

Lonnie Johnson

"The Entire Family Was Musicians ('67, autobiograph"

Visit "[The Entire Family Was Musicians \('67, autobiograph](#)" on MotoLyrics.com

Listen, regarding you music and your playing, can you give me a little background on when you started and how you started and how this happened and so forth? [spoken words - Moses Asch]

Well, in the first place, the whole entire family was musicians. And I started playing when I was fourteen years old. My father played music. My mother played music. My five brothers played music, and I had two sisters played music. And I just bought an instrument and, and in ah six months I was holding a good job. I 's playin' with my father's band - he had a string band. And we played for weddings, and different things like that. It was nothing like now, you know? Those days wasn't like now, not then. And we just played for weddings, and dances, and, and ah, private parties, things like that, dinners, and â€¦ well â€¦

When did you start recording? [spoken words - Moses Asch]

I started recording 1920 ... for Okeh Record Company. I started recording for them in 1920 and I stayed with â€¦ I won a contest with them â€¦ I had been â€¦ I had been on this contest for eighteen weeks â€¦ I won first every Thursday night. 'Cause it's something, it's hard to play violin and sing at the same time. And I was doing that. And I was doing a very good job. And I got â€¦ a five-year contract from them. And I played violin and sing, and my brother played piano for me. And I made

a so many beautiful records for them. And so after the contract give out, and I went back to the steel mill, and started to working again 'cause I didn't know the nightclub work and I didn't take any chance. So [I] went back to the steel mill in East St. Louis, and worked there five years. I started as a sand cutter and end up as a molder. I was molding these big boxcar wheels you see on the track, that's what I was molding. And I worked there for a long time, and I left there and I went to 'cause they had a job open at the tie plant. You know, a creosote plant where they make ah railroad ties. So I went 'cause I, I went up there and went to work, and ah, I didn't work there very long - I worked there six months because ah, the work was too heavy. I was tired of weighing from 150 pounds to 200 pounds only, only two men had to carry them. And they come out of that creosote boiling hot. And you had those leather coats on. You put 'em on your shoulder. And you load sixteen, seventeen hundred ties into a boxcar. An' I got tired of that. So I left from there and went to Peoria, Illinois. Got a job in a nightclub, playing music again, and I played there three years in a nightclub, and the club 'cause closed down, ah, and I 'cause went to the foundry, only four blocks from the club and got a job doing the same kind of work I was in East St. Louis. So I worked there seven years.

When was this? [spoken words - Moses Asch]

Hmmmm? Oh, that was way back in the 20s 'cause 28, way back in there. And then I, then I worked there for a long time and then I got another easy job workin' at the golf club 'cause takin' care of the lawns, you know? I had a good job, worked out there a long time. Then when I left from there, come back to St. Louis and I started playing for Charlie Chreathe's

band and playin' all the, all the ah, all the all the
ah I played every
excursion boat out there for five years. I 's workin' with
Charlie Chreathe's
band, that's what they called him, Charlie Chreathe's,
his, his name was
Chreathe. So I, I ah played violin for his band for
five years. And then
his band broke up. And then I left from there and went
where'd I, then
I come here to Chicago. And ah, I worked in Chicago
with Louis' band,
I worked with Louis Armstrong's band way back in the
20s. I worked there
with him plum until he went out on the road by hi'self
and it cut me out
again. And then I started working in vaudeville, see? I
worked everything
in, ah on the key circuit 's to be worked. They kept me
on 'leven years.
I worked everything on this side and everything
overseas.

Playing violin overseas? [spoken words - Moses Asch]

No, I 's playin' guitar then and singin' [spoken words
- Lonnie Johnson]

Visit [Lonnie Johnson](#) page on MotoLyrics.com, to get more lyrics and videos.

[MotoLyrics.com](#) | Lyrics, music videos, artist biographies, releases and more.