Russell: Just give your name to start with, so you know, we will have your name on here.

Walters: Albert Vincent Paul Walters, Known as musician "Fernandez".

Russell: How did you get that name; why did they call you that?

Walters: Well, my step-father raised me and that name just followed—Fernandez. And practically all the older musicians knows me by the name of Fernandez. I mean my son—I have a son that's a trumpet player and he introduce himself and nobody know [who] his older people is, so he has got to explain that name of Fernandez.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: Then they, they recognize; say "Well, yes, I know your father good". Saturday gone a fella met my son and tol him say "I don't know, I don't know Walters". Say, "You don't?"

"No." So a fella, "Buddy" tol him a guitar player; he says "Well, that's ah Albert Fernandez son". Say "Oooh", say, "I used to play jitney dances years ago with your dad." (laughter)

Allen: Well, no you got some other nicknames, too; Buddy, huh?

Walters: Budda, yes. Well, Paul give me that name years ago.

Allen: Which Paul?

Walters: Paul Barbarin. Paul give me that name when he went with Luis Russell.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: He used to call me Budda.

Allen: Now what does that mean, that's just—

Walters: That's just a name I never could know what it means. (laughter) They used to advertise me on the placard like that. "Kid Budda".

Russell: How's it spelled, how do they spell it then?

Walters: I don't know, I don't have any idea how it's spelled cause he used to spell it one way and some people say it was incorrect, ya know.

Russell: Yeah.

Walters: And it's spelled another. Several of them spelled it different ways, but I never did know the the meaning of it.

Russell: Well, when were you born?
Albert Walters: I was born July 19, 1905.

Allen: And where were you born?

Walters: In New Orleans, Louisiana.

Allen: What section of town?

Walters: I'se--2020 Orleans Street. That's in the Tremé [section]. I was christened at St. Katherine's Church; also made first communion, confirmed there.

Allen: That's over on Tulane Avenue?

Walters: Tulane Avenue.

Allen: Were any of your family musical?

Walters: Yes, my grandfather was a ole' time clarinet player—he was a professor in Algiers.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: Alphonse Cobette.

Allen: And ah did he teach clarinet only, or teach other instruments?

Walters: Naw, he taught clarinet only.

Russell: Did he play with any bands over there?

Walters: Yeah, he played in bands, in fact—I learnt in later years that Manuel Manetta came up under him.

Allen: Uh-huh. And ah, when did he die? Did you know him?

Walters: Oh, well that's before my days. I mean I was quite a kid, I was too young to remember that.

Allen: Yeah. Did he have a good age when he died?

Walters: I think he died in his 70's.

Allen: Leads back quite away—did anybody else in your family play?

Walters: Yeah, I had several cousins—I had James Cobette used to play; he played with a lot of bands around here like Chris Kelly, Charlie Love. I think they made the first trip to Mexico—ole' Mexico.

Allen: Oh, yeah.

Walters: Him, Charlie Love, James Cobette, "Little Dad" [Clarence Vincent] on banjo—I disremember the line-up. But he---
Allen: What did he play? What instrument?
Walters: He was alto and clarinet player.
Allen: That's Cobette?
Walters: James Cobette. And there was another cousin, Reese Cobette; he used to play, too; well, he don't play anymore either.
Allen: Is that C-o-b-e-t-t-e
Walters: C-o-b-e-r-t-e. [Or Cobette; see Soards, 1905]
Allen: Uh-huh.
Walters: Cobette. Well, I mean most of the people around New Orleans—Creole—they call it Cobette.
Allen: Uh-huh. What language did you grow up speaking by the way?
Walters: Well, my father and my mother was Creole, ya know, I mean practically we all grewed up in Creole. Which they didn't wantcha to learn that because they called it—they said it was a broken French.
Allen: Uh-huh.
Walters: And they, want, you know, to come up in American, but ya know children; they hear things and listen.
Allen: Uh-huh.
Walters: And just grow up with it.
Allen: Did anybody around your house sing songs in Creole or?
Walters: Well, my daddy used to ah—my step-father.
Allen: Uh-huh.
Walters: And my mother used to sing Creoles.
Russell: Were any of your folks Spanish; is that name Fernandez Spanish too?
Walters: No, my step-father's daddy was an Indian; I remember him—Panistat Fernandez. He lived to the age of 109, 10, like that. In fact, he outlived the ole' man.
Allen: What sort of songs did they sing; do you remember any of that—that they sang in Creole?
Walters: I couldn't remember just that long.
Walters: 'Cause I was quite a youngster—I was in the neighborhood say of about 10 or 11 years old.

Russell: What instrument did you start on?

Walters: Well, I started playing piano in house parties. And ah I went to rehearsal where Kid Howard was playing at a house party—on Barracks between Rampart and St. Claude. And Johnny Prudence told Howard say "Well, that boy gonna make a good piano player;" he say, "try him in another key". So they kept on switching keys and I would follow 'em. They took my name and address; well I played several jobs with 'dem and one day Allen—Henry Allen [Jr.] ['Sonny' = "Red"] was lookin' for a piano player, him and Albert Martin, and I was staying 1450 St. Claude Street. And they came to my house and they hired me to play at the Radio Cafe which is at the corner from here.

Allen: Right over on Decatur?

Walters: Decatur and Toulouse.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: On that side.

Russell: On, the uptown side.

Walters: Yeah. And I worked out there with 'dem oh about two years and maybe better than two years.

Russell: Yeah. When you started on piano, did you have a piano at home to practise on there—take lessons?

Walters: No, I just taken piano, ya know, by going by different people's houses like that, and I learned how to play a coupla numbers; and—well piano players was scarce then they'd get jammed for parties and they would hire me, ya know. That's how I came out to the light, and after I got with 'dem well, I got to following music and in later years in 1927, '28, like that, I taken to trumpet. Well, I learned how to play trumpet in a pretty good while. I got in the Camellia Band playing piano and after Wooden Joe [Nicholas] got off the trumpet—he had taken sick—I played a coupla of jobs in his place. Well, Wooden Joe got in bad with the band and he left—when he left I replaced him on trumpet.

Allen: Uh-huh. To back up, to get some of these different guys names and instruments—
Allen: Johnny Prudence was playing with Kid Howard, you say?

Walters: That's right.

Allen: And what did he play?

Walters: He was a string bass player.

Allen: Uh-huh. And do you remember any of the other guys with Howard? Were they regular?

Walters: Well, at that time we had "Big Yank" [Johnson], trombone player. And "Yank" left to go with Allen; and he got "Big Fire" in "Yank's" place.

Allen: "Big----"?

Walters: "Big Fire".

Russell: "Big Fire"--what--who was he? (laughs)

Walters: He was a trombone player; he used to run up and down the coast there. Cut off and them places.

Allen: Uh-huh; I don't know him.

Walters: Naw.

Allen: Well, we'll ask Howard about him.

Walters: Oh, he had a devil of a name around here.

Allen: Uh-huh. And ah clarinet--did you have a clarinet or sax, or what?

Walters: No, they had a clarinet; I think Georgie Lewis was playin' with Kid Howard then.

Allen: Uh-huh. And ah let's see, who else would be in the band? Drums . . .

Russell: Was there a drummer?

Allen: Drums and banjo I guess, maybe.

Walters: There is a fella by the name of "Son" Thomas was playin' banjo. He has passed too. I dis-remember the drummer.

Allen: And ah let's see. After Howard you went with Henry Allen, you say.

Walters: Went with Henry Allen.

Allen: And that's the young, "Sonny".

Walters: The young son, yes. Well, I played with the father in later years.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: In a brass band. Well I was playing piano then, and I went with Allen during that
Walters: Well they had ah—I was on piano, Edward Johnson on sax, Albert Martin on drums, ah "Big Fire" on trombone, "Little Dad" on banjo.

Allen: And which Johnson was this on sax?

Walters: Edward Johnson.

Allen: Is that "Big Head" or the other one?

Walters: No, the other one—the little bright one.

Allen: I can't keep those guys straight. There are so many of them. (A.W. laughs)

Walters: One is Ed and one is Edward.

Allen: Oh, I see. Well, "Noone" is Edward Johnson too, ya know.

Russell: Yeah.

Allen: That's "Noone's" real name, ya know.

Walters: Is that right?

Allen: That really does get confusing in there—and then you joined the Camellia, you say with Wooden Joe.

Walters: I joined the Camellia Band that's right.

Allen: Well, how was that band set up; who was the the leader and the manager?

Walters: A fella by the name of John Smith.

Allen: And what did he play?

Walters: He was a banjo player.

Allen: And you had a clarinet?

Walters: Yeah, we had George Thompson, which everybody knew him by the name of Georgie Stuart.

Russell: Oh yes.

Allen: You heard Bunk talk about him.

Russell: Yes.

Walters: Uh-huh. He was a fine clarinet player.

Russell: But his real name was what—Thompson?
Walters: They tell me his mother's name was Stuart so everybody called him Georgie Stuart. Course it might a been a case like me with this Fernandez.

Allen: And ah did you have a trombone player in the band?

Walters: Yeah they had a trombone player, a fella Morris Arceneaux (sp ?). And he's still livin'; he don't play—he don't care about playing.

Allen: How old is he about?

Walters: Oh Morris should be about 50. In his 50's, in his early 50's, I'd imagine; about 54, 55, like that.

Allen: And ah what kind of music did these bands play—Howard, and Henry Allen and the Camellia, were they . . . ?

Walters: They played the numbers that they're playin' today, the Dixieland numbers like "Panama" and "Dark Town Strutter's Ball" and "Clarinet Marmalade" and "Fidgety Feet"; in fact, they played all the old numbers that they are using today that is in demand.

Allen: Were you readin' then?

Walters: Naw, I wasn't. I learned how to read after I had went and played on that Jitney job.

Allen: Oh, I see.

Walters: They used to guy so music I just had to learn somethin'; had fellas in the band, ya know, to help me and . . .

Allen: Oh, yeah.

Walters: . . . string along until I learnt as much as I did now.

Allen: Did you have a teacher on piano at all? Or did you just pick it up yourself?

Walters: Naw. I didn't have a teacher on piano but a fella by the name of David Jones used to teach me when I was working around with him.

Allen: Oh, I see.

Walters: He used to teach me chords, how to form them and . . .

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: . . . and invert 'em.

Allen: Uh-huh. Did you have any particular piano player that you used to listen to a lot?

Walters: Hmmm... well, I used like to listen at Clarence Gabriel, Little Willie, "Fats" Pichon.
Walters: and ah . . .

Allen: Little Willie— which Little Willie is that?

Walters: There was a piano player by the name of Little Willie; he was a house party piano player, but he could play plenty piano.

Allen: Is he the guy that got killed? Ah, coupla Mardi Gras ago, I think it was?

Walters: No, I think he died a natural death.

Allen: Willie Forrest, huh, maybe.

Walters: No, not him.

Allen: Not Willie Forrest.

Walters: No. Little Willie; we used to call him "Long Head" Willie, he had a little long head. He used to play all them house parties; him and "Red" Ci-you Udell . . .

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: Walter Pellebon. Oh, we used to have regular jam sessions like bands have now, on the piano.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: When I was quite a youngster, I used to go around there and listen—I used to try, ya know—try to imitate them—go home and start playing, you know, try to get what they get on a piano.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Russell: Do you still play piano some—sometimes?

Walters: Well, I know the instrument, I'll, you know, sit down sometime and make a few chords, but ordinarily I don't worry with it too much because I don't have none at home, see. If I had one at home probably, ya know what I mean, I would play it. Now and then on the job I make a few chords.

Allen: I have seen you play piano on Bourbon Street. Forget who was in the band; Myrtle Jones was singing.

Walters: That's right, that's right. The boy didn't know our number and he couldn't play our music so I had to, ya know, fill in.

Allen: Oh, yeah.

Russell: When you took up trumpet, ah did somebody help you with that or did you just pick it up?
Walters: No, I went under Chaligny when I taken up trumpet. And I stayed with Chaligny about six months and I left him and I went with Manuel Perez. And I left him and went with ole' man Adolphe Alexander, [Sr.] which we call—everybody know him by the name of "Tato". And I stayed with him about three, four weeks; he was kinda rough, I had to leave him. And when you'd miss your lesson, he'd hit you on the head. (laughter)

Russell: How was Manuel Perez; what did he—how did he teach?

Walters: Well, he was good, he was a good teacher. But Manuel had got so, he had got sickly and he told me he couldn't, you know, he couldn't ah continue teaching me because he was sickly. So that made me have to look for another teacher.

Russell: How did he play, did you hear him very much, when you were young?

Walters: Oh yeah, he was a fine trumpet player, yeah; I mean, he was a straight man, but he was strong, good leader, fine leader for brass band.

Russell: Did he ever play much in the way of Dixieland numbers or jazz?

Walters: Well, that's all he could play. He couldn't play nothing else if he had wanted to.

Russell: I thought maybe in the marches they stuck to the Sousa type marches or something?

Walters: Well, in the marches, sometime they would play marches, but I mean, New Orleans was always known for that; people like marches; you can mix a few marches, but they like the ole' tradition, ya know—somethin' they can jump up and holler...

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: ... and get a kick out of.

Russell: Would, he play the numbers that he played pretty much the same way every time, say "Panama" or ...

Walters: "Panama" ...

Russell: ... those tunes?

Walters: "Baby Face", ah "Clarinet Marmalade", "Fidgety Feet"—they was, that was ace numbers in the streets.

Allen: Would he play variations much or?

Walters: Naw, he was a straight man.

Allen: Straight man, huh.

Walters: Straight man, never variate. Another he used to play, that's "Bugle Boy March"
Walters: [real name: "American Soldier"]; that was that was a famous number on the street during those days.

Russell: That the same one George Lewis's band plays?

Walters: Yes, yeah; George learned that from them.

Russell: Uh-huh.

Allen: That's a good number, too.

Walters: Yeah, it's a good number.

Russell: You say he had a big tone—loud.

Walters: Yes. He had a big tone—loud, loud.

Russell: Did he always play cornet or did he—do you think he switched to trumpet in his of later days?

Walters: Well he ah—in his later days he switched to trumpet, but when I first met him he was playing one of those cornet—E flat cornet.

Russell: E flat.

Walters: Uh-huh.

Russell: Little tiny one.

Walters: Yeah.

Allen: What about Wooden Joe—how would he compare with Perez?

Walters: Well, ah I mean, Wooden Joe was a strong trumpet player, but for leading a band, Perez was one of the best, and I mean, he used to lead them marches and all. I mean, in other words, he was a musician and all, in other words. But for hardness, for outlasting, I think Wooden Joe was one of the hardest trumpet players they had around New Orleans.

Allen: What about variations—would Wooden Joe just play straight lead or would he . . . ?

Walters: No, he'd variate, he'd variate.

Allen: He'd get off and everything.

Walters: Yes, he'd variate. But he was a hard man.

Allen: Did Perez use mutes much, huh?

Walters: Mutes?

Allen: Yeah.

Walters: Well, yeah occasionally in ah in dance halls—like they used to play at the Roof
Walters: Gardens, well I mean they had session [section] session would use mutes together.

Allen: Oh, I see. Now, what about Wooden Joe; what kind of mutes would he use?

Walters: Well, I tell ya, Wooden Joe was so strong half of the time when he had a mute in there, you didn't know he had it. (laughter) That's where he got that name from Wooden Joe.

Allen: Well, I know they used to make mutes out of so many different things; I was wondering what different kind of mutes you'd seen.

Walters: Well, he had coconut shell, had—they used to take a coconut and cut it in half and gut out the meat...

Allen: Uh-huh

Walters: ... and make 'em. And they had another little straight mute they used to put in there—that was before wow-wow mutes come in style, and they used to wow-wow with dat, ya know. Put the little mute in there and wow-wow with the coconut, half of coconut (scats "Careless Love").

Allen: Is that like a Conn mute that they had in there?

Walters: Yes.

Allen: Pear shaped?

Walters: That's right, looked like...

Russell: Like a light bulb.

Walters: Yes.

Russell: Looked like little light bulbs.

Walters: Looked like a little light bulb.

Allen: Yeah.

Walters: Then eventually after that they started taking—Chris Kelly came from behind, well I mean he started takin' those, those ah rubber...

Russell: Plunger things.

Walters: ... plungers, yes. And he start making them out of that. Well later, later in the years, I mean, came wow-wow mutes and all, where you didn't have to use all that. All you had to do was put your hand on it and work it.

Allen: Who was in the Camellia band when you came with them; did they have the same ah ah--
Retyped

Allen: when you came with them on trumpet, did they have the same line-up? Did they have the same drummer, for example; who was the drummer and the bass player?

Walters: The drummer was ah Alexi Ricard [real name: Alexis], Ricard [Alexis's] brother.

Allen: Oh, yeah.

Walters: He's passed now, too. And ah the banjo was John Smith; George Thompson, which is Georgie Stuart ...

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: ... Albert Fernandez Walters on piano, and ah string bass ah, Johnny Prudence.

Allen: I see.

Walters: He was playin' with that band, too. And ah, Morris Arceneaux on trombone.

Allen: And when you came in, you just took Wooden Joe's place, huh?

Walters: Well, the second time, yeah.

Allen: Yeah. Who did you play with in the meantime? In between those?

Walters: Well, I played with so many little bands, ya know, gigs, they call 'em. I played with, with Paul awhile; I played with Paul about 13 years.

Allen: Uh-huh

Russell: Paul Barbarin, that is.

Walters: Paul Barbarin, yeah.

Russell: Yeah.

Allen: When was that, that you played with Paul; in the 20's or 30's, or when?

Walters: Well, there was about in the 30---say, from '36 till about '47.

Allen: Was it you who was tellin' me about playing with the kazoo player in some little trio?

Walters: Yeah, I used to play, that's how I started out on piano, too---with Danny Barker, and they had a kazoo player by the name of Joe.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: Well, he's dead. We used to play there in a little--in a barroom at Marais and St. Bernard--by Roubion's.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: Well that jazz--Danny Barker wasn't playin' nothin' but ukulele then; he was a devil
Retyped

Walters: of a ukelele player then. That's how his uncle had sent for him and brought him to New York to learn banjo.

Allen: Which uncle was that? That was Barbarin?

Walters: That's Paul Barbarin, yeah.

Russell: Now where were some of the places you played when you started out? What kind of halls, or were they parties, or picnics or . . . ?

Walters: Well, I tell ya, we played at the New Hall

(End of spool)

Walters: . . . . . . the Jeunes Ami, the Artisan's Hall, the Perserverance, the Economy Hall, the Corporators Hall, St. Katherine Hall—oh, there is many others, that I, you know, has slipped my memory.

Russell: Did you ever play many picnics, like at Milneburg, or anything out there?

Walters: Yeah, we used to play picnics at ah Milneburg, at the Little Eva camp, the "Bombela" (sp. ?), and a lot of others that I—you know what I mean—memories—the names done got away from me.

Allen: You've got a good memory.

Walters: Moreau's—we used to play it before the policemen of New Orleans had the police band; we used to play the eight-day picnic every year. That was from Sunday to Sunday.

Russell: In your day when you started was there anything going on in Spanish Fort anymore?

Walters: Yeah. There was plenty activities doing around there. . . . Spanish Fort. But I mean, most of the white musicians had it; colored musicians didn't have nothin'.

Russell: What about West End?

Walters: Well, West End—I worked out at West End a good while. I worked at the Balloon with a fella by the name of Munson Hickman, saxophone player. And we worked at the Bungalow for awhile; we left there and went to the Seaplane and from the Seaplane we went to ah—well, another fella, used to be a racer around New Orleans called him Bill Wade—he had a nightclub out there. Well I work out there till they completely demolish all the camps; we were one of the last band out there.

Allen: And who were you with out there?

Walters: Munson Hickman.
Walters: I was wondering about some of the brass bands you played in when you started.

Walters: I started out with the Tulane Brass Band; that's "Big" [Alcide] Landry.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: Well, they had Landry, [Ernest] Rogers was the manager of that band, myself, Kid Howard, Joe Avery, and ah Isaiah Robertson on trombone and Joe Avery on trombone, and they had a ah ah fella by the name of White, used to play sousaphone. And they had another fella, "Trap", used to play melophone, and the same Big Tillman that's playin' bass now, he used to play alto with the band--alto sax. And Georgie Lewis was in the band, also; he was the clarinet player.

Allen: Did they have baritone horn?

Walters: Yeah, they had a fella by the name of Peter White, a West Indian; he used to be baritone man.

Allen: Oh yeah, I've heard of this guy.

Russell: About what year was that when you started parades?

Walters: That was in 1929.

Allen: Did they have a bass drummer?

Walters: Yeah, ah Edgar Moseley.

Russell: Oh, yeah.

Walters: Edgar Moseley. He was the bass drummer, Rogers was the snare drum man.

Allen: How long has Landry been in town; did you know where he was from or anything?

Walters: Well Landry was from Donaldsonville--that's his home. Well, he had been in town quite awhile, ya know, 'cause him and Louis Dumaine was good friends.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: Until he formed his band. Well I was playin' out at Milneburg at a nightclub; well I, I had charge of the job and Rogers was drumming with me, and he told me--he used to call me Budda--no, he used to call me "Dago". Say "Dago", he say, "how about you ah come gettin' in the brass band with us"? I say, "Well, I don't know." I say, "I don't have no
Walters: experience in that. I was just ya know, just . . .

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: . . . comin' out pretty good. "Man, you're doin' fine". So he say ah "Why don't ya give it a try". So I say, "Well, all right--I give it a try". So I went out with 'em--that was on a Monday they had a park out Shrewsbury [Road]. And they had eight-day affair out there. And we played the eight-day affair out there and didn't get but half of the money. So when I went back home, my wife say, "You been in a bad start with the brass band."

Russell: There's one thing we always forget to ask people about their ah, their school--where they went to school when they were a kid. Did you--I don't remember if you told--I was wondering.

Walters: Well I come up through Catholic school. I used to go to Miss Jeanette, until I made my first communion and after I made first communion my mother continued me to St. Katherine's School.

Russell: That's over there on Tulane?

Walters: Tulane Avenue.

Russell: Where they have the dances near their church.

Walters: Yes.

Russell: We have a few more minutes on here. Ah, who were your favorite trumpet players? You mentioned you liked Manuel Perez, and a few others that ah . . .

Walters: Manuel Perez, Joe ah Wooden Joe--Joe Nicholas.

Russell: Did you hear Joe Oliver when you were a kid?

Walters: Well, now I heard a lot of talk of Joe Oliver, but I mean, being young I dis-remember, ya know.

Russell: You wouldn't be very old. Well, Freddy Keppard, I guess left town pretty early, too.

Walters: Naw, I heard, I heard Freddy Keppard.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Russell: How did you like him?

Walters: Oh, he was a fine trumpet player. I heard, also heard "Bunk" [Johnson] before he . .
Russell: In the old days then.

Walters: In the old days, yeah--before he made his second comeback.

Allen: What was he like, Bunk, then, would he . . .

Walters: Bunk?

Allen: . . . play the same as he did later?

Walters: I think so, to my idea he did, yeah.

Russell: Who did he play with when you heard him; was it in the country or right here in the city?

Walters: No, in the city; there was a colored nightclub they called the Entertainers; Arnold Metoyer was workin' there. He used to go there and rest for an hour while Arnold Metoyer--after, you know, he gets off the job here. And everybody would be hollering for him; "Bunk, play a number, play a number, Bunk". Well, you know, he always liked to juice; he had to get his juice first before he would get up there. Arnold Metoyer was another fine trumpet player; but he was a different type; he was the sweet type, ya know.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: Sweet straight solo.

Allen: What would happen when Arnold Metoyer or Perez or that school would have to play a blues; how would they do?

Walters: Well, Arnold could play a blues, but they was sweet and soft. It was, ya'know, more--people used to call him a parlor trumpet player.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: But he could play sweet and soft--he wasn't a flashy trumpet player.

Allen: Would he play variations?

Walters: Yeah, he would play a variation.

Allen: What would Perez do if he had to play a blues?

Walters: Well, Perez would play a straight-out blues. Just straight-out. There wasn't nothin' extra to it; I mean, he--whatever he played it was just like a person who read a poem, ya know.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: Ah, it's just, just straight-out.
Russell: Would he pick a number like, say, "St. Louis Blues", or would he just make the blues in B flat, or just anything like that, too?

Walters: Well, a B flat blues or the "St. Louis Blues", but he'd, ya know what I mean, he wouldn't put nothin' extra to it.

Russell: Yeah.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: No more than what it would go.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: Course the average trumpet player or musician, whenever they'd play a number like that, and there would be too far in between--you know, slack in between--they would always make some kind of variation to fill in. Well, he wouldn't. It would be somebody--up to somebody else in the band to make that.

Russell: Yeah. Did you hear Buddy Petit much when you young?

Walters: Oh, I played with, I played with Buddy.

Russell: Piano, I guess.

Walters: Yeah. I played piano with Buddy. Buddy was one of the finest trumpet players; now he wasn't strong and powerful, but I mean, he had so much execution. Now I mean to my idea, Buddy---Buddy had the time that---the execution ah, that ah that they are usin' today. I think he was just that far ahead of time, I'd say about I'd put him about 40 years ahead of time.

Allen: In what ways was his execution good?

Walters: In diminishes and in chord.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Walters: diminish--what, what just what they're usin' today, that's what Buddy made 40 years ago.

Russell: Did he play high like Armstrong does now?

Walters: No, he couldn't play high (car horn blows)--that was only his trouble; he he never did believe in playing high, but he'd stay in the staff and make you sick, though. Make you dizzy with the variation he'd make.
Allen: Could you hum a typical variation of his or do you remember any of them?

Walters: Oh, well, I'll tell ya he used to play so many variations.

Allen: Yeah.

Walters: He used to practically used to make a whole lot of things (hums variation). And to me he had the execution . . .

Russell: Uh-huh

Walters: . . . under control.

Allen: Fingering was good.

Walters: Fingering, yeah.

Russell: Used cornet or trumpet the times you heard him?

Walters: Well the time I heard him he had a B flat trumpet. He was a very fine trumpet player.

Russell: What about "Kid" Rena, how did he compare--

Walters: Now, he was come up to play on a different type. He had a swell round tone, and clean, clean, clean. I mean, him and Louis Armstrong are about the only two I know on that that tone type. And it was just the tone--I mean, I've heard a lot of trumpet players I mean to imitate ya know, close. Now "Sharkey", "Sharkey" [Bonano] play more like Rena than anybody I heard yet. His style and everything.

Russell: Yeah. Was Rena pretty loud or ah softer or . . . ?

Walters: Yeah, he was loud; he could get out there on the back of the truck during advertising days and get on the back on the tailgate of the truck and stand up there and he, when he hit, it hit C just as clear.

Russell: High C.

Walters: High C, yes. He was just as clear.

Russell: What about ah Chris Kelly?

Walters: Well, Chris Kelly he was more of a blues trumpet player. In fact, he, he was one of the blues, the best blues trumpet players they had around here. (street noises)

Russell: What about ah "Papa" Celestin; would--did he rank with the very best in those days, was he one of the great ones, would you say?
Walters: Well, yeah, "Papa", "Papa" did his share; but "Papa", I mean, was a different type too, I mean that's another type of trumpet. "Papa" was more ah sweet, sweet type, ya know. You know he had numbers he featured like "[My] Josephine", "Whenever you're Lonesome [Just] Telephone Me", well I mean he used to specialize.

Allen: When did you first play with "Papa"?

Walters: Well, I played--oh, a lot of jobs off and on with "Papa", you know, but I wasn't regular. I got in the band about five minutes, five months before "Papa" died I was appointed, ya know.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Russell: I think that about covers most every thing; we've only got about two seconds left on here.

Allen: Okay.

Russell: Just let that run on through.

END OF REEL I, JAN. 5, 1959

ALBERT "FERNANDEZ" WALTERS
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(Form A)