

CHARLES LOVE
Reel I F--Summary--Retyped
May 10, 1960

Those Present:
Richard B. Allen
Marjorie T. Zander

Summary: Betty B. Rankin

First Check: Paul R. Crawford Second Check: Richard F
The interview is taking place at Love's home, 700 Thayer Aller
Street, in Algiers, Louisiana.

Love sings the chorus of the hoodoo song, "I've Been Hoodooed"
[Compare Erand C. Brown Bollection of North Carolina Folklore,
398.3, D877F, v. 3.] He used to sing this, accompanying himself
on a guitar, but he has forgotten much of the words. He used to
make up little verses for it. This was when he was a kid, about
sixteen or seventeen years old. Love was born October 6, 1885.
People really used to believe in hoodoo--some of them still so.
[Especially his wife!] They had other songs about hoodoo. There
was one song about Marie Laveau, called "Marie Laveau," that
[Papa] Celestin used to play, has played for a long time.

Billy Kersands [Tom Fletcher, 100 Years of the Negro in
Show Business, Berdge & Company, Ltd., 1954] used to sing "I've
Been Hoodooed" with the Overton and [Senior Ragtime] Minstrel
Show. [See discussion of Billy Kersands and minstrel show in
Charles Love, January 16, 1960, Reel II.] He [probably Overton
or Senior] had just got married, went on his honeymoon trip with
the minstrel show. He sent and got Billy Kersands and his wife
because they [Kersands] had never played in the state of Mississ~~i~~ppi.
Overton paid the Kersands about \$400 a week to put Kersands' name
on the two cars [railroad cars] they traveled in. Kersands used
to sleep in the drawingroom. The band Bellows rode the coach.
Love played with the band. This was about 1903. Billy would
sing "I've Been Hoodooed," and at the end of the song he would

start pulling off vests. He was a great big fellow, had "about fifty" vests on, one over the other. The very last one would be a lady's corset. He would unfasten that, grab his suspenders, and his wife would catch him and bring him off the stage. Love made his very last trip with him, in Mississippi, probably around 1916.

Kersands' wife, Louisa, was highly educated, a fine woman, taught Billy what he knew. He had been a shoeshine boy in Donaldsonville, Louisiana. He had a big, funny-looking mouth, was really funny. "He was apt at catching that foolishness, and she would teach it to him." She was a good singer. Toward the last, he was forgetful, she would have to prompt him, [as he was getting old.] He would say, "Oh, Father, take my hand. I got four kings," as a signal for prompping. The audience couldn't tell, but the orchestra, in the pit, could see it.

Mr. Allen asks if Love remembers any of Billy Kersands' jokes. Love tells Kersands' joke about how he likes chicken [See Reel II, January 16, 1960.]

Love tells about Billy Kersands performing before the Queen of England [Victoria] who was very solemn. A fine present had been promised to anyone who could make her laugh. Billy made her laugh by putting his cup of tea, cup, saucer, and all in his mouth. "She had a hysteric." She gave him a fine diamond, a gold-handled umbrella, a walking stick with a gold knob on it, and a lot of money too.

But Billy went broke before Love went on that Overton show.

Louisa used to talk to the boys on the show about it. She said Billy had gone through two or three fortunes. He would go around treating everybody, spend too much money, drink too much and get sick. Louisa used to go out at night and pay as much as \$10 or \$15 cab fare, going around looking for him. [Cab fare has gone up. In Reel II, January 16, 1960, the cab fare was \$5 for this.]

They had a fellow on the show named John Johnson, a great big fellow, about six foot four [on Reel II, 1/16/60, he was almost seven feet tall], wore suits with big stripes. He was so big and looked so different from other fellows in Mississippi everybody thought he was Billy Kersands. People would carry him on down town, give him champagne, cigars. Louisa wouldn't let Billy Kersands out to go to town; Billy knew what John was doing, didn't like it.

The trombone player was Floyd McMillan, who used to play with the Caddo band, in Shreveport. He used to do it for devilment-- get in conversation with Louisa Kersands, then when John came along, they would light out and go downtown somewhere, get plenty to drink. They would come back laughing, and it worry the old man to death. Billy would be saying, "Louisa, I don't like that fellow," and Floyd would be across the street killing himself laughing, getting his kicks.

Mr. Allen asks Love what the line of the hoodoo song means, "I've been hoodooed by a big, black ^ucoon," Love says it means a big, black man.

Mr. Allen asks Love when he came to New Orleans the first

time. When Love was just a kid he intermittantly lived down here. His mother used to sing, used to go out with his father on a little show, used to leave Love with a cousin [cousin lives in Gretna now] when he was just a baby. The cousin brought him down here from Plaquemine. She lived down here "on that canal." When Love went back home, he missed her, and his mother brought him back down here when he was five or six years old, wearing short pants. Then he would miss his mother, and the cousin would send him back to Plaquemine. From the time he was about ten, eleven, or twelve, up until he was sixteen, he stayed down here with his cousin Henrietta. She was living on Nunez Street. [In earlier interview, he tells about living with Henrietta and her husband, Bobo Lewis, when he was sixteen or so.]

Mr. Allen asks when the "screen" was put on, segregating streetcars. Love says when he first came down here, the screen was not used. When it was first put in, he was in Shreveport, around 1915. A rich fellow who owned the radio system in Shreveport, Mr. Sawyer, who lived on Texas Avenue, came down here to help fight that. But they lost; the screens were put on in New Orleans and in Shreveport, too. Segregation wasn't so bad then. It got bad because some fellows got loud, a lot of common people came into the city and located on Franklin Street and North Rampart Street, even on Dryades Street. They were loud; people wouldn't live in the neighborhood with them. They were always getting arrested and put in jail. "That was a tough place up there, around Franklin

[now Loyola], Franklin and Perdido." Mr. Allen inquires about Gasquet Street, around Cleveland, two or three blocks above Canal Street, between Tulane Avenue and Canal Street. Mr. Allen is talking about the section between Claiborne and Rampart Streets, and between Tulane Avenue and Canal Street. Love says that was a rough part of town, too. They called that section "The Battlefield."

Chinatown was on Common Street, right across from Rampart, near the First Precinct. The Chinese used to kill one another and hide it. Alex Bigard said he saw two Chinamen sitting down on the floor with sharp hatchets, cutting one another up. One would die, they would open up the floor and bury him right there. Love says they found a whole lot of bones around there.

There was a Chinatown in Alexandria, Louisiana, too. Love has seen them sell stuff that looked like gunpowder, that they smoked. Love thinks the Chinese were run out, deported. "They wouldn't tell on one another. . . . Every now and then one would come up missing, they didn't know where he was at, nobody knowed nothing about him." Nobody stayed in that old building from Rampart to Tulane on Common Street but Chinese.

They had a place where you could smoke opium, all kind of stuff, They caught up with a man in Shreveport named Mose [Chelson ?] --they knew he was smoking something. They had a job in Mansfield, Louisiana. Mose got in a room by himself. He had a whole suitcase with him besides his violin case. Manuel suggested they have some fun with Mose. Mose went to his room after the dance, put on pink

pajamas. While Mose was out back, Manuel looked through his suitcase, found a pipe that looked like Picou's clarinet. They stole the "clarinet" and hid it. When Mose came in and looked in his suitcase for his pipe, so he could get his smoke, he did some threatening, threatening to kill the man who had stolen his pipe. When Mose went out in town somewhere, they slipped the pipe back in his suitcase, and when he came back and discovered it he raised sand again. Love says Mose smoked that pipe so much that even though he was a black man he looked like a Chinaman. Mr. Allen questions whether his color changed, or the shape of his eyes, or what. Love says he looked like a black Chinaman. He was a violin player. Mr. Allen asks whether Mose [Chelson ?] is still alive. Love believes he must be dead, he smoked so much of that stuff. Love never hears from him anymore.

Mr. Allen asks about the Red Book, what bands played it. Love says the Superior Band in New Orleans, Peter Bocage played with them sometimes, on the violin, Bunk Johnson playing the trumpet. Harry Walker in Alexandria--different bands around Alexandria all played the Red Book. They were all connected. They used to rehearse every Sunday, invite all the musicians. There was Baby Lovett, the drummer. He's in Kansas City, Missouri, now with [Julia] Lee's band.

They had some fake bands around there, that just faked music, but they played the rags too. They had heard them so much they could play them just as if they were reading them. One of these

was Bunk Johnson's uncle, Willie Young, a violin player who also played guitar and banjo. This was around 1908, 1909, 1910-- Bunk wasn't there yet, but his uncle, Willie Young, lived around Alexandria.

They had about eighteen [!] bands in the "District" in Alexandria, "over the bayou." They played every night. One musician was the Pensacola Kid from Florida--a good violin player. Another was Zue Robertson, the trombone player, who was working with Baby Lovett. There was also Bunk Johnson, and there was Willie Reed, a bass player. Willie used to work for Miss Lucille Agnes. Love worked for Pansy Bannhard, two or three different places, Miss Bea Nichols, Lucille Wilton [these are all madames, or as Love puts it, "House lady--landlady."] In about 1907 or 1908, when Love was working in Alexandria, they had high water; Bayou Rapides rose. They had to go over a bridge to go to work. The water got so high they had to move upstairs in the houses; Love had to go to work in a skiff. The water rose so they could step from the skiff right onto the porch. But when the water rose nn up in the building an inch, Love left and came back to Plaquemine. He didn't go back until the water went down; they rebuilt and fixed up.

Love says they never had brass bands for funerals anywhere but in New Orleans. Except once they buried a musician in Alexandria, Ollie, whose last name was Williams, "or something like that." Dddie got killed by a train. There was no musician's union, but

the musicians were all friendly with each other. Ollie had come from Arkansas somewhere, had no people, as the musicians put in \$5 or \$6 apiece to give him a big funeral, had fellows from all the different bands, about 50 or 60 pieces, to play for his funeral. Love conducted the funeral' only a few of them had seen funerals in New Orleans' Love had to show them how to walk, line them up. They only had one funeral march, "Flee as a Bird." Love played "Nearer, My God, to Thee," and a few hymns Love could remember having heard down here. Coming back from the funeral, they played "all them rags . . . like they do here." That was in 1908. It was right after the high water went down. Ollie was talking to someone on the train when it went out; he slipped and fell; the train went right over his neck, cut his head off. Ollie was a bass violin player.

Miss Zander suggests they were playing the same things for funerals then as now. Love says they didn't know as many dirges, just a few hymns they could get out of any [hymn] book. Love says there was a long piece in the paper about this funeral.

Mr. Allen asks what hymns they were playing here in New Orleans at that time. Love can't think, but says a lot of the fellows have a lot of that music now, that old [Willie] Cornish had a lot of that music. [See John Casimir.] They didn't know "Just a Closer Walk with Thee" at that time. They didn't know "Gloryland" either. But they played hymns on that same order.

Ollie's funeral was the only one they ever had a band with in Alexandria. Love says they didn't have bands at funerals in

CHARLES LOVE
Reel I--Summary--Retyped
May 10, 1960

9

Plaquemine or Baton Rouge, wither.

END OF REEL

CHARLES LOVE
Reel II--Summary--Retyped
May 10, 1960

10
Summary: Betty B. Rankin
First Check: Paul R. Crawford
Second Check: Richard B. Allen

Love played a funeral all by himself in Shreveport, once. A veteran of the Spanish-American War died; he had requested music at his funeral. They had never had music for funerals there, but they had heard of the bands in New Orleans, and many of them had been to New Orleans and seen funerals. Everybody knew Love had been in New Orleans, so they asked him what to do. He suggested that they make up a brass band. When he told them they would have to pay about \$5 apiece for this brass band, they asked him to walk behind the hearse and play "Nearer, My God, to Thee" just on the cornet. Love agreed to play for them for \$10.. He insisted on marching in front of the hearse, leading the procession like a grand marshal. He came on down Texas Avenue, by the pool hall where all the musicians hung out. The musicians came out and watched him go by. Love played there [in the graveyard ?], then went off to the fence and made the last call [Taps]--it sounded sad--then he came back by the grave and played "Nearer, My God, to Thee." Then the preacher said a few words, and they went back. He didn't play going back, just put his horn in the case. There was a little boy toting his horn for him, in the case. Love went back to the pool hall. The fellows there kidded him, asked him what he was doing in front of the hearse, playing "Nearer, My God, to Thee," He told them the man hired him to do that, "Wouldn't you do that for \$10?" They laughed, and he started playing pool with them. Love used to tell fellows about playing a funeral by himself, and they didn't believe him. This was about 1913 or 1914. That same year

Reel II--Summary--Retyped
May 10, 1960

he came down to New Orleans at Mardi Gras with Mose [Chelson 7] [See Reel I]. They had about 20 bands playing the Mardi Gras parade. Love and Mose were the last band in line; they cut loose with some piece [he can't remember the name of it]. One band would be right behind the other, bucking each other: Chris Kelly, Kid Rena, Buddy Petit, Sam Morgan, all those bands. They were all on trucks. Love and Mose were from out-of-town, so they got "hung" on the last truck. It comes to him that this was in 1914.

Love was home in Plaquemine when they had the big storm in 1915. He was working for F. L. Trepagnier Brothers, a jewelry store. He used to fix clocks. He also fixed bicycles. They turned the whole workshop over to him. They sold instruments: accordions, guitars, violins. Love used to tune the instruments for the buyers. This is how he learned how to tune instruments. Some of these fellows were so dumb they couldn't tune their own instruments; would come back to the store a week later for Love to tune the instruments again. They finally got pitch pipes; Love sold them too. Love worked for this company a long time.

Mr. Allen asks Love which of the rags he plays from the Red Back Book of Rags he likes best. Love likes them all, but he likes "Frog Legs," "Easy Winners," "Chrysanthemum," "Ophelia" best. "They're real musical numbers." Love says they didn't play so many of these old rags in New Orleans "in olden times." One band would play one or two of them; another band would play two or three of them. Love used to study those books, Cecelia

Cunningham had books "like that" but they were just for the piano. She had studied piano in England. When she finished college over there she came over here and went to Boston Conservatory, started all over again. She had put the books out in the wash shed. Love lived on the place, right on the next corner. There was a bell from his house [Mr. Cunningham's ?] to Love's room, to call Love when he was going out. in case Love had to hitch the buggy up, or something. While they were gone, Love would put a mattress on the floor, lay there and study those books. Love couldn't read so well then, but "I could spell like the devil." He would try to whistle and sing the notes as he made them out. When he learned the cornet, he tried to play them, but it was piano music and he had to raise it a tone; it would run too high; he couldn't make the notes without coming down, got all confused.

When Love got to Alexandria, they had those Red [Back] Books, but couldn't get a cornet player to play them. He and Harry [Walker] used to practice every day. Right after breakfast, he would go to Harry's house, and just like workmen, they would practice until twelve o'clock, get dinner, and come back and practice again. Harry bought an A clarinet and a B [flat] too, Albert system. He changed [from] that system. He was a great clarinet player. He got Boehm system clarinets A and B flat and sold his old clarinets. Then they had to practice "sure enough" because he had to learn the Boehm system clarinet.

They used to play over in the "District" across the bayou

every night. "When you play every night that way, you contract [sic] a lot of stuff." It becomes natural to play the books-- Love played them by head--whether he had the Red Back Book there or not, he imagined he could see the music in his head. Before Love's father died, he said that was great, for a fellow to imagine music and play it. He thought it plays a great part in musician=ship. To play a piece the same way all the time, you have to imagine you see it, because [if you didn't] your ideas might run differently altogether. "If I had to fake a rag. I'd just fake anything that come in my head . . . but I just imagine I see that music." He even can imagine music on a new piece. "That's better than transposition."

Mr. Allen questions Love about joining the Young Men of [Algiers]. When you join a Society, you pay so much a quarter-- Love thinks it was about \$.1.25/ They meet at regular intervals, once a quarter. When a member dies, the organization buries him, gives him his funeral, and gives his wife or other beneficiary a sum of money--Love thinks it wasn't too big a sum, perhaps a couple of hundred dollars.

When Love came to New Orleans, he had a place waiting for him in the Excelsior Band--his wife had told everyone he was coming. The members of various bands used to join societies, so they could get the funerals for their bands. In those days they were playing funerals every day, sometimes two a day. Love joined the Young Men of Algiers so he could draw their funeral business to

May 10, 1960

the Excelsior Band. [Peter Bocage and Willie Humphrey and his brothers were other musicians who joined societied for this reason.) Not long after Love joined the Young Men of Algiers, they got to fighting over election or president. He saw that one of the combatents had a pistol. Love left there, let them keep the \$1.25 he had paid to join. He hasn't joined anything since but the Union.

He did belong to a Pleasure Club, stayed in that and paid his dues until it dissolved. He drew his money back then.

Miss Zander asks about difference between a Society and a Pleasure Club. Love's answer is rather about the difference between the pleasure club and the union. He says the pleasure club gives something, like a big dance, to swell the treasury, so they would have money to have "pastimes" like running an excursion on a boat. The Union is supposed to protect you in the music business. The particular pleasure club he is discussing was made up of nearly all the musicians in town. When the club broke up, Love got the money back--got back more money than he had put in. Willie Humphrey [Jr. or Sr.?] took the charter for his pay. When [William] Houston set up a union, he bought that charter from Willie Humphrey--paid him \$25 for it. Chris Kelly was living then, when they had the union [Check Kelly's obituary for dates.] Kelly was in that union. So was Love. "That's the union that turned out to be all right; that's the one we got now."

George Augustin was the president of the pleasure club. He

is dead now. He played bass. [A. J.] Piron was in it; so were Eddie Pierson, [Papa] Celestin.

The club failed, but the union didn't. The club had a president, secretary, treasurer, finance secretary, and a twelve member board.

Mr. Allen is still trying to find out about benefits of societies. Love says the Young Men of Algiers would pay something for doctor bills if you were sick, in addition to funeral and life insurance payment to the widow or other beneficiary. Once a year the "Young Men" would have an outing, get two or three kegs of beer and a big box of ham sandwiches, lemonade, punch, sometimes gumbo. Love recalls one union outing at which Allen was present, at which Love and Bill Russell "et a whole chicken." That was about the time the hula hoop came out. "Showboy" [Worthea Thomas] had his hula hoop, twisting around there. [Does this date it as late summer or early fall, 1959?]

Miss Zander asks Love about hoodoo. Love says he doesn't believe in that stuff, but there are a lot of people in Algiers who do. A fellow who came from Mississippi stopped Love on the street one day, asked him if he knew anything about "two-headed stuff" orknew anybody who could tell him about it. When Love first moved over to Algiers, people used to tell him about the seven sisters with the seven cats. He found ou later they were right in his neighborhood. But he never did believe in that stuff.

When Love was a young kid, "they" used to believe in that

around Rampart and Perdido streets. People would threaten to throw some hoodoo stuff at others they wanted to leave them alone. People used to come out early in the morning with lye and scrub their steps, have them shining. This was supposed to keep them from being hoodooed. They were afraid that if they walked on hoodoo stuff, they would be crippled. Mr. Allen suggests they also used brick dust to clean the steps. Love says they used brick dust, lye, and everything else. They think the brick dust has special power to keep hoodoo off. Love thinks this kind of thing came from the Indian medicine man, witch doctor concept.

There was one in Algiers called the witch, had a picture of a witch riding a broom, and a black cat. Love named a piece of his after them, got in with them, named his piece "Black Cat on the Fence." People over the river used to say, "I believe I'll go over to Algiers and get me some graveyard dust."

Love tells about a dude from New Orleans who victimized the fellows in Love's home town, Plaquemine. The man bought a pound of red beans and about a half a yard of red flannel. He cut the flannel up into inch squares, sewed a bean up in each piece of flannel, with black thread. He took a grip full of those beans sewed up in flannel to Plaquemine, went to [Dougherty] Saloon, where the fellows gambled in the back. He sold those beans for a dollar apiece, as luck charms. He sold out his grip of beans, went out with his grip full of money, caught the train (No. 54) and went right on out of the state.

Two or three other fellows went to this salesman, asked him if he had any other kind of luck charms. He said they would have to wait until next week, but he had some special shoes ordered. He came on back here, went down on Rampart Street and bought cheap shoes for \$1.50 or \$2.00 a pair. He would take those shoes back up to those sawmill switch towns like P̄aquemine, as far as Baton Rouge, would sell them for \$15 a pair. They were supposed to "fixed" so that "nobody can't do you nothing." Love's father observed, "They got some crazy people in the world." This man never did get caught. He would grab the train and go on somewhere else after he'd sold his shoes. Love thinks people aren't so bad now as they used to be, selling these things.

Mr. Allen says that John Casimir believes in hoodoo. Mr. Allen saw Thomas Jefferson kid Casimir at a parade once, make motions as if he were going to throw something on him. Casimir practically quit playing he was so scared, even though it was his band.

Love tells about a fellow in Mississippi, they used to call "See-me-now." He was a laborer in the tent show. He was always fooling around in the grass with weeds, would break a piece off of some special kind of weed, put it in his pocket. People believed he had some of this hoodoo power. Everybody on the show was scared of him. [Story of why the man was called "See-me-now" doesn't seem to have much point in our context.] Some of the show people believed in this stuff; the boss himself did. And the boss began to think "See-me-now" was bad luck, put him off the show.

CHARLES LOVE
Reel II--Summary--Retyped
May 10, 1960

18

See-me-now was acting kind of silly, or crazy, anyhow. He saw Earl Humphrey played trombone with this show, loud trombone.

See-me-now was supposed to help put up the tent. Right after a payday, See-me-now went to town, spent all his money at a pawnshop on a trombone. Of course, he couldn't play at all, but he decided he would play trombone on the show rather than put up the tent. After the fellows put the tent up, he went up under it and made all kinds of noise with his trombone.

END OF REEL

CHARLES LOVE
Reel III--Summary--Retyped
May 10, 1960

THOSE PRESENT:
Richard B. Allen
Marjorie T. Zander
Summary: Betty B. Rankin

19

First Check: Marjorie T. Zander Second Check: Paul

Charles Love says that "See-me-now" did not get to play Crawford

trombone with the show. When the show got to a town, the boys noticed that "See-me-now" was out of jail; they were afraid he was going crazy. Everyone was afraid of him; they thought he was a hoodoo or something. They told the policeman that he was a pretty good fellow, but they wanted him put in jail until the show could leave town--"See-me-now" was just following the show: he hadn't done anything to anyone, but the show people didn't want him around. The police jailed him till the show left, but he was sitting on the railing of a bridge in the next town where they played, even though they had not told him where they were going. When they put up their tents, "See-me-now" was right there. No one would tell him where they were going next, but he would be in the town before the show could get there. Love did not know how he'd get there. Finally, the boys told the police to lock him up for three days so they wouldn't see him anymore, and the show lost him. The above shows were in the state of Mississippi, which was "See-me-now"'s home state.

Joe Lizard was the leader of the Pacific Band. Lizard had Buddy Johnson on trombone--Arthur [Yank] Johnson was not in that band, he was too young, about Love's age. Joe Lizard played the E flat cornet. Sometimes Frankie Duson would play trombone. Love says that the late Dude Gabriel, who was a plasterer by trade, played clarinet; later he says that [a] Dude played snare drum, his only instrument--[S. B. Charters lists Gabriel as a clarinetist and lists Duke Simpson as the snare drummer with the Pacific Band

--p, 55 of JAZZ: New Orleans 1885-1957.] Georgie Hooker played the cornet at that time; that was before he became a baritone player. George Sims played the baritone horn. All of them were Algiers fellows. George Davis was the bass drummer. [See previous mention of Dude Gabriel ?] Dude Gabriel used to play at the Manhattan Club with Frankie Duson. Jimmy Palao Spriggs was with them on alto horn; he went with the Creole Syncopators; he was [also] a good violin player. The Creole Band made quite a hit; they were the first band to leave here that went anywhere. Eddie Vincent, Big Eye Louis [Delisle], Jimmy Palao, and Wellman Braud were members of the Creole Band. The Braud was not the one who started out with Love, but the Braud who played with Duke Ellington. Love can't remember the guitarist or the drummer. Also with the Creole Band was Freddie Keppard. Mr. Allen says that perhaps the drummer was Dink Johnson. Love has heard of Dink who may have been with them.

Love had a band with a Dink [Stewart ?], a tenor sax player in Shreveport. Dink [Stewart] is in Chicago now. He had a brother who played the mandolin.

The Pacific Brass Band played brass band jobs, mostly parades. They played all-day Sunday parades. Every Sunday some society would turn out. They played on either side of the river, but mostly on the West Bank. They played all down the coast below the Navy Yard, and at McClendonville. They used to walk on rocks, dirt, way down as far as Belle Chasse. They would have a

parade where they would leave here [Algiers] and go to Gretna and back. Then, the next Sunday, they would have a parade out in the Ninth Ward somewhere.

The first brass band Love played with when he came down here was [Henry] Allen, [Sr.]. In that band was Allen, Love, ["Toutsuite" ?] a cornet player, Arthur Yank Johnson, Buddy Johnson's brother, Love used to play alto with Allen--Allen was playing cornet; Love couldn't play enough cornet to play in the band, then. Love had a little upright alto on which he played regular alto parts. Everyone would clap and look at the cornet player; no one would see Love. Love didn't like that; he wasn't any excitement at all. So, at one of the corners, instead of playing the chord accompaniment he played a run and everyone laughed. Love really thought he was doing something. Allen didn't like it and told him that he didn't have to make all that, "just stay and make the C and D in the chord that you are in." Love thought Allen was a great cornet player at that time; Allen couldn't play anything, but Love thought he could. Allen would miss a note everynow and then and Love would try to cover it up with the alto and everyone would start laughing.

Love went home where his father had a little brass band around Plaquemine. One Sunday when they were playing a parade, Love broke out with his little run, and his dad came back where he was and told him that he didn't have music like that in his band and warned him that once more and home he would go. They'd play

all over town. There were times when the music felt good to him and he just had to "bust out and make one of them runs." The people would say, "Look at little Son, look at little Son Love," and Love would make his little run and his dad would take his horn and send him home. Love would go home crying and cry all evening. Everytime his dad offered him a job for one dollar and a half on a parade, he warned him that if he broke out with a run he had to go home. Love just had to make the "bust-out," and then he would try to fool his dad returning to the regular part. Finally, his dad found him an upright tenor on which he couldn't make the runs.

Love's dad didn't play funerals with his band; they didn't have funerals around Plaquemine. Love's dad used to play for dances mostly. He had a swell orchestra; they used to sit down and make their own music. Most of their whole program was stuff they made up--quadrilles, lancers, schottisches, mazurkas, and varieties, two-steps, and one-steps. They used to play rags a little bit. They also played sentimental music, overtures. Love's father was a first class musician; he could go to sleep at night and dream up a piece of music and get up in the middle of the night and play it right away. Then he'd write it down. Love's mother was his witness; he would say, "How did that sound, Kate?" "That sounds lovely." But she would add that it sounded like it needed another part. She would give it a name. Then Love's father would write

Reel III--Summary--Retyped

May 10, 1960

the lead and take it around to [Honore ?] Barber's house. Barber was something like [Emmanuel] Sayles; he could score that stuff down;" he could write the guitar and the bass part, etc. Clarence Williams' father was playing bass with Mr. Love. He [Williams' father] died in Gretna now so long ago, "Just fixing to go see Clarence." He was working for the T-P Railroad Company.

To get jobs for the band, [Henry] Allen [Sr.] would hear of a member of a society being sick and would make him a visit. During the visit, if he thought the man wasn't going to live, Allen would tell the family to call him if anything happened to him. They'd promise him the job if anything happened. Then Allen would go home and line up the band. He would send over for Cornish. Cornish would do the same thing, too; he would visit the sick members of the society, tell the family that he had known the sick one for a long time, and then go down the street and ask Louis Armstrong what he was doing the next week as he was having a funeral--all this before the man died. Love used to be given small jobs that way. Love said he thought he'd go back to Plaquemine if you had to wait until a man died to get the job.

Love only played for one woman. She belonged to a whole gang of societies. There are a lot of ladies' societies: Hopes Hall is for ladies [in Slidel ?], but they don't bury them. With the Masons, the ladies turn out wearing cream-colored suits. Some of them have drilling uniforms. They have swords and they "carry their little march on at the funeral." The Odd Fellows and

the Elks have ladies, too.

The Pickwick Band was a long time before Love's time; that was in his father's time. In the band was Duconge, the old man, who came from Bayou Lafourche. Also in the band was Paul Domingue's daddy; old man Domingue was a bass violin and a bass [horn] player, too. Love says that was one of the best bands in the city. They were short of musicians. Also in the band was old man DeRoux [sp.?] who was a great cornet player. The DeRoux boys names are Lawrence and Irwin. They play music now; Dolly [a daughter ?] has "got a bunch--Manual's [?] little nephew." Mr. Allen says that they play modern jazz, and Love says yes and that they play well. Dolly plays the piano; she plays swell piano. She also plays the bass violin. When Lawrence played the piano, she played the bass. Lawrence was the cornet player; the trombone player died. The trombone player who lived right around the block, worked with Love when he was in the WPA band. They split the band in two; they would not let Love in that band when they first got a band with about 200 members. They had about fifteen banjo players. [They] used to come to [Ptolomy's? place] in the Fifth Ward, an athletic club where Love was working with Walter Decou on piano and Alex Bigard on drums: "drums, piano, trumpet playing more music than six pieces." They played everything: "My Josephine" for which they had the music. People used to wonder how they could do that. One man wanted to treat the band at the bar, couldn't believe there were only three members. They had a small bandstand, just big

enough for Charlie and Walter. Alex was down on the floor.

Walter's piano playing was a big drawing card.

Walter played the piano with a heavy bass and accompaniment; he would just make chords when Love had the lead. Love would play about two choruses and cut out. Then Walter would play the piece [as a solo] on the piano. Love adds that the piano is a band by itself. While Walter played, Love took a derby and placed the horn in it and made an "off melody" like what Walter was playing. That made it sound like an alto saxophone; some chords that Walter made sounded like a tenor. "You would swear that they had strings and everything in that band." Alex was a light drummer. People would be dancing out in the street and would come inside to see how three people could play like that. Soon the place would be full. The band didn't know how they did it either. A. J. Piron came in and sat down and enjoyed himself watching them play. About this time Walter went crazy about the Watch Tower [religious] business; he had a lot of books on it. Walter turned out to be a preacher and forgot his music. He couldn't play like that now at all. He always wanted to play like Steve Lewis and a whole lot of other fellows and he couldn't do it, it wasn't in him to play that way. He had a nice style and was the only fellow doing that in the city. Love used to like to play with him; he played soft and loud. He always had a job until he got to studying about the Jehovah's Witnesses. He started to drink whiskey and drank so much that he even started Love to drinking, but when Decou got too bad, Love

would leave. Also when Decou got to studying the books, it didn't agree with Love so he pulled out. Joe Rena used to be with Walter and is a bishop now. He wears a black hown. He taught Walter all that staff.

Love used to play funerals for the Baptists, and the Odd Fellows. The Catholics did not have bands for funerals. If a Catholic had asked for music at his funeral, and gets it, the band will bring his body to the church, but the band doesn't play. [Later, Love seems to imply that the band can play to within a block of the church.] They just march behind the Grand Marshal. The band waits at the church. When they come out of church, the band still doesn't play until they get in the next block away from the church. The Methodists have bands as do the Elks, and the different societies, but not the Catholics. They never did. "Most Catholics are followers of Jesus Christ and he didn't have no music; [therefore,] neither do they."

In Shreveport, Love played for a Jewish wedding. They had their uniforms on and went up into the church balcony. Love pulled off his hat, and a fellow came up from downstairs and told him to put his hat on in the church and to wait until he went outside to take it off. Love describes the Jewish wine drinking ceremony at weddings.

There wasn't any Excelsior Brass Band when they had the Pickwick Band. After the Pickwick Band went out of existence, they had the Excelsior Band, and it was just as good.