

SQUIRREL ASHCRAFT

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Also present: John Steiner

John Steiner introduces Edwin "Squirrel" Ashcraft as a leader in the Chicago style of jazz, both amateur and professional; he has recorded with and/or played with, among others, the following: [Bud] Freeman, [Jimmy] McPartland, [Frank] Teschemacher, Davey Tough, [Gene] Krupa, and the [Eddie] Condon gang; he is currently active, as he has been for the past 30 or 40 years. JS says he will ask SA to talk objectively and unconcernedly about his contacts with jazz, and that the influence of New Orleans music on the Chicago people will be shown along the way; JS says SA went to [Princeton,] New Jersey about 1925, and is in a position to report the influence of New Orleans music on New York music.

SA was born in 1905, about the time most of the Austin high "gang" were born; he adds that he was born at the right place and the right time to observe [the development of jazz], and he wishes he had recorded his observations better. He is a third-generation lawyer, his people came from Virginia and Massachusetts by way of Vandalia, Illinois; he has two sisters. He says the first contact he had with jazz was about the same as that of the Austin High boys, through records; they had access to records by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band. SA says he, as a pianist, was partial to the All-Star Trio, Omen and Arden, and later to Zez Confrey, until he heard James P. Johnson's

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"Carolina Shout" and "Keep Off The Grass" on Okeh [in the early 1920's]. He says he heard records of groups like the Happy 6 and Paul Specht's band, but the band recording that first made an impression on him, and on Freeman and McPartland, he believes, was "Farewell Blues" by the Friar's Inn band [New Orleans Rhythm Kings]. He says this was just about the time of the "coming of Bix [Beiderbecke]." He says Bix' influence on Chicago jazz was almost entirely through records, because Bix rarely played in Chicago, generally playing in Indiana. SA says Bix and Si Rogge [sp?], (a great friend of Bix' at Lake Forest Academy) a drummer, jobbed together before Bix had developed his style. [JS leading] SA had heard about the N. O. R. K. before he heard the record mentioned above, but he had not heard them in person. SA says that although they would admit it today, in their life as a group the Wolverines did not think they were influenced by New Orleans music, although they would have said the ODJB made an important "move" in music and that they paid attention to it, but didn't feel they were playing in that style. SA says he thinks the real influence on the Wolverines was hillbilly music--a sort of combination of ragtime and "tricky" music. SA says the NORK was what he considers two 4-piece bands joined into one eight-piece band. He explains, saying that [Paul] Mares, Georg Brunis, Leon Roppolo and [Arnold] "Deacon" Loyocano, or later Steve Brown, were

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from New Orleans, but of the others, two were from lower Indiana and two from lower Illinois--farm boys. He then names Frank and Ralph Snyder, Jack Pettis, [Elmer] Schoebel and Carl [Kyle Pierce ?] [odd-man out]. He says Ralph Snyder later played with the Wolverines. JS says Frank Snyder told him "they" met Brunis at a place at North Avenue and Halstead [Chicago], where all had come to jam with someone compatible. SA says Pettis told him the two groups joined as one often on Sundays, before they combined permanently; the Snyder group was playing at the Erie Cafe at the time, while Brunis and Mares were playing with Ragbaby Stevens, at a place around Madison and Halstead or Madison and Ashland--perhaps Tommy Thomas' or other popular joints in that "hot area."

SA says that possibly Bud Freeman and Teschemacher didn't connect the fact that the NORK was playing basically the same kind of music as the Negro bands from New Orleans, or did not connect the two until they heard [Joe] Oliver's band with Louis [Armstrong] in it. SA says the economic situation was so set up that the Negro bands either played on the South Side, or functioned as an entertaining unit (almost clown bands) at parties, etc. SA says it was just a few of them [his friends] who realized that Jimmie Noone was not just a funny guy, or that Baby Dodds was not being [just] tricky, as he consciously was when he went out to play for parties. In answer to JS's question

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about Teschemacher and any influence on him by Johnny Dodds, SA says Rod Cless admits imitating Dodds, his greatest influence. SA says his own heroes were Larry Shields and Roppolo, but they certainly were not those of Cless or Teschemacher. SA says [Benny] Goodman shows a lot of influence from Teschemacher up to a point, and JS says the influence kept popping up into the Thirties and then thinned out. SA says that Pee Wee [Russell] could answer any questions about which clarinetists influenced others (Teschemacher, et al) to use certain ways of expression in their playing--harsh tone, etc.

JS asks, "Did Bud Freeman relate at all to colored influences?" SA answers by telling a story of how Jack Pettis, then working in the office of the Hoover Food Administration of World War I, got started. Pettis and a friend celebrated the false armistice by buying C-melody saxes from Lyon and Healy music company. The friend took his back, but Pettis, having little to do in the office after the real armistice, practiced his sax in the vault of the building, and learned how to play it. He progressed so that eventually he began playing it with the NORK at Friar's Inn. Once he borrowed a tenor sax from Lyon and Healy, the only kind they had to lend him at the moment, to use while his C-melody was being repaired. He liked the tenor, so used it, and soon dispensed with the other sax. SA says the only other people using tenor (that he recalls) were Paul Beasey [sp?] and Isham Jones;

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(he says the only reason he listened to Jones was because of some good men in the band--Alf Eldridge, Frankie Quartell and others--that Jones himself was no good, except as a writer. SA says he thinks Freeman was influenced very much by Pettis, but he says Freeman says Coleman Hawkins. JS says Freeman was also probably influenced by Beasey, and that Beasey was a great slap-tongue artist. JS says there are Columbia records of the Paul Beasey Trio; SA says he has them, and that they are awful. JS asks if [Rudy] Wiedoeft had any influence on saxophonists [or saxophonists-to-be]. SA says the first impressions on his crowd by anyone on saxophone was either Wiedoeft or the Six Brown Brothers. The shininess, number of keys and ease of blowing (although not necessarily becoming good on) were probably the strongest impressions. JS asks if the reason for a lot of violinists' taking up reed instruments was because of range similarity; then he agrees with SA that the reason was probably because there were openings [on jobs] for reed men. As mentioned before, Bud Freeman's first instrument was violin, and so was Teschemacher's. JS and SA discuss the reasons Jimmy McPartland and others played their particular instruments; [Jim] Lannigan may have been influential. JS asks SA if he can name a few of the people who went to Austin High. SA names Dave Tough, [check] Teschemacher, Jimmy and Richard McPartland] and Bud [Freeman]. Gene Krupa was at University High. JS says Art Grunewald, pianist, was at Austin,

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perhaps a little earlier. SA says Dave North was the pianist he associated with Austin. There was also an alto player. SA says he first met the Austin bunch about 1922, when he was playing with the first band organized around New Trier [sp?] high school, Winnetka, and later at San [sp?], on the near north side of Chicago. SA says some of the men in that band were Chuck Champlin [sp?], who played many instruments; Phil Thompson, banjo; and Bobby Barker. He says a lot of them went to Dartmouth [University] and became part of the Dartmouth Barbary Coast [band?]. Then they would take music jobs in the summer. JS says Jimmy McPartland and Bix Beiderbecke played on boats crossing Lake Michigan, and may have met Georg Brunis on those boats, as he also played on them. SA says that Condon, McPartland and Fritz Nielson played at Lake Delavan in Wisconsin. SA says that Nielson, always considered an amateur, was the best of the early white pianists from Chicago, that the rest were just no good. SA says he doesn't know how Joe Sullivan came up, perhaps he all of a sudden was there. JS says that SA is right about pianists, that there just were no good ones except Sullivan, that Jess Stacy came from elsewhere, that Art Hodes was later. JS and SA discuss Art Grunewald, agreeing that he was a competent pianist who played good jazz when he was with a good jazz band, but he didn't provide his own drive, but could go along nicely with a good rhythm section. SA says Grunewald liked the lower Indiana stuff

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[Wolverines, etc.], and was the only person SA has ever known who could play [Indianan Hoagy Carmichael's] "Boneyard Shuffle." JS says Grunewald took delight in arranging Bix' tunes for the Goldkette orchestra when it played over radio station WGN. JS poses the question, that if there had been no New Orleans jazz [or influence], would there have developed in Chicago a dance music with a high level of art. He says, "We now think that it's quite artful, because there are many conscious efforts to draw progress and high virtuosity out of the men, and develop the most out of the music." SA agrees with JS that the early Chicagoans did not admit that New Orleans was the only influence, and SA says the [New Orleans] influence, which was there, must have come from Paul Mares, Leon Roppolo and Georg Brunis. SA says he himself played with a small (4-piece) group in country day school, using a C-melody sax lead; he says the C-melody went to alto, and he himself [and others] were in a band at Sin [sp?] High School, and that they played the tunes with a stronger beat--tunes such as "Avalon," "San" and "Japanese Sandman," but with a beat. He says the Sin band met the Austin band at a prom; the Sin band was judged the best, by the dancers, who knew how to dance to the Sin music, but not to the Austin. SA says the Austin band didn't worry about that, that they knew the Sin boys would really like to be able to play as they did. SA says that Bill Tell, banjoist, who later played with the Wolverines on some Vocalion

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records, was in the Sin band then, and Ros Metzger, [check sp] also a pianist (band had two pianos). SA says the Austin gang was trying to get a rhythmic thing going, independent of any influence, and a person would not think the NORK had influenced the Austins unless they had heard the NORK in person. SA says bass drum still could not be recorded, and he was impressed by the rhythm the NORK could get going without being loud.

JS wonders if the dance did not have a lot to do with bringing about the stress on rhythm in jazz. SA says that it is strange that jazz musicians do not like to dance. However, he says he (and others) noticed, as early as 1925-26, that they played more rhythmic and better music when they were playing for dancing than when they played with no dancing. He says, "In the first place, it meant that you had to play for a prescribed length of time; you couldn't change rhythm, for instance, at all, and you had to suit yourself within reason--it generally ended up that you did a more orderly job and a better one and a more rhythmic one if people were dancing to you than if they weren't." JS says, "This is [the? a?] discipline," and SA agrees, and says they were conscious of it. SA says that the NORK was playing for dancing at the Friar's Inn, and that King Oliver was playing for dancing, generally. He says he didn't hear Oliver as much as he wished he had, but where Oliver was playing was 20 miles from his home,

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and hard to get there. He remembers hearing Oliver at the Midway Gardens; JS remembers hearing colored bands, but not specifically Oliver. JS says people like Doc Cooke played at White City, and possibly at Midway Gardens, and Darnell Howard talks about playing with bands, but JS can't recall Oliver specifically. SA says that by about 1926, everybody in his crowd associated with the Oliver band was already considered legendary by them, as being wonderful musicians.

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JS asks SA if he remembers groups after the New Orleans Rhythm Kings which had a strong influence, for example, the [Georg?] Brunis band at the Valentino [night club?], but SA says he was out of Chicago for several years at about that time except for occasional summers. JS asks SA if he knows why the Chicago boys decided to go into music as a profession, aside from the fact that about that time musicians became in demand and one could make a pretty good living at it. SA says he was in a different economic situation than most of the others. He himself didn't become a musician because he was predestined for the legal profession; he had a very strong-willed father, and he himself didn't feel that he had the talent necessary to be a professional musician. He continues, saying that the Austin [high school] boys, who, for the most part, did not have any definite idea of what they would work at, having such a love and devotion for jazz, and finding remuneration for playing quite good, took the line of least resistance when they decided to be musicians. SA says the father of Jimmy McPartland [and Richard McPartland] didn't want his sons to be musicians, although he himself was one, and Jimmy [and Tommy] Dorsey's father was the same. SA says that playing music in Chicago didn't have the same connotation as it did in New Orleans, as far as where jazz was played, but the fact remained that Chicago was run by [Al] Capone, and a joint was a joint. SA says he was tempted to be-

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come a musician when he got out of college, because the wage had been raised to such an extent that it was very attractive; he had an offer to play accordian with Ben Bernie, on a five-year contract at \$150/week, in 1929. JS mentions Bill Priestley, and SA says he played five shows a day with [Fred] Waring while completing his Columbia University studies in Architecture [about a year], traveled with them one summer, and then went to Germany for more study.

JS says that when changes occurred in jazz, musically, some of the older men who couldn't keep up just dropped out; he says Frankie Quartell told him that he couldn't rid himself of some of the older influences, so he dropped out, and JS says Frank Snyder, as a drummer, might have become dated. JS says the men who came to prominence in the Twenties didn't seem to suffer the changes so much--for instance, Bud Freeman and Eddie Condon. SA tells of Paul Mares's saying that it became a necessity to play what someone else had written down, he would quit playing, which is what he did and why he opened a barbeque place. When Dick Voynow, leader of the Wolverines, made the announcement that all in the group would have to learn to read (he being the only reader), George Johnson said, "What do we do if the lights go out?" SA says the Austin boys didn't have much to change, that they were young and on top of the world. He says when he took the 1926 record they made to Princeton, the listeners there thought SA was out of his head; they considered

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the sounds like those of Spike Jones, especially the off-intonations of Teschemacher. That was not the case when the Austin boys came East later, although they came at an economically-bad time. Red Nichols realized they had something his "tricky" band would never have, so he used them, individually, in his recording units. The Austins brought a whole new force to New York; they scared [the New Yorkers], as Bix [Beiderbecke] had when he came there with the Wolverines, earlier. SA says the place the Wolverines played didn't do any business before 11 [PM], and then the place became packed with musicians finished with their jobs; SA says the owners didn't like it, because the off-duty musicians didn't spend any money. JS discusses early and late places in Chicago in the Twenties, saying he wonders if they were set up to cater to two different audiences, the dancers and the listeners. JS says Jimmie Noone was a "moonlighter," working first at the Dreamland Ballroom, and then going to the Apex Club for a couple of hours; [Joe] Oliver had two jobs on many occasions; Darnell Howard has talked of theater jobs and then the late jobs.

Answering JS's question, SA says he came back to Chicago in 1928. JS says that by then there must have been a style that could be definitely identified as Chicago, that the musicians could be identified as Chicago musicians. SA says Condon would deny that, but perhaps because Condon objects to any sort of tags. SA says he thinks there

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has always been a Chicago style. JS says it is odd that Wingy Manone's band with Wingy was a New Orleans band, but without him it was Chicago. SA says one thing that typifies Chicago style for him is drive, and he cites the "one note" men as examples, saying Muggsy [Spanier] and Bud Freeman played solos that emphasized one note a lot of the time-- in fact, Freeman was called "One Note" Freeman (SA says Freeman did not know very many notes at the time). JS says they were after a maximum rhythmic effect, and SA agrees. SA says one effect that is gone is one the Wolverines used; they would play a loud ensemble chorus at the beginning of their series of terminal choruses; then, instead of increasing the volume, they would play many more choruses which diminished in volume until they could hardly be heard, and they would finish like that. SA says Jimmy McPartland would sometimes play with his horn between his knees when the Wolverines did that. SA says a recorded example of the band diminuendo is "Tia Juana." JS asks if the Wolverines ever became rhythmically monotonous when they played one of their long numbers; he says rock and roll becomes monotonous if too long. SA replies, but first says that in those days, it took six months for a Broadway show tune to get to Chicago, and it became fashionable for anyone who had been to New York to request one of the late numbers. When the Wolverines got such requests, they always played "China Boy." Then SA says the tunes they played didn't become

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stale rhythmically because of key changes; he cites "China Boy: as one, and says the change from F to A<sup>b</sup> at the bridge gives a new life to the tune. He says the New Orleans standards ("Tiger Rag", for instance) all change like that, so that they don't get stale.

JS asks if there had never been any New Orleans tunes (those associated with New Orleans music), would there have been any New Orleans music? SA says that the Wolverines' weakest performances were on New Orleans tunes, such as "Royal Garden Blues," but they sounded fine on tunes written in Chicago, such as "[I] Need Some Pettin'" and "Susie." SA says the thing about New Orleans tunes was that the structure was so solidified (pre-determined) that any musicians familiar with the tunes, even though they had never played together before, could give a reasonably good performance using the New Orleans tunes, whereas if a similar group is asked just to play a [non-New Orleans] tune, one has no way of knowing how it will come out.

JS says individual musicians had much-different approaches to repertoire; he says Bud Freeman used to like to play new tunes to an empty house--a rehearsal, in fact. SA and JS agree that if a musician were lazy, he could just play the same old tunes, over and over [See Bourbon Street, any night--PRC]. SA says the old ones play themselves.

SA adds to comments about New Orleans tunes, saying that they have a pulse-quickenning martial effect to them, as they [many of them]

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best example of this figure is to be found on Paul Whiteman's recordings of "From Monday On" and "Mississippi Mud," with Bix playing the solos; also, the trumpet trio records that Bix and Jimmy and Tommy Dorsey made. JS questions, perhaps doubting Bix got the lick from Chicago, but SA says Bix spent the night before the recording with him and others, listening to Jimmy McPartland use the lick time and again in Ben Pollack's band, that Bix commented on the lick at the time. SA says Bix went through Chicago so fast, and was a good friend of Hoagy Carmichael and others in Bloomington, Indiana, that he developed his own "singing" style, quite apart from the Chicago style, but that his playing had an under-lying soft punch to it. Bix was not a loud, powerhouse player, although he proved he could be when playing with the [Jean] Goldkette band, a powerful band for its day. SA says Bix' playing was quite in contrast to the Chicagoans, because they were consciously trying to "blow the walls down." SA says Chicago style was thought of as loud and imaginative, but that the Chicagoans did not play loud all the time, but used soft passages as contrasts. He says [Phil] Nappleon and Miff [Mole] described playing very soft as "playing underwater." SA and JS agree that restrained passages contrasted with forceful, loud passages was an aspect of Chicago style. JS says the restrained passages aspect is sometimes said to have come about from the Chicago players' not knowing what to

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play, and that they would be quiet while searching for the notes they wanted; SA says that was true, as the Austin gang didn't know what to do a lot of the time when they were just beginning.

SA says he was talking about the Wolverines and the effect they had on the Austin boys, [in relation] to a conscious feeling of tempo. [SA is talking about the rhythmic intensity?] SA says the rule in the Wolverines was that any break a person took had not only to sustain the rhythm, but had to improve it. Bob Gillette, of the Wolverines, often played waltz-time in his breaks, to point out the rhythm on either side of the break. SA says Jimmy Hartwell and Jimmy Lord, clarinetists, always did it [did what? waltz-time or improved the rhythm?]. JS says it seems to him the Indiana school took liberties with rhythm that the Chicago boys never did, "but they exchanged favors on such elements." SA says that was so, and that the Wolverines were always waiting for Hoagy or the Merrihew[sp?] brothers to come out with another crazy one. SA says that Bob Gillette often played with the NORK, and that Don Murray recorded a lot with the NORK, on tenor, after Jack Pettis. SA says that they had been talking about taking up music as a profession; he says everyone knew the "greener fields" were in New York, so a musician developed in Chicago and then went to New York. SA says the first to go was Pettis, so Don Murray replaced him. Pettis played on transatlantic liners when he first went to New York,

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originated in brass bands [or, at least, were played a lot in brass bands, and are sectioned like marches--PRC].

JS says that blues, being the other primary source for New Orleans music, provided the basis for the slowest tempos played, also [as well as the march-derived tunes for fast tunes--inferred], and that the show tunes and Chicago tunes, etc., tend to find the middle tempos.

SA comments on the NORK recording of "Tin Roof Blues," saying that Leon Roppolo's chorus was considered too sexy or suggestive to be played in some places.

SA talks about the tenor sax in the Chicago ensemble. He says he thinks Chicago started the use of tenor in a jazz band, that there were none in New Orleans bands--until Eddie Miller, adds JS, and SA agrees. [Compare early New Orleans records.] SA says Miller admits knowing about Jack Pettis, but told SA that George Johnson of the Wolverines had much more effect on his own playing than anyone. SA says Johnson was much under-estimated, who would have gone a great deal further--he was a great friend of Hoagy [Carmichael], and was probably more responsible for the rhythm of the Wolverines than anyone, including Bix--if his desperately-ill father hadn't got him to promise to give up playing. His father died shortly after, and Johnson told SA that he got the first good offer to play he ever had

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in his life [before his father died?]. SA says the clarinet in New Orleans music played basically a second part to the cornet lead, usually a third above, and that the trombone would be playing a third part, usually the bass of the chord; when the tenor sax came in, the clarinet had to shift to a third part, higher. SA says the best example of this he can think of is Rosy McHargue, who plays a pure [style] clarinet, very much like [Larry] Shields did, even though there was no tenor in the band with Shields [ODJB]. The tenor was not to replace the trombone in the band, but SA says trombone players hate to play in a band with a tenor.

JS and SA discuss aspects of Chicago style which make it different from other "dance music" [JS words in quotes]. SA says the force and drive, which have been mentioned, are most important. He says that the people associated with Chicago jazz are, for the most part, trumpet players, clarinetists and tenor sax players; he says pianists are generally not associated with the style, with few exceptions; bassists, with the exception, perhaps, of Steve Brown, who was from New Orleans, are not considered; [Gene] Krupa and [Dave] Tough are not really associated, because drums did not record [technical problem] until later. He says the repeated note, the rhythmic insistence on one note, is part of the style; he says repeated figures might be a better term, and he illustrates a figure used much by the Chicagoans. He says that the

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then he was with Ben Bernie for many years, and is the reason SA played with Bernie.

JS asks how the Chicagoans felt about "harmonics" [harmony]. SA says all were very surprised when Bix first played a whole-tone [scale], and all worked on that immediately. The idea of using unusual chords and/or substitutions was quite consciously done by everyone, particularly pianists. SA says he thinks Eddie Condon was the first one to play great big majors [major seventh chords, or what?]. SA says Condon is the only one of his close friends that he is afraid to play with, because Condon not only can become critical very quickly, but he is absolutely accurate. JS says Condon seems to be content to play his 4-string guitar, although he would certainly be capable of playing a 6-string. SA says he likes the tuning of the 4-string, which is wider [the tuning is wider], and which produces a more-ringing sound. JS says Marty [Grosz] has suggested, and JS agrees, that the sound of a 4-string is more pointed, and that a 6-string can't be made to sound as sharply-rhythmic as the 4-string. SA says that the really-great players, like [Eddie] Lang always deadened two strings, so that the sound of only 4 strings was being heard at any one time.

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Also present: John Steiner.

"...experimental aspects of music, and this, of course, touches on improvisation and on constant condition of development, and you thought that it was unlikely that any of the fellows would want to learn a tune by rote, so that it would be performed precisely the same way each time--is that so?", says JS. SA says they [the musicians] would much prefer [not playing a tune precisely the same way every time], although the Wolverines liked to work out 3-way harmony for four bars or, an introduction or an ending, but everything had to flow freely; doing that was fun, because it had not only the fun of jazz, but of barbershop harmony, etc. SA says he wants to bring up the question of standards [criteria]; he says the question [opinion of the musicians] of good and bad jazz was [based on criteria] about as iron-clad as that in any art form or in business or anything else; he illustrates by saying that if something were played for 10 musicians [of the ones he knows], opinion would be unanimous. JS says that is one aspect of criticism, that if a critic finds "enough of his peers" in agreement, he becomes confident of his opinions, and decides that he "belongs" as a critic. JS says that the musicians were as critical as anyone. SA says Bix [Beiderbecke], who made 110-odd recordings, never played a bad note (except some caused by missing the pitches he was going for), as far as SA and his friends

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were concerned; SA says Bix' taste dictated that he choose good notes, and SA goes on to say that excellence of taste could be credited to almost all of them [the musicians]. JS says if they acquired a good status, it was because they knew how to choose good notes, intuitively. SA says [yes], if they were good; however, he says he himself was not good, but he doubts that he would have played anything in questionable taste during that time. He says the line between good and bad was "awful clear."

JS says that the early records suggest that some of the bands were sloppy about intonation, and that even 10 years later some of the Chicago bands sounded sloppy that way; JS says the musicians must have known. JS asks SA if the matter were ignored, or was it done for effect. SA says, speaking of [Frank] Teschemacher specifically, that Tesch knew exactly what he was doing, that he knew what the correct pitch was, but he used "off-notes" for effect; SA says he used quarter-tones as well as [Paul] Hindemith, but he could not explain his usage as well. SA says Teschemacher's clarinet was said to be out of tune, but that he himself had it for a while, and it was perfect. SA says he thinks some of them [the musicians] had the idea of the diatonic scale as some classical musicians do--i.e., they would use an absolute scale rather than a tempered scale, as the violin and trombone can do--viz., F<sup>b</sup> would be lower than E natural in an un-tempered scale. SA

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says classical clarinetists do it all the time, and that Jo Stafford sings that way, causing her to sound out of tune half the time. SA says Pee Wee [Russell] will play oddly-pitched tones when soloing, but in the ensemble his playing will be exactly in tune with the other instruments.

SA says that he was being presumptuous when he said there were no good Chicago pianists, that there were some wonderful ones. Art Grunewald [see Reel I, Track I] was a first-class man, and Roy Bargy was, too. SA says, however, that Chicago music was not distinguished for its pianists; one of the first pianists anyone ever heard of was [Earl] Hines. SA never knew Hines well, although he has met him. SA says the musicians recognized [that] Hines [was a kindred soul] as soon as they heard the first Louis [Armstrong] record [with Hines on it]. JS says it appears to him that Hines was the only important influence on Chicago piano playing. SA says that there used to be a rule that if the piano in the band could be heard, it was wrong; there was another saying, that if the pianist ever got his hand above middle C, it would be shot off (SA attributes this one to Paul Mares). There is talk about Hines, and SA says Hines was the only one who got his vibrato by moving his hands up and down instead of shaking the whole hand from side to side. More discussion of Hines follows, SA saying one influence on Hines was Jimmy [James P.] Johnson. SA says

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Jess Stacy's vibrato is deceptive, that when it sounds like he is using it, he is actually playing a triplet figure with his (extra-long) middle finger and his index finger, while the outside notes in his hand (right) do not move at all. JS says that he has been told that Bix, when playing other than his own compositions on piano, was very careful to play a note between the octaves [in his right hand], dynamically lighter than the octaves; SA says he hadn't thought of that, but that it sounds correct. SA says that he and Bix talked about their mutual tragedy, which was that no matter how good a piano was, their playing sounded as though they were making much use of the loud [sustaining] pedal, and neither ever touched it. SA says that was a matter of a heavy touch, that the good pianists don't sound that way. SA says he has never been able to figure out why the touch of individual pianists is so different; he says one can identify Stacy from hearing three notes. SA says he does not know that Stacy has imitated Earl Hines, but that Stacy has admitted his admiration for Hines. SA says that when he talks about Chicago pianists, he has to leave out Sullivan, because Sullivan was not really in the group that SA considers the Chicago group; Sullivan just "popped up" on a record in 1926, and that was that. SA says, that aside from Hines, he thinks the greatest influence on Chicago pianists was Artie Schutt, and that the recordings of the Georgians may have borne that influence to the

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musicians, although SA doesn't know that they were [the records] that well-known. JS says, and SA agrees, that Schutt, on Red Nichols records in the late Twenties, was of some influence then, but SA believes there was influence earlier, around 1925. SA had heard Schutt then with a small group from the [Paul] Specht band; he doesn't know whether Specht's band was still going then. In answer to JS's question, SA says all the people in New York, when he was around there, consciously knew that Nick LaRocca had quite an influence on everything [in introducing something to popular music that hadn't been heard before]; SA says he has to get back to "licks" again, that certain licks were prescribed in the tunes the Original Dixieland Jazz Band played, tunes not like [not as free in form] the ones Bix played. SA says Larry Shields, in his way, was the founder of a whole school of clarinet playing; everybody imitated him. Also, Emile Christian and [Eddie] "Daddy" Edwards were the originators of tailgate trombone, as far as any of SA's friends knew. JS mentions that Miff [Mole] was around; SA says Miff was an exception, considered by many to be a genius. SA tells of going to hear the Roger [Wolfe] Kahn band in 1928, at which time Miff told him of a trombonist downtown playing more cornet on trombone than he had ever heard; Miff was speaking of [Jack] Teagarden. SA says Teagarden's playing was as much of a new thing as Brad Gowans' later, playing valve trombone. In answer to JS's ques-

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tion, SA says Abe Lincoln was well-known and liked around the same time; Abe played with Red Nichols' on a lot, and jobbed around, like [Ray] Bauduc, with society bands. Nichols was recording on 14 labels then; SA says The Molers and the Charleston Chasers, he thinks, names were always Miff's bands, and the Five Pennies changed a bit. The Redheads could be anyone, including [Sam] Lanin. Answering JS's question, SA says the [California] Ramblers band must have been going than [around 1927], as one of the big bands in New York; SA says he can't remember any small bands at the time, because the money was for big bands (around 12 pieces). SA agrees with JS that they can't remember any New Orleans musicians being very prominent in New York or Chicago at the time. SA says he can't remember any in the Goldkette band, although he may have missed one. JS says Steve Brown was with Goldkette. SA says [Frank] Signorelli and Phil Napoleon were around, but JS says they were not from New Orleans, but probably from New York. SA says a lot of jazz men were from Boston, and their influences were the Wolverines and the ODJB. JS says he played some early Chicago records for Bobby Hackett, in about 1956; Hackett, who had never heard them, said they knew what they wanted to do, but were certainly crude. JS and SA agree that Hackett's first and prime influence was Bix. SA says Gowans and probably Max [Kaminsky] would have known about the early Chicago records, because there was the Mal Hallett band in Boston, with Pearly Breed, which played, note-for-note, the Wolverines

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arrangements. SA agrees that the Wolverines had a great influence on young, white musicians. JS says Red Nichols went to Culver [Military Academy], and wonders if that were close enough to Indiana for the Wolverine influence to have rubbed on Nichols; JS says Bix had the most influence on Nichols. SA says the Indiana influence on everything in this country is kind of peculiar, that it is a peculiar state. He says that no matter what position a person may rise to in life, or where he is, he remains a Hoosier. SA says he didn't mean actually hillbilly music when referring to Indiana before; he meant country music, ragtime: folk music. SA, in talking to Hoagy [Carmichael], says Hoagy said that besides ragtime, there might be another kind of music having influence on jazz, music he called "tricky music," in which one is being clever and/or inventive. SA says Hoagy now would probably admit that the Negro had something to do with the development of jazz. There is discussion of Hoagy's songs. JS asks if SA is familiar with Hoagy's acknowledgment that "Stardust" was based largely on an idea by Bix; SA says he didn't know, but is not surprised. SA says "Washboard [Blues]" is kind of the key to everything Hoagy has written since; SA says he remembers that when the Wolverines heard the recording of "Washboard," by Hitch's [Happy Harmonists], they commented that Hoagy had gotten that crazy tune recorded. "Washboard" was backed by "Boneyard Shuffle," which SA says has impossible parts,

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changing keys many times. JS talks about the Chicagoans' investigations of simplicity and complexity of changes, melodies, etc. He says blues is basically simple, but that the Chicagoans did something even more simple, [" Gum" ?], for example. SA says that had two chords, as was the verse to "The Eel," attributed to Bud Freeman.

SA says he has heard Negroes singing in the Southern field, and that it took the training given by whites to put the third [of the major triad] in their singing, that they sang like singers of Gregorian chants. SA then expounds on the development of harmony. SA says the minor third was used in the chord before the major, so old church music employed the minor third. SA says the Negroes he heard singing in the South would never sing a major third as harmony. SA says probably the [major] third was introduced into Negro music by the brass bands in New Orleans. He says that is one reason LaRocca and Shields [and the ODJB] sounded different from the Negro in the blues then, or even when he [the ODJB man or Negro] began imitating them. SA says that at some stage of the [development of jazz] game, the different treatments, or usages of the third must have been important to the different approaches by whites and Negroes.

SA says he guesses the first bands he heard were very early Ted Lewis, Art Hickman, the All-star Trio (with George Hamilton Greene on xylophone and Victor Arden on piano). SA says that then there was

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the idea that 3 saxophones at once couldn't be recorded because the needle would jump out of the groove or it would be too muddy. He says Isham Jones was important because of the men in his band. SA is speaking of around 1924, when he first remembers going to places to hear bands. Some of those in the band [Oriole Orchestra] were Nick Lucas, guitar, Frankie Papile [sp?], accordian and Babe Naset, tenor sax who wrote "Suzie."

There is talk of Chicagoans earlier than the Austin high gang; JS mentions Frankie Quartell and his brothers. SA says Glenn "Tinny" Scoville, tenor sax, was a contemporary of Don Murray; Murray used to play C-melody sax in a Presbyterian church in Evanston [Illinois]. SA says Murray, who later switched to clarinet, and Scoville both worked with the NORK.

JS says Roy Maxon, later with Whiteman, was from New Orleans.  
[Check. RBA] SA knew of him.

SA says the Benson orchestra had Roy Bargy and a couple of sax players who ended up with Whiteman.

SA did not know Volly De Faut well.

SA says Mel Stitzel was another who played piano with the NORK.

SA says Danny Alvin was older than he, that he met Alvin in New York.

SA says he doesn't know when he first met Tony Parenti, from New Orleans; JS says that Parenti was prominent through radio work in

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New York and he thinks he didn't come north until about 1930.

Ray Lopez is mentioned. JS says he was of influence to a slightly earlier generation than the Austin High bunch. JS says that Phil Dooley talks of Lopez. JS says that Dooley and his brother played on the South Side of Chicago, around 35th Street, when the area was first being integrated.

End of Reel II, Track I.

