]. Al Hirt had the very loudest band ever. BB has played "F" sax [just higher than alto] and C melody sax. He mentions a straight alto sax. Lester Nelson played one [see Harold Peterson notes]. BB worked a couple of jobs with Brownlee, in 1928-30. Emmett Hardy died about the time that BB started playing. BB heard Roppolo shortly before he died. BB played a couple of jobs with LaRocca. Oscar Marcour had a tin horn fitted on his violin to amplify the sound, especially for recordings. [What recordings? RBA].

Tempos were slower then, for dancing. "Dixieland" [of now] was just called "jazz" then. Mike Lala's band at the Famous Door is trying to play older tempos. BB says the audience response is good. The band includes Mike Lala, trumpet; Emile Ouliber, trombone; BB, clarinet; Dan Leblanc, bass; Russ Johnson, drums; Arthur Seelig, Jr., piano.

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BB's favorite trumpet players in the early days included Sharkey, Red Bolman and Howard Reed.

BB worked a long time at The Woodmen of the World hall, with Dutch Andrus, the band including Sherwood Mangiapane. This was in the early thirties.

BB spotted with [Johnny] "Wiggs" [Hyman] at times. On trombone he liked Charlie Miller, Charlie Hartmann and Julian Laine. He was a good Charleston dancer, won several prizes. BB heard Schillings's band a lot, also a lot of the others, including the Negroes, such as [Kid] Rena, Kid Punch [Miller], Buddy Petit, the Tuxedo Band, and the Maple Leaf Band. Johnny Bayersdorffer had a very good band at the old Pontchartrain Beach at the Tokyo Gardens [at the Spanish Fort], which included Lester Bouchon [clarinet and sax?]; Nappy Lamare [guitar and banjo]; Ray Burke and Leo Adde [drums]; a trombone at various times, and others.

BB's first recordings were with Bill Crais and the Delta Kings. He was supposed to make recordings with others, such as Sharkey, and Wingy Manone, but something always happened to prevent it. He spotted with Wingy around New York.

Leo Adde, BB's favorite drummer, played soft, smooth, with plenty of rhythm. BB describes Adde's playing, and mentions how the old-time drummers played [mostly snare drum, hardly ever used cymbals,

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just for special effect]. Cymbals in constant use indicated "out chorus.

Leslie George's orchestra used to do most of the society work around New Orleans, in the late twenties and early thirties. [Out of about 20 Carnival balls, George had 16]. The bandmen made about \$ 75.00 a week [BB says the modern equivalent would be \$ 200.00].

BB's favorite saxophonist is Eddie Miller. Fazola was one of his favorite clarinetists. BB and Armand Hug started together; Hug was always so good. Horace Diaz was good, also Dee Larroque.

End of Reel III

