

January 8, 1959

Retyped

[Revised & dated
Jan 4, 1959]

(Stuttering not transcribed)

Henry: Charles Henry is my name.

Allen: Uh-huh. And, is that your full name?

Henry: Charles Henry--that's my full name.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Russell: Have any middle name?

Henry: No, none at all. No more than Charles Henry.

Allen: Well, where did you get your nickname?

Henry: Oh, well, I don't know; the boys just call me "Sonny," that's all, you understand.

Allen: When you were young, huh?

Henry: Yeah, when I was a kid, coming up.

Allen: And ah. . . by the way--did your father or your uncles or anybody in your family play music?

Henry: No. My brother played; but that son-of-a-gun--he played alto, you see, in the band--Magnolia [Plantation] band . . . they called it the Eclipse band--and I was a kid, you understand, going to school, but him, he was in the field, working. And I so every day I'd--his alto, I used to grab hold of his alto and play it. He'd come from work--^{by ned}finally, and he'd come jump on me-- "Hiii! You had my horn." I'd say, "No"--my mother--she'd help me out, you understand--she used to hold up for me, Well, and so he'd say, "I don't wanna, I don't wanna you to fool with my horn anymore; if I catch you, I'm going to beat you." All right and so I--So what he did . . . he took his mouthpiece in the field -- taken it and carried it in the field. All right. And so my brother-in-law, that's called Effie Jones . . . with my sister--he had my sister-- he was the trumpet player, a cornet player at that time . . . and I used, used to

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go there, then, and I used to could play his horn--the trumpet. I got so I was starting playing, and he (stutters) took the doggone trumpet away, and then I didn't have a thing to play.. And so, my father--I told him about it--and so he said, "You go to the store, and you tell the storekeeper to send you--to go ahead and get you a trumpet." On the train that morning--I run to the train by the road there, and I told the storekeeper, and he said, "Okay, Henry, I'll have it here for you tonight." Train came that night, by Ned, and there it was. I took it and carried it home, and, by Ned, all night with the trumpet; I used to raise so much sand there in the morning 'til three o'clock I was playing the trumpet, and my daddy told me, said, "Listen here", say, "I got to go to work, and you're going to school." Say, "But now you put that thing down." And I put it down--return in the day when they gone out, and I'd play.

Russell: How old were you then, when you started?

Henry: Oh, I must have been around fifteen years old or so; I guess it was somewhere around in that neighborhood.

Russell: Can you tell us just where you were born, and . . .

Henry: Yes, I was born on Magnolia Plantation; they used to call it Lawrence Post Office and Governor [H. C.] Warmouth Plantation--yeah.

Russell: Uh-huh. What was the date of your birth?

Henry: I was born on November 17, [18] '85.

Russell: 1885.

Henry: Yeah.

Allen: That's the Lawrence Post Office?

Henry: Yes, sir, that's what it used to be, at that time; I'm giving you the whole history of the thing, you understand, just the way it is, you understand?

Russell: That's right, yeah. That's good.

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Henry: Yeah.

Allen: Sure.

Henry: Magnolia Plantation was Lawrence Post Office . . .

Allen: Was Warmouth still governor when you were born?

Henry: Gov. H. C. Warmouth--he musta, because I found him there, when I could, you understand?

Albert Warner: You don't mean Walmsley that was pres--that was mayor?

Henry: No--Warmouth... W-a-r-m-o-[u]-t-h. . . Gov. H. C. Warmouth--that was his plantation.

Allen: Yeah. Well, I heard about him being governor.

Henry: Yeah.

Allen: Oh, I was going to ask you another thing--how far did you go in school?

Henry: Well, I didn't go no further than the seventh grade.

Allen: Seventh grade.

Henry: At that time, you know, it ain't like it is now, but seventh grade in them times was work.

Russell: Was your school right down there on the plantation?

Henry: Yes, yes, school used to be there.

Russell: Well, was there a little town, or a settlement there, too--how was it?

Henry: No, it wasn't a settlement--just a plantation.

Russell: Was there a big plantation house in those days?

Henry: Yeah; sugar cane--yeah, ^{they} we were raising sugar cane. ?

Russell: Was there a great big plantation house there, too?

Henry: Yes, yes . . . plantation house was there, too.

Allen: And ah, let's see, you got to the seventh grade, you say?

Henry: Yeah.

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Allen: How old were you when you started school?

Henry: When I started school, I must have started school around about seven years.

Allen: So you'd have been about fourteen or fifteen when you got out of school?

Henry: Yeah, that's what I'm saying.

Allen: Uh-huh. So you took up cornet about the time you were finishing off school--around then.

Henry: Yeah . . . yes.

Allen: So we got the date pretty well on that.

Russell: The alto, ^d your brother's alto was the first instrument you played?

Henry: Yeah, was the first I tried on, but he . . .

Allen: Uh-huh.

Henry: . . . scared me so. I couldn't fool with it any more.

Russell: What kind of a band did they have there?

Henry: A good band--Jim Humphrey used to come down there and teach the boys, you understand?

Russell: Jim Humphrey taught.

Henry: Yeah, Jim Humphrey used to come there and teach, and, of course, me--I didn't gamble or do nothing at all--I was a little kid--I'd get in, get right in the window there. Jim Humphrey used to show them fellows everything what he done there. [That was Jim Humphrey.]

Russell: How many did they have in that band?

Henry: Sixteen.

Russell: Sixteen?

Henry & Allen: Uh-huh.

Henry: And so, by Ned -- Jim Humphrey used to show 'em; then, when Jim Humphrey gone, I could go there and show them everything what Jim Humphrey

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showed them, see?

Allen: Oh, I see.

Henry: And then after that, I got in the band; they kept on after me. Well, after I grew a little more older, well, they wanted me to get in the band.

Russell: What instruments did they have--how many cornets, how many trombones, and all?

Henry: I'm going to tell you--they only one one trombone.

Russell: One trombone.

Henry: Yeah--valve trombone. . . that's right.

Russell: Who played that; do you remember?

Henry: Yeah; it was a fellow they called Musterfer Johnson, that's his name.

He's right here in town; sometimes I see him when I go uptown yet.

Allen: He's still alive, huh?

Henry: Yes, he's still alive yet. But--and so, after that he was on the trombone; and so, what they wanted him to do--they wanted him to change; they wanted him to take E-flat trumpet.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Henry: He told them that he would take the E-flat trumpet if they would give me the trombone, because he knew I would make that. Okay. Then they asked me do I want to play trombone. I told them, "Yeah, I'll play trombone." So, they give me the trombone. And, then Jim Humphrey came there then, that night; and he said "Where you get him from?" So, my brother said, "That's my brother," he said; "That's the little fella used to be in the window all the time."

[Humphrey] Say, "I'm going to see what he know; you got the trombone." And so the first doggone piece he brought was "Whistlin' Rufus" [by Kerry Mills?]

Allen: Oh, yeah; that's a good tune.

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Henry: And lemme tell you and so, he jumped on me, --he say, "Comme ga ya" [✓ sp.] . . he say, "Come on here"--I don't know what he say in French, but he say something. Well anyhow, he jumped on me. He say, "Come on, I want to see what you know: I've been hearing talk of you." All right. Look here then. [sings tune]. You know, he say, "Comme ga ya; where you get him at?" And he say, "Go on down, let me see." And I played the whole doggone thing. And then, Jim Humphrey told the boys, he say, "Now looka here--that young boy done come in here, and look what he done did. You fellows been around here for years, and he done come in and done beat all of you." Well, it just was that thing.

Russell: Was it a valve trombone?

Henry: Valve trombone, that's right.

Allen: Say ah . . this Mumford Johnson--where does he live at, now?

Henry: Musterfer Johnson . . . he lives somewhere uptown there, but, you see-- I tell you, how I could see him sometime, be going in the, up in the Washington Avenue Cemetery--that's where I generally sees him all the time.

Allen: Oh, he visits the graves in there?

Henry: Yeah, he visits there.

Allen: Well, I'll ask the caretaker; he'll know. Munsard?

Henry: Huh?

Allen: What's his name, Mumford?

Henry: Musterfer.

Allen: Musterfer.

Henry: Musterfer is his first name.

Russell: If you happen to see him, try to find out where he lives, if you think of it; we'd like to see him.

Henry: Okay.

Russell: We'd appreciate it very much.

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Henry & Allen: Yeah.

Russell: Let's see--to get back to your band . . . how many cornets did they have about?

Henry: Let's see--Effie, Pierre--they musta had about four trumpet, and clarinet--two clarinet . . .

Allen: Who were the trumpet players?

Henry: Effie Jones was one, and John Anderson was two; Thomas Barnes (?) was a trumpet player, [This doesn't agree with later statement; played clarinet later statement.] too--that's makes it three; and what [were] the others?

Allen: Did you say Pierre or something?

Henry: Well, but Pierre came in there a little after they, you understand, the band [?]. But after that, they had Pierre, Effie Jones, Harrison Barnes, and John--John Anderson. And doggone, I remember . . . when they got Pierre ^{Anderson} in that doggone band . . . God dern it . . . trumpet player . . . Harrison Barnes just like you see Harrison Baenes over there? He ain't nobody's fool--I'm telling you--I'm gonna tell you--he's [?] ^{He's really good} He's a doggone good musicianer. Because, I started to playing just a little ahead of him--I used to help him along, too . . . yeah.

Allen: Was Pierre Anderson and John Anderson related?

Henry: No--Pierre Anderson, no, and John Anderson--no. I know they wasn't no kin at all.

Allen: Two clarinets, you said?

Henry: Yeah. They had E-flat--Alfred Barnes, that was Harrison's brother--and Thomas Barnes; that was his brother . . . that was his oldest brother, the one they called . . .

Russell: Was one of them B-flat, and one E [flat]?

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Henry: Yeah, one B and one E that's right, yeah.

Russell: How many alto horns?

Henry: They had two--first and second. My brother played alto--Willie Henry.

Russell: And the baritone horns?

Henry: Baritone was Freddy Barnes . . . Freddy Barnes.

Allen: Was was the other alto player, other than your brother?

Henry: There was a fella, but he's dead now; they used to call him "Ybo"

[Sp. ?] --- I don't know--just a damn nickname, but I know they used to call him "Ybo." But his right name, I done forget his right name, but I know he used to play the first and my brother used to play second, see?

Allen: Uh-huh.

Russell: Just one baritone, then?

Henry: One baritone.

Russell: Yeah. And what about tuba?

Henry: Oh, yeah--a fella called Wright Reddick--he played the tuba.

Allen: Wright Reddick?

Henry: Yeah; Wright Reddick, one of my cousins.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Russell: What kind of a tuba was it? It didn't wrap around you like Red Clark's horn?

Henry: No, it was an old

Russell: . . . Upright.

Henry: . . . upright. *tuba*

Russell: How many drums?

Henry: Two drums.

Russell: Two, regular drums.

Allen: What kind of cymbals did they use?

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Henry: Well, they had the cymbal on the drum there, you see . . .

Allen: Like [Robert] "Son" [Lewis] uses now?

Henry: Yeah.

Allen: Wire beater, the same as him?

Henry: No, they didn't have no wire beater, but they had two cymbals, you understand—they had one on the drum, sitting on the drum, right in there, and the other cymbal would beat on top of it. They didn't have no ring like they got to beat now.

Russell: Yeah--use the two cymbals.

Henry: Yeah.

Allen: Oh, I see. And ah, who was the snare drummer?

Henry: Jim McGinnis.

Allen: Did we get the bass drum player's name on there?

Russell: I don't believe so.

Henry: Robert Reddick.

Russell: Oh, that's right; you did give his name.

Allen: No, he gave the tuba player.

Russell: Who was the tuba player?

Henry: Wright Reddick . . .

Allen: They were brothers?

Russell: They were brothers--that's right, yeah.

Henry: They were brothers, yeah.

Allen: I see.

Russell: Any piccolo, or other instruments?

Henry: No, no piccolos

Russell: Any saxophones?

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Henry: No; at that time they didn't have no saxes at all. But they had them alto, you see; they didn't have no saxophones.

Russell: Did they ever use more than that one trombone? I just wondered--you said there were sixteen pieces, and I wondered if they had . . .

Henry: No, they just only one trombone . . . yeah.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Russell: When Jim Humphrey wasn't there, who was the leader then?

Henry: My brother-in-law, ^{EFFIE} Eddie Jones--he was leader of the band, you see.

Russell: Did Jim Humphrey ever play with the band, or did he conduct it with a stick or something--what did he do?

Henry: The first way he'd do, he would get the band on its foots, you see, and then he'd ah, he'd commence ^{come in} with his trumpet, and then, again, he'd get 'em all straight first, you see. But the first thing he would do, that battery [Fr., ^{BATTERIE} battre, drum]--that's the first thing he would get straight first, that battery . . . that's the bass and the trombone and the drum and everything--after he'd get all that straight first, and then he'd jump on the trumpets, you see, and he'd get them. Because that battery, that's the foundation of the band, you see. And so when he'd get that straight, then after that, the trumpets, you see--he'd get on them. And then, when he'd get them straight, all right, he'd say now, "Come on, let's go; everybody." But what he would do, he would make the battery get in there first, you understand, and get everything straight first, and then, trumpets. I gone tell you, the way he taught the boys, I think it was the right way.

Allen: What did they play? What kind of music did they play?

Henry: I gone tell you, he used to write the stuff, you see.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Russell: I wanted to ask some more about Jim Humphrey--did he give private

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lessons, too, take each man by himself sometimes during the day, or what?

Henry: No, no, he wouldn't be there; you see, Jim Humphrey only came out there when they sent for him.

Russell: Did he come down every week, about, or every . . .

Henry: Twice a week, sometimes. ✓

Russell: Twice a week, sometimes.

Henry: Yeah.

Russell: Just stay a couple of hours, or how long?

Henry: Well, he'd stay about three or four hours, and . . .

Russell: Yeah. Just for the band, but no private lessons--he didn't teach each one?

Henry: No . . . no, he didn't teach private.

Russell: Oh, you were talking about the music they played--what kind of marches, or overtures--or what all did you play?

Henry: No, there wasn't no overtures--just marches, you understand?

Russell: Ever play for dances? --that is, did you play any waltzes and quadrilles, or anything?

Henry: Yes--a little waltzes we used to play, yes.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Henry: But, I'm going to tell you just the whole history of it--course that band didn't start to playing the real heavy music until I start the band off myself, you understand? After I got in the band, you see. And, then I used to write to H. N. White . . .

Allen: Uh-huh.

Russell: Oh, yeah.

Henry: Cleveland, Ohio, that music and he used to send me samples, and

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I'd take the samples, and I used to--the boys--go around and show 'em all their parts. And so, Jim Humphrey, one time--I was in the band, too; I never will forget that--I told him, "I got a piece here, called "Greater Pittsburgh March"--split time [2/4]. And, then at the train, you understand, every time the train would come, every time he'd come down, well, the band used out there and meet him at the train, you understand.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Henry: And so, we went there one evening with that piece. He turned and looked around when he got it, and he say, "I didn't give y'all that." ✓
He say, "Y'all done got y'all another teacher." Says, "Naw"--my brother and ^{in-law} be
Effie told him, says, "Him, that little fellow used to in the window--he showed that." "I knowed that had some smart-alecks around here" [laughter].
Yeah, that's the truth, from here to heaven. I would tell a worse lie. Yeah.
And so, then after that, he was down on me--everytime he comes, but I didn't care. Because everytime he come, I had him [] every time there, they had a lesson there when he come down, I'd meet him, and I'd be the first one first man, he'd mind me, and be setting down there and wait 'til the rest of them be through with it.

Allen: Well, before you came, they were using some of his music, then, huh?

Henry: Huh?

Allen: Before you came in the band, they were using his music?

Henry: Yeah, sho', yeah, yeah. But after all they, they continued using his music. But, I was on the side, getting them music, you understand?

Allen: Uh-huh. Well, what did he write out for them?

Henry: Oh, he used to write out all kinds of little stuff--little light stuff, you understand . . . he'd give them.

Russell: How did he go down, on the train, you say? Was there a train . . . ?

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Henry: Yeah, oh, yeah--they had a train; you could go down there in the morning and in the evening, and--they had a train that used to leave here eight o'clock in the morning, and she would, ah . . . eight o'clock in the morning . . . and then she'd come back about four o'clock in the evening--come back [from] town, you see. But him, the way Jim Humphrey used to come, he used to come at night; and there was a train used to get down there about six o'clock in the evening, and he would stay on until the next morning; [when the] eight o'clock train would come up, well, he could get on the train and come on back.

Russell: What's down there now? Anything left of that plantation?

Henry: I think it's all orange farm now [of what] it used to be down there, yeah.

Russell: How far is that down the river?

Henry: It's about thirty-five miles from here.

Russell: Thirty-five?

Henry: Yeah, just about.

Allen: Well, when he wrote out things, to get back to that--would he write out spirituals, or 6/8 marches, or 2/4 marches, or hymns or what?

Henry: Yeah--hymns and 6/8's and--yeah, he was really good; he could sit right down there, and your part and your part, he'd write it out and give it to you . . . and you should play it.

Allen: What were some of the hymns?

Henry: Oh, let me see . . . I . . . well, I dis-remember, ✓ ?, but I know it was "Swanee River;" I know that's one thing he used to write out. And but now like now we plays few march--well, he used to give 'em a 6/8, you understand, like that. But no split--time music . . .

Allen: No split-time.

Henry: I didn't see any at that time. But, I know I got it in there when I got

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in the band, see?

Russell: Did you ever play, like "By and By" or "[In] Gloryland" down in the country?

Henry: No, down there, no--not at all.

Russell: None of those.

Allen: Did ah ...

Henry: I didn't remember that.

Allen: . . . Well, when he'd. Let's see, how was I going to put this. Did they ever play by ear, down there, before you came in the band?

Henry: Very, very, very little by ear.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Henry: I'm telling you, all they knowed they learnt, see that.

Allen: Yeah, uh-huh.

Russell: What about parades? Did you ever go out on parades in those days?

Henry: Oh, yes--used to go from place to place; we used to go to a place called Woodland, and used to go to St. Sophie (✓ sp.), and go to Deer Range, [or other places?]

Russell: What kind of parades would those be--different organizations? . . . lodges, clubs, or what?

Henry: Yes, yes--that's right--lodges.

Russell: Uh-huh.

Allen: Any special days for parades?

Henry: Well, it would be on a Sunday. } that's the only time. Because they used to work every day -- sun-up until sun-down. cup

Allen & Russell: (Interspersed during preceding Henry--uh-huh, yeah, I see, on Sunday)

Russell: What kind of work did you do, otherwise?

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Henry: Well, I'm gonna tell you the facts--me, when I first went to work, I was a good size, I went under the water-carrier, you understand--to carry water to the people in the fields.

Allen & Russell: Uh-huh.

Henry: But, I didn't do too much of the work. (laughter)

Warner: ✓ [You don't care too] much about it now (more laughter)

Henry: I didn't do too much work, I'm telling you a fact, yeah here; I did more work since I came up here that what I did down there.

Russell: What--the men down there, though, on the plantation--what did they raise? Sugar, cotton, or what?

Henry: Sugar cane.

Russell: Sugar.

Henry: Yeah, that's all--cane.

Allen: Did they sing when they were cutting cane?

Henry: Huh?

Allen: Did they sing when they were cutting cane?

Henry: Yeah; you could sing--you could do anything you want down there.

Allen: What would they sing?

Henry: Oh, well, they'd sing any kind of a church hymn, anything you want.

Yeah, they used to sing.

Russell: Did they have any blues in those days?

Henry: Well,

Russell: You don't remember?

Henry: no, I don't remember no blues.

Allen: Do you remember "I Wonder Where My Baby's Gone Tonight?" (laughter)

Henry: Shoot.

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Warner: Maybe she'd be gone when he'd get there. (laughter)

Henry: Maybe so, she'd be in the back yard.

Allen: I just wondered when that tune came out--if you remember when it came out?

Henry: No, no, I--no, I don't know; I really couldn't tell you.

Allen: Well, were you in church then? Did you join church when you were young?

Henry: Yeah, I joined church, but this is the idea of it, you see--when I joined church, I liked the church all right, but these here--and then the boys had done brought me a brand-new trombone, too, you know.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Russell: Well, what kind of church would they have--mostly Catholic, or Baptist, or what were they?

Henry: No, down there [they had] Baptist.

Russell: Baptist.

Henry: And so, that trombone, I used to love that trombone so much--course, I in church sometimes, though. And so, that trombone, I carried away from there.

Russell: What kind was that--was that a King, too, that came from White, or what?

Henry: No, that was a Holton.

Russell: Holton.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Henry: Yeah.

Russell: When did you change to the slide trombone?

Henry: Let me tell you about the slides--I changed to the slide when I came here. I played a bass, and everything, because Wright--the fellow was used to play the bass--well, he had got sick.

Allen: Uh-huh.

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Russell: I wanted to ask a little bit more about the plantation life down there--funerals, did they have any funerals like they do here, with the brass band?

Henry: Well, no--no.

Russell: You never played for any funerals . . .

Henry: No, I never played funerals until . . .

Russell: Came here.

Henry: . . . until I came here.

Russell: Did you ever see one like that down there, any place?

Henry: No, no.

Russell: No band.

Henry: No, they didn't have a band in the funeral.

Allen: Did the band ever play in the church?

Henry: Oh, oh, they played in the church, yeah--they had a big time, you see; because, you see, the parade--when we'd make the parade, why, we used to play a little piece in church.

Allen: Uh-huh. What would the people sing in church?

Henry: Oh, "himes" [hymns].

Allen: Same as ever, huh?

Henry: Yeah, same.

Russell: Did they have a good beat to it, you know, with a lot of hand-clapping and all, or were they sort of slow and slow

Henry: Oh, man, did they--they had a jolly time there; cake-walking and doing all that kind of stuff, man, and . . . ✓

Allen: In the church?

Henry: Sho' man; they was having a good time, man.

Allen: Sho'.

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Henry: Why, sho'.

Russell: Yeah.

Henry: Clapping their hands there, man, and . . .

Russell: Way it oughta be.

Henry: . . . the old man there--"Jubilee" time, you know.

Allen: Well, that's what the Bible says--you read the 151st Psalm [he means the 150th Psalm], the very last Psalm--it says that, you know.

Henry: Oh, yeah. Yeah, they used to have a good one.

Allen: Uh-huh. It was a "Jubilee", huh, in church?

Henry: Yeah, boy, absolutely; I loved it, too.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Henry: I used to love it.

Allen: When did you come to the city?

Henry: I came to the city around, let me see--I just couldn't exactly 19¹² --- around in 1913, I think, somewhere around there--'13 or '14, something like that.

Russell: Before the, before the war, the First World War--that was before the war, then, you came up?

Henry: Yeah, yeah.

Warner: Just before the First World War.

Allen: Was it before "The Big Storm"?

Warner: Yeah, yeah. . . .

Henry: Yeah, it must have been before "The Big Storm."

Allen: "The Big Storm" . . .

Warner: "The Big Storm" was 1915.

Henry: 1915.

Allen: You were here in the city, when the storm passed?

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Henry: Oh, yeah.

Allen: Did you ah--were you in the Spanish-American war, by any chance?

Henry: No.

Russell: No, he wouldn't be but . . .

Henry: No . . .

Russell: . . . thirteen years old. [Unless he was "Truthing" about his age.]

Henry: . . . I didn't go in the Spanish war. [check with Jim Robinson].

Allen: Uh-huh.

Henry: I wish I had been in it, now--I'd be getting some big money.

Russell: Yeah, would be getting a good pension.

Allen & Henry: Yeah.

Allen: Well, when you came to the city, you had been playing with that Magnolia band, all that time?

Henry: Yeah--no, I wasn't playing with it all that time; but of course, before I came here, I was playing in the Magnolia band.

Allen: Who else was you playing with in the country; any other bands?

Henry: No, no--no other bands.

Allen: No other bands.

Henry: Eh--no.

Allen: So when you came to the city, who did you join up with?

Henry: Uh, when I came here--let me see, who did I first go with? -- was it the Tuxedo? --I played a little while with Amos Riley.

Warner: Amos Riley?

Allen: Uh-huh.

Henry: Yeah. Well, I wasn't playing--I hadn't joined no band at all . . .

Russell: Yeah.

Henry: . . . but I was working, you understand--but I--they used to come get

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me sometime, and I'd play.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Henry: But, I'm gonna tell you--well the first band--the funeral I played, it was the Excelsior Band . . . came there to get me one day to play--no uniform; I didn't have a uniform then, because I wasn't interested in playing--I was working.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Henry: And Vic, Vic Gaspard came around there with George Moret--he come get me to play. I told him I didn't have no uniform--I was back in the yard, call my wife, and she says, "There's some musicianers out there want to see you." I say, "I wonder what they want with me out there?" I went to the door; he say, "Your name Henry?" I say, "Yeah"--Vic was along with George Moret--he say, "I want you to play a job with me," you see. I say, "I haven't go no uniform." Well, man, George Moret [✓] 'lowed, he says, "Can you read?" I he told him, "Yeah." He says, "Well, I don't want the uniform; I want the man." [laughter]--just like that. Well, so when I went with Vic, Vic was playing [✓] trombone, I got on the pieces, [✓] but I couldn't hardly walk, you understand, my first time.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Henry: And I'd get in step. So Vic told me, he says, "4/4 time" takes it slow; and I took it easy--I was playing, but I was a little afraid I was going to fall sometime, you know. So, well, after I played one piece, reading, going on down--so Vic told me, said, "Now, listen; you take it easy, 'cause this is your first time playing a funeral." Says, "It's kind of difficult for you to, you know, catch the step." Well, then he showed me the step, you see, and so the second piece we played, I commenced doing a little better; and then after that, I played ^{with him} ^{after then.} Then, Celestin, he came for me, And

Retyped

then I got in that band, so . . . Tuxedo--Original Tuxedo--and then, I stayed in that band until it went down.

Allen: Did you ever know a tune called "I Want to Go Where Jesus Is?" It's a hymn.

Henry: Yeah, yes.

Allen: Did you ever play that in any of the bands?

Henry: Yeah; I played that with the Tuxedo Band.

Allen: Oh, yeah. John Casimir was telling me about that, and he was saying what a good trombone player you were on that tune.

Henry: Yeah.

Allen: He was humming your part, you know.

Henry: Oh, yeah.

Allen: Said he could still remember it, after all these years.

Henry: Yeah.

Allen: Who was in the Tuxedo Band?

Henry: I don't remember who we had. Let me see--[Ernest] Tregpagnier on drum [bass?], and ah--well, they had so many fellows in there--they had--Henry Martin used to be on drum, too . . . snare drum; and Eddie Jackson on

Warner: Bass.

Henry: bass [horn]. All right. And now, here come [Isidore] Barbarin on

Warner: Alto.

Henry: alto. I was on trombone; [Bebé] Ridgley, he was on trombone. And George Hooker was on baritone--and, on, who else?

Allen: Did they have any cornet players?

Henry: Oh, yeah, yeah--they had Celestin . . .

Warner: Louis Dumaine.

Retyped

Henry: Yeah; they had Celestin and Willy Edwards, and Peter Bocage used to play with us, too.

Allen: Uh-huh. Let's see . *And - -*

Henry: [Lorenzo] Tio [Jr.]--Tio on clarinet.

Allen: Did you ever know Johnny Dodds?

Henry: Yeah--he used to play; you see, that's what I'm telling you. They had so many of 'em in it--Johnny Dodds, he used to play clarinet.

Allen: Did he play E-flat or B-flat?

Henry: B-flat.

Allen: Uh-huh. In the street, huh?

Henry: Yeah.

Allen: Would they, would they have a--they wouldn't have a steady band, then--they would switch off, huh?

Henry: Huh?

Allen: Different guys would come in different days, huh?

Henry: Well, you see, this [is] the idea of it; some of them fellows used to be off, you see, of course, anyone would be off, they used to replace them with another fellow, you see - - that's right.

Allen: Well, was that all readers, in the band?

Henry: Yes, sir, they had to read; you . . .

Warner: You couldn't play in that band if you didn't read.

Henry: Tuxedo Band. If you couldn't read, you'd be in a heck of a fix.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Henry: Because Celestin they used to bring the music, and sometime on the job, like that there. We used to play it. Course, my kicks, I was getting my kicks of that, when he'd bring it on the job, he'd tell me--I look at it--I used to look at it and laugh. Man, say, "You better look at it." I say, "Man [obscene word] let's go play."

Retyped

Allen: What about Louis Armstrong? Was he ever in that band?

Henry: Well, Louis Armstrong lefthere, playing with us--up on Colapissa Street, somewhere up there, up there in that doggone.

Warner: Freeman housing?

Henry: Yeah, yeah.

Warner: Freeman.

Henry: When he come in, he would--because in that day, a funeral--when we had a funeral, up there playing. And so he come in, he told us, he said Joe Oliver had sent for him, and, see, and he was going. Oh, but he was a sweet trumpet player; he could put in anything there, and sometime he'd come in the street there, man, and he'd come in there putting in all the stuff--man, he was going it--good man, he certainly was.

Russell: We're at the end of this reel.

END OF REEL I
SONNY HENRY
January 8, 1959

[Russell:] Did you ever play with Joe Oliver on parades?

[Henry:] With Joe? Yes, I played with him with the [Henry] Allen [Sr.] Band.

[Russell:] Across the river, mostly?

[Henry:] Yes, in Algiers.

[Russell:] Did the Allen Band ever work a job on this side of the river, too, or were they all over there?

[Henry:] Well, most of the jobs used to be over there.

[Russell:] Over there.

[Allen:] What did they play? What kind?--

[Henry:] [Written] music.

[Allen:] Strictly music.

[Henry:] Yeah, because, you see, Allen, he wasn't much, you understand, but he would get good men to play; and that's the way he used to do. But, he had some tough music there, but him, he couldn't play, but he'd get good men to play. Pay you like he want; he'd pay the other fellow--he'd pay a fellow, one fellow one thing, and the other fellow another. Of course, me and him used to get along good because he used to call me "Name"--you see, Henry Allen [was] named Henry Allen, and my name [was] Charles Henry, see.

[Allen:] Oh, yeah, you had the same name, huh?

[Henry:] Yeah. We got along good together.

[Russell:] Remember some of the other people in the band? Did his son ever play in those days?

[Henry:] His son? His son came up playing with us in his daddy's band. He was a little kid like that (gestures); he used to come there with a alto all the time. And he came up; course, we trying to help him; we didn't care; he was just a little kid, you understand. And so, he used to come in there with his alto; had a little cap and come on in. And he got so, with a trumpet--he got a trumpet. And then, after that, a little band---he got a little band. Well, I played with him, too, in his little band over in Algiers.

[Russell:] Was he better, was he better than the old man?

[Henry:] Oh--WHAT! HUH! He was about four times better than the old man. And so--he had a little band over in Algiers, too; well, I played with him a couple times; I used to help him out, you understand. I used to look over on his card up there; I used to--my trombone--I used to play his part on my trombone. Yeah, used to help out him. And then, after that, he commenced getting good-good.

[Allen:] Well, you read treble clef and bass clef?

[Henry:] Sure, sure.

[Allen:] Both--I see. Was that a dance band or?--

[Henry:] Yeah, it was a dance--with him, yeah, I mean him, yeah, after he commenced to going.

[Allen:] Well, how long were you with the [Original] Tuxedo [Brass Band]?

[Henry:] Oh, well, [I was playing with?] the Tuxedo I don't exactly-- I'm telling you the facts: I stayed with them until they went down.

[Allen:] When did they go down, during the Depression or during the war [World War II]?

[Henry:] Yeah, must have been somewhere right around the Depression, huh, Albert?

[Warner:] Round about that time, yeah, round about Depression time.

[He probably means 1929.]

[Allen:] Well, I guess that was before the W.P.A. Band was organized, or after?

[Warner:] Oh, yeah, before.

[Henry:] Oh, yeah, before.

[Allen:] They went down before the W.P.A. Band was organized?

[Henry:] Yeah, because I got in that W.P.A. Band myself.

[Allen:] Well, were you playing with Allen the same time you were playing with the Tuxedo?

[Henry:] No. You see, with Allen, you see, with the Allen Band, the way he used to do: if he'd want a trombone player what could read, you

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understand, well, he'd come get me, see. That's the idea. Course, he had Buddy Johnson over there and also "Yank" [Johnson]--we used to call him "Yank." Course, Buddy Johnson played with the Excelsior, you see. Many times the Excelsior would have a job, well, Buddy had to go with the Excelsior, and me, I used to go over there with Allen, you see.

[Allen:] Oh, I see.

[Henry:] That's right.

[Russell:] Was the Excelsior mostly on the other side of the river?

[Henry:] No, they used to be here; they used to be over there and over here, too, yeah.

[Russell:] Did you ever hear the Manetta Band over there, Norm Manetta-- or the Pickwick Band, did they call it?--or any of their bands?

[Henry:] The Pickwick Band.

[Allen:] These were the two brothers.

[Warner:] Yeah, they did have a Pickwick Band; I don't know who had it.

[Henry:] I'm telling you, the Pickwick Band was in St. John or St. James [Parishes] somewhere, wasn't it?

[Warner:] It was back in what-cha-call it.

[Allen:] Well, they had a Pickwick Band up the river.

[Henry:] Yeah, I know it.

[Allen:] Kid Thomas [Valentine] 's daddy used to [keep some of?] the instruments.

[Henry:] Yeah.

[Warner:] Some "Dave" had it in charge there--fellow used to play that piccolo, what was his name?

[Henry:] I don't know.

[Warner:] Remember the fellow used to play the piccolo?

[Allen:] That was across the river?

[Warner:] No, he was on this side; he was from on this side, I believe.

Little short, bright fellow.

[Allen:] Was he?--

[Warner:] Bab Frank, I believe.

[Henry:] Oh, Bab Frank.

[Warner:] Bab Frank, yeah; yeah, he played that piccolo. I believe he had charge of that Pickwick Band.

[Henry:] Well, I didn't have much to do with that band then.

[Allen:] Well, were you working with other bands while you were working with the Tuxedo?

[Henry:] Well, [with] any band would come hire me; if our band didn't have no job, I'd go and play with any of them. And if it was with the Excelsior, the Allen Band--any of them, see?

[Allen:] How many days a week would you work then, during the daytime, [when you were also] playing music?

[Henry:] Well, you see, when I'd get a job, I didn't work; me, just lay off, you see, and go play the job, and next day go back to work.

[Russell:] What kind of work did you do when you came to the city?

[Henry:] Oh, you see, when I first came to the city, I used to work for the Sewerage and Water Board. Flagman--I used to be a flagman and raise flags, and bucket--fellows used to be down there digging, and I used to be way back in the back; bucket come out there and I used to dump the bucket and send the bucket on back [on up?] there.

[Allen:] Well, did they--they'd let you off, so would you work maybe an average of three days a week, or four days a week, or two, or what?

[Henry:] Oh, no; well, you see, I wouldn't get off that often because, you see, it would [have] made bad business.

[Allen:] Yeah.

[Henry:] One day a week I used to get off like that; sometime two, but not three; [unintelligible].

[Allen:] I see.

[Russell:] A lot of the parades, I guess, were on Sunday, too.

[Henry:] Oh, those parades, they was all on a Sunday; but I mean, for a funeral, you see, they'd be in the week anytime, you see.

[Allen:] Uh-huh.

[Russell:] What about the Onward Band? Did you ever play with them?

[Henry:] The Onward--yeah, sure, sure; man, I loved to play with them. All them good bands, them was mine; I used to be, get in all of them. But them bands where you got nothing but "heads"[ear men or arrangements?], I didn't fool with them. You see, because some of them guys used to tell me, some guys wanted to hire me, "Go get Henry." Told [unintelligible]. "No, he can't play 'Home, Sweet Home' by head." And that's the truth [unintelligible]. "On, no, don't get him; he can't play nothing by head." I say, "Okay, you go ahead. Some of these days, by Ned, you're gonna wish you hadda learn something another."

[Allen:] Well, could you play by head at all then, years ago?

[Henry:] Well, I'm going to tell you: back [a] long time, no, I couldn't do nothing.

[Allen:] You didn't want that.

[Henry:] No, I didn't want that; in the first place, I wanted to learn the right way, see--the right way is the best way. [Yeah?].

[Allen:] But now you can do either?

[Henry:] Now there you are; I know what I'm doing now, you see. But--now, if I'd have jumped out the first time going by head, I'd have been a--let me see--a--jackass--putting the horse....

[Warner:] In front of the wagon.

[Henry:] Behind the wagon.

[Warner:] Behind the wagon. Yeah, that's what I meant to say.

[Henry:] [Behind the wagon?]. I didn't go that-a way.

[Russell:] Yeah.

[Henry:] So, I was taught the good way. But then, now I found out that I did go the right way.

[Russell:] What about the Onward Band? Who was leader of that and who else was in that; do you remember?

[Henry:] The Onward Band had--

[Warner:] Manuel Perez.

[Henry:] Manuel Perez's band. They had a good band, too.

[Russell:] A good band. Did they read some, most everything--I mean, all the time?

[Henry:] Read, yes, yeah--when you get in there--let me tell you: in that Excelsior Band and Onward Band and Tuxedo Band--well, I'll tell you--and Allen Band, too--you know, then, you just had to know your stuff, or else know--you got to have a mighty good head to play in that band if you couldn't read. Course, if you could read some, well, you could make out, you understand. But them people, you used to put them old heavy marches on you, you had to jump.

[Allen:] Say Louis Armstrong, would he be reading all, most of the time, or what?

[Henry:] He--boy, I'm going to tell you about him: I didn't never understand Louis Armstrong, because that son-of-a-gun, he [unintelligible] didn't care what you played. Course, he had to [unintelligible]; he, what he played, he would play a obligato all the time; be off [the melody], you understand; he wouldn't never come play straight with you. But everything he put it in there, by Ned, it worked.

[Allen:] Uh-huh.

[Henry:] He reads, too; he read. Yeah. But I didn't understand his playing; [unintelligible]--he used to play so sweet, you understand; get in there--I don't care [what] you played, by Ned, he'd get in there in [with] that obligato. [?]

[Russell:] How was his tone then? Was it a big tone, was he loud or not?

[Henry:] Lovely tone, yes, sir.

[Russell:] Was he as loud as the other--was he as loud as Joe Oliver or Perez?

[Henry:] Well, I'll tell you, he was pretty loud--very loud.

[Russell:] I wonder if he had a strong tone then, or just sweet?

[Henry:] Sweet tone, that's what he had; that's no joke about that--
a wonderful man.

[Russell:] What about Freddy Keppard: did you ever play with him?
You remember him on cornet?

[Henry:] No, I didn't; no, I never played with him.

[Warner:] Freddy was, Freddy had left town when Sunny came to town.

[Russell:] That's what I thought--about that time.

[Allen:] Yeah.

[Russell:] Bunk--did you ever play with Bunk Johnson, in those days?

[Henry:] No; I know him good, though, but I didn't never play with him.

[Allen:] Who were the "Green Book" brass bands?

[Warner:] The what?

[Allen:] The regular "Green Book"--you know, "head" brass bands? Did
they have many of them in those days, or would they just be "jump-up"
bands?

[Henry:] Just mostly "jump-up" bands.

[Warner:] I doubt if they had any "gut-bucket" bands in them days.

[Henry:] Chris Kelly and them, sometimes--

[Warner:] [Cause?] most all of them used to read.

[Henry:] Used to get together, Chris Kelly and--what you call this
fellow?--"Duck" Ernest.

[Warner:] Duck Ernest?

[Henry:] Yeah, sometimes they used to get together.

[Allen:] What did Duck Ernest play in the street?

[Henry:] Drum; Duck used to play drum. [He also played string bass
in the street.] Yeah.

[Allen:] Bass drum or snare?

[Henry:] Yeah--bass drum.

[Russell:] What about Kid Rena? When he started out did he play brass bands? Could he read? Do you remember much? What kind of band did he play in on the street?

[Warner:] He started out at the Homes [Waif's Home], and--he started out playing dance music.

[Henry:] Yeah, at the Homes.

[Russell:] Didn't do much parade work, do you know?

[Warner:] He didn't do too much of that parade work, no.

[Russell:] Do you remember who else was in the Onward Band--the trombones?

[Henry:] The Onward--they had Buddy Johnson; he used to play in that band.

[Russell:] Which band did Vic Gaspard play [in]?

[Henry:] The Excelsior. What about George Fihle? Do you remember him?

[Henry:] George Fihle?

[Russell:] Or did he leave early, too?

[Henry:] Well, George Fihle showed me the positions on my trombone.

[Allen:] On the slide or the valve?

[Henry:] Slide.

[Allen:] You already knew the valve, huh?

[Henry:] Eh? Oh, the valve, I know the valve already. And reading-- I could read anything. But the trombone--when I got the trombone--course, a book, I had a book for it, understand, but what I wanted to do, I wanted to get some--I wanted to be perfect on it, you understand? I wanted to know exactly what I was doing. And so, I was living back at 2315 Orleans Street, and George Fihle was living in the twentieth block of Orleans Street.

[Warner:] Next block from me.

[Henry:] Yeah, yeah, you remember. And so, I went there and George, and he say, he told me, he say, "Yeah, I'll show you, Henry." And he

charged me \$.75 for about twenty minutes, understand. Well, I went around, I went to him twice, and he showed me the positions. And so, my brother, Eddie, he used to work on the wharfs, he was staying with me then. Well, him--he used to like to drink, you understand--Eddie told me, he say, "Son"--he used to call me--he say, "Son," he say, "God darn it, what the hell you got to go pay that man, and you can read and got the book?" I say, "Well, Ed, the question is this. I wants to get this thing straight." He said, "Well, you got your book in there. I tell [you] what you do. Tomorrow when I come"--[Double Head was out there then?]--"I'm going to bring a gallon of wine when I come back here. You take you"--at that time I didn't drink much, you understand?--"you take you a good hook out of that wine and you get that book, and I betcha you play." And you know one thing? That was the truth, if ever it was; I got a couple drinks of that wine and heck, I thought I--that trombone-- I went all over that dern trombone. That's a fact. That's why come, man, my, I got to have my shot now when I'm going and play music; I'm got to have me a couple shots. And I took that trombone and them positions, I made him [give me the?] positions, and then after that week and Sunday come, some of them [were] looking for me; Amos Riley come got me for a parade--trombone, on slide trombone. As soon as George Fihle saw me he say, "Well, God damn. You see that fellow back there? Henry? I just give him two lessons, and look, I see him playing." But he didn't know then that I was so far advance, you understand, with the music [as I did?].

[Russell:] With the valve, yeah.

[Henry:] Well, [what] I wanted to learn was that position of that horn, [and soon as?] I got that I been going ever since.

[Allen:] When would you start playing in dance orchestras?

[Henry:] Well, I used to play with McNeal, and Hyppolyte Charles.

[Allen:] Which was first?

[Henry:] Let me see--McNeal.

[Allen:] What was his full name?

[Henry:] Huh?

[Allen:] What was his first name? McNeal?

[Henry:] Wendell.

[Allen:] Wendell McNeal?

[Henry:] Yeah--a violin player.

[Allen:] Uh-huh. He had his own band?

[Henry:] Yeah. Old man George, he used to play with us, too--Moret.
And Paul Beaulieu, too, used to play with us.

[Warner:] Beaulieu?

[Henry:] Yeah.

[Allen:] Where does he live now? Beaulieu?

[Henry:] He used to live on Robertson Street.

[Warner:] Down on Robertson Street.

[Allen:] Robertson between...?

[Warner:] Between Ursuline and Governor Nicholls.

[Allen:] Oh, that's not far from Picou's bar.

[Henry:] No, that's the same block.

[Warner:] That's the same block as Picou, but on this side.

[Allen:] That's on the lake side of the banquette?

[Warner:] River side.

[Henry:] River side.

[Russell:] River side.

[Allen:] Yeah, river side, I mean.

[Warner:] River side, yeah. Nice little balcony you see on the side--
you see a big driveway like a lawn; right next there you going to see a
little balcony, you know.

[Russell:] About the middle of the block in there?

[Warner:] Just about the middle of the block.

[Henry:] Yeah, just about the middle of the block.

[Allen:] How old is he now? He must have a good age on him.

[Henry:] I don't know [how old he is?].

[Warner:] Must be up in his seventies.

[Allen:] Uh-huh. We'll have to drop around and see him.

[Warner:] Well, you [can] catch him home now, cause he's retired, too.

[Allen:] Uh-huh. Well--

[Russell:] About dance bands--that one with Hyppolyte Charles?--

[Henry:] Oh, yeah--strictly music[written].

[Allen:] But what kind of music would it be?

[Henry:] Huh?

[Allen:] What kind of music? Was it fox trots then?

[Henry:] All kinds of music; be schottische and everything--waltz--

[Warner:] Polkas.

[Henry:] Yeah, polkas and everything.

[Allen:] When did the fox trot come into New Orleans? I was wondering about that.

[Warner:] Fox trot been here.

[Henry:] I couldn't tell you. It's been here--

[Allen:] It was there when you started [unintelligible]?

[Warner:] Yeah, the fox trot.

[Russell:] Did they call it the one-step or two-step or something first, or?--

[Warner:] All this is new name they got now, the one-step and two-step, but they [would] just be fox trots.

[Russell:] It had been fox trot before you called it one-step or two-step?

[Warner:] Yeah.

[Russell:] That's what I wondered.

[Warner:] It'd be fox trot, waltz, mazurka, polka--

[Henry:] Schottische.

[Warner:] Schottische.

[Henry:] I played--

[Warner:] Cake walk.

[Henry:] All of them.

[Warner:] All those kind of dances.

[Russell:] Did they have a special dance they called the "slow drag" then, or not? [Is it?]

[Henry:] Yeah.

[Russell:] Or did [they?] mean just any slow blues, or?--

[Henry:] Yeah, a slow piece.

[Warner:] Yeah, they had some slow drags then.

[Henry:] Yeah, call it the slow drag, yeah.

[Warner:] Slow drag.

[Russell:] Did they play many of the old-time rags like "Maple Leaf Rag" and "Hilarity Rag" and "Climax Rag" at that time?

[Henry:] That "Red Book", yes--I used to play that thing. One of the fellows [they] used to call Henry, a bright fellow used to stay downtown there, he used to have [those] doggone "Red Books".

[Warner:] Henry, eh?

[Henry:] Yeah, yeah.

[Allen:] Whose band was it? Was it his band?

[Henry:] Yeah. They used to call him Henry, but his other name I dis-remember; but that was a pretty good while [ago]. But I played with him--

[Allen:] What did he play?

[Henry:] Trumpet; he used to play trumpet. But he--only thing about [it], his band didn't last very long, because he was a plasterer, you see, and made good money, so he just--

[Warner:] You talking about Henry Joseph?

[Henry:] No, no.

[Warner:] Bright fellow was living back up in, over on the other side of Claiborne?

[Henry:] Yeah.

[Warner:] Yeah.

[Allen:] Who was in the band? We'll find out his name.

[Henry:] Oh, let me see, who in the devil was in that band? Well, that band, it didn't stay up so long, you understand. But this here boy--what's--he isn't here now--what's his name?--saxophone player--but he's away from here--he used to play all the time with this fellow. But his band, he didn't stay up no time, you understand; it just went out of existance in a short while. [Unintelligible]

[Allen:] Uh-huh.

[Henry:] But them books--I used to play all them things; "Maple Leaf" and all that, "Frog Legs" and all them things used to be in that book.

[Allen:] Any other bands use the books?

[Henry:] Huh?

[Allen:] Any other bands use the books?

[Henry:] No, I didn't know of no other band using them books. Course, I guess some of the guys got a-hold of some books; I'm quite sure, you see?

[Allen:] Uh-huh.

[Russell:] Then when did you join the Eureka Band?

[Henry:] I joined that--with him; he come for me in the Eureka Band.

[Warner:] Yeah, I come and put him in the Eureka Band; he didn't want to go, but I put him in there.

[Allen:] Was that during the Depression or after?

[Warner:] No, after Depression.

[Allen:] During the war [World War II]?

[Warner:] That's about--let's see--that's along about [19]47, I believe.

[Allen:] Uh-huh.

[Henry:] Yeah, it must have been around there.

[Warner:] Uh-huh. Bernell used to come pick us up then, you remember?

[Henry:] Yeah, I remember that.

[Allen:] Bernell?

[Henry:] His son.

[Warner:] That's my son; he used to come pick us in the automobile.

That's around about [19]46 or [19]47, yeah.

[Allen:] Who was the trombone player before you?

[Warner:] In the Eureka?

[Allen:] Uh-huh.

[Warner:] Joe Clark.

[Allen:] Oh, I see.

[Henry:] That's [unintelligible]. (He laughs.)

[Allen:] And that's when the change-over came?

[Warner:] Yeah. You see, when they taken--they needed a trombone player and they put Joe Cl--they needed a bass player, at least, and they put Joe Clark on bass. [Dominique] Remy put Joe Clark on bass, so he said he wanted a trombone player. So I told him, I say, "There ain't but one man I want along side of me; that's Sunny Henry." So I told Joe Clark, "Well, go get Sunny Henry." He say, "Well, I don't know; those fellows [are] so funny." I says, "How you figure those fellows is funny? You go ahead and get him. Just all you got to do, go and tell Sunny I say I want him to play with me." "Well, O.K," I say, "you don't want to go get him?" I say, "Well, so-and-so. I'll go get him myself." So I come on down and I seen Sunny. I say, "Sunny, [I] want you to play a job." He say, "You going to play?" I say, "Yeah, sure I'm going to play." So he say, "All right, I be there Sunday." "Be sure and be there," I say, "I'm looking for you." Told him where to go and everything. So came on up there. After he got up there I told them, I say, "Well, here's

Sunny." Oh, he wanted to make a big fuss over Sunny then. "Don't make no fuss over him now; I told you to go get him. You didn't go get him; I went and got him myself." And so Sunny say, "Well, uh--" I say, "Now you here to stay." Sunny Say, "You going to play?" I says, "Why sure, that's why I come got you. I want you with me all the time." So, there he is. You still in the Eureka's.

[Russell:] Yes.

[Allen:] Uh-huh.

[Warner:] I wasn't going to go get nobody worse than me; I wanted somebody better than me, so I say [that] I'd go get Sunny. You see, because I had been carrying that band long enough--you know, carrying this fellow and that fellow and the other fellow. [Because there wasn't?] no sense in you going and get somebody in the band [who's] going [to] pull it down; you want something going [to] be built up. So I knew who I was getting when I went and got Sunny, so....

[Allen:] When did y'all work out those duets that y'all play by head? You know, like on "Panama", for example.

[Warner:] Oh, well, Sunny and I [are] just used to [each other?].

[Henry:] You see him so that--[unintelligible], I'll tell him to go, play it just like he want it, you see, and then, me, I puts that in there, see. And then we got so we can switch it either way; I can play--

[Warner:] You see, sometimes I take it and sometimes he take it.

[Henry:] Yeah.

[Warner:] We just switch back and forward. But we just study that thing up ourselves.

[Henry:] Yeah, [unintelligible] ourselves.

[Warner:] When we started playing like that, we surprised Percy [Humphrey] and all the rest of them; they didn't know what we was playing. Then Percy, he got excited; he put his trumpet down and come up in front.

[Allen:] Percy is funny when he does that.

[Henry:] Yeah.

[Allen:] Oh, man!

[Warner:] There's several duets him and I used to play together; but if we ever get to the right place, why then, we'll play them and show-- you know, show what it is. [They never did.]

[Allen:] Yeah.

[Warner:] But outside of him--when he sends somebody else in his place, I don't try to play those things, because him and I understand one another, see?

[Allen:] Yeah.

[Warner:] Because he know where I'm going to pick up at, and he's right in there, see?

[Russell:] Mr. Warner, did you ever play valve trombone, too?

[Warner:] No, I never did play valve.

[Russell:] I wanted to ask Mr. Henry once more about the valve trombone, if you played a different style on the valve than you did [on the] slide much? Did it seem like a new instrument when you got it up, or about the same kind of a thing?

[Henry:] Well, it was pretty near the same thing; only thing is [your fingering?].

[Russell:] Would you try to play a different part to make more slides or anything?--

[Henry:] No--

[Russell:] Glissando?

[Henry:] You see, it's the idea of it; with a valve trombone, your smear, mostly you got to almost use your tongue, see?

[Russell:] Use your tongue and lip and all on that.

[Henry:] [Lip like that?]. But you see, just a slide, it's much, much easier, you understand; you just go ahead and get it right now. Yeah.

[Russell:] But you played about the same notes, then?

[Henry:] Oh, yeah, yeah.

[Russell:] I mean even if you were playing something in a dance orchestra or by hand you'd use about the same kind of part?

[Henry:] Yes, yes, just about the same thing, yeah.

[Allen:] I wanted to get back--the Tuxedo went down, you said; then who did you play with?

[Henry:] When the Tuxedo went [down]? Well, I went with the W.P.A. Band then.

[Allen:] With the W.P.A. Band then?

[Henry:] Yeah.

[Allen:] I see. Who was the director of that band?

[Henry:] Louis Dumaine was director at one time. Then after that they had another guy they called--

[Warner:] Pinchback [Touro].

[Henry:] Yeah, Pinchback [unintelligible]. [Wire-hair?].

[Allen:] Well, tell me, out of curiosity--I heard about this and I want you to give me the true story, the true history on it. When the guys got fired--you remember they were having trouble?

[Henry:] Yeah.

[Allen:] And Pinchback got up to read the letter--can you tell me about that? Is that when he was fired; do you remember that?

[Henry:] Yes, I remember. When Pinchback got up to read the letter, well, he didn't know that he was fired, you understand?

[Allen:] Uh-huh.

[Henry:] And so, he thought that everything was O.K. in there. God damn! So when he did go up and read that letter, he come [near to?] on hisself. And then he said, "What is all this?" Everybody bust into a big laugh then. [Unintelligible] He told Louis Dumaine, he say, "I think it's you; you [are] the cause of this." Louis said, ["What the?"].

[Warner:] He got Louis fired, didn't he?

[Russell:] Louis Dumaine, huh?

[Warner:] Didn't he take that job from Louis?

[Henry:] That's where the trouble come in at. But he got fired afterwards, you understand? Then he wanted to put it [the blame] on Louis, and he wouldn't--

[Warner:] But he double-crossed Louis first.

[Henry:] Yeah, he double-crossed Louis first.

[Warner:] Then after that they--

[Henry:] They--

[Warner:] They put him out and put old man [Joe?] Martinez in there.

[Henry:] Yeah. And then--I'm going to tell you about old man Martinez, [understand?], when he came in that band there--God dern it--Pinchback was there then.

[Warner:] Yeah, I know.

[Henry:] And Martinez come in there and then they had--I ain't going to tell you no lie--they had about twenty-five trombone players before I had got in there, you understand. And Martinez got in there; [unintelligible] Martinez look all around; he says, "Well, I'm going to have a"--what do you call that thing?--"examination. All them can't make the grade, get a wheelbarrow." That mean that they had to roll a wheelbarrow [instead of playing to remain on the W.P.A. payroll]. And so one day the old man come in with about fifty different pieces. [He] come there and he say, "Now, listen; come up here, all y'all; here's the [spot?], and no man ain't going to play the same thing." He commenced calling them fellows up, and he said, "Now, listen: now the ones [who] can't make the grade go get a wheelbarrow, because I can't use you." God damn! Some of them fellows--Frankie Duson, trombone player, he went there and he went in there and Martinez say, "Get a wheelbarrow." God dern! And then I come--and they had a gang of them; they'd come there--

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"You get a wheelbarrow." Well, and so on and so on them got way down, because the trombones, [he] jump on the trombones first; they must have had about twenty-five trombones in that doggone band. And so they got on down and they come on around, and so a fellow said, "Henry, you better watch." I said, "(Obscene word), [I ain't studying about that?]. If they got the music, I'm going to play it." He go on around, and so he go on around to me. All right. [Unintelligible]. The introduction, I hit it. He say, "Go on down there, [go on down?]." And then he say, "Ho!", because in the trio it change, you understand, and he tell me to [put it down there?]. O. K. And then he got on [Louis] Nelson; [unintelligible]. He says, "O.K." And he got on "Chicken", Oscar Henry, and he was O.K., and then he got on Barnes, Harrison Barnes. (Obscene word)--he had it. Out of the twenty-five trombones, they had four.

[Russell:] Only four?

[Henry:] Yeah, I and Nelson and Harrison Barnes and Oscar Henry. Just goes to show you--and them guys had been there fooling around, you understand, just there to make the money. But that old man got in there and that old man made a band, you understand?

[Allen:] Uh-huh.

[Henry:] He make a band; he played them overtures and everything.

[Russell:] Do you remember his first name? I have a piece of music written by some Martinex, and I wondered--

[Henry:] I don't know his real name, but I'll tell you who could tell you that is Oscar Henry.

[Allen:] Say, who was the first trombone player in the band?

[Henry:] Me--I and Harrison Barnes.

[Allen:] I see.

[Henry:] Two first trombones.

[Allen:] Oh, by the way, did any bands from the city come down to the country when you were living on Magnolia [Plantation]?

[Henry:] No, they didn't come to Magnolia, but they used to go down on excursions, below.

[Allen:] Who would that be that would come down there?

[Henry:] The Pacific Band from Algiers.

[Allen:] That was a brass--excuse me--that was a brass band?

[Henry:] Brass band, yeah.

[Russell:] [Was] that an excursion on the train?

[Henry:] Yeah, on the train, yeah.

[Russell:] On the train.

[Allen:] Were they playing by head or were they playing by music?

[Henry:] Oh, they had--seom of them in there was good; they played mostly by music, I think. Yeah.

[Allen:] Anybody else come down and play dances, ever?

[Henry:] No.

[Allen:] No dances, huh?

[Henry:] No, they didn't have much dances down there; if they would, the brass band down there would take charge.

[Allen:] Oh, I see. I wondered if Frankie Duson ever came down there?

[Henry:] No, I'm quite sure he didn't, because I was down there and I didn't know [unintelligible].

[Allen:] Uh-huh.

[Russell:] Frankie couldn't read, then, much?

[Henry:] No, he couldn't read much.

[Allen:] What about Willie Cornish?

[Henry:] Worser.

[Allen:] Worse than Frankie?

[Russell:] He was?

[Allen:] Yeah?

[Russell:] That's all on this one.