

LOUIS KEPPARD
REEL I
JAN. 19, 1961

Digest: Ralph Adamo
Check: Richard B Allen

Also present: William Russell,
Ralph Collins

Recorded at his home: 1017 [N.] Villere, New Orleans [La.]
Jan. 19, '61 by W. Russell & Ralph Collins.

When he played guitar he did not have his electric amplifier connected, but during his songs at times he sang into his own mike and 'P.A. system.' [From tape box]

[Birds are heard singing throughout this reel.]

William Russell asks how Louis Keppard pronounces his name. He gives it the French pronunciation. Louis Keppard is his full name. LK says that it's the same as Freddy Keppard, "the onliest brother I had." LK had two other brothers who died when they were young. LK was born on February 2, 1889.

Louis Keppard asks if William Russell wants to find out about bands "and different things right now." WR says they will take things up in any order they come, and he asks if LK's father or mother played any instruments. LK says they did not.

Freddy Keppard started out on the violin. LK says that he believes he gave it to WR, and WR answers that it was the mandolin. FK also had a violin, but he neglected it and it wound up on the "dump pile." FK did start out on the violin, LK says, but went on to the mandolin. Then he "started fooling with the accordion;" and then a harmonica. [There is confusion about the order in which FK played various instruments. LK says:] The last thing that FK took up was the violin.

Reel I
(track 2)
g 4, 1957
Louis
KEPPARD

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LK says this is about the same time that he himself had a guitar his parents had given him. It was made out of old box wood. LK was about seven or eight years old. Their mother used to "bring them around [to] different corners and to her friends," where LK and FK would play. LK says he didn't know what he was doing--"I was just thumping on it"--and didn't know the names of the notes he was playing. LK says the people liked them anyway because they were so young to be going around. WR asks how old, and LK says he must have been about nine, and FK, about eight. LK notes that he was about a year older than FK. He says FK would be about 71 now. LK says he is 72 and will be 73 on February 2 [1961]. FK was about a year and one month younger.

LK mentions his sister. WR recalls LK's wife's telling him that his sister was living "here now." LK says his sister will be 79 on February 15. WR wonders if she'd remember much about the family, and whether he might be able to interview her.

LK says he'd like to arrange such an interview, but she's had a stroke, and it might not meet the doctor's plans. She has trouble talking and walks badly. "She has to drag her foot." LK says that he has brought her home with him (from where she had lived at 1827 St. Philip Street) and moved her things to his house. It was his wife's idea, since LK's sister needed someone to take care of her. LK admits that it has been trouble to take care of her.

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WR wonders, speaking of the family, where KKK was born, and where the house was when he and FK were children. LK was living at 2007 Customhouse (now Iberville) Street when he and FK were born. This is near Galvez, WR suggests, and LK says it was near Prieur [cf., city directories], "on the uptown side of the banquette" [i.e., sidewalk^{*}]. LK's sister was also born there, and he is not sure where his dead brothers were born. They were younger.

WR understands that LK's parents didn't play music, and Ralph Collins wonders if they sang. LK says no. As for FK, he was "just ... a jiver, just like myself." He never sang, but was an instrument player, LK says, "like myself." FK was a "good comedian" as well. LK says that FK "puts me in mind [of] this fella what's up there now, Louis Armstrong." LK thinks that LA is the best now. LK says he [LA] wasn't born when ^{were} ~~we~~ ~~was~~ coming out. [Note that LK sings during this taped interview and on the Big Eye Louis Nelson LP on AM.] LA used to work for the W.G. [Carl ?] Coal Company. LK remembers when LA was a little kid living at Saratoga and Poydras. LK says that in those days they didn't know anything about LA.

* This means on the uptown side of the street which is now the even numbered side.

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But LK says he's heard that LA started at "that home" [i.e., The Waif's Home].

Ralph Collins asks if LK's other brothers and sisters played anything. LK repeats that they [the brothers] died young. LK repeats that they died young; only he and Freddy played music.

[WR leading about LK's older sister.] LK says she never played anything. She worked for Dr. [Bartley?], an uptown dentist. "That was all she ever done, worked in the dentist's place, and fillss teeth and all that, you know." LK says his father was a cook at Fred Bertrand's Bar & Restaurant at Dauphine and Canal, back when LK was a child.

LK goes on to mention a riot that went on in the neighborhood [with no details]. The name Robert Charles is mentioned. (WR says this was c.1900), LK and WR agree that LK was about eleven.

The restaurant where his father worked has been torn down and there is a K&B [Katz & Bestoff Drugstore] there now. The restaurant was for whites.

LK says that his father was the head cook and that he cooked everything that a chef would. (LK thinks WR has seen a picture of his father. WR isn't sure, so LK says he'll show it to him when WR has time. LK got the photograph from his sister; he framed [pictures of] Freddy, his father, and himself "in that frame up there." [Looking at photo of LK?])

WR says that that's the Magnolia uniform [in picture], and LK

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agrees that it's the Magnolia Band with Joe Oliver when LK was manager of the band.

LK asks if there ^{are} any other questions. WR asks LK about the neighborhood in general--parades, dance halls, and the kind of music that he heard--back when he was a "little kid."

LK mentions that there were "two white bands" across from him on Customhouse St., between Prieur and Johnson [Streets]. LK and FK were shining shoes "at the proper time" in the [red light] district. WR notes that this was close to where LK lived. LK says that [his family] then moved to 427 North Villere St., between St. Louis and Conti, but nearer St. Louis. He was about twelve years old.

WR brings up the riot again and asks if LK's father was mixed up in it. LK says he was not. His father "could pass around the streets," and they wouldn't worry him because he was Creole and "kind of bright." LK says, "They couldn't tell him from who's who." It was like Francs AMis Hall, where LK used to play, you couldn't tell who was what color. LK gues^ses the people are like that even now.

LK says his father was French, and maybe looked Italian. His father's mother was French, LK supposes. "It was all jubileed up." So his father never had any trouble on the streets.

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LK goes on that they would "pass over him," as happens now. "You can't tell who's who these days and times. . . We ought to be careful who we contact with. . . You can't put you finger in the fire for the other fellow 'cause you don't know exactly who he is. . . The whole thing is, when you know a person from birth, then you can tell who they is."

LK says when he went to the restaurant he was "in short pants." His cousin worked as a dishwasher under his father. The cousin's name was Edmond Glapion. (He was there yesterday to see LK's sister.) EG also used to work for a druggist at St. Charles and Claiborne. EG had to be careful on his way to work [probably at the restaurant] because, LK says, "he wasn't much more fair than I was."

LK's mother let him go [to the restaurant], but she didn't know about the trouble. They were "shooting down [They were making humbugs] in the streets." This went on all over town. If they see "a colored man, they'd break him like. . . that school going on now."

[NOTE: Referring to the integration of the Catholic schools.]

WR suggests that it was probably worse earlier, and LK agrees.

WR thinks that Big Eye Louis [Nelson] claims his father was killed in the riot. WR asks if LN told LK about this. LK says he didn't know LN's father and that LN never said anything about it.

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"I've been knowing Louis for a couple of year," [i.e., many years.]
(LK begins, then switches to naming other people he knows.)

LK says that he knew Achille and George Baquet ("I knows all them Baquets. . ."). AB used to play with the other bands. . . on the "other side" [i.e., with white bands]. LK played with AB. WR says George is dead, and LK adds that Achille is too.

LK says that Achille was a very good clarinet player. LK worked with AB, he says, and "after that he [AB] crossed over." LK says there were some white musicians who liked the way AB played and knew he was "very bright," so they used him. AB became a regular with the white group, and LK says AB forgot about the guy he was playing with before. LK says he understands and doesn't blame him for this--there was more money with the white group.

Then, LK says, AB "went too far, I guess." He became "perfect" on the clarinet ("making the baby cry and all that.") The others in the group were all having a good time, so AB wanted to also. LK says that this is when he was found out to be a "colored" man [by the management]. "That's what knocked him out," LK says.

LK tries to think of where AB went next, and WR says that he went to Los Angeles and finally died out there. LK says that AB was "solid" as long as he was "in his place," but "the minute that he overcame his jurisdiction. . .he fell down." LK says that AB hurt himself in the band.

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WR asks about George Baquet, who played with FK. LK says he played with GB also, and GB was a good clarinet player.

GB used to play at ^{un}funerals. "He was a funeral man. . .he didn't miss a lick." LK says GB was a better musician ("not in the line of musician but in the line of playing") than Alphonse Picou in a funeral. LK praises GB's style, and amends that Picou was good in his variations. But LK is more impressed with GB's lead [melody]; he says the lead is the main thing and puts everything in its place. LK remembers seeing GB blowing clarinet with his head up in the air at funerals; "he had people around there crying." (WR notes that other people told him that too.) LK says he'll never forget the song; he does not know the words and would like to know them. But, he says, he can always hum the song. (LK hums for about a minute and a half.) [Birdsong keeps pace.]

GB would make on the clarinet "what is called treble." He was playing with Manuel Perez's brass band. MP played lead, and GB was just "crying in that clarinet." WR asks if it was in a slow funeral dirge, and LK says 4/4 time. Sometimes they used Alphonse Picou.

LK says another one who was good (and also "clumsy") was Lorenzo Tio. LK says Lt's daddy was all right, but "not like Lorenzo Tio." LT was like [Sidney] Bechet, LK says. SB was a good clarinet

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player. (LK notes that SB "went away, and played for the king and the queen. . .") Both SB and LT used rubber [bands] on their clarinets. SB could take a mouthpiece and play it by itself, "don't need the whole stick."

LK says SB used to sleep on the meat stand in a market at St. Bernard and Claiborne. (There's a grocery there now called the Circle Market.) When it was a big butcher shop, there was an alley back of it, where a peg-legged fellow shined shoes, and SB would sleep on the stands back there. LK says that at the time, SB was young, and maybe didn't have a home.

Then LK says this [referring to SB?]: "Of course, boys was mischievious, but they ain't bad like they is now. They'd go and rest theirselves, and go [lay down]somebody, around somebody, but now they don't rest until they get hold of a pocketbook. (Laughter.) Unless they knock your brains loose--if you got 'em and if you ain't got 'em--they'll know^{ck} your brains loose, you know."

RC asks if LK knew George [Baquet]'s parents or any of the family. LK tells about going to GB's house on Roman [Street] between Iberville and Bienville [Streets]. GB had returned from Chicago, and LK met GB's wife. It was about the 200 block of Roman. (LK gives a point of reference that WR and RC aren't familiar with. GB's house was across from Paul Gros's [restaurant?or bar?]).

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"George Baquet, when he came home sick, his sister was sick. His wife and his sister was living on Roman between Iberville and Bienville. Well, that's where he died, see. . . Yeah, I seen him, I seen him [when he came back from Chicago], but he was sick, and that's where he died, around there. I went to his house and seen him. Then when he died, well, I went to see him at the wake."

WR asks if GB's father played some instrument.

"Old man Baquet? Yeah, he used to play clarinet. Old man Baquet. If I ain't mistaken, of course, I was very young, and I believe that's the one taught George how to play, and his brother. "Course, you couldn't tell now, Achille Baquet and George Baquet, well, the old man used to play clarinet too.

"Of course they used to have a band by the name of Adolphe Alexander, but I ain't talking about that young fellow [Adolphe Alexander, Jr.] now. He's paralyzed, he's got a stroke, I believe. But I'm talking about the old man [Adolphe Alexander, Sr.]. He's dead now. Of course, he used to play cornet, and he was a good musician, and he used to be a director--he's almost like [Paul] Chaligny [Chăl ũn ēē]."

LK mentions Willie Parker, "that's old-time too," who lives on St. Philip Street.

"Of course, I can't mention the young fellows these days and

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times, 'cause they're coming up like they're coming from underneath the ground on me, 'cause I don't know 'em. "Course, I'm out of the picture. Just as well to say--it's just like--a fella gets fifty and sixty--[people say? they?] don't hire him no more, 'cause he done got too old."

WR notes that, when he wants to work, LK plays with the Gibson band.

"Well, see, I'm working with old mens, and young mens too, but of course I don't know the young fellows coming up now these days and time. I happen to be with the Gibson Brass Band now, playing tuba with them. . .But of course, after I took and started playing with them a little while, the young ones liked me as well as the old ones.

"Of course, I understand they got good and bad in all ways. Sometimes, when they make a bust, well, you got to try to cover that bust up. See--the young ones make it; how come the old ones can't make it? Well, of course, the young ones make busts, well the young ones make it, well that ought to be that they have more of a better education now, then--and more of a mother-wit--then what the older time, cause they never had. . .you see, in those days and time, Mr. Roussell, ^[i.e., Russell] in them days and time, we had to guess, we never had the teachers that they got today. Now, today's a day you can get a teacher every minute in the day. You've got teachers to learn you, but we just had to pick it up from the man above. God Almighty

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give a gift."

WR asks if LK got help from any other guitar players.

"Well, I'll tell you, I wasn't stopped, but I was only told how to do it while on the music stand with them. And I was asking them, 'What do you call that?' before I started playing guitar-- 'cause I wasn't playing no guitar when I was with my brother. When Freddy had a violin I was just only hitting on it. But I wanted to learn, to see what I was doing. Just like a fella reading the paper--if he don't read it, just looking at it--he can't get nothing out of it. Well, I wanted to get the sweetness out the guitar 'cause I hear so many other fellows making that good ha'mony, so I thought I'd take and ask for the things I don't know, I'm going to ask for it. They say, 'You ask, and you'll get received.' See, if you knock onto the door well, the door's bound to open to you.

Well, I used to take and go 'round to bands, and I met up with this fellow, Willie Santiago. . . Well, he used to play with my brother. Well, he was a good guitar player, mandolin player, banjo player--he was a string man. . . Well, he turned around and I see him and I said, 'Willie. . . what was that you was making just now?'

"So I just have to buy him a little drink, you know. . . I know he used to like to drink his beer and wine and all that. Well. . . I was working. I had to work 'cause I never had no music on me, and wasn't started playing music, but I wanted to get off that job

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where I was working at. See, I wanted to quit working so I could make that easy money like them.

✓ "Well, it happed^{ned} that he showed me the stretches, and tell me what it is. Just like, he say, 'Well, this is C natural, this is E^b.' And I'd say, 'Willie, well, how about that?' And he'd say, 'Well, this is A^b.' And I say, 'Well, how about that?' He say, 'Well, this is D natural.' I say, 'Well, all right, don't show me all at one time. Just show me one at a time so I can go home and practice that on that old guitar I got home.' Well, it happened that I continued.

"So, I never seen his band no more; I saw another one, [John] Robichaux's band. Well, I was a mixer; I'd just go around. [?] [Make you see] I talk so much now. Well, I got around Robichaux and said, 'How are y'all doing, gentlemen?' And I got in with all of them. And I met Johnny St. Cyr.

"And I said, 'Hello,' and he said, 'Hello there, boy. . .hello there, partner'--well, I just don't care what he said. I just got close to him, and he couldn't make a move, and I'd follow him. So I said, 'Mr. [Bud?], what is that you making?' 'Well,' (he used to say) 'Well' (that's the way he talked) 'Well, I tell you: problem. I tell you.' I said, 'I'm Freddy Keppard's brother.' He said, 'Oh yeah, well anyhow, this here is G natural.' I say, 'What is that

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other thing?' He said, 'That's B flat.' I say, 'Oh yeah,' I say, 'Uh-huh.' So I says, well, the onliest thing I could do; I done got so many--and every time I turn around I goes and tries to find out what's what all the time.

"I never had no time for the street. I had time just to go and find out, to learn something so I can quit working. Well, I just continue, continue, continue.

"So what I done--I went to Manuel Perez and got in with him and I asked him to learn me how to play cornet. 'Cause me and my brother couldn't get along, Freddy and myself couldn't get along. We wasn't much. You know how brothers is--some of them. . .Well, one want to have his way and the other fella tell him something and he gets mad and he want to let him know that he's the boss and, well, I just left Freddy cold. So I just went to Manuel Perez and started learning. Well, Manuel Perez charged me--it was six-bits a lesson at that time. Well, I taking two lessons a week.

" 'Well,' I says, 'Well, Manuel, what is this thing?' So he showed me; he give me a line of music; he made me get a Otto Langrich [i.e., Otto Langley method book]. And I said, 'Well, all right, Manuel. Now, Manuel,' I said, 'what must I--' He said, 'You see, that's the way you got it is on the end of the line is one flat,' he said. 'That's what they call F,' He said 'Two flat's B flat;

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three flat is E flat.' And he said, 'Now when you go down to 2/4 time,' he said, 'raise up your foot.' I raised up my foot. And he said, 'Now down your foot.' He said, 'Now that's up and down, one-two, one-two, one-two.' He said, 'Now, 3/4 time, that's a waltz.' He say, 'Now you make--put your feet down, one, and push it this-a-way, two, then raise it up, three--one-two-three, one-two-three.' All right, I continue--I was inheriting that. Then looked at the book when I get home; I studied. Then he say, '4/4 time. Well, I'll say, one-two-three-four, one-two-three-four.' I say, 'Well, Manuel, I takes and I hear y'all play it fast sometime.' 'Well,' he say, 'well, that's a 6/8.' I say, 'Well, how would that go?' He said '(Scats rhythm. . .) up and down.' I said, 'That's 6/8?' I say, 'Well, all right, Manuel.' I'll just practice and inherit all that and I got it, now, I don't say nothing about it."

WR says Manuel Manetta teaches time that way.

"Talking about Manuel [Manetta], that is my brother's best friend. He used to play violin when Freddy was playing cornet. He used to be--and, him and Freddy, everytime you'd see Freddy you'd see him.

"They used to go^{at} this fella what they call Henry Morton. Henry Morton's place up on Second and Magazine [Streets]. . . Oh, it was a fine place.

"I don't know if you've heard talk about this fellow here, what they call him again, uh? This here fella--I can't--forgot his--

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I can't--John Rucker! He was a good comedian. Well, them three used to be together. He was good---we used to play for him at Economy Hall, you know--but he was fine. He was a good comedian, but talk about this man here, Manuel, I will--I ain't seen him since the time you [WR] brought him here, and I sure was glad to see him. Of course, he done fade away a little bit, though, you know.

"Well, you see, my daddy was in the same boat as him; just like--him and my daddy--same color, but of course, he done got like a [lemon? lantern?] [i.e., too dark to pass] You know. So that's why I say, well, I say, well, we can't always be the same way all the time. But Manuel is a perfect musicianer [i.e., reader of music]--from a piano, and, what they call them things what works on the boats there? 'Calliope', eh? Calliope--he can play that. 'Cause I used to hear him. Well, he played with Piron and all of 'em. See. Now, of course, this fella here, they tell me--I ain't seen him yet--but I told my cousin, Warnicke [i.e., Albert Warner] that: 'The onliest man who fit this [Willie] Pajand's place will be Peter Bocage.' And they tell me he's in the band now--they tell me he's in the band. [WR notes PB is still with Eureka.] [Albert Warner] That's my first cousin--well, he ain't been playing as long as me. Yeah, he come out with a horn that the bell musta been about that big, old horn he had, and he started learning, and I believe Chaligny learn't him how to play trambone.

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"So that's make," I says, 'Well,' I say now, I says, 'Warnicke,' I say, 'Pajand's dead now.' I say--he say, 'I don't know who they got--' I say, 'Well the best man will fit that would be Charlie Love or Peter Bocage. 'Cause,' I says, 'I don't say that they gonna rag.' Well, this fella here, he wasn't too much of a ragger; he wasn't much of a ragtime man'; he wasn't no jazzer.

"Well, of course, this fella here, what they call, named Broomfield, and this other fella here, and I done forgot his name.

[Cf. see notes on Gibson and Jackson Brass Band.] Well, anyhow, them is good street mens, you know. But them mens what I'm talking about like Charlie Bocage--Charlie Love, uh, this fella who died here, uh. . .Pajand! Well, them musicianers--they got the stuff wit' 'em. Now of course, I ain't putting them like with [Kid] Howard, and Kid Clayton and all like that--that's only street mens, you know--'course I understand people likes--

"But you know, you never know who you're going to run across. Somebody gonna condemn you someday. Gonna throw something against your face and say, 'You a musicianer?' 'Yeah, I am.' 'Play this for me, please.' And there you, you're condemned. Well, I, we don't play that-a-way [i.e., read music]. Oh, and you can't call yourself a musicianer, that right? You can say: 'you're doing the best you can.'"

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(Beginning of talk about Henry Morton, not to be confused with
drummer Henry Martin, then:)

[END OF REEL I]

Transcript/Digest: Ralph Adamo

Notes: Richard B. Allen

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Also present: William
Russell, Ralph Collins
Notes: Richard B. Allen
Digest/Trans.: Ralph Adamo

WR asks about [Henry] Morton's place. LK explains that it was an "up-to-date" bar room and restaurant. There was never a band there. "It was only--uh--upstairs was goodtime." [Prostitutes?] RC asks if Freddie [Keppard] and Manuel [Manetta] went there to play [music] and LK says they just went there for "goodtime". LK says that Manuel will tell you what good times they had there.

WR asks about the drummer from around Perdido Street. LK says that was Henry Martin [sp?] and [his brother] "Coochy" [sp?] Martin, but indicates that Henry Martin is not the same man as the bar-owner.

RC asks if it was LK who told him that Freddie [Keppard] "played the first trumpet in the district." LK says FK did; he was playing with the Lindsay Brother's Band: Johnny Lindsay, b, later tb; Herb Lindsay, vl.; and the daddy, who played guitar.

WR, looking at a picture, mistakes Roy Palmer for Johnny Lindsay; WR goes on to identify Ed Garland, bass [in photo of Mamie E. Lane].

LK explains [the Lindsay Brother's Band] was a three-person "family band," and then they got Freddie to play at Hannon's saloon on [now Iberville--Customhouse St.] and Liberty [now Treme St.]. It was the first cornet in the District.

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Then Huntz's Cabaret opened, where Louis Keppard himself played. LK says Joe Oliver was a butler at Second and Magazine [Streets] before LK got him to play at Huntz's with him. (JO also "cleaned up around the yard.") RC asks if the place where JO worked as a butler was near Henry Morton's; it was. LK tries to remember the name of the man--"he was a very bright fella"--they used to rent their instruments from. [Possibly Dave Perkins.]

RC asks what instruments they had in the District before the first cornet. They had just string instruments, "soft music," according to LK. He adds that there were also clarinets. "Big Eye" Louis [Nelson, cl] used to play at Rice's with Manuel Perez [cornet!]; they had guitar, bass, piano and clarinet. LK says that saxophones were rare, though there are "a thousand" now.

RC wants to know if FK (and other cornetists) had to play softly when the cornet was first used, or if they used mutes, or what? LK explains that when FK was first playing, they were "a hustling band;" that is, the three of them would play at the door (there were no music stands) in order to bring people into the club. They also were playing for people inside the bar to dance. Later, they put up music stands and finally, they

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built a [dance] hall in the back. LK guesses this was because "they must have condemned music on the street too much." But at first, they played right inside the doorway. LK names them again: John Lindsay playing bass, the old man playing guitar, and Herbert playing violin. HL was the leader.

LK discusses streets briefly. Hannon's was on Customhouse [now Iberville] and Marais or Marais and Liberty [now Treme. Treme and Marais are parallel].

Freddie was sixteen or seventeen when he played with the Lindsay's; JL was younger than FK. LK thinks HL was older than JL. (LK compares old man Lindsay playing guitar to himself when he was first learning.) RC asks how long FK was "on these other instruments" [see reel I] before he played cornet. LK says he'd been on it [cornet] about two years. LK remembers when FK was playing violin with Joe Petit. (LK goes on to note that it's said that Buddy Petit was Joe Petit's [tb] son; "well, of course, I can't vouch for it." WR suggests he was a step-son. LK says that BP started playing "almost like Freddie." He used to like Freddie, LK says, then adds that "the only thing would harm him, he used to be crooked ." LK explains that he was crooked "with the band" at first, and "crooked with the people after that." He used to take deposits for two jobs and only play at one of them. LK tells a story about one particular night when BP had booked

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his band in two places: "Yeah, they had to go get him out the Lake. Yeah, cause he's supposed to come at another place, and he had one--another place--he was playing somewheres else, and then he tells them, he said, 'Well, listen, Mr. John Quarella and them, he says, uh, 'oh, Mr. Quarella, I'm playing for you.' And the other fella says, 'Well, listen, you're supposed to come play for the Owl Club.' He said, 'Well, I know, I got my band over there.' He said, 'We'll call for Buddy Petit's Band.' He said, 'Well, I got my band over there, but I'm over here.'"

(RC and WR laugh.)

LK says that Buddy stuttered also. LK indicates that BP pulled this kind of double-dealing regularly, that he was never arrested for it, and that it was amazing that he was never even roughed-up. He just out-talked people.

BP paid off his band members what-ever he wanted to. He would pay people different amounts for the same job. "He was a short-cutter for true, you know!"

Chris Kelly paid the same way. Jack Carey also; "he was the King; he was the ace; Jack Carey was the ace-cutter."

WR is surprised about JC. LK says that WR should have Kid Punch [Miller] tell him about JC; Kid Punch used to play with him.

LK mentions Joe [later "King"] Oliver and Bebe Ridgley ("wasn't much of a trombone player") who were close. According to

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LK, Joe Oliver would be "uptown on Magazine Street playing pool" with the money the band had given him to buy uniforms. "Them same uniforms what you see there," LK says. WR says, "Yeah, the Magnolia--" [In a photograph in LK's home.]

LK mentions [Honore] "Norah" Dutrey [Norah is a common pronunciation of Noah], slide trombone, and Sam Dutrey, cl; ND lived uptown and played with the Magnolia Band. LK says that he thought they were "implicated" with Joe Oliver's misusing the money. However, Sam Dutrey assured him that they weren't.

JO lived so far uptown that most of the band members would never be up that way. He ate, drank and played pool on the uniform money, and then presented a phoney piece of paper from the uniform maker saying he'd been too busy to finish the job.

The uniforms cost fifteen dollars, "with the cap." The uniforms were dark green, with a black stripe on the side of the leg; the cap was black and had "Magnolia" on it (and one said "Leader").

Bebe Ridgely got sick and Norah Dutrey started playing trombone. Norah told the band, "Ya'll think that I'm with him [JO], but I ain't." Norah wanted his money, too [for the uniforms.] LK says they all talked about throwing Joe Oliver in the river. They threatened him and he finally, two weeks later, got the uniforms. (LK thinks he must have borrowed the money.)

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After that, JO got up a band of his own and started playing at Rice's, on Marais and Customhouse. Manuel Perez and Big Eye Louis [Nelson] were "on this side" [i.e., on the lake or down side or on the downtown-lake corner?]. LK says it was then they started cutting out the guitar, and "putting piano in the line of a guitar player." The reason is that Big Eye Louis started it; they got Walter Decou for piano. WD killed [Butler] "Guy-A" Rapp at the Dog House. "Rapp was a big man, make two like you [WR]." Rapp slapped him a couple of times, so he took his knife and killed him. After that, LK says, WD lost his mind.

LK goes on to say "this fella" [WD]--"Watch tower, or something, he's in now"--used to live in the back at Tom Albert's. He doesn't play anymore, but he "used to be a nice piano player." WR says that he heard him play years ago; he [WD] had made some records with Bunk [Johnson].

LK mentions a record he made with Ernest Rogers, "Big Eye" Louis [Nelson], charlie Love, and Johnny St. Cyr playing guitar. [See Big Eye Louis Nelson records originally on AM.] LK asked to sing a song ["The Curse of an Aching Heart"]. He has their pictures on there [i.e., on the LP cover?].

LK continues, "I just naturally say those were the best days to my knowing." He says that there isn't as much work now as there was years back. Even the union bands aren't doing well,

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and some union members have to play little jobs behind the union's back so their families can live.

WR asks when LK's brother [Freddie Keppard] left New Orleans. It was about 1910 or 1911; LK went to Chicago about 1917 himself and stayed "not quite a year." [Cf. Reel I] LK's mother died while FK was gone. [?] They lived on St. Ann between Derbigny and Roman.

Jimmy Palao and George Filhe [sp?] also went away [around the same time as FK?] WR tells LK that George Filhe died in Chicago about five years ago. LK says GF's sisters were living on St. Bernard between Prieur and Roman, and GF was living there last time LK saw him. WR expresses interest in meeting GF's sisters, but LK says they are dead perhaps.

LK doesn't know the sisters's names, or whether they got married. He tells WR that he might find out from a cornet player [Peter Locaze] who live on St. Bernard between Villere and Robertson, on the [downtown] side of the banquette.

RC and WR try to help LK remember who the cornet player might be; LK remembers that he was also an insurance collector, and a good musician, "but he don't play no more."

WR says GF may have died ten years ago.

LK says [the sisters] lived on St. Bernard between Prieur and Johnson.

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LK says GF's sister was called Lolo Filhe.

At this point, LK remembers Peter Locaze's name, more or less, with some leading by WR.

WR asks whom FK left the city with. LK says it was the band, [the Original Creole Orchestra] (and LK was playing with FK ^{up}* then, but they didn't take a guitar player): George Baquet, Jimmy Palao, vl, and Eddie Vinson tb. This was the Olympia Band [i.e., these men plus FK were in the Olympia Band.] Ernest Trepagnier used to play drums, but he didn't go with the band. The band was to get a piano player and a drummer when they went to Chicago. [Cf. other sources.]

This Band began playing with Buddy [i.e.: Bill] Johnson up there. BJ played guitar. [Cf. other sources.]

WR mentions meeting Norwood "Giggy" Williams, a guitar player originally from New Orleans, in California [who also was in the Original Creole Orchestra.]

LK mentions Bud Scott from Chicago, and adds that he is not talking about Buddy Scot "from--used to [?]. (This Buddy Scott who played here was a good guitar player, LK says, but he's the one who brought out. ["Wildcat Put on the Bombashay"])). The Bud Scott in Chicago is the one FK went up to see.

LK begins talking about people having the same name. He mentions seeing many "Keppards" in the phone book, and one,

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uptown, he contacted because "I don't believe it's my daddy made that." LK says he has no relatives except his sons: Louis Keppard, Jr., Theodore Keppard, Sidney Keppard, and Joseph Keppard--"but they all Juniors, but me, I'm Senior." He didn't ever meet the uptown Keppard, or hear about him. LK says a lot of people know him [LK] "from up and down" [town?].

WR asks when LK's mother died. She died about twenty-five years ago ("I disremember what date"), and his father died thirty-odd years ago. "So that left me, my sister, and my brother." Freddie never did get back for a visit. "And when he did want to come back" [apparently LK means when he ^[his father?] died] "Well, my sister say, 'Well, what you think about it?' I said, 'What's the use of sending a person back home what been away about twenty-five, thirty years...who knows 'em?'" FK was buried "over there" [in Chicago?], where the woman he had lived with was. FK was never married. LK hadn't seen him in years before he died.

LK begins talking about Herb Morand, who lived on the corner of St. Philip and Derbingy. LK says HM bought FK's cornet, and was the sister of "this woman who sings." [WR leads.] She was Lizzie Miles, who used to be called Lizzie Landry [or Landrieu?]. She used to be at Economy Hall and "we used to play for her."

WR notes that Economy Hall and "we used to play for her." (WR notes that Economy Hall can be seen "straight across the street

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here.")

LK says all the old halls--he names Globe's Hall, St. Elizabeth's Hall, Franc Amis Hall, [McDon--?0--are all owned by churches now. LK says, "See, the good people is dancing on top of the devils."

WR says he went in Economy Hall last year (the preacher, [Rev.] [?] Alexander, let him in) and saw that there seemed to be a dance hall upstairs too. LK says the dances were all downstairs and the music stands [i.e., band stand] was in the back. There was a bar on the side of the Hall. The second floor might have been used for a meeting room.

LK played there "some years back" for clubs and weddings and such. He was twenty-two or twenty-three when he was playing there. LK says he was twenty-seven when he went to Chicago and came back.

At Economy Hall, LK worked with Joe Oliver, with the Olympia Band, and with Manuel Perez.

WR asks about the lessons MP gave him. LK says it was the music and not the guitar that he got help on. [Cf. above.] LK goes on to say that learning how to read music was a big help to him. Also, you have to read it often or get rusty; the music helps LK with his time, [i.e., 4/4 time, waltz time, etc.] LK

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talks about the rhythm section, of the guitar, drums and double-bass or tuba working together. The trombon[ist] is supposed to give two or three notes before the tuba player plays one. [Meaning?] LK discusses the trombone's role.

LK turns to RC and notes he's been doing all his talking to "Mr. Rousell" and offers RC a chance to ask something.

✓ RC wants FK's first instrument clarified. LK says it was accordion [Cf. above], and FK was about eight or nine years old.

Talking about how FK picked up the accordion, LK mentions an old man called [Babois, Ba'Boy?]^{*} who walked with a crutch. [Babois?] used to play "cornet and different things." FK's parents bought FK an accordion, and "of course, Freddie used to foal with a harmonica a little bit, too." RC presses that the harmonica was the first thing he had. LK says yes and, after that, an accordion. After that, he "fooled with--he had an old mandolin he got from somebody."

✓ RC asks if [Babois?] helped FK with the accordion. LK says he did because he knew the accordion. "Freddie take then and pick up on the harmonica..."

[End of Reel]

"Babad? Charles Babad of B.'s Academy? (Swards' 1885)"

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Draft: Kay L. Wicker, 1/17/81
Check: Richard B. Allen, 1/22/81
Retype: Alberte Lastic
Date completed: Sept. 1, 1982

Also present: William Russell
Ralph Collins

"Freddie [Keppard] was the first one who started in music" [i.e., he began before Louis Keppard did]. FK had an accordian two or three months before he "put it down" [i.e., stopped playing it]. LK says he and his sister "done away with it" [it was misplaced]. After that FK "went to the mandolin." He had an "old-time" mandolin. Louis Keppard says, ["Roussell--Mr. Bud's got--?"] [Bill Russell, whom LK called "Bud Roussell," had FK's mandolin. See photographs of the mandolin in Hogan Jazz Archive. See end of this reel on WR's name. Bud Roussell was a musician whose name Louis Keppard applies to Russell. RBA, Jan. 21, 1981.] LK's daddy "bought it second hand from somebody, I disremember." Willie Santiago used to play the mandolin also; he was good on it. FK didn't buy the mandolin from [Willie Santiago?].

FK never took mandolin lessons; "he just picked it up like that. It's just like a gift." When FK was playing violin, he complained to his mother that no one could hear him playing in the band. FK was still in short pants at that time. FK wanted to get a cornet. Joe Petit and the man who used to play cornet with him--LK went to the first job he [FK or the man whose name he can't remember?] played with them. LK and FK's daddy got FK an old brass cornet, an old-time one on which you have to change shanks. FK had one long one and one B^b [shank]. "Then he [FK] started foolin' with that."

FK's parents sent him to "Old Man Taton," Adolphe Alexander's daddy, who was "living on New Orleans and Derbigny at that time--Roman [I beleive?]" [i.e., New Orleans Street between Derbigny and Roman Streets?]. "That's when he started taking lessons and taking lessons

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and taking lessons and--" Old Man [Adolphe] Alexander, Sr. taught him. "Everything he'd hear, he'd catch on to it, like Buddy Petit and all the rest of them." Then FK quit taking lessons and started playing "routine"[i.e., by ear]. "He never learned much about music" [i.e., reading music]. Freddie Keppard was like Big Eye Louis [Nelson in this]. Nelson played C clarinet but couldn't play a B^b clarinet or a saxophone. "[When he (FK) went away, like Louis, he learned more ways (to play?).] Freddie never did learn the music here" [i.e., reading music here].

FK "never spent hardly no time" practicing the mandolin; "he just pick it up and put it down...when he see fit." Until FK got a job playing violin, he never "worried with it" [i.e., he didn't worry about practicing the instrument until just before a job?]. In those days, if you could play five tunes, you could play them all night and all day.

LK names some tunes: "My Tiger Lily" and " Just Because She Made Dem Goo-Goo Eyes." He hums "After the Ball" He says that Freddie used to play "After the Ball Is Over." "Freddie used to play all them old things." That's [why LK knows them?].

LK sings two choruses of "Just Because She Made Dem Goo-Goo Eyes."
[CF. Sheet music.]

They played quadrilles, too. LK sings and hums "Coon, Coon, Coon."

Collins asks about a tune about a coon in the moon. WR says that Manuel Manetta talks about a song about the man in the moon [i.e., "If the Man in the Moon Were a Coon"?]. LK has heard the song. They also used to play "Baby Face." [LK looks for some music?]

There is a picture on the wall of a band that LK went to Chicago with for eight or nine months in 1917. LK was the manager of the band. "When them people bring you away, they expect for to do business with one man;

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they don't do business with everybody," i.e., with each band member. Sugar Johnny was assistant leader of the band, and Lawrence Duhé, clarinet, was the leader. "The clarinet, he's the one that takes the violin's place." LK says everything is changing now, but it used to be that if there was no clarinet, the cornet took its place. [Apparently LK is talking about playing lead, i.e., the melody, which was generally the function of the leader, i.e., musical director, in New Orleans. RBA, Jan.21, 1981.]

LK is looking for something but can't find it. He says, "When you get a certain age, your mind goes and then it comes and then when, if you don't pick it up in a hurry, it'll go again if you don't watch it."

LK sings and scats "Molly and Me" [i.e., "My Blue Heaven"].

LK says people are bringing the old tunes back. He mentions Scott Joplin's music. LK had forgotten a lot of these, but when he hears them again, he remembers.

LK sings and hums "Some of These Days (You Gonna Be Sorry For What You've Done to My Poor Heart)." LK mentions "I'm Drifting Back to Your Dreamland" [sic]. "You Made Me What I Am Today" [i.e., "The Curse of an Aching Heart"] is on a record LK made with Big Eye Louis [Nelson]. LK sings and hums "What Make You Do Me Like You Do Do Do?" [i.e., "How Come You Do..."]. LK used to play "Tell Me Your Secrets and I'll Tell You Mine." WR mentions "You Tell Me Your Dream," [I'll Tell You Mine]" and LK hums it.

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LK sings and scats "Baby Face." The bass drum[mer] hits two licks at a point during "Baby Face." LK scats this and the slide trombone part.

LK and FK shined shoes in the [red-light] district when they were both in short pants (at about seven, eight or nine years old), "hustling with a box on our shoulder." They used to shine shoes for a nickel. Everybody liked their work, and sometimes people would give them a dime or even a quarter. If the boys were in a hurry for more money, they sometimes shined only the fronts of people's shoes. FK and Lk were hustling and "when you hustling, you busy!" They would stretch black polish with water from the gutter. Louis Keppard describes their shining shoes at length. Servicemen on furlough came to the district during the war [i.e., the Spanish-American War]. Neither brother was playing music then. Louis Keppard would take their money home to his mother to buy food, and Freddie would continue shining shoes or vice versa. They lived at 427 Villere Street. [According to Andrew Ridley, a close friend of Louis Keppard, this was probably on North Villere. Compare city directories.] LK and FK "fakers or bluffers, bluffing them people; but of course, we didn't know no better. We was out to try and get home first and abroad after." LK says that kids today spend their money on candy and Coca-Cola, but that was not the way LK and Fk spent their money. "And that's what make we come up like we is, 'cause God Almighty blessed us. Because we taken care of our mother on nickels, we never give her that much trouble; we always did believe in doing right."

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"Colored" and White" children used to play together. They used to have good times though people nowadays don't call those times "good." They used to have a picnic out on the lake. The mothers (both black and white) would spread a big sheet out on the ground at Spanish Fort or Milneburg for them to eat on. The "Smokey Mary" train ran "out there." They didn't have strong drinks--Coca-Cola for the kids and beer for the adults. They would all get along well together. If anything happened, if the kids started fighting, "their mother can beat my backside and send me home crying. My mother would beat me again and...bring me back and show her the place where she beat me." These days, if you beat a child, "your name is mud... You gotta go to jail.... You ain't got no business beating that child." Mothers don't know where their children or husbands are and vice versa, "but they want to get married--get married for what?"

LK doesn't want to "entertain everybody what comes along to see me.... If they want to see me," they are to contact Russell at 731 St. Peter Street. WR remembers a fellow from France who couldn't speak much English who came to see LK. LK has known "Bud Roussell" [i.e., William Russell] for years and considers him a businessman. People can see WR and listen to the tape of LK instead of bothering LK every time. WR will "perform all duties." If it is necessary and worthwhile, WR will contact LK and bring the people to LK's residence at 1017 North Villere Street.

END OF REEL

END OF REEL.