

[Allen:] All right, let me put on where we're recording it. Recording it, this tape, at 925 Marais Street. That's right?

[Henry:] 925 Marais Street is right.

[Allen:] And what's today's date? October the--

[Henry:] October the 21st, I think.

[Allen:] 1959.

[Henry:] That's right, right you are.

[Allen:] We'd better get everybody's name on here--go ahead.

[Henry:] Name? What you mean, of the band?

[Allen:] No, your name.

[Henry:] My name is Charles Henry.

[Allen:] OK. And what's your name?

[Zander:] Marjorie Zander.

[Allen:] All right. And I'm Dick Allen. Got everybody's name on there, and the machine's working OK now. First thing we wanted to ask you about was the way a funeral was set up with the music and everything. For example, how is the band notified about a funeral?

[Henry:] Well, the band is notified by the grand marshal, you see; he notifies the leader [or manager] of the band, and the leader notifies the members of the band.

[Allen:] I see. And the grand marshal is sort of in charge of music, then, at parades, huh?

[Henry:] Absolutely; he's in full charge of it; when they turn it over to him, he has the full possession of it.

[Allen:] Does he choose which band's going to come, or does the club choose it?

[Henry:] Oh, no, the club choose which band they want, but the idea of it, he's the boss of it, you see; after the band gets there, well, he's the boss of the band.

[Zander:] Well, usually the same band plays for the same organization, doesn't it? Or do they switch around, or?--

[Henry:] No, they play for the same organization more often, you see.

[Zander:] That's what I thought.

[Allen:] Like the Excelsiors: who would they play for?

[Henry:] Oh, times back, you see, they had their society that they used to play for, you see, and also, we all had our societies to play [for], you see.

[Allen:] Well, you played with Excelsior some, huh?

[Henry:] Yes, I played with the Excelsior, Onward--all them good bands, anyways.

[Allen:] I was wondering which organization hired those different bands. Do you remember, for example, who would hire the Excelsior the most?

[Henry:] They just was in Algiers; they used to play pretty near all the jobs in Algiers, you see? Over here they used to--oh, some of them societies I done forgotten; they gone out of existence, you understand, them societies [unintelligible].

[Zander:] But who would be--for instance, the groups like the ones I was talking about, you know, that I used to see up around Cherokee and that neighborhood up in Carrollton, what groups would that be?

[Henry:] The group that used to be--that's the Eureka, they used to be up in there all the time, you see. And also John [Casimir], the Young Tuxedos, they used to be up there sometimes. Sometimes if a society hired them, they'd be there, and if the society hired the Eureka, well, we'd be there.

[Allen:] What societies were up in Carrollton in those days?

[Henry:] Oh, The Merry-go-round, that's one up there, and then the Young [and] True Friend, that's the other. That's about the only

two up there. [Does he mean at present ?]

[Zander:] Well, you all only played for men, didn't you?

[Henry:] Men, yes; men the only one, you see, that have the bands, but no women at all, you see.

[Allen:] Well, do women belong to these societies?

[Henry:] If they belong to them, you see, there may be a fraternity lodge, like the Odd Fellows, you see, or the Masonic, you see; they'd be belong to them. They be the Household of Ruth and also the--

[Zander:] Because often you see the women marching too--

[Henry:] Yes, that's right.

[Zander:] In their uniforms.

[Henry:] That's right. The fraternity lodges, that's the onliest way they'd be in it.

[Allen:] Now these lodges and clubs, or whatever you want to call them, what are they mainly for?

[Henry:] Oh, well, they--when you're sick they give you a little benefit. When you die, they bury you, see?

[Allen:] And what about at the meetings and everything; do they have?--

[Henry:] Oh, yeah, they got to have that; they have meetings some-times twice a month, regular meeting, and sometimes they have special meetings, you see. If they got something that they want to do, you understand, they calls a special meeting.

[Allen:] What goes on at the meetings?

[Henry:] Oh, well, different things goes on. Like if there's anything that they wants to do, you see, well, they couldn't do it by themselves, so they call a meeting, call everybody together, and go over those things. The majority rules. They just, which way you go--it comes up to a vote, the majority rules.

[Zander:] Do they ever have parties besides business meetings and stuff

like that?

[Henry:] Sometimes they have a outing, you understand, a banquet, as you call it, where they have eating and drinking, and stuff like that.

[Allen:] And they have, in addition to the banquets, they do some other things for fun too, don't they, like--they must have their parade?

[Henry:] Well, yes, all that's in it, you see; they have the parade and the eating and things while they're going on, you see?

[Allen:] After the parade is over, what do they do?

[Henry:] After the parade is over, why, they knocks off.

[Allen:] Yeah, I--

[Zander:] Everybody goes back to work, huh?

[Henry:] Yeah, that's right.

[Allen:] I thought, I was wondering when the banquet would be tied in with the parade, ever.

[Henry:] Well, you see, this is the idea of it: they have a certain time for that, you see. Like the band goes--after the band gets to the stopping place, that's where they all come in, eat and drink, you see; then when that's over, everybody go home.

[Allen:] Oh, yeah, I see. So sometimes, after the parade, they do have a little fun?

[Henry:] Yeah. [Unintelligible].

[Allen:] So those societies are not just for burying, but also for sickness--

[Henry:] Yeah, for sickness, yeah.

[Allen:] And insurance.

[Henry:] That's right.

[Allen:] And then also for pleasure.

[Henry:] Yes, and burial too, you understand, when you die.

[Allen:] Now, where would the band meet at?

[Henry:] Just any place that they tell them to meet at, you see.

If they tell them to meet on the corner, such and such a time, and such and such a place, all we got to do is be there at that time. And when they leave there, well, they might go to the church or the funeral parlor, somewhere.

[Allen:] What kind of corner would they meet on?

[Henry:] Any corner that they suggest.

[Allen:] I mean, what would be on that corner for them to gather at?

[Henry:] Well, you see, sometimes the hall is too far from the church, so what they do, they get in a place in the range of the church, you see, about eight or ten blocks off, like that. Then, when they get ready to go, well they march to the church, you see.

[Zander:] So it's just really wherever is most convenient.

[Henry:] Yeah, it's convenient, that's the idea.

[Allen:] It might be a hall, huh?

[Henry:] If it be a hall, it be all right, but if it, no hall, it don't naje abt dufferebce,

[Allen:] Would they ever meet by [at] a member's house?

[Henry:] They could, if he was in the neighborhood.

[Allen:] What about a bar room?

[Henry:] Oh, that's in the best place of all.

[Zander:] That's what he was getting at, I think, as to which corner you choose.

[Allen:] Well, there's all different kind of places to meet; I know that.

[Zander:] Especially if it's a cold day, I guess.

[Henry:] You telling me.

[Allen:] Well, do any members of the clubs go in and have a little

drink before the funeral?

[Henry:] Oh, yes, a great many of them go in--the majority of them.

[Allen:] None of the guys with the bands ever drink, do they?

[Henry:] No, they just swallows. I'm going to tell you. I and Al [Albert Warner]--I don't care what you say in here, we used to have our little "baby" on our side; carried it for protection. We have our stuff when we come on the job, we have our stuff with us. If he don't have it, I have it. Enough to get a little spirit, you see. When you start, you can go, you see.

[Zander:] Then it keeps you going, doesn't it?

[Henry:] It certainly keep you going, until you get some more, you know; when you get some more, that freshen you up again, you see. Not too much of it, though; if you get too much you can't do nothing. If you get enough just to keep you lively, you can go all right.

[Zander:] So then the band meets with the members of the organization at the same place, usually, huh?

[Henry:] Yeah.

[Zander:] The other ones that are going to march.

[Henry:] Yes. They all meets in the same place.

[Zander:] And then you march to the church together?

[Henry:] Absolutely, to the church.

[Zander:] And if a woman's organization is going to march too, do they meet at the same place, or do they meet at a different place?

[Henry:] Well, yes: they don't have to meet there, though, you see, them, they don't force them [to do as one of the members ?]--like if they belongs to the organization, then perhaps they just tell them to go on to the church, and we meet them when we come to the church, you see. That's right.

[Zander:] Does anybody else ever march in the procession, other than

the bands and the members of the organization? I mean, except for second liners and stuff like?--

[Henry:] Oh, that second line--I'm gonna to tell you, they really have more second line than they have anybody else.

[Allen:] How do they line up? Who comes first?

[Henry:] Who come first?

[Allen:] Yeah, in a funeral procession, when the club meets, who's the first one, marching?

[Henry:] Well, we're supposed to be in front.

[Allen:] The band.

[Henry:] Yeah; the band is in front, and the members next to us, and the hearse and things next to the members.

[Allen:] Nobody in front of the band?

[Henry:] No, but the marshal.

[Allen:] The grand marshal.

[Henry:] Yeah.

[Allen:] I see. And who determines which route you take?

[Henry:] Well, they have that figured out already, you understand. Sometime if you go to the church, that depend on the cemetery where you're going to. Course, they have that figured out already.

[Allen:] Who makes the turns, and everything? Who directs?--

[Henry:] The grand marshal.

[Allen:] Did I ever tell you about that parade? You know John Bernard? He was at a parade, and one time the grand marshal beckons him over, a whole lot of people there in teh second line--(noise cane knocked over) whoops--

[Henry:] That's all right, it didn't do no harm. Just put it right there anywhere, right in the corner.

[Allen:] But the grand marshal motions for John to come over, and John

comes over, he says, "Go back and ask Joe which way we go now." And the grand marshal had lost his way.

[Henry:] Well, some of them guys, like, up in Carrollton, somewhere, . . . some of them go up in there, they don't know the routes, you understand, so that's what you you have to do: they have to send word back there and ask the fellow, which way we going now, which way to turn. That's the way he does.

[Allen:] Do you always go from the hall, or wherever you meet, straight to the church, or would you go somewhere else?

[Henry:] When they leave the hall, they're supposed to go directly to the church or to the funeral home, directly there.

[Allen:] Just a second. (machine off)

[Zander:] You went where?

[Allen:] Now, you're going along--say--you might go the the funeral home first, before you go the the church, sometimes, huh, you were saying?

[Zander:] Or instead of going to the church?

[Henry:] Yes, yes, it just depends on where the body is at; if the body is at the funeral home, we go there and pick up the body from the funeral home and then carry him to the church.

[Allen:] Where might the body be? What are the different places it might be?

[Henry:] You couldn't tell, you know--like if it's up here at Geddes and Moss [Funeral Home], up there at Jackson Street Avenue, [and] if the church is somewhere way uptown, we go the Jackson Street first and pick up the body and then go to the church.

[Allen:] Yeah, but I mean is the body ever not in a funeral home?

[Henry:] Huh?

[Allen:] Is the body ever not in the funeral home or the church? Do



they ever lay them out in another place?

[Henry:] Oh, yes; if it be at your house, they'd go there and pick up the body and carry it to church.

[Allen:] I remember seeing that when they had the cutting--I guess it was not this summer, but the last summer before that--remember when they had the cutting--I think it was on St. Philip Street?

[Henry:] Oh, yes, yes. Well, you see, that's the idea of it; they go to the house and pick up the body and--

[Allen:] There was no more funeral there for a while; it kind of got a little tough that day.

[Zander:] Oh, really?

[Henry:] Well, I'll tell you, I don't want to be in that, neither. I wasn't in that, neither; I don't want to be in there. Course, now, I know I won't never be in it now. [Since he lost a leg.]

[Zander:] You mean this was some rough stuff in the middle of a?--

[Allen:] Well, yeah, it broke the funeral up; the procession just disappeared, you know. They pulled a knife on a guy. Three or four guys--

[Henry:] Second line do that, you understand. They come there with their heads tight [from that old stuff?]; they come there, sometimes they rule the band--they wants to rule the band--tell them what to do, tell them what to play--and they haven't got anything in the world to do it, you understand, but they just come there with their heads tight and they want to rule.

[Allen:] How do they get their head tight? I mean, what do they do?

[Henry:] Tight, they get it; most of the stuff, that's what just make your head tight--foolish, they get foolish and they think they rule the town.

[Allen:], Do they drink, or take dope, or what?

[Henry:] I don't know how they get it, but I'm going to tell you, their heads be tight. I hear some of them say--I don't know, but from the way they tell me, they tell me they shoots it up in the arm, but I don't know. Now me, I ain't never had it, and I know I ain't never going to fool with it now.

[Allen:] They shoot it up in the arm, huh?

[Henry:] Yeah, that's what they tell me.

[Allen:] Well, I remember, I used to smell them smoking those cigarettes, you know.

[Henry:] Yeah, they call that maritone, something that they put in, shoot it in.

[Allen:] Well, I could smell that stuff.

[Henry:] All they want is to get their head tightened, that's all they want.

[Allen:] They don't do that so much any more, but you used to could smell it for blocks; you'd just walk along and they'd be--

[Zander:] Were these mostly young fellows or older ones that caused trouble?

[Henry:] Younger people.

[Zander:] That's what I thought.

[Henry:] All young, mostly teen-agers.

[Zander:] That think they're just everything, huh?

[Henry:] Older people, they don't hardly, you know--they don't do nothing like that--very few of them.

[Allen:] Well, what about in 1915? Who caused the trouble then?

[Henry:] When?

[Allen:] In 1915, around when you first came to the city, around in there.

[Henry:] Well, we didn't have no trouble then. No. Not me; I ain't

never had no trouble with anybody, me.

[Allen:] Yeah, but I mean, the second line. Were they bad in those days?

[Henry:] Yeah, they was bad, but they wasn't like they is now. Because, you see, the police could chastise them, but I'm telling you, these here guys, now, you got to kill them to chastise them.

[Allen:] What did they fight with in the old days?

[Henry:] Oh, they used to chunk at you with bricks and rock, things like that. No guns--I've never seen anybody shoot [unintelligible], you know, but now these guys got a knife and everything; they do you anything.

[Allen:] Would they hit you on the head in those days?

[Henry:] Anywhere they could hit you: they'd hit you on the bottom of your feet; if you run, they hit you on the bottom of your feet.

[Allen:] What would they use besides stones and bricks and stuff?

[Henry:] Oh, well, they'd use--sometimes, they'd have brass knuckles on.

[Allen:] I've seen them carrying chair legs, you know.

[Henry:] Anything.

[Allen:] Little sticks. I wonder about umbrellas: you know, you always see people with umbrellas.

[Henry:] Yeah, but that's too light.

[Allen:] That's too light, huh?

[Henry:] That couldn't hurt a fellow very much.

[Allen:] Well, I've seen some mighty funny umbrellas out there at parades and funerals.

[Henry:] Yeah. They're pretty tough, too.

[Zander:] Well, the weather is so strange in this town that you sort of need them for other than protective purposes--I mean to protect

their heads.

[Allen:] I've seen an umbrella with no cloth on it, whatsoever, above their head. Have you seen that?

[Henry:] Well, that's their fighting material, you see? That's what they got for to crack you on your head, or somewhere on you back, on your leg; anywhere they can hit you, they hit you and go on about their business.

[Allen:] Well, what about umbrellas and dancing? You've seen that? When they dance--you've seen them dance with umbrellas, huh?

[Henry:] Oh, yeah, they dance with it; well, all that's in it. They can crack you with that, too, in that dancing.

[Allen:] I've seen them put the umbrellas down on the ground and dance around them, like in a circle and everything. It's--

[Henry:] You go pick them up, now, then you see what'll happen to you.

[Allen:] Well, I don't want any part of that.

[Henry:] No, you're right, too.

[Zander:] So they're sort of daring you to start something, huh?

[Henry:] That's what they want you to do. When you start it, I'll tell you, they'll finish it, now I'm going to tell you right now.

[Allen:] Let's see: we got on our way to the, from the hall, or wherever they met--now what kind of music would they play, the first tune? Generally?

[Henry:] What you mean, coming from the church, or going to the church?

[Allen:] From the hall, where you met.

[Zander:] Going to the church.

[Henry:] Oh, well, you could play anything that you want to. You can play a hymn or you can play anything you want to--until you get near the church, you see; then when you get around the block of the church, you got to play a hymn or something like that.

[Zander:] So you sort of just start out playing something to warm you up, huh?

[Henry:] Absolutely.

[Zander:] Just whatever you are in the mood to play.

[Henry:] That's right.

[Allen:] What about the Eureka? What tune do they play first, generally?

[Henry:] Oh, well, they--when I was in there playing, they didn't have no particular tune. I used to tell them, anything they had [fall on ?], come on, let's play.

[Allen:] Well now, after--just before they pick up the body, what do they usually play? Just before they're getting to where the body is, what do they usually play?

[Henry:] Oh, well, sometimes they play "Sing On," and "When the Saints Go Marching In," different pieces, you understand. But it got to be some kind of a hymn, see, when you're going to pick up the body.

[Allen:] And once you got the body, then what do you play?

[Henry:] Funeral dirges.

[Allen:] That's before you get to the church, you might play a dirge?

[Henry:] No, no, after you get there, after--when the body comes out of the church, when you're going to the cemetery.

[Allen:] But going from the home to the church, what would you play?

[Henry:] If you were going from the funeral--

[Zander:] You mean when the body goes into the church.

[Allen:] When you got- yeah, when the body is going into the church-- when the body is on the way to the church, what kind of music would you play, with the body?

[Henry:] Funeral marches, funeral dirges, yes.

[Allen:] You would play a dirge before you got into the church?

[Henry:] Any time that the band is with the body they're supposed to play funeral dirges. If they're going or coming from the church, that's what they got to do.

[Allen:] That's what they're supposed to do.

[Henry:] They does that, too.

[Zander:] Do any of themembers of the band ever go into the church during the service?

[Henry:] Sure, sure, sure they go in there. I [would] go in there sometimes, when my head wasn't so tight. But many times, when I get to the church, I'm glad to get there so I can get to the bottle.

[Allen:] Well, now, some of these sort of jump-up brass bands-- you know what I'm talking about--do they play funerals?

[Henry:] Dick, I want to tell you one thing, they got some of these guys take a chance at anything, but they don't half do it, you understand? Them kind of guys that they pick them up, they get--they'll just jump on one piece, stay on that 'till they finish; can't do any better, you see.

[Allen:] Yeah. I was wondering how they'd play a dirge, you know.

[Henry:] They don't play no dirge. They might play, sometimes, like-- what you call that thing--"Closer Walk With Thee" and something like that, something slow, [unintelligible] by head. They play "God Be With Us Till We Meet Again;" well, they play all them things by head, but when you come down to them really dirges, you understand, they can't fool with that, see.

[Zander:] Those are the ones that are on the cards--

[Henry:] Yeah, [they don't want to try them good ones is in there. ?].

[Zander:] What happens with a band like the Eureka, if one of the men can't get off from work?

[Henry:] Hire another fellow in his place.

[Zander:] But you do pick somebody else who can play, who has played with you before, in place of him?

[Henry:] Well, just so long if he can read, you understand.

[Allen:] Once in a while they'll have somebody who can't read too well.

[Henry:] Well, that just depends; you see, if you can't get the man you want, well, you got to fill in there with somebody, you see--fill out the number.

[Allen:] Jim does pretty well when he comes.

[Henry:] Yes. You see, with Jim, Jim has a good ear. And then something else about him, he will listen to you. Many times I had Jim on the job with me, and I used to tell him, I say, "Now listen, don't you come in there too heavy. You work under me; anything becomes difficult, I'll take care of that." But I'll tell you, if you play that piece down about twice, Jim [is] coming in there, and ain't going to spoil nothing neither. That's right. He has a very good ear, and his execution is good.

[Allen:] He's right down the street--Jim Robinson--we ought to stop by and see him while we're in the neighborhood. Now let's see--I was going to ask you about something else on that--

[Zander:] I was going to ask you--while you're thinking of your question--if you all ever practiced the dirges between times--for instance, if you haven't played it for a long time?

[Henry:] Supposed to do it, but, you see, I'm gonna tell you now: sometime them fellows don't like to rehearse, you see. But, I'll tell you one thing, of course, the majority in the band there, they can play them things. But it's always good to rehearse them things first before you play them, because sometime you run up on a passage in there

that might trick you. You see, if you have rehearsed, you can remedy them things, you see. But if you ain't got no rehearsal, you just get out on the street there, you're going to run up on it there; then there you are in the "bajung" [ ?] you're going.

[Allen:] Back to those sort of jump-up bands we were talking about-- then they would only play hymns, and what tempo would they play them in? With the body?

[Henry:] Well, they play them the same time that we play them. See, [they're walking, because it's slow ?], you see, and--

[Allen:] They play it in dirge tempo, in other words?

[Henry:] Yes, in dirge tempo is right.

[Allen:] So they get around it that way. I just wanted to get that straight.

[Henry:] Yes.

[Allen:] Cause there sure are a lot of different kinds of brass bands, you know.

[Henry:] You've got something there.

[Allen:] They've had a many a one here.

[Henry:] Yes, sir.

[Allen:] Now, what kind of music goes on in the churches, that you've heard?

[Henry:] Oh, nothing but hymns, nothing but the hymns.

[Allen:] And would they have the whole congregation singing, or one person, or what?

[Henry:] Oh, well, they have a choir there. A choir--sometimes they have about twelve or fifteen of them in the choir, [and they ?] got the organ in there, an organ or a piano, you understand, and they all join in.

[Zander:] Are these mixed choirs, or just women?



[Henry:] Yeah, they have men and women.

[Zander:] In the same choir?

[Henry:] In the choir there.

[Allen:] Well, when you went in the church like that, how many preachers would they have?

[Henry:] One at a time.

[Allen:] But they'd have more than one, huh?

[Henry:] Oh, yeah, they had more than one there.

[Zander:] Would they--I mean, is that because the church has more than one preacher, or are they preachers from different churches?

[Henry:] Oh, yes: one church, some of them would have two and three preachers. The idea is they've got to have a few of them there, you see, because so in case the head man get sick they got somebody to step right in and take his place.

[Zander:] Yeah. And so they all talk, huh?

[Allen:] Well, who else talks?

[Henry:] Well, of course, you know, if they got the voice, most of them talk until they get ready to collect that money, the collection.

[Allen:] How does the collection work?

[Henry:] It works; they sing, and they have ushers to go around with little--

SUNNY HENRY  
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[Allen:] You were talking about how the collection went.

[Henry:] Yes. They goes around with the little baskets about that big, and the choir would be singing and everything: they'd go around to everybody, everybody'd put their money in there, and when they finish putting it in there they carry it up to the table, and they'd dump it over there, and then they'd count the money.

And then when the church is over, they tell you just what they  
[spit ]  
[spent ] up, you understand.  
[picked]

[Allen:] And who does that money go to?

[Henry:] To the church.

[Allen:] To the church.

[Henry:] Not no one person--it's for the upbuilding of the church, you understand, to keep the church in good condition and everything.

[Zander:] Does the preacher get paid out of that?

[Henry:] No, the preacher gets a salary a month, you see; he get so much a month. But that money they pick up like that, he don't touch that; his hand don't touch that at all. They has a committee.

[Allen:] Is there any other way that they collect the money other than passing the plates?

[Henry:] Well, sometimes they--yes, they have envelopes sometimes that they give evèry member of the church, you understand. [If you--like [if] you [are] around, ask you to put something in ?]. Then they have a day set for everybody to come and bring in [his] envelope, see. That's for the church, that's the upbuilding of the church.

[Allen:] Well, do you walk up front with the envelope, or do you hand it to somebody, or what?

[Henry:] You set it right down there; they got someone to come pick it up, if you don't feel like [giving anything ?].

[Allen:] Do they ever walk up with the envelope.

[Henry:] They could walk up with it.

[Allen:] Yeah, and give it.

[Henry:] Yeah, sure. I mean, even if you don't feel like getting up, you can put it in the basket, and they'll carry it up and put it on the table, you see.

[Allen:] Well, I have seen people walk around--the members of the club--walk around in the church, and they all line up and come up front and walk around and around several times, and they usually drop off quarters.

[Henry:] Well, you can walk around if you want, because every time you walk around there, [around] that table, you got to put something on it, something on that table. If you going to keep on walking around there, every time you get to that spot there, you got to put down something. Sometimes they have a dollar march, sometimes a five dollar march. You understand, if you want to, you make that round, you put it on the table.

[Zander:] So you have to start out with plenty in your pocket.

[Henry:] Yes. But of course, you can pick what you want.

[Allen:] What is a dollar march, exactly?

[Henry:] Well, that's some of them guys that just, you understand, want to put on something big, you see. "Well, we're going to have a dollar march." That goes for the ushers, or the Sexton board, or something like that; they want to be big, you understand. Well, they say it's a dollar march, well you ain't going to do any good until you put that dollar on the table. That's a pretty good way, too; if you feel like going, or if you feel you want to be a big

shot, and go ahead and put it on the table.

[Allen:] Something else I was wondering about, now--did you ever hear of brass bands giving a sample to anybody--say the widow or somebody, or the club?

[Henry:] Giving what [is that ?]?

[Allen:] A sample of the music.

[Henry:] No.

[Zander:] You mean before they're hired?

[Allen:] Before they're hired, yeah. To give them an idea how they sound.

[Henry:] No, not never since I've been playing.

[Allen:] So they found out about the brass bands another way, then?

[Henry:] Oh, yeah. But I'm going to tell you way, they knows all the brass bands: They got, all the societies and thing around here, they got mens in there who knows every band that they is around here, you see. They have some men in the society used to be old musicians, you understand. They know; you can't fool them a bit; they knows the best and the worst--they know the worst, too.

[Zander:] And even if they weren't, they probably grew up as "second liners," I mean, and have heard them all their lives, I guess so.

[Henry:] Yes, mean they heard them all their lives, that's right.

[Allen:] I'd like to talk to some of those guys from the society who help choose the band, you know, and stuff. If you can get any of them's names or addresses--

[Henry:] I'll tell you: the best way you can get that, if you see Red [Clark] or [Willie] Pajaud, or either Percy [Humphrey], you see, they keeps all that. But we all, we don't worry about that; we just worry about when they got a job, if they call you up, tell

you meeting at such and such a place and you go on up there, but otherwise, we don't worry about that.

[Allen:] Well, let's see. Back to what goes on in the church--you got offering, singing, the preachers get up and preach--and then what else happens?

[Henry:] When they finish everything, when they finish the collection and everything, then the preacher get up and he announce what's going to happen in the next five or six days. Then after that, the benediction--let you out.

[Zander:] He's talking about a regular Sunday church service now.

[Allen:] No, I mean at a funeral. They announce what's going to happen in the next five or six days at a funeral?

[Henry:] Oh, no; you said about the church, you see.

[Allen:] Yeah, well I meant at the church at a funeral.

[Henry:] Oh, no they don't do that in the funeral, no.

[Allen:] Yeah.

[Henry:] When they finish preaching in the church with all they doing, the preacher when he finish, he just dismiss the church and then bring the body on out.

[Allen:] But I thought maybe some members of the congregation would speak, or they'd come up and view the body, or something, during the service.

[Henry:] Oh, before they leave out the church--you see, when they're fixing to leave the church, they tell you to come by and view the body, and then you come on around, and you view the body; after you view the body you come on out, you see. Then after you view the body, then the undertaker closes the body and shuts you up and then they come on out.

[Allen:] Do they open up the whole lid, or do they have a half a

lid, or what, on those coffins?

[Henry:] They got a half a lid there, you can see his face and everything way down to there.

[Allen:] Down to around the stomach, huh?

[Henry:] Yes, sure.

[Allen:] Yeah, that's the way it's been when I've seen them--

[Henry:] That's just the way it is now.

[Allen:] Do they have flowers with the body in the church, or not?

[Henry:] Yeah, they do have flowers in the church.

[Allen:] Any other kind of decoration or anything with the body?

[Henry:] No, no more than the flowers, a bouquet of flowers. And then they have a wreath [unintelligible] design.

[Allen:] Well, now, how would the body be dressed?

[Henry:] That's up to the family, you see. They choose what kind of garment that they wants to put on the corpse, you see. It's up to them. They can put anything they want on it.

[Allen:] What do they usually have?

[Henry:] Well, if you're a man, if you have your own suit, if you want them to put that on, it's all right. If you want to get a suit from the undertaker, well, they put that on.

[Allen:] Would it be a regular suit, or a tuxedo, or what?

[Henry:] Well, just anything you want, it just depends.

[Zander:] It just depends, huh?

[Allen:] Now, suppose he's a member of an organization. Would he have any of their uniform on?

[Henry:] Well, no. If they wants to, they could put it on. But it's up to the family, what they wants to put on. They's the bosses.

[Allen:] I see.

[Zander:] Do the Masons ever hire a band of music for their funerals?

[Henry:] Sometimes, yes, they hire--

[Zander:] [Be]cause they always seem to have pretty much ceremony in themselves; I mean, you know--

[Henry:] They hire a band.

[Allen:] I see. What happens after you come out of a church, now?

[Henry:] What happens after you come out of the church?

[Allen:] With the body.

[Henry:] Oh, well, just as I've told you beforehand, you plays the funeral dirges, but now, but I guess, this is what you want to find out--after you leave the cemetery, yeah, is that what you mean?

[Allen:] No, I mean, what happens, you go from the church to the cemetery.

[Zander:] He's already told us about that.

[Henry:] Absolutely.

[Allen:] And then what happens, when you get in the cemetery?

[Henry:] In the cemetery? You plays a hymn there, or a funeral dirge, a kind of short one, you understand? And then after they put him in the tomb, or if you're burying somebody there, well, when you're finished, well, we plays a little piece [over him ?]: "God Be With Us Till We Meet Again" or else not "Upper Garden" something that's short, you understand. Then that's all.

[Allen:] So they've buried him and then you come outside.

[Henry:] Yeah. Come outside and wait for the society. When they come out, all they say is "Let's go."

[Allen:] Then what happens?

[Henry:] Anything liable to happen then.

[Zander:] Where do you all head back for then? I mean, just follow wherever the grand marshal leads you, or what?

[Henry:] He mostly have a route to go, you understand, all the time. He got it figured out, if he got [no more than get ?] around way to the block, if he have to go this way, make it a round there, so his gal can see him, you understand, then go on to the hall.

[Allen:] Where do you end up?

[Henry:] Got to go to the hall.

[Allen:] So you end up where you started, huh?

[Henry:] Absolutely. Just where you started.

[Allen:] And what kind of music?

[Henry:] You can play anything you want, coming back. But we all, the way we generally do, from of the cemetery, when we leave the cemetery, we play a hymn, you understand? And then, after that hymn there, get away from that cemetery, there's anything liable to happen then.

[Zander:] Well, do they feed you and such, when you get back to the hall?

[Henry:] Oh, no. And if you ain't, if you don't fed yourself, you're in a devil of a fix.

[Zander:] Let me ask you one more thing about the music. Sometimes I've heard where they just have a drum roll. Is that when they're moving the body, sometimes? Just the drum plays.

[Henry:] No. When the drum roll and the drum beating all the time are two different things. When the drum roll, they are fixing to play. But now when they're marching, well, just beat the march time. But when they go to roll, like that, well, they're fixing to play a piece.

[Allen:] The drummer will keep a beat going between the tunes.



[Zander:] Yeah, I know, when they're marching.

[Allen:] But that roll serves as an introduction.

[Zander:] Yeah. Sometimes it just seems to me that they rolled the whole time when the body was, you know, being lifted out of the car, or something, I didn't know that it was just a--

[Henry:] That's what I'm talking about, when the body--that's what I'm talking about, when your [snare] drum roll, and that big drum come in and hit.

[Allen:] The band comes in.

[Zander:] Yeah.

[Allen:] The bass drum gives you a little beat, first. A roll, and then a little bass drum beat--

[Henry:] Three beats.

[Allen:] And then the band. How many beats? Three beats?

[Henry:] One, two, three, yeah. Or sometimes they--well, boom, boom-boom, [it supposed to hit ?] one two, three, hold time and the bass drum hit, and the three, well the fellows that drums, he supposed to hold and they roll on until he finish beating them three licks on the drum.

[Allen:] What are some of the tunes they play coming back, and what do they mean? Are they played for any special reason?

[Henry:] Just anything that they--just anything, they fell like playing, then play, if they want to play the blues, they plays it. Just anything that they feel like playing, then they play it.

[Allen:] What does a blues mean?

[Henry:] They call them the blues. That's all I know about them.

[Allen:] I mean, is there any special reason for playing the blues?

[Henry:] No. Sometimes, some of the guys in the parade, they ask for them things, you see, of course, <sup>just</sup> what they ask for, we play

the blues.

[Allen:] Would there be any reason why you'd play "Lady Be Good?"

[For the Widow perhaps]

[Henry:] Oh, that's a good one. I likes to play that tune.

[Allen:] I know you have that on the record.

[Henry:] Yeah I likes play that. It's very good. I love them all, me it's a fact.

[Allen:] How fast would you play, coming back from the cemetery?

[Henry:] Well, you couldn't play too fast, play in the march tempo.

[Allen:] Not the dirge tempo, but the regular march tempo.

[Henry:] Absolutely. Little faster than the dirge.

[Allen:] Let me see. How much does it pay?

[Henry:] Let me see. They pays, I believe sixty-five dollars--no, sixty-five or seventy--I know when I was in there, well, anyhow, they got to give you six dollars a man now, except the leader. Of course, he generally gets a little more.

[Allen:] The leader gets more, huh? What about the manager? Does he get more?

[Henry:] Well, you see, I guess them guys today splits it up, I guess [unintelligible].

[Allen:] What about when you first came here; how much were they paying for funerals then?

[Henry:] Two dollars, or two and a half, something like that.

[Allen:] How much of that money would you keep? I mean, by the time you got home.

[Henry:] Yeah, well, how much I keep?

[Allen:] Yeah, well, I mean you got to--

[Henry:] All of it.

[Allen:] All of it. You'd go straight home?

[Henry:] I'd have it in here.

[Allen:] You mean to say you'd go straight home, after you played a funeral?

[Zander:] He said he'd have it in here.

[Allen:] I see. In your stomach.

[Zander:] I guess the price of drinking has gone up in the years in between.

[Henry:] Let me tell you one thing. You see, I and Al--right now, not now, but [He had lost a leg] I mean, you know, when I was out there, when we'd go on a funeral, we'd be on there just to have fun. You see, when we'd get home, might have \$2.00, \$3.00 out of the \$6.00; we had drink the other part up.

[Zander:] Well, you strictly couldn't support yourself that way, could you.

[Henry:] Well, you see, we didn't depend on that, you understand, not for no living. Me, the reason I used to play them jobs, I just liked to be in the street. I used to love the job, you understand, to be in the street, play funerals and parades. When I used to go play [unintelligible], we used to go play so we could drink, but for anything else, we--

[Allen:] Well, in the old days, did any of the guys support themselves by playing in brass bands only?

[Henry:] No, they couldn't exactly--you see, the brass band only. Some of them they used to play at night, when they didn't play in a brass band. Myself, I used to play at the Music Box every night, up there on Carondelet and St. Charles. A [unintelligible] dance. I was playing every night but in the funerals, sometimes we'd have a funeral every day pretty near. Well, you see, I [just tired of it ?]. Of course, them times when I was playing every

night, I couldn't drink like I could after that, you understand. Just naturally because I had to work at night, then work at day. Well, you couldn't make it thataway, just drinking and working all night, and walk in the day.

[Allen:] Well, it seems to me some of the people I know that play a funeral or parade, end up losing money, you know? I mean, they can come out in the hole, huh? That would happen, huh?

[Henry:] If you're going to suck it up, well--what you expect? You've got to lose.

[Allen:] I've seen that happen. Now who were some of the outstanding bands, for playing funerals? Who would you name?

[Henry:] Well, I'll tell you right now--what you mean, now or--

[Allen:] In the old days.

[Zander:] Back when you said you were sometimes playing one every day.

[Henry:] Well, I tell you, there was the Excelsior, there's one; The Tuxedo, is two, see Tuxedo--

[Allen:] Just a second.

(Machine off)

[Allen:] You were telling me about the outstanding bands of years ago for playing funerals.

[Henry:] Well, the best [bands ?] was the Excelsior, Onward Brass Band, Tuxedo--Original Tuxedo--I don't mean John [Casimir] and them, the Young Tuxedo--I mean the Original Tuxedo; them was the outstanding [men ?] [ones ?]. Now of course Allen, he had a band over there in Algiers; he was pretty good, but the idea of it, he didn't have no real men to play with him. The way he'd do, he'd get a job, he'd come to get me, if I'm a good man, he'd get that fellow there, if he's a good man, he'd pay him good, and other fellows what didn't

play so well, didn't get not money hardly. [Unintelligible], but the Tuxedo, Onward, Excelsior.

[Zander:] About how far back do those bands go? Were they already playing when you came to New Orleans, or--

[Henry:] Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. They were playing when I came here, because when I came here, I didn't get in no band for a good while. I went to work for a while. I didn't know nobody, you understand, much?

[Allen:] How long did it take you to get with a band? You came here in 1913.

[Henry:] After they find out, you understand, what kind of man I was, I couldn't rest, every band had some work would come knock on the door.

[Allen:] Well, what about--before the big storm, were you playing with bands?

[Henry:] Here?

[Allen:] Yes. The Big storm here.

[Henry:] The big storm. Oh, yeah, yeah.

[Allen:] You were playing with bands.

[Henry:] Yes.

[Allen:] The big storm was in September of 1915.

[Henry:] Sure, sure.

[Allen:] And you came here in 1913.

[Henry:] Yeah.

[Allen:] So it wasn't too long.

[Henry:] Well, anyhow--

[Zander:] I guess it just seemed long, when you were new in the city and things like that.

[Henry:] But I'm going to tell you, you see, Dick, when I first come here, some of them guys wouldn't hire me, because they used to say I couldn't play "Home, Sweet Home" by head. You understand? Well, of course, which I couldn't, you understand, because, me, I always did love to read, you understand. So after they find out that I could do both, so after that I got in the Excelsior, they hired me, I made good in that, and the Onward, I made good in that. Then the Tuxedo, I was a regular man, first trombone player, stayed that way until it was broke up.

[Zander:] What kind of music did you used to play before you came to New Orleans? This may be going over something you talked to him about before, but I'd just like to know.

[Allen:] Uh-uh, go right ahead.

[Henry:] What you mean, a horn? What kind of horn I used to play, or--

[Zander:] No, I mean, what type of music--were people playing the same jazz-type music other places that--

[Henry:] The same, the same kind of music--sheet music. But [which man ?] out there--Jim Humphrey used to come out there, teach the band, Percy's grand-daddy. [He thinks she means written Music.]

[Allen:] Now, out there in the country, did that band play funerals and parades, or what?

[Henry:] That band could play anything any other band could play. That's why, when I came here, I knowed as much as I know now. I learnt in the country.

[Zander:] So you've kind of just grown up playing, huh?

[Henry:] That's the idea.

[Allen:] Did they have dirges out in the country?

[Henry:] Yeah.

[Allen:] Would they have funerals with a band of music?

[Henry:] Well, they have funerals sometimes, but it wasn't often like it is here, you understand, because we ain't got many people, down that way [unintelligible].

[Allen:] Then you had more musicians down there than you had up here in proportion to the population.

[Henry:] Well, yes, the idea, you see, we had, in our band we had sixteen.

[Allen:] And that was a small place, wasn't it?

[Henry:] Yeah. It was just a plantation, a cane farm.

[Allen:] How many people on the plantation, would you say, about?

[Henry:] Oh, about two or three hundred.

[Allen:] That's quite a large portion of them playing music, if you add that up. So would the funerals down there be like the funerals up here, or a little bit different or a lot different or what?

[Henry:] Well, you see, down there they didn't have the route to go down there that they have here, you understand. But the idea of it, they'd leave the church and go on back to the cemetery, and come right on back, you see. They couldn't make no round like they make here, you understand.

[Allen:] Would they be supported by an organization down there, a society?

[Henry:] Yes, we had society, they call the Morning Light.

[Allen:] The Morning Light?

[Henry:] That's right.

[Allen:] Were there any other societies?

[Henry:] No, not on the plantation; this one had one society, see, the Morning Light.

[Zander:] Well, then, you really didn't find moving to the city too different from living in the country, did you?

[Henry:] Oh, yes, there's quite a difference [unintelligible].

[Zander:] I mean a lot of the things, I guess, the same customs around.

[Henry:] Yeah.

[Allen:] Would they stay longer in church in the country than in the city or would they stay about the same length of time?

[Henry:] No, well, you see, the idea, they would preach there at night you see, like the wake, would be at night, preach there at night, and then after that, they'd come to the church, and in the daytime about twelve o'clock, about two o'clock when you leave, you leave out there, you see. Bury the body. Go on back home.

[Zander:] Was the church on the plantation?

[Henry:] Absolutely.

[Zander:] And was there just one church for everybody on the plantation? Or were there different--

[Henry:] Yes, one church, that's right. It was called the Macedonia Baptist church.

[Zander:] So everybody that was on the plantation were Baptists.

[Henry:] That's right.

[Zander:] So that would be different.

[Allen:] Yeah, that's right. Now what about the different churches here in the city, like Methodists and Baptists and Catholic? How long would the funerals last for them?

[Henry:] Well, you see, now, with the Catholic they won't let you use no band now with them, but the times back we used to play for them. Now they don't use no band at all. Not the Catholic.



[Allen:] About when was that rule came out about the Catholic?

[Henry:] Well, Dick, I couldn't exactly say, but it hasn't been too long. Been a pretty good little while, though.

[Allen:] Before the Depression? Or after?

[Henry:] After Depression.

[Allen:] It came after 1929?

[Henry:] Yeah, because I've seen the time I used to go to the church there on Tulane Avenue, that church there--

[Allen:] I know the one you mean. Out around Galvez?

[Henry:] No, around--

[Allen:] Across from Charity [Hospital]?

[Henry:] Yeah.

[Allen:] St. Katherine's?

[Henry:] Yes, St. Katherine's.

[Allen:] You buried people from that church.

[Henry:] Many times.

[Allen:] Was that before World War II?

[Henry:] Yeah, I believe it was. It's been a pretty good while, because I remember George used to play with us, George McCullum, trumpet player.

[Allen:] What band was that?

[Henry:] The Tuxedo.

[Allen:] Well, you could check on that through the church records.

[Zander:] I was thinking, yeah.

[Allen:] Would show you that, and the church records ought to show when that was got out.

[Zander:] Well, is there much difference between the Methodists and the Baptists?

[Henry:] Oh, well, I don't think it is much.

[Zander:] Not that you'd notice.

[Henry:] Not [unintelligible].

[Allen:] Which lasts the longest?

[Henry:] Baptist or Methodist?

[Allen:] Uh-huh.

[Henry:] Well, Dick, I couldn't say which used to last the longest. But I guess the one who lived the longest--

[Allen:] No, I mean the preachers, the preaching, which preaches longest?

[Henry:] Oh, I guess the Baptists, they preach the longest.

[Allen:] That's been my experience. The Methodist is much shorter than the Baptist.

[Henry:] Oh yeah, for the funeral, particularly, yeah, they're much more shorter.

[Zander:] Do you all ever play at any Episcopal funerals? Do they ever have a band of music?

[Henry:] No.

[Allen:] No other churches but Baptists and Methodists now?

[Henry:] Yeah, that's all.

[Allen:] What about the Sanctified churches?

[Henry:] I haven't been around one of them churches in a long time.

[Allen:] But sometimes the Sanctified churches would have a band, huh?

[Henry:] Well, I going to tell you about them Sanctified: I don't remember [pulling for them ?] [unintelligible] [Dick ?]. Maybe I have and I didn't know it, you understand.

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[Allen:] I don't ever remember it.

[Henry:] No, that's what I'm telling you now, I don't remember  
it.

END OF REEL II  
SUNNY HENRY  
October 21, 1959

[Allen:] We were talking about the different denominations. What about the Catholic funerals? What were they like?

[Henry:] Well, I'm going to tell you, Dick; with them Catholic funerals, we used to play them; after we leave the church, you see, and go a [certain?] distance, then we would turn them loose; then they'd go on about their business.

[Zander:] How would you turn them a-loose?

[Henry:] Well, we'd go a [certain?] distance, so we'd get to the corner, and stand and divide ourselves--open up, you understand--and play whilst the funeral would be going through, you see. After they'd go on through, we'd come on back to the hall.

[Zander:] Was that because the cemetery was so far away from the church?

[Henry:] Yes, yes, sometimes the cemetery was so far away.

[Zander:] And so then, after you turned them loose you'd go into whatever kind of music you wanted to play, just like you were coming back from the cemetery?

[Henry:] Absolutely right, right you are.

[Zander:] Well, do they still sometimes turn them loose--for instance, if they're burying them out in Gentilly?

[Henry:] Yes, nowadays the same thing, that's right, like for the Holt [Cemetery]. of you got a funeral, go out there. Well, they will go such a distance, and then after that they stop. Then they open

up, you understand, and play a piece whilst they're going through and then that's over, they turn on around and come on back.

[Zander:] Are they playing a dirge while they're going through, or a hymn, or what?

[Henry:] Yes, they play a hymn or either a dirge; any way would be OK.

[Zander:] Do the relatives of the person who is dead ever ask you to play certain things, or, I mean?

[Henry:] Well, yes, sometimes they request for some piece to be played, and we play that for them.

[Zander:] But mostly people just like the old-style hymns, like "Just a Closer Walk With Thee" and--

[Henry:] That's right; that's the idea.

[Zander:] I could listen to that about a thousand times, I think, and it always sounds different and it always sounds beautiful.

[Henry:] Yeah, and I'll tell you one thing, that "Upper Garden," too, that's a wonderful thing.

[Zander:] I don't know that I know that. Does it have words?

[Henry:] We play it. Yes, it have words.

[Zander:] I probably would recognize it if I heard it, you know, but just don't know the name to go with it.

[Henry:] If you ever have a funeral [then ?], if you ever go to the cemetery, just ask [Willie] Pajaud or Percy [Humphrey] or some of them to play "Upper Garden" for you. I love it myself; I love to play it.

[Allen:] Well, now, "Upper Garden," do you play that by head with the Eureka?

[Henry:] No, they have that; they got that.

[Allen:] Who wrote it out for you?

[Henry:] Louis Dumaine, he written all them things out [unintelligible] just about that wide--manuscript, you see.

[Allen:] Well, now, where did Dumaine get them from?

[Henry:] Out of the book.

[Allen:] Would that be a hymnbook, or?

[Henry:] Yes.

[Allen:] It would be a hymn book he got them from, huh? And so what would he have in the hymn book: he would have words?

[Henry:] Words and music.

[Allen:] And what kind of music would go with it?

[Henry:] He would put the--you see, the way it is now--in our days, the hymnbooks, they'd have words and the music there, you see. All he had to do is transpose it, put it in which key it is in in the best key for the hand. That's one thing he could do.

[Allen:] But they wouldn't have all the parts in a hymnbook, is what I'm getting at.

[Henry:] Well, him, he would make parts for the band to play with, for the bass part and everything else.

[Allen:] He would just arrange it, then, from the piano part.

[Henry:] Good arranger. Absolutely, absolutely. He'd take that piano part there and arrange [the hymn] for everybody.

[Allen:] They played "Wonderful" Friday. Remember when they played "Wonderful"? I think it was right after we came out of church, maybe, Friday; they played "Wonderful." That's one of his. That's a beautiful one, too.

[Henry:] He was good, I want to tell you. He's dead and gone, but he's [missed ?],

[Allen:] Did they have anybody else could arrange hymns like that?

[Henry:] I'm going to tell you; no, not as good as him; some of them, they'd arrange, but they didn't, couldn't get it like the way he did. They had a fellow here--what did you call him?--Amos White--he was good, but he didn't stay here long; he left and went away from here.

[Allen:] I think he's in California now; Bill Russell saw him out there; he's around San Francisco. He still plays with a brass band.

[Henry:] Yeah? He's a all-round man, [he is ?].

[Allen:] What did he arrange? What would he arrange?

[Henry:] He didn't arrange anything.

[Allen:] Oh, I thought maybe he was an arranger, like Dumaine.

[Henry:] No, he wasn't like Dumaine. But he knew a whole lot, you know.

[Zander:] You must really have to know your music to be able to do something like that.

[Henry:] To be an arranger--well, sure, absolutely.

[Allen:] I got a list of questions; we might as well get down to that. Now, how did you learn how to walk with a brass band? Did you learn that in the country or [in] the city?

[Henry:] Well, I'll tell you: [when] I came here I had to learn over again. In the country we walked--you see the--just the tempo we used to play in the country, we had it just a little bit faster. But then, after I came here I had to learn how to walk all over again.

[Allen:] Did they play dirges a little faster out there?

[Henry:] Yes.

[Allen:] And they played the regular march tempo the same, or faster or slower?

[Henry:] The same.

[Allen:] The march tempo was slow but the dirges were a little--

[Henry:] Yeah.

[Allen:] A little faster, I see. Did you ever hear any outstanding preachers for funerals? Any men who really were supposed to be good?

[Henry:] Well, yes, [a gang ?] good. What you mean, in the country?

[Allen:] Either in the country or here.

[Henry:] Outstanding preachers that I heard in the country: had a fellow by the name of Jim Jones, he was an outstanding preacher.

[Allen:] What makes a preacher outstanding at a funeral? What does he do?



[Henry:] Well, I'm going to tell you: if he's outstanding, he can stand up on the door, he can get anywhere, you understand, and do just what any other man do or a little more.

[Zander:] He just gets through to the people more, huh?

[Henry:] That's the idea.

[Allen:] Well, do the outstanding preachers talk loud, or soft, or what?

[Henry:] Very soft, some of them; and then, some of them get in there and they get their head turned, I guess, like me sometime.

[Allen:] Ever hear Sunshine Money?

[Henry:] Oh, how many times have I heard him; he's too sasst for me; he jump up and tell them women what they got to do--bring money, and he don't care where they get it from.

[Allen:] That doesn't sound like a preacher; that sounds like something else.

[Henry:] That's what I want to tell you; let me tell you. I didn't care much for him.

[Allen:] I wanted to ask you about not only the outstanding bands for funerals, but some of the outstanding individual musicians in the bands. You know.

[Henry:] Well, Dick, that's a question, that is.

[Allen:] I know. But I mean, say, for example, could you name me a good baritone player, and sort of describe what he did?

[Henry:] What you mean, now or--

[Allen:] Well, there's not many baritone players now.

[Henry:] No, they really haven't got--

[Allen:] In times back, who would be some of the men for really  
[unintelligible].

[Henry:] They had a fellow called Vic Gaspard; he was good; he was  
a trombone player and a baritone player. And a fellow they called  
Georgie Hooker, he was pretty good. And this old man--he died now--  
Alexander's daddy, he was very good.

[Allen:] On the baritone?

[Henry:] Yes.

[Allen:] That's Adolph Alexander, Sr.

[Henry:] His daddy.

[Allen:] Well, he's junior, "Tats" is junior.

[Henry:] Yes, "Tats" is junior, that's right.

[Allen:] So he'd be senior.

[Henry:] Senior, that's right.

[Allen:] Now, he--

[Henry:] He used to be good too, "Tats"; in that WPA band, that  
boy'd pick up that baritone, pick up a trombone part and play it,  
any part at all. He was a good little musicianer [as you've ever  
seen ?].

[Allen:] How would a man do like that on the baritone? What would make him good? Other than his speed in reading, how would he obtain that--effects and expression?

[Henry:] What you mean, a baritone?

[Allen:] Yeah. I mean, would he use a vibrato--you know, with that shaking--or would he?

[Henry:] That's one thing I couldn't say.

[Allen:] You couldn't tell about the baritones?

[Henry:] Because some men, they--

[Allen:] They use their fingers a little different than the trombone.

[Henry:] Oh, but I'm going to tell you, no, the trombone and the baritone, they use the same fingering.

[Allen:] I wondered if any of those guys, you know, would use the--shake their fingers to get an effect, you know, a little bit--

[Henry:] Oh, you mean, on the--on account of that stroke, huh?

[Allen:] No, I mean, you know how some guys, they'll be playing trumpet, and they'll shake their fingers a little--

[Henry:] Oh, yeah. What is that--

[Allen:] Just to give it a little vibrato; gives it that little--

[Henry:] Yeah, well sure. All that's in it.

[Allen:] You do that on a baritone? Did you ever do that?

[Henry:] Sure. Sure you could do it.

[Allen:] Who would have the most beautiful tone, of those guys you think?

[Henry:] Let me see--Vic.

[Allen:] Vic really had a beautiful tone.

[Henry:] Yes. I'm telling [you the truth ?].

[Allen:] What special numbers feature a baritone?

[Henry:] Well, Dick, I don't know. I couldn't hardly say, because Vic, I didn't care what you put there, [he was] so sweet, [let me tell you ?].

[Allen:] Well, the number that gets me is that "West Lawn" [Dirge], you know, that's a beautiful part.

[Henry:] But oh, now, let me tell you, that "West Lawn": There ain't but one man that ever played that thing on the baritone like it should be played. He was the first one and the [unintelligible] best one, Celestin fellow called John Porter. He's dead. Dick, [of course, the thing about John, ?] that man, when he first got that piece, that man made everybody cry around the church. You see, the way he played that what-cha-call-em, he had such expression, in the tone, and when he'd hold them notes to the value, get off it so nice and smooth I was playing; I had to stop myself! It tore out your heart. Even anybody in the church come out there. [It hit you ?] and this here fellow we had on bass there, Eddie, Eddie Jackson, oh, that long, tall, dark guy, man, he--we had a band, that [Original] Tuxedo

[Brass] Band. We didn't care for nobody; every man we had in there could take care of himself.

[Zander:] Well, you were saying that he had everybody in the church crying. Did he play it inside the church?

[Henry:] No. Coming out, you see, when they's come out, when the body was coming out of the church. They'd tell us to play and start on this [unintelligible] drum [unintelligible]. [When we got to that passage ?] that man made everybody cry. And that ain't no joke. That was back on Clara [Street] near Calliope [Street], somewhere back there, they had the church somewhere back there, but now everything's messed up back there. If I'd go back there, I wouldn't know myself now. But at them time, you know, there's nobody plays it like him. and then again the baritone has a different effect, too, you understand. Of course [Manuel] Paul, he plays nice, but the real baritone is nice.

[Allen:] Better than a tenor saxophone.

[Henry:] Yeah, sure.

[Allen:] Did they have any outstanding alto horn men?

[Henry:] I'm going to tell you, Dick, they had one fellow down here, I think he's pretty near dead now. Old man [Isidore] Barbarin, he was good. And then in Algiers they had a fellow they call Joe Pyan [spelling?], he's dead too. And they had another fellow, but he isn't here now, he works on the ship, a fellow called Flowers. He['s] good.

[Allen:] Well, those fellows playing alto horn, mellophone, would they carry a melody, like the baritone would sometimes?

[Henry:] No. What they do is, they'd always [play on the] after-pretty near; sometimes they soloed; took solos and things. But most of the time [unintelligible] (sings um-pah, um-pah). You see that's a good [bass]. [Give the bass chime ?] give you a chance to make anything, that supports you [out the band ?] and the bass, and a good base too. I'll tell you they ain't got none in town now, they must have some, but I don't know [where they is ?].

[Allen:] Did they have anybody who was outstanding for trumpet solos?

[Henry:] Yeah. George McCullum; that one who died. But he's dead now. In that WPA band, they used to feature him all the time--any hard thing came in, marches, and them overtures/ and things come there. That boy would get them [unintelligible] little short fellow about that high.

[Allen:] Would he specialize in funeral dirges?

[Henry:] Anything. Concert, anything, [unintelligible], overtures, we used to play all those things.

[Allen:] Like Pajaud today. Now that's what Pajaud likes to do best, is play a solo on a dirge, it seems to me.

[Henry:] Yeah, sure.

[Allen:] Says he'd rather play a funeral than eat a turkey dinner.

[Henry:] Well, me too [unintelligible]. Man, I'd be so glad, I'd jump out there and be the first one on the job. I used to love that.

And I'd love [to do it now ?] but I know I can't, can't play no funerals no more [with one leg]. Because if a fellow can do a job and do it gooe he likes it. [Unintelligible.] I know that job with that trombone and I know--and I don't need anybody to tell me; when I gets there I know that, and pretty near anything, when they get up there, I'd be the first man out of it, too. I'd get my parts first every trip.

[Allen:] Any other men that specialized in hymns and dirges, other than McCullum?

[Henry:] Now let me see. Well, no, I think he was the--and he was the best around, at that time, too. He's dead now, [unintelligible]. I think he was the best. And this other fellow, he used to be pretty good, too, Lionel Farbos.

[Allen:] Lionel Ferbos, huh?

[Henry:] Yeah, trumpet, yeah, nice trumpet player.

[Allen:] I'm trying to think about the different guys I've heard about as being good at funerals. Alvin Alcorn played beautiful, with "Old Man" [Henry] Allen [Sr.] some. And Manuel Perez is supposed to have been good.

[Henry:] Oh, yeah, he was good, strong and everything, but you see this boy McCullum, he didn't blast, but that tone came out of there just as clear as anything. He didn't blast [unintelligible]. Of course, Manuel Perez was a strong man on the trumpet. But that other

boy McCullum, he didn't blast. Smooth tone. But you could hear it anywheres.

[Allen:] Let's see: any outstanding clarinet players? Anybody who'd make you cry?

[Henry:] [unintelligible] I'll tell you, Lorenzo Tio [Sr. or Jr.?] was a really outstanding clarinet player.

[Allen:] What would he do at a funeral that would be special?

[Henry:] Who, that fellow there?

[Allen:] Yeah.

[Henry:] Well, he was just a good man. When he'd get on the job then he worked, you could hear him, these clarinets they got now, playing E flat clarinet, you can't hear them, them clarinets supposed to be above everything in the band, so you could hear them, you know. But some of these guys they got playing clarinet, you can't hear them from here to the [unintelligible]. Me, I wouldn't have them, me. If it was left to me [unintelligible].

[Zander:] Well, why do you think that there aren't as many good musicians as there used to be, I mean--

[Henry:] Well, they had--some of them, they just died out, and then again, these here younger fellows who come on now, they don't take up like the old fellows used to be, in times back. I guess that's the reason they haven't got as many, you understand? They all want saxophone, saxophone, that's all they want, saxophone.



[Allen:] Well, there's hardly a young E-flat clarinet player that I know around.

[Henry:] Huh?

[Allen:] I can't think of any really young E-flat clarinet players.

[Henry:] No. They're just not any. That's what I'm telling you.

[Allen:] There's not one around.

[Henry:] No. They all want saxophone.

[Zander:] Is that why they seem to not bury people with a band of music as often as they used to or why [is it]?

[Henry:] Oh, no. It isn't that at all. They don't bury as they used to; the money<sup>done gone</sup>/now. I guess the big fish eat up the little fish what ain't got no money. That's the way it works.

[Allen:] People don't have as much money now for funerals as they used to.

[Henry:] But they make more money now than what they ever did in their lives. They got money, but it's just as I told you, big fish eat up the little fish. That's the way it goes.

[Zander:] About how often would you say that, these days--you said that they used to have maybe one funeral every day, but about how often do they have funerals with music now?

[Henry:] Well, you can't tell. Sometimes you may have [three funerals ?] two or three straight; then after that it will go off-- but you see; in times back they used to have more societies that

used to bury with a band, and clubs used to bury them by a band. But now they haven't got many clubs and things, yousee. So that makes it--that makes the job down; they don't have as many. There's as many people dying, but not many people die that belong to the club and things.

[Zander:] You just said something about societies and something about clubs. Do societies and clubs differ?

[Henry:] Yes. Societies and clubs [different ?].

[Zander:] What's the difference?

[Henry:] Well, you see, a club is more for pleasure; and the society is more for you being sick.

[Zander:] Well, the club would be more like the Zulus then, or something like that.

[Henry:] Yeah; they're for pleasure. They bury, though, with music, though.

[Allen:] What else do they have, besides societies and clubs? Do they have anything else, like that?

[Henry:] I don't see anything else, Dick, but that: societies and clubs.

[Allen:] What would you call the Young Men's Olympian Benevolent Protective Association? ["Protective" should have been omitted--RBA.]

[Henry:] [Unintelligible] That's a society.

[Allen:] That's a society. The Jolly Bunch?

[Henry:] That's a club.

[Allen:] I think I see already what you're talking about.

[Zander:] I can tell just from the names of them--

[Allen:] Yes.

[Henry:] [There you are in there ?]

[Allen:] That tells you right away. When they have that "Benevolent" or "Protective" you know what it is right away; that's got to be a society.

[Henry:] Absolutely. They are incorporated, you see.

[Allen:] If they say "Social and Pleasure Club" you know what that is. We could go back to some of those different men on the different instruments that were outstanding in the street, like, you mentioned one bass player. What about some of the others? Who were they?

[Henry:] Well, Eddie Jackson was outstanding and so was another fellow, called Joe Howard. He was really outstanding. Because he used to play trumpet, and then after that, he went on the bass. Another [fellow, too, you call Pierre Anderson ?] I taught him on the bass. First time I ever [taught him a horn ?] was a trumpet, and then bass, when he got a bass, I showed him how to play bass, he could pick that bass up, run off with it. You see, any man that's a trumpet, if he ever could play the trumpet first, and then if he get ahold a bass, man, he can run off with that bass, because the fingering is so slow, the bass. Of course, sometimes you catch some passage is fast, but you see, if a fellow is used to playing a trumpet, you just tell him, "You going over it," you see, that's

the reason. [unintelligible] Joe Howard was one of them. And so was this other fellow they called Pierre. That's Harrison's cousin. Harrison Barnes's cousin. But he was really good.

[Allen:] While we are at it, what about his fellow Munsterfer Johnson you were telling me about?

[Henry:] Yeah, he's [unintelligible] uptown. He seen me to Charity Hospital one day, I'm telling you just had left when I was in Charity Hospital, because on that bed Number two, his cousin was in that bed Number two.

[Allen:] Do they call him "Mose," too?

[Henry:] Yeah, they call him Mose, but his name is Munsterfer Johnson. Some call him "Dude," they call him all kinds of names, but his right name is Munsterfer Johnson.

[Allen:] We'll have to go back and look for him. We went up by-- he lives up in the old Asylum, I think.

[Henry:] He live up there somewhere. I'm going to tell you--I don't know where he lives at--I'm going to tell you the truth.

[Allen:] Well, we'll find him. I think he lives near Lemon. I'll get Lemon to get him in contact with [us sometime ?].

[Henry:] Yeah, [he ?]

[Allen:] If I can find Lemon. That's another problem. Lemon doesn't have a telephone either. Now let's see; we've been over most of the instruments, except the drums and the trombone. Who were some of the drummers that were good?

[Henry:] What you mean, bass drum or--

[Allen:] Bass drum and snare.

[Henry:] Well Ernest Trepagnier, he used to play with us, he was one of the outstanding ones.

[Allen:] What band was this?

[Henry:] The Tuxedo. Celestin's Tuxedo; I mean the Original Tuxedo; I don't mean the [Young] Tuxedo what's here now.

[Allen:] And what instruments did he play?

[Henry:] Bass drum. Snare drum too; he used to play a trap drum; he used to play in the string band [orchestra] too. But in that brass band he was right there with you, all the time.

[Allen:] And what made him good? What did he have?

[Henry:] Well, I don't know what he had, but I know he had a feeling for music; that's all I could tell you.

[Allen:] Was he good especially on dirges, or the fast ragtime stuff--

[Henry:] Any one of them, anywhere. They come on with them dirges, I'm gonna tell the fact: I just believe we had the best band in town, the Tuxedo, because you couldn't find [no better ?] bass drummer. We had the best bass player and the best baritone; we had the best baritone, and you come down to trombone, it was nip and tuck on both bands [Tuxedo and Onward or Excelsior or?], they had good trombones, you see. On alto we had old man [Isidore] Barbarin and on clarinet, let me tell you ~~XXXX~~ our band was that Tuxedo Band. Original, of course, them other bands, they no [dog ?] could go. [Unintelligible] Don't you think that you could go to sleep now in them other bands is there with you. You had to work.

[Allen:] Would they have more than one band at a funeral ever?

[Henry:] Oh, man, I've seen the time they had a funeral--some fellows die, they must have had about four or five bands. Some of them, you understand, they wasn't organized bands, but they couldn't get major bands, you understand. Well, you can see it [today if you want to, some funerals ?] some guy, it was over in Algiers, and they had every band in town. But, if you see Pete and ask him, he could tell you about [it, and ?] also Pajaud could tell you.

[Allen:] Pete Bocage?

[Henry:] Yes.

[Allen:] Well, he'd probably know him personally.

[Henry:] Oh, yeah, yeah.

[Allen:] ~~XXXX~~ He knows everybody over there.

[Henry:] Yeah, he know them personally, yeah.

[Allen:] We'll cut it off for a second now.

[Machine off.]

[Allen:] Yeah, how many bands they'd have, and all that.

[Henry:] Yeah, well, they must have had about four or five bands. Now I'll tell you, if you really wants to find the whole history, if you see Peter Bocage, he can tell you more about it than me, because he knows the folks over there.

[Allen:] What about preachers, when they die? Do they have many bands, any of them?

[Henry:] No, them preachers want to save the money, I guess--their wife, I guess, want to keep the money [for the band. They don't want ?]--Very seldom that preacher have a band.

[Allen:] What about musicians?

[Henry:] Huh?

[Allen:] What about musicians?

[Henry:] When they die?

[Allen:] Uh-huh.

[Henry:] Oh, well, they have a band, sometimes, but--

[Zander:] But usually I guess they don't have time to belong to the other organizations.

[Henry:] Yeah, they always--but you see, if a musician die, well, they have a chance to have a band, because if the family wants a band, the Union will furnish them a band.

[Allen:] Lawrence Marrero had one recently.

[Henry:] Well, that's the idea.

[Allen:] [Matthew] Fats [Houston] was the grand marshal. I'll point him out to you some time at school; he works up there.

[Henry:] He was the president [at one time?] of our local, too.

[Allen:] Fats. Not William Houston.

[Henry:] No. You said--

[Allen:] I'm talking about Fats Houston, that plays drums.

[Henry:] Oh, that big fat fellow there? Oh, yeah, yeah.

[Zander:] I've seen him play.

[Henry:] Oh, him, he's a big fat fellow.

[Allen:] What about Rena, and Buddy Petit, and guys like that?

Did they have a band, or did you play?

[Henry:] Let me see, I believe Buddy Petit had a band, I think.

But I wasn't fooling with them then, [because ?]--I was playing with [a band ?] but I didn't fool with them very much.

[Allen:] Arthur Ogle had a band recently, too, and I missed that.

[Henry:] Yeah, they told me that Arthur [Ogle ?] had--oh, that was an outstanding drummer. That's the only drummer we ever had in the [unintelligible] wonderful man. Only drummer.

[Allen:] Any other snare drummers outstanding?

[Henry:] Well, let me see now--reckon not--this here boy Matthew[s] from Algiers--I think he died, too--

[Allen:] Would that be Remus, or Bebe?

[Henry:] Remus, I believe it was.

[Allen:] Remus? He just died a couple of years ago.

[Henry:] Yeah, yeah, yeah. [He died ?].



[Allen:] Well, I have a record of him in the sanctified church then.

[Henry:] Oh, him. You right, that's where he was in the [sancti- ?] because he stopped playing with us and then joined the church. You're right.

[Allen:] He played the bass drum.

[Henry:] He could play the snare and the bass drum. [Well, ?] I'm going to tell you, all them fellows, now; you see this fellow up here, Bill, Bill Matthews, he can play the drums too. It was his first instrument, you see. On the drum. Then after that he pick up trombone.

[Allen:] Who else would you name as outstanding on the snare drum?

[Henry:] Well, now, let me tell you, for the older drummer, I don't know. I think Happy [Goldston] is about the best now that you got around here, I mean in his class, you know. About them young fellows, I don't know nothing about them little teen-agers, but [unintelligible] the fellows, I know.

[Allen:] Who had a beautiful roll, in the old days?

[Henry:] Arthur Ogle. That's [unintelligible]. Let me see, Remus, too. And Johnny--[that little fellow ?] he played drums with us a long time ago; I disremember. [Probably Murkes.] But anyhow, they really had some very good drummers, outstanding drummers.

[Allen:] This guy played drums with you, snare drums a long time ago?

[Henry:] Who was that?

[Allen:] You were saying there was somebody else--

[Henry:] Oh, yeah. He used to play with the [Young] Tuxedo,  
too. I believe he [might ?]

[Allen:] Did he work in a dance orchestra?

[Henry:] He used to play in--yeah, with a dance orchestra, too.

[Allen:] Which dance orchestras would he work with?

[Henry:] I don't know, really, but I think he used to play around  
with Joe Howard and them I think. Because I know--<sup>at night</sup> he used to work  
at night.

[Allen:] Oh, yeah.

[Zander:] What happens with the men who work in the daytime in  
regular jobs, when they have to play in funerals? Do they have any  
trouble getting off, ever?

[Henry:] Well, some of them does. And some of them don't. Like  
Red [Clark], he works in the daytime, you see, but he can get off  
to play a funeral, just like Albert Warner. When Albert Warner  
used to work, Albert used to work at night, sometimes he worked  
in the day, but any time he wanted to get off, he'd get off to go  
play, go play [unintelligible] funeral [unintelligible].

[Allen:] Now, what about the second line? Did they have anybody  
who would sort of be a leader of the second line, would give them  
orders, any way, when they marching? [RBA had heard this, e.g.,  
"Forward, GO!!!"]

[Henry:] Well, no, I'm gonna tell you. Them guys, they just make up a gang, you understand? They say "We second line." They all get in there and they get together, get they head tight, and might do anything. You can't ever tell. And then again, sometimes them second liners are really good. You know they act nice. If you tell them to get on the side, they get on the side. But around up in here, them guys, if you tell them to get on the side, they'll put you on the side.

[Allen:] Where is that?

[Henry:] Around up in here.

[Allen:] In this neighborhood.

[Henry:] Yeah, around St. Philip Street. You see [unintelligible] but anyhow, the Union don't allow them no more, they used to play around here, any more, unless it's a society or a club, you understand, but no pick-up, you understand, like you say some guy die, if he's a corner man, you understand, a fellow always on the corner, they all got their gang, you know, well, they go pick up, they pick up money to get a band, to bury him. Well, now, when they do that, that's a--all your humbug come up. They all get the money, you get there, they pay the band off first, after that when you get out on the street, they wants to rule the band, want to tell the band what to do, you understand. That's second line, see, but now we don't fool with them no more. We don't play for nobody but if it's a club, organized club or society.

[Allen:] Do you remember that guy that was laid out in the Caldonia? They had a guy laid out in a barroom.

[Henry:] Oh, that was--he wasn't--belonged to no society.

[Allen:] How would they hire a band for those kind of guys? I mean, that's that pick-up thing--

[Henry:] Well, that's what I want to tell you now, you see-- he'd been a guy, you understand, around the barroom all his days, you see, that's all he ever did. Write lottery, ran the barroom, sleep in the barroom all his days. So he was in the gang, you understand, with them. That's the way it goes.

[Allen:] I've heard they've even had them laid out there in the barroom--

[Henry:] They told me that, but I didn't go there.

[Allen:] --with a jug of wine in their arms.

[Zander:] Oh, really?

[Henry:] Man, that ain't nothing. Chris Kelly, when he died, they had wine, had a jug of wine at his head and he had a jug at his feet. [??]

[Allen:] In the casket, or--

[Henry:] No, no--

[Allen:] Outside.

[Henry:] Not outside, in the, you know, in the house where he was laid out at. They had a jug of wine at his feet.

[Allen:] Oh, that's something. I never knew that.

[Henry:] But I'm tell you about that wine; that's one man that sure loved that wine. Man, he really drank wine, and he wouldn't eat. He'd go, go drink before he eat. 'Cause many a time I used to play with him over there, in the hall there, twelve o'clock, I'm going, it'd be time to eat, you understand. "I don't want nothing to eat. I'm going to go get me some wine." He's go drink [just cutting out of that stuff ?]. But me, I love to eat, eat anything.

[Allen:] What kind of wine would he drink?

[Henry:] Just any kind he could get. He didn't care what kind of wine it was. Oh, that man could drink the wine.

[Allen:] They used to have some funny names for wine. We were talking about that the other day, at a funeral.

[Henry:] Yeah. Well, I don't know much about drinking wine, but I know they have vino rosé, claret wine, sherry wine, port wine, [unintelligible] wine, orange wine, oh, there's all kind of wines.

[Allen:] Yeah, but I mean those winos, they call it different names, you know, that's what we were talking about, the funny little nicknames they put on it.

[Henry:] Them kind of names I didn't--I wasn't in that groove at all.

[Allen:] Yeah, I'm sure of it.

[Henry:] But me, I used to love my whiskey, my gin. I didn't drink much wine. Of course, [sometimes when,(or) I wouldn't want to tell you ?] I didn't drink it; I'd drink it sometimes, [and ?] it would make me happy, but my drink was whiskey or gin.

[Allen:] Your drink was whiskey?

[Henry:] Yeah, at that time.

[Allen:] What I want to know is, who were some of the good trombone players in the street?

[Henry:] Oh, well--I'll tell you.

[Allen:] I don't want you to mention any names, like Sunny Henry.

[Henry:] I ain't going to put myself in myself in it, you know. I'm going to call everybody except myself. Well, times back we had some very good trombone players in the street. Had a fellow they used to call August Rousseau. That's the man made me play first trombone. He made me play it, because he was playing second and I [was] playing first. He was on me so tight I just had to get out of the way. I've got my glass. [?] Yeah, he was tight; he was really tight. [You got all right?] Him, a fellow called August Rousseau, and a fellow they call Bat Delisle; they was the first class mens. And they have a fellow you call-- what's this guy's name? Well, anyhow, Vic Gaspard was one, too. Buddy Johnson was good but he wasn't no first class reader. Of course, he could read, you understand, but I mean he wasn't what

he was put up to be. Because after I come to town and I got in his band, I find out what they all could do. But when I was in the country, I thought maybe--you understand--just because they'd been in town and I'd heard talk of them, what they could do, when I first got here, I was kind of shy to meet them. I thought maybe--and then when I got in the band, see what they was doing, I could outgo them. Understand? Because of course I didn't know about back years, what the fellows used to do all the time. But when I come in and I got around them, I started playing the same things they [were] playing, I didn't study about them. So that's the way it goes. And another good trombone player, a fellow called [Honore] "Norah" Dutrey, he was a good trombone player, really good. Zue [Robertson?], too, fellow called Zue, that's an old time fellow, a real good trombone player.

[Allen:] Which one of those do you think would you name as outstanding for playing the dirges and hymns, slow pieces?

[Henry:] I'll tell you, this old fellow you call Bat. He was really outstanding.

[Allen:] Let me see now. Did they have any trombone players that played funerals with those barrelhouse brass bands, you know, those jump-up bands, that played good?

[Henry:] Oh, yeah, man, they had a gang of them.

[Allen:] Uh.

[Henry:] Water?

[Allen:] Yeah, I want a little water.

[Henry:] Why don't you tell someone, boy?

[Allen:] I should have told you.

I was wondering about bands like, say, the Bulls Club Brass Band. Did you ever hear of the Bulls Brass Band?

[Henry:] That Bulls Band was all mixed up, too. They had all kinds of people in that. They had a fellow in there name of [Arthur] Stevens. He had a band, you see. [He used to march with it ?] [Tell them it was ?] the Bulls Brass Band. They didn't get far. They didn't get so far.

[Allen:] How long did they last?

[Henry:] Not too long.

[Allen:] What about bands like the Camellia, you know, with the--

[Henry:] Oh, it--like the Camellia Band--well, I wasn't so much acquainted with that one, Dick [unintelligible].

[Allen:] Do you know the Terminal Band that Willie Parker used to play with?

[Henry:] Oh, yes, I know something about that one, because I used to play in that one myself with him sometimes.

[Allen:] Oh, yeah?

[Henry:] I used to go down there to a rehearsal. Willie Parker used to play clarinet. Try to play ninth ward. He never did make good on [clarinet ?], but boy, could he talk! [Talking to him ?]



he was the best clarinet player [that ever lived ?]. Just--just one of those things, you know, [he could tak ?] his way through. Of course, he hired me one time to play, and of course, I played with him. They had music all right, you understand, but nobody to play it.

[Allen:] Did they play funerals, or--

[Henry:] I never saw them play no funeral[s?].

[Allen:] What would they play, mostly?

[Henry:] They'd play like a Carnival Day, something like that, you see. They could get a job/the big days like that, they want bands, see, so if they can't get a good band, they just have to get anybody they can, just to make out.

[Allen:] Ever hear of the Tulane Band?

[Henry:] Oh, yeah, I used to play in the Tulane Band. Amos Riley was the leader of that band. It was pretty fair.

[Allen:] Who would be in that band, the Tulane Band?

[Henry:] [Unintelligible] them guys are all dead, pretty nearly. Amos Riley, I believe--he was the leading man in there. Pretty near all them guys are dead.

[Allen:] Do you remember any of them's names?

[Henry:] Amos Riley, I know, he was the trumpet player. Joe Howard, he used to play with them too, sometimes. And also I used to play with them sometimes.

[Allen:] What did Joe Howard play with that band?

[Henry:] Bass [horn?].

[Allen:] Was that a reading band, or sort of a?--

[Henry:] Well, yes, they did pretty good, you understand, they had a few men there reading, but, of course, they didn't have enough men, you understand, to make the thing go like it should go, you see. A few of them could read; the rest of them couldn't read.

[Allen:] Remember the Diamond Brass Band? Call it the Diamond, Diamond Stone--it's old, old time.

[Henry:] [Unintelligible] I've heard of it, but I don't know it. You see, when I came here I was interested in all good mens, what could read. [The men ?] that couldn't read, I didn't have anything to do with them, because the men, when I learned, I learned how to take care of myself in my own [end ?]. But the other guys there, if they couldn't read, I didn't have much [to do ?]--of course, I'd be with them, but if they asked me to play, I'd tell them no, because I know they're going to play something that I couldn't play. First thing you know, I'd be getting in an argument, so I just gave--well, now, when the right mens come along, had the stuff, had them cards, reading, well--I just went on [with them ?].

[Allen:] What about the Zulus, back when you first came here?

Do you remember them then?

[Henry:] Yeah. The Zulus were here when I first came here, but there was a tough gang [then (or) of them ?]. It's different now to what it used to be a long time ago.

[Allen:] Well, did they hire any special brass band when you first came here?

[Henry:] They used to hire the Eureka, too, but of course at them times the Eureka wasn't up to standard, like it's supposed to be now.

[Unintelligible]

[Allen:] When did the Eureka start improving?

[Henry:] I'm going to tell you, I hate to say it, but after I got in that band. After I got in that band, that band went right on up, because in the first place, Albert didn't have nobody in with him to play. He had Red playing with him. Red couldn't play. Of course, the other fellow he had, Cornish, used to play--[unintelligible]-- he didn't have nobody to support him, you understand, so that's the way it went. So when they come and got me, Albert told me he wanted a man to be as good as him or better, said if he didn't get that, he was going to quit. So he come and got me. After he come and got me, well, I stayed in there a while, the band just went on up. I can vouch for that.

[Allen:] Who came into the band to improve it?

[Henry:] That's what I'm telling you now. I did.

[Allen:] I know you did. But who else, who--did they change much?

[Zander:] When did you come into it?

[Henry:] The year--I couldn't--it must have been around '40 something I come in there; '43 or '44, somewhere around there.

[Allen:] Was it during the war?

[Henry:] No, I believe it was a little after--yeah, it was during the war. Somewhere around in there.

[Compare Albert Warner, Red Clark interviews.]

(Machine off.)

[Allen:] Let's see. We were talking about the Eureka has improved, huh?

[Henry:] Yeah.

[Allen:] Did the trumpets improve, do you think?

[Henry:] Well, I'll tell you. Yeah, Percy and [Willie] "Paj" [Pajaud], well, they have one weak spot in there. Of course, he does the best he can. Because I'm tell you about Sheik [George Colar] here. Sheik helped us out one time. We went on a job, we didn't have no trumpet player. We waited for the trumpet player, nobody didn't come. So Sheik held up the band the best he could, so that day I and Albert got together; we say, "Sheik gonna stay in the band because he did a favor for the band, did a favor for the band." No trumpet [player] didn't show up but him.

[Allen:] He works hard.

[Henry:] Yeah, he really does the best he can, I reckon so.

[Allen:] I was wondering, did they ever have horses with men on them in the old parades, the old funerals, I mean? Like they would in the parades?

[Henry:] No.

[Allen:] Never would have a horse with a man on it.

[Henry:] In funerals, no. In the parades they'd have horses. But no funerals.

[Zander:] Do they ever have any kind of memorial services or anything after a person has died, or something like that, I mean where you'd have, maybe the society would have a service for all their members that had died, or anything like that?

[Henry:] No, they don't have--once you are dead and gone, you're soon forgotten. They don't have a "Memorial [Day. No kind] at all for you, not unless some date they might set, you understand, to have that, if [the ?] people want that. But otherwise they don't have that.

[Allen:] They wouldn't have a band of music, then.

[Henry:] When?

[Allen:] After you're buried a long time.

[Henry:] No, no.

[Allen:] Ten years [after that ?]

[Henry:] No, no.

[Allen:] Course they do have that Memorial Dau service at Chalmette with a band.

[Henry:] Oh, yes, they have [services ?].

[Zander:] That's what I was wondering about--

[Henry:] Not, you understand--

[Allen:] Not an individual, the whole, soldiers and everything. What do they play down there? I'm trying to remember what they play. Did you ever work at Chalmette?

[Henry:] Many times; many times I've worked down there. Just about a couple of years that I haven't worked down there. I used to work down there every year. If I didn't work my band, I used to work with John [Casimir].

[Allen:] What would they play? What type of thing?

[Henry:] They'd play a hymn or anything there, then after they'd get way down there, they'd play a [secular] song, play anything they want [to.]

[Allen:] Play some ragtime, eve, after they got away, huh?

[Henry:] Yeah. You see, after they go down there and come back, they play, they play anything.

[Zander:] Is there much difference between what you play, say, in Algiers and in Carrollton and in different sections of the city?

[Henry:] Well, I'll tell you one thing, Algiers is the best place for me to play, because you just have one way to go, and one way to come. It's shorter than what it is over here, sometimes, because

the funerals over here--sometimes they carry you I don't know how far, but see over in Algiers they got one [set ?] place to the cemetery, come on back up to the hall. They can't make no/round [unintelligible] like they do over here.

[Allen:] They walk you to death some days, eh?

[Henry:] Where, over in Algiers?

[Allen:] Here. Over on this side.

[Henry:] On this side, yeah, yeah. They walk you on this side, yeah, you bet your boots on that.

[Allen:] Did many of the men work only in brass bands? Not work in the dance orchestras?

[Henry:] Me, I'm one. I got so--the orchestras-- I didn't work with the orchestras because I was working otherwise and didn't fool with it, with the orchestras.

[Allen:] I'm trying to think of anybody I know who--like that, Old Man [Isidore] Barbarin, he didn't work much in orchestras.

[Henry:] No, he work--

[Allen:] [Only the (or) mainly ?] bands.

[Henry:] He didn't work in orchestras at all, Old Man Barbarin.

[Allen:] What about Georgie Hooker? Would he play in orchestras?

[Henry:] No, George didn't play in orchestra. Of course, they had a job. He used to work out here at the [Morgan Line ?]. Them fellows, they had a job, you understand. But when you want to get

off, they could get off any time they wanted, go play the job at the day, work a--they work a half a day, get off and go play a job in the evening. Then the next morning they'd go back to the job, see? That's the way they used to do.

[Allen:] How big a--how many tunes would a--hymns and dirges would those bands play, years gone by? Would they have a lot of them, or a few?

[Henry:] Well; they had quite a few of them they used to play.

[Allen:] More than they do now, or less?

[Henry:] Yeah, more than they do now.

[Allen:] More hymns?

[Henry:] Yes. Because, I'm going to tell you why, them people, when they says to meet and you're going to start at one time, then they're there, and then when you leave the hall, I mean the church, wheresomever they going, they plays a dirge right behind one another almost, you understand, but now them grand marshals [tell you ?], "Don't play nothing until you get to such and such a place." Well, of course, if that's up to us [then they say don't play none ?]

[Allen:] So they played more dirges, too.

[Henry:] Yes.

[Allen:] More dirges, more hymns.

[Henry:] Than what they do now.

[Allen:] Uh-huh.



[Henry:] That's right.

[Allen:] Have they changed and brought any new tunes in, any new hymns or any new dirges now that you know of?

[Henry:] [Who changed ?], my band, or who?

[Allen:] Well, any of the bands that you know of.

[Henry:] Well, Dick, I couldn't say, but I kind of think that the Eureka has a few more--that's what I've heard, now, I haven't--since I've been like I am now [with one leg], I haven't thought much about the band, but that's what I heard.

[Allen:] But is it new stuff, or is it old stuff that they bring back again?

[Henry:] Well, I don't know because I haven't saw it yet.

[Allen:] Yeah, but I mean, say, in 1954. Did they get any new stuff back in those times?

[Henry:] Oh, yeah, man, they used to [keep ?] new stuff all the time.

[Allen:] Uh-huh. Well, the new stuff they would get, would it have been things that they were bringing back from years gone by, or would they pick up a tune that was popular now, or what?

[Henry:] Well, Dick, some of the pieces had been from years gone by. Now for instance, this piece you call "The Flowers"; that was a--

[Allen:] "Garlands of Flowers"? Was that the one?

SUNNY HENRY  
Reel IV--retyped  
October 21, 1959

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[Henry:] Yeah.

[Allen:] (Sings?) Let me see, I can't remember how that goes.

[Henry:] That thing, that was a tough one, too.

[Allen:] That dirge, with the pretty trumpet solos.

[Henry:] Yeah, yeah.

[Allen:] You all recorded that; that's pretty. It's about to run out. I'm afraid we'd better close up shop for the day and let it-- so I'll turn the machine off.

END OF REEL IV

TULANE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA PROJECT FOR INTERVIEWING  
PERSONS WHO CAN CONTRIBUTE TO KNOWLEDGE OF HISTORY  
OF NEW ORLEANS JAZZ

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Charles Henry  
(Interviewee)

x Richard B. Allen  
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(Form A)

Note: "Sunny" is correct spelling.