

DANNY BARKER  
I [only]--Digest--Retyped  
June 18, 1959

Also present: Richard B. Allen, Lee  
Friedlander and wife, Maria.  
Recorded at Friedlander's, Apt. 4-G,  
241 Central Park West, New York City.

Those present look at and make comments about some of Lee Friedlander's photographs. Names mentioned are Alice Williams Zeno (mother of George Lewis), Edmond Hall, Larry Borenstein, Kid Thomas [Valentine], Manuel [Manetta]--DB says Manetta plays some wonderful jazz on his two horns [played simultaneously]; RBA says Manetta would play Chris Kelly's [version of the melody of] "Careless Love", in harmony, and then play the [Kelly] variations. Other pictures shown are "Slow Drag" [Pavageau], Ann Cook (who is still alive, on Thalia Street; DB asks about "Cooperwire", saying that she and Ann Cook, who were buddies, were the toughest sporting women in the District), Billie and DeDe [Pierce]. A picture taken at the Tulane Club shows John Casimir, Albert "Fernandez" Walters (who plays with Celestin), Andy Anderson, Paul Barnes, and [in other photographs?] Johnny St. Cyr, Louis Keppard (brother of Freddy Keppard). Another shows the church of Mama Lou Washington, where John Handy's mother is Mother Richard; on the occasion of the photo, Handy, Kid Howard and the preacher's son, Melvin Lastie, were among those playing. A picture taken at Luthjen's shows Emma [Barrett], wearing her bells. Another picture shows Edmond Washington, alto sax, who was in Florida with "Eagle Eye" Shields, or at least, the same band Edmond Hall played in; Washington plays with Kid Thomas now. Another shows Freddy Leonna "Blind Freddy" Small, who once was a clarinetist, but who now plays harmonica. RBA reads the inscription shown on the card of Small. Other pictures

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show Kid Punch [Miller], Eddie Morris, Adolphe "Tats" (also known as "Biscuit") Alexander [Jr.]. A photo of Joe James, pianist with Kid Thomas, displays an unusual face, with serpentine veins; DB says "That's from thinking, I guess--shrink up your skull." A picture of [Alphonse] Picou and his daughter is shown, and then one of "Snooks" [Eaglin]. (Barker has to leave.)

End of Reel I

DANNY BARKER  
REEL I--Retyped  
June 30, 1959

S U M M A R Y

Those present: Richard B. Allen

This tape was recorded at the home of Danny Barker at 495 West 130th Street "in the Slums of New York" on June 30, 1959.

Danny's full name given as Daniel Moses Barker, Jr. of New Orleans. He was born February 13, 1909, in the French Quarter, Vieux Carré in a tenement apartment building. New Orleans had apartment buildings before other people around knew what they were; they were living in log cabins when New Orleans had airconditioning. <sup>Now it is a suburb</sup> Danny lived in [The Sunburn ?] Apartments at 1027 Chartres Street in the rear: you look through this alley and there is a large patio and a semi-circle of buildings, a semi-square of tenement buildings, upper and lower, two story buildings. This was right across from the French Market Ice House. Danny was reared in the French Quarter until he was six years old and then he moved to the 7th ward on Bourbon, which is now called Pauger and St. Claude, with his mother. He was reared partly by his Paternal grandparents, his father's mother and father. Barker came from Kentucky. Danny doesn't know why he came down South, but thinks he was employed on one of the riverboats. He settled in New Iberia [Louisiana], and there he met Danny's grandmother. She bore him four children, and she moved to New Orleans with him. He worked as a stevedore, a longshoreman on the riverfront. He reared his children until they became of age. Around [his ?] twenties, his father met his mother. She was Rose Barbarin, daughter of Isidore Barbarin, member of the original Onward Brass Band. "And of that union, I was brought into this world against my will, this cruel world." [Laughter]

Danny didn't go to New York till he was twenty. He married Blue Lou Barker in 1929. He was working at the Alamo.

The first music Danny remembers was his grandmother's voice singing, while she worked around the house and kitchen, such great classics as "Down By The Riverside, I'm Gonna Lay My Bible Down." Later on, Danny heard Bunk Johnson's version of it: "Down By The Riverside, I'm Gonna Lay My Weapons Down." Danny's grandmother was Baptist. He was raised between two Christian religions: His father's people were Baptist, called "hard-backed" or "hard-shelled" Baptist and his mother's people were lukewarm Catholics. Danny was baptized in the St. Louis Cathedral; his mother insisted upon rearing him as a Catholic. He had a good basic background of hearing some of the greatest spirituals, laments, blues from his grandparents. He would hear the workmen passing in front of the door, and coming from work they would be singing blues and laments. Danny would see the blind men passing by with their street calls and chants. He heard most of the peddlers when their voices were real light before they wore out later on in the day when they would come out fresh with their vegetable wagons. Danny imitates the call of a banana vendor. There was always a little humor in the street calls. He imitates some other calls: stone coal, pralines. On the corner of Chartres and Ursulines is the St. Mary's Catholic Church, and every Sunday morning an old colored lady would stand there. He describes her. She was selling calas, mostly to Italians. Sometimes Danny would buy some from her: three or four of them for a nickel. They were little balls of rice cooked to a very crispy brown. She didn't sing.

Danny used to hear the church bells from St. Louis Cathedral. The guy who rang the church bells had some kind of melody which was quite different from the Baptist church. That was St. Louis Cathedral on St. Ann Street and Pirates' Alley. Marie Antoinette gave those bells to New Orleans. [Mr. Allen tells Danny this]:

Danny would hear the steam boats; the river boats were the most facinating sounds. The long drawn out steam boat blasts for the arrival and departure of the boats. And all sorts of wierd whistles from the river packets. Also, there was all kind of folk singing. The gypsies were singing their music. The most outstanding thing was a big Italian brass and concert band that used to march from the St. Louis Cathedral to St. Mary's Church at Ursulines and Chartres. During the summer, every Sunday, there was some sort of Italian or French procession, Catholic religious procession. Sometimes there were as many as one hundred pieces in the band, which also included a lot of small kids in the uniform that the grown-ups wore. They were very beautiful marchers. They would march slowly down Chartres near St. Mary's Church or further on down to other churches or up down to St. Patrick's Church. They were "probably off 1st rate musicians in a brass band sense." They had all the brass instruments. Later on, from his grandfather's Onward Brass Band, he "wondered how just about nine or ten men could get so much music, after hearing this." [phone rings] [Mr. Allen]

Since Danny's grandfather was a stevedore, his grandmother became a "marchand" lady, a merchant. She used to fix food for the workmen and the gangs. There would be fourteen or fifteen

members of a gang and sometimes she would take over two gangs and feed them hot food. She would put on big pots of food like red beans and rice, cabbage and rice, stew and rice and make a big pudding, cupcakes, cornbread, and hot biscuits. Danny and his young cousins would help her with the three or four big baskets of food. About eleven-thirty they would leave for the river which was just a few short blocks. They would get there just as the whistle would blow for the gangs to break. They would walk up on the wharf and she always knew where his grandfather's gang was working. They would take a big crate or cotton bales or whatever they were handling or shipping and place all the stuff on top. Then she would take napkins and take the buckets out into which she would put the individual lunches and give them a knife and fork. You needed a hot meal rather than a sandwich to do that heavy work on the river front. As long as they'd be loading the ships, sometimes seven days, including Sundays, she'd bring these meals out.

They didn't have any music on the river then except on payday. On Friday or Saturday, the blind men would come up and sing for the workmen as they gathered around the pay office. Sometimes there would be some preachers there with a couple of sisters doing missionary work for the church: they would come up there and sing and preach a while. The blind men had instruments on them, guitars. One of the blind men was called "Blind Tom" who was sensational. It was the first time Danny saw somebody really sing the blues. He was well known and people came from blocks around. The news spread in about 15 or 20

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minutes, and you would have two or three hundred people gathered around. Danny had to push through the crowd to see what the excitement was when he first saw "Blind Tom." He was sitting down on an old box or crate. He didn't seem to be so old then, maybe in his fifties. He was playing the blues on a guitar and singing; he sang the "Ballad of the Titanic," and he sang it because it had some connection with the river front, and all the men knew about boats, and that was his main concert. Danny then tells how "Blind Tom" described the wreck of the Titanic in great dramatic detail. It took "Blind Tom" about twenty minutes to sing about it.

Danny did some acting, but he always got stage fright as a kid; they always gave him a leading part, and he would forget the lines when he saw the people. He was in a couple of Broadway shows. He was in a show with Mae West called the "Constant Sinner," and he auditioned for half-a-dozen other shows, but nothing ever came of it. Danny was in the movies, too; he made about four of them. He was with Cab Calloway in "Stormy Weather" and <sup>with</sup> him also in "Sensations of 1945." He was in a movie short called "Lazy Bones" with Stepin Fetchit, and he made another short with Morton Downey. Mr. Allen saw him in one of them: "Sensations of 1945" with W. C. Fields. Danny said it was interesting just to see W. C. Fields perform his act. *elaborate*

Danny heard Fate Marable about 7:00 or 8:00 o'clock one evening before the boat departed giving a concert which lasted about one-half hour. You could hear it all over the city distinctly as far as, probably, the lake front. He was playing

a calliope; he played all kinds of popular tunes, and he'd swing out. He was probably one of the greatest calliope players of all times. Danny was about ten or eleven years old then; it was about 1921. All the guys [pianists ?] who worked on the river boat played the calliope; it was similar to the piano, not very hard. It was worked by a steam boiler and had copper keys on it, and you had to play it with gloves on and a raincoat and rainhat over your band uniform because the steam came from all directions. The keys got real hot and you had to be careful or the copper would get into your skin. He thinks it was [Walter] "Fats" Pichon, piano player, who started to play the calliope, and he didn't realize that the keys were hot and scorched his fingers; he kept holding some whole notes on it. You have to play a calliope staccato. It was a real haunting sound to hear in the evening, but that was before the city got so commercial and electrified with electric wires, and had the noise of the trucks, you could hear it real plain. But later on as the city got cars, cabs, and such, it would kill off some of the sound of the calliope. Once when Danny was on the river front with his grandmother with the lunch pails, the news around us said, There's that "Bald Eagle" in town. That was a terrific river packet and one of the most famous on the river. "It was like a renegade packet." It was run by "The Kaintucks and Missouris and Indiana hoosiers." It was a pretty good size freight packet, and at one time they used bands on it; one of the first river boats to use a band on it. It was a rugged crew; it looked like some kind of a pirate ship: it had guys with beards on it, and they were six and seven feet tall. The guys were lounging

around all over the boat, and when their work was over they would go around the town: they were known to tear up barrooms, didn't care about anybody. Later, Gene Sedric was telling Danny about how the "Bald Eagle" would carry whiskey cargos across state lines when they weren't suppose to. That was Gene Sedric of St. Louis, saxophone player, who came down to New Orleans on a boat with Fate in one of his early bands. Sedric loves to reminisce about the river boats, and he always speaks of the "Bald Eagle" with great respect. The river boats like the steamer "Capital," the "J. S.," excursion boats would be docked at a town and be playing and all of a sudden the news would spread, "Here comes that 'Bald Eagle'." The "Bald Eagle" would be steaming down the river like "a bat out of Hell," with both chimneys throwing sparks and steam. The captain didn't care about any captain on the river; he just passed close to the excursion boat, and in its wake he would leave cinders flying all over. It would annoy the captains of the big excursion boats very much. Danny hopes someday to do some research on the "Bald Eagle" because it had quite a reputation, a reckless bunch of riverboat. He thinks that it was the last river rogue. In New Orleans there were also lake boats, excursion boats like the "Mandeville" and the "Blue Bell." Boats that went between Mandeville and New Orleans and Bay St. Louis and all across the lake to the scattered little towns. They used bands, and Danny played quite a few of them. He was just in pick-up bands. [Abby] Chineé Bébé [Foster]'s wife was on one of them, Dede [Pierce]'s sister. Dede's wife's name was Goodson. Chineé Bébé's wife was a pianist; her name was Crosby, and she had some sisters who played piano. [See Billie Pierce.] Dede's wife and Chineé

(Confusion of Jackie Crosby & Sachia Goodson?)

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Bébé's wife are sisters; all the sisters played piano. They were from across the lake somewhere. Chinese Bébé is still living; Mr. Allen says he is doing better. He and Walter Decou bum together. She was devoted to him; he was in a state of melancholy and seemed twisted in the head. She did all the work, and he stayed around the house which was a southern custom. Mother takes care of her baby boy.

Besides the Italian Brass Band, there were dozens of colored brass bands, but the Italian Brass Band was a concert, brass band, and military band all combined. They played "heavy" classics. Danny never heard them swing out much. Mr. Allen says he thinks that they played a few dances, but they couldn't swing; played everything like it was a march. Tony Parenti told Mr. Allen that the day before. Danny says they probably played mazurkas, quadrilles, lancers, and European type dances, like waltzes.

Mr. Allen asks Danny if he ever used to sneak around to the dance halls or any place he shouldn't, and he says he was always sneaking around and peaking through windows, cracks, looking in good-time houses. He would hear a piano plunking or a guitar player singing; he was always fascinated by the music so he would stop and listen. Mostly the bars had a piano in the back. Some guys would pull organs around; it was a piano, but they called them organs. It had a shaft on it like a wagon, and a guy would pull it from barroom to barroom. These had a special name, but he can't think of it. They would stop on the corner of the barroom and play current popular tunes, turning the wheel on the piano. It was like a nickelodeon and a piano, mounted on a two-wheeled wagon. A man would hire

it by the day from the owner. It had a bucket on it; wherever he stopped the bartender would give him a pitcher of beer. He'd pass the hat and they'd give him a few nickels. A lot of guys would make their living that way.

The entertainers in the good-time houses would be piano players, like "Black" Nolan, "Buckeye Wilfred," they played blues, "Shine," regular honky-tonk piano players.

They used to call what is now known as boogie-woogie "the horses" in New Orleans because it sounded like a horse's trotting. (Danny scats "that monotonous boogie beat.") First time Danny heard that beat, his uncle said, "Look at that guy, how he's playing them horses." That was either Uncle Willie or Uncle Lucien; there was two years difference, Danny was either with one or the other. They were always in mischief. They knew when every band would parade, because his grandfather usually knew about it, at least downtown. They were second-lining, and they would take Danny with them. He remembers this was the way the first time he heard King Oliver. There was a parade, coming up St. Claude Street from St. Roch Cemetery. They had seen the funeral going down in that direction, ran down to meet it coming back up St. Claude Street, through the colored section. The second line stuck with the band, curious to see who was playing, because they idolized the jazz men. They were so thrilled when they saw it was King Oliver. King Oliver was tall, with his horn, walking slow, very carefully. Danny thinks he had corns or bunions; he was paying attention so as not to hit his foot on one of the stones in the street.

END OF REEL I

Danny remembers in New Orleans when they had banquets [pronounced "bahnKay"] and balls. They had no baby-sitters. His mother would take him when he was very small. The young mothers would bring their children along, check them in the check rooms, just like hats and coats. There was always some old lady in the checkroom who would take care of the babies. If the kids started bawling and crying, she would make up a little concoction to quiet them, a little toddy with a little firewater in it. The baby would soon go to sleep. RBA suggests it is like a Cajun Fais-dodo. When the dance was over, the mother would go to the checkroom, pick up her hat, coat, and baby.

Danny remembers lawn parties at Pecan Grove, on Pauger between St. Claude and Marais, given by "these primitive people." "I call them primitive because they were some other kind of colored people. They were from lower Louisiana, St. Bernard Parish. . . ." They would give lawn parties in this yard on Friday nights and Sundays. "Would decorate up with Chinese lanterns, have a five- or six-piece band, regular [Negro ?] jazz band. They would ball in the open air."

He thinks there were more halls in the seventh ward than anywhere else: Artisan Hall, Autocrat Hall, Jeunes Amis, Perseverance Hall. Economy and Italian halls are in the sixth ward. "There were half a dozen other halls." In the ninth ward are Independence Hall and Grand Union Hall. Danny has in his material a lot of halls that no one has ever heard of-- that were in buildings. There was a hall on Urquhart Street between St. Bernard and Annette which has been torn down.

"There was always something happening in the seventh ward. Funerals, parades--every Sunday you could count on three or four advertisements. They would have Chris Kelly's band, Walter Blue [Robertson]'s band, Buddy Petit's band, Joe Petit's Columbia band, "Long Head Bob's" band, Manuel Perez's band, and Hypolite Charles's band which was the Maple Leaf." <sup>[with]</sup>

In Walter Blue's band: Emile Barnes [clarinet]; an old man who played the six string banjo--went over the lake, where he died--in the picture in Esquire Magazine [Yearbook, 1945]; Buddy Manaday; Israel Gorman. Israel Gorman reminds Danny Barker of George Lewis. Israel Gorman told Danny a few years back that he was still playing horn and had a great jazz band, but Danny didn't hear him play. RBA says Israel Gorman had a band out at the Happy Landing for a while; he had Joe Avery and Eddie Dawson with him. [See Albert Jiles, Reel \_\_\_\_\_, 1961]

"Long Head Bob" played guitar, had a string group. Sometimes would augment it with a couple of brass men. They played a lot of Creole songs, blues. Doesn't know whether they were Catholic or Baptist. They would jazz up anything. They were very popular in the seventh ward. They would sing original things, but in these lyrics you would always hear such Creole expressions as "mon cheri," "courtbouillon poisson," always something about fish "Mo' l'ami [ck sp.] vous" Real plaintive melodies. Would invent lyrics as they went along, go on and on. Always something about love and something to eat, and wine, ["Jus ?] vin." "That was quite an experience, that early life in New Orleans."

Hypolite Charles, ~~was~~ considered a great trumpet player at one time, led the Maple Leaf Band. He had bronchial trouble and had to give up the horn. He was straight and jazz, but they played mostly Scott Joplin's music, had the Scott Joplin book [Red Book], named the orchestra after one of Scott Joplin's great tunes, the "Maple Leaf Rag." It was currently popular from the time of Manuel Perez.

Danny's grandfather, Isidore Barbarin, played the melophone. He originally played the cornet, but the doctor advised him to get off. Danny "doubt[s] if he was ever a hot man." He chuckled at the mention of hot men. He <sup>IB?</sup> considered Manuel Perez the greatest trumpet player that ever lived in the musical [reading] sense. They [Danny Barker] used to laugh at trumpet players the way that they would lip their horn, didn't have the right embouchure. He [Isidore Barbarin] lived for the brass band; "That was a cult in itself." A lot of the guys just loved that music for the fun of it: the money wasn't too much. It was hard to make a living playing, and he [Danny's grandfather] didn't. He worked as a coachman for the undertakers; later he had a team of horses and was an independent drayman. He could get off to play for funerals, because the undertakers always had extra drivers: He probably got just about as much driving at the funeral as you would playing in the brass band: \$2 or \$3 or \$4, didn't make much difference.

Danny thinks New Orleans is quite a town, and the spirit is still there.

Danny's first instrument was drums. They had a lot of drummers around the house. He had three uncles who played drums:

Paul, Louis, and Lucien Barbarin. Danny would sit behind Lucien's drums since he played in 5th and 6th rate jazz bands where it didn't matter. During the intermissions or when there was a lull, he would keep the beat, at first, later played some.

Then it was suggested that he learn to play the clarinet. There was a great clarinet player in his family: Louis Artidore, Danny's mother's uncle. He died young at the age of twenty-one. He was a virtuoso according to George Fihle, Isidore Barbarin, and Manuel Perez. He played with the Onward Brass Band; he played first clarinet.

When Danny's uncle Paul came back from Chicago in 1923, he suggested that Danny take some lessons. Paul had been with King Oliver. Danny took his [Paul's] clarinet and took half a dozen lessons from Barney Bigard. However, Danny didn't care too much about it; he wanted to blow something right away. He was told he should learn the notes; he should learn to read first, leave the clarinet at home. But Danny didn't listen to them, drifted off from it. In 1924 Paul's sister, Teresa, [See her interview] bought a ukulele during the ukulele craze. It was a banjo-uke, and after she tried it for a while, she left it around the house. Danny started fooling around with it, and he even acted like it was his, and she sold it to him for a dollar. She had paid \$7 for it. Danny didn't know how to tune it, but there was a neighbor boy named Ashton Murray who was a piano player and now a school teacher in New Orleans, well-bred boy, nice family, and he would tune Danny's uke for

him every evening. He told Danny to listen to the tone of the strings, and he could learn to tune it like that. He started singing tuning and learned to tune it. Danny then organized a pickaninny band: the drum was made from a washboard and little contraptions, a kazoo player, a makeshift tambourine, and the uke. [See clipping file: French Quarter and Jazz--picture of a Pickaninny band from The National Geographic Magazine. Vol. LVII, No. 4. April, 1930.] He called the group the Boozan Kings. Boozan means good-time in patois; it was a very popular word: "I'm going over to so-and so's, they're having a Boozan over there." = "They're having a ball, they're having a party." This little group used to sneak off in the district after seven o'clock at night and go in the barroom and ask the bartender if they could play a couple of tunes. They would play a couple like: "Little Liza Jane," and "My Blue Heaven"; all the current songs they would sing and then pass the hat around--in other words, they would hustle. The group got popular; they would play on the steps, and all the kids in the neighborhood would congregate around in the afternoon after school; they would rehearse in the street. Then they organized a little club of about seventeen or eighteen members and started giving parties. Other kids in the seventh ward would hire them to play for parties. They became very popular. Danny became very good on the ukulele.

Old men like: Albert Glenny, (Danny played with his nephew, Emile Glenny, who played the tambourine and passed the hat with a sad expression), Walter Decou, "Big Eye Louie" [Nelson] would see him with the ukulele. Danny could play in two or three or four different keys, and at parties he'd stand around the banjo player. The kids would tell him he could play ukulele better

than whoever was playing banjo. One day Kid Rena's band was playing an advertising job on the corner of Marais and Annette. Son Thomas was in the band, and he played the banjo which is very important when you don't have a piano, but he was drunk, and they had to set him in the corner of the horse drawn furniture wagon. They were playing without a banjo. Danny walked to the back of the truck to try to see the banjo player. Albert Glennay was sitting on the tail gate with Morris French and when Albert Glennay saw him with the uke, and, calling him "L'il Barbarin," asked if he could play the banjo. Danny told him no, but they had him climb up and they tuned it for him ukulele style, and Danny sat in the band and played. He was like a hero. Danny was about fourteen then. He played that evening and would have played that night, but his mother didn't think he should go and play at the hall. That started his reputation; the word passed around by Albert Glennay that "this kid could be a wonderful banjo player if he had a banjo." He told his uncle Paul what happened, and Paul told him that he would send him a banjo from Chicago where he was playing with King Oliver, and he did send him a small banjo. So in a little while he was playing the banjo with his Boozan Kings. Then Lawrence Toca, [Martin], Little Russell, and Eliot Taylor who made one rehearsal, had formed a little band. Lawrence Toca played cornet, Taylor played clarinet, and Russell played drums and Danny played banjo. Nothing happened because they were afraid of the music, and they disbanded after a few rehearsals. They played current numbers. Danny's Uncle Paul's brother-in-law who is "Big Foot Billy" Phillips had a band. They were some kind of Serenaders:

Sunset or Oriental Serenaders. So then Danny joined his band. He was very patient and had a pretty good band and played at the Lion's Club, San Jacinto, lot of house parties, a lot of white social affairs. Danny stayed with them for about five or six months, all this time improving.

Then word came to Danny that Lee Collins needed a banjo player to go to Pensacola, Florida (no, that was later).

Then he worked for dancing schools and different bands: Willie Pajaud's band, and a man who would never pay you his money as he would always fall out drunk at pay time, and a lot of other little groups.

When he was seventeen, he joined Lee Collins' band [or Ernest Kelly's ?] and went to Pensacola, Florida. The second day there, they discovered that they were stranded. They stayed there for two months and then came back to New Orleans and went to the Alamo Club with Willie Pajaud and stayed there with him for a year and a half.

The band in Florida that Danny saw that was the leading band at that time was a woman named Florida Beck in Pensacola. She was a woman who had learned to play classical piano but turned to jazz. She was instrumental in getting them to Florida. Another band called "Fat Daddy" or "Lazy Daddy"; he had a huge bass drum, and they had something like a trio or a quartet. They didn't play like New Orleans Jazz; they had more of what you would call a church beat. Danny scats and demonstrates beat like them for illustration. It was monotonous. There was nothing exciting or a great variety or rhythm tones, just something you could dance to. They had a "Baptist beat," like people sitting in church and patting their hands which is natural in the South. The leader's name was "Fat Jack" or

"Lazy Daddy," or "Fat Daddy." He played the drums. They were very annoyed that Danny's group had come to Pensacola to work for Nick the Greek at his cafeteria. They were somewhat of a sensation in Pensacola, because people were starved for a real organized band." [Jim] Willigan [sp?--see Charters p. 71] <sup>on sards</sup> on drums, Lee Collins on cornet, Ernest Kelly on trombone, Arthur Derbigny and [Lee Rubin ?] on saxophone. Lee Collins was in his prime; you could hear him four or five squares [blocks] away. The other guys were annoyed with them "because the choice spots was around playing at the Pensacola Naval Base--Friday, Saturday, Sunday." [No mention of Pensacola on Lee Collins <sup>cf. others</sup> tapes.]

In the Boozan Kings, there was Joe Francis on kazoo, Russell on little makeshift drums, Danny, and Herman Henderson who was a terrific ukulele player and played a little piano. Herman's mother was a mid-wife, and he went to school and was a well-educated little kid, but they tried to raise him like a mama's boy. He did all the house work; he had to cook while his mother and father were away. Danny sneaked him up in the district to play a couple of times, but when his mother found out she made him quit the group. She wanted him to be a doctor or something. When Danny was in Pensacola, he bought a New Orleans paper, the Louisiana Weekly maybe, and noticed where Herman Henderson had died from appendicitis. He was a brilliant kid; he had his own Ford; he was about seventeen then. He had his own Ford car which his daddy had bought him, and he had fixed the motor up himself. He could sing and dance and play; he was a studious kid. He and Danny were real close; he showed Danny how to play the ukulele real well. None of the others went on to

fame. Joe Francis played the piano and [was ?] a great ukulele player around here; Danny tried to get him on guitar because he had a terrific beat, but he never was interested in it. Russell drifted off from the drums. Danny sees them once in a while when he goes home to New Orleans, and they talk about how famous Danny had been to go to New York to play with Cab Calloway, but if either of them had kept up their instruments, they could have gone as far as he did.

The outstanding clarinet players when Danny was a kid for ratty music: Willie Humphrey impressed him the most; Danny "saw him in the street parades playing that little E flat. He had that piercing sound over the brass band, really wailing on the horn." That is the Willie [the Younger] who is working with Paul now, Earl Humphrey's brother. He lived uptown and [Danny] never had a chance to hear him much. Danny thought he was the master. Others like Big Eye Louis [Nelson] who was always sort of in semi-retirement, but he played when he got a chance. He was real great in his style. Danny worked with him, Arnold Metoyer, and Walter Decou at the Bungalow out on the Shellback Road for a couple of months. [Alphonse] Picou was great. All the real wild cats had left like: Jimmie Noone, Johnny Dodds. Barney Bigard and Albert Nicholas were around, but they were featuring saxophone.

The wildest and most exciting trumpet player that Danny saw in New Orleans at that time was a youngster Guy Kelly from Baton Rouge at the same time John Handy came from across the lake, [See John Handy, Reel \_\_\_\_\_], and Danny heard them one night at the Entertainer's Night Club, and they were real wild. Danny

had never heard anyone play a clarinet like Johnny Handy.  
Danny doesn't know why he [Johnny Handy] won't pick up the horn today. Louis [Armstrong]'s records were popular then, Guy Kelly played identical like Louis, the same tone, and Danny thought they were the two most exciting musicians of that era that he had seen.

As for banjo players and guitar players there was: John Marrero, Caffrey Darensbourg, Son Thomas, Henry Kimball, and Emanuel Sayles; they were terrific. Caffrey Darensbourg was one of them. [Implies "great"] John Marrero could basically play the beat real great. A boy who played with Sam Morgan was a good banjo player, not Johnny Dave as Mr. Allen suggests. The one Danny is thinking of came after Johnny Dave. He thinks it was between George Guesnon and Johnny Dave.

They had a straight four beat some what like Lawrence Marrero played, but it wasn't a tired four like he played; it was a spirited four with a beat; it was a [four four ?].

END OF REEL II

