

JOHN:

"All kids draw and write poetry and everything, and some of us last until we're about 18, but most drop off at about 12 when some guy comes up and says, 'You're no good.' That's all we get told all our lives. 'You haven't got the ability. You're a cobbler.' It happened to all of us, but if somebody had told me all my life, 'Yeah, you're a great artist,' I would have been a more secure person."

The Beatles Anthology (2000)





The curtain rises on the Beatles at the start of a charity performance in New York on Sept. 16, 1964.

“John’s music got my attention at a very young age, then John got my attention and that changed my life forever! He defined the spirit of rock and roll as a way of life: think what you want, be what you are ...

We play music ... it puts us at ease, it’s what makes us tick. Even though he left us early, he was here long enough to make some great music and change the world. He will always be missed.”

Earl Slick - guitarist on
Double Fantasy sessions

CHAPTER 1 – *Beginnings*



John Lennon, circa 1947.

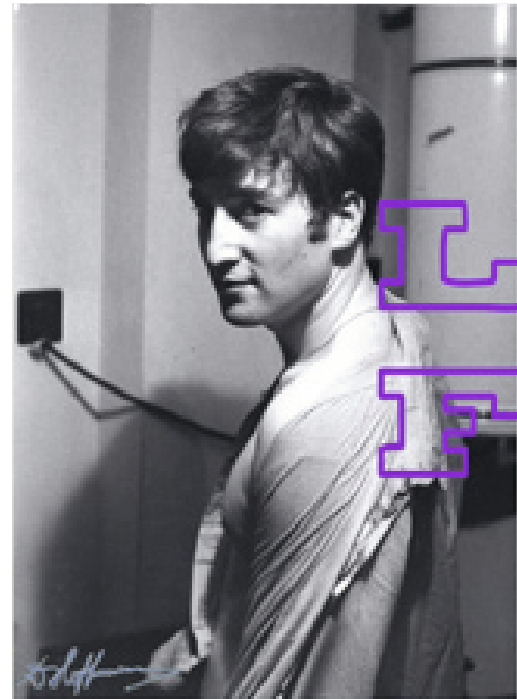


John and his Aunt Mimi.

John Winston Lennon was born in Liverpool, England to Julia Stanley Lennon and Alfred Lennon on Oct. 9, 1940. Lennon's upbringing was a nice, lower middle-class existence, although his early years were not without their share of heartache. Lennon's parents separated when he was very young, and at around age 5 he was sent to live with his mother's sister, Mary Elizabeth Stanley Smith, known to John as Aunt Mimi.

Mimi's husband, George, passed away in 1955, which was another blow to the teenage Lennon, who had grown quite fond of his uncle. Lennon would still see his mother relatively frequently during this period, but the free-spirited Julia was either unable or unwilling to take on the responsibility of full-time parenting. She is often credited, however, for instilling a passion for music in her son.

He didn't, however, have much of a relationship with his father. "My father had gone away to sea and I never saw him again until I made a lot of money and he came back. Which is another story altogether. I wasn't going to see him at all, but he sort of blackmailed me in the press and I fell for it and saw him and we had some kind of relationship and then he died a few years later [in 1976] of cancer," he told author David Sheff in a 1980 interview, later published as part of the *Playboy* interviews with Lennon and Yoko Ono in 1981.



Signed Dezo Hoffman photo of John Lennon, sold in 2003 for \$460.

LORES TPO

JOHN:

"When I was about 12, I used to think I must be a genius, but nobody's noticed. **Either I'm a genius or I'm mad,** which is it? 'No,' I said, 'I can't be mad because nobody's put me away; therefore I'm a genius.' Genius is a form of madness and we're all that way. But I used to be coy about it, like me guitar playing. But if there's such a thing as genius — I am one. And if there isn't, I don't care."

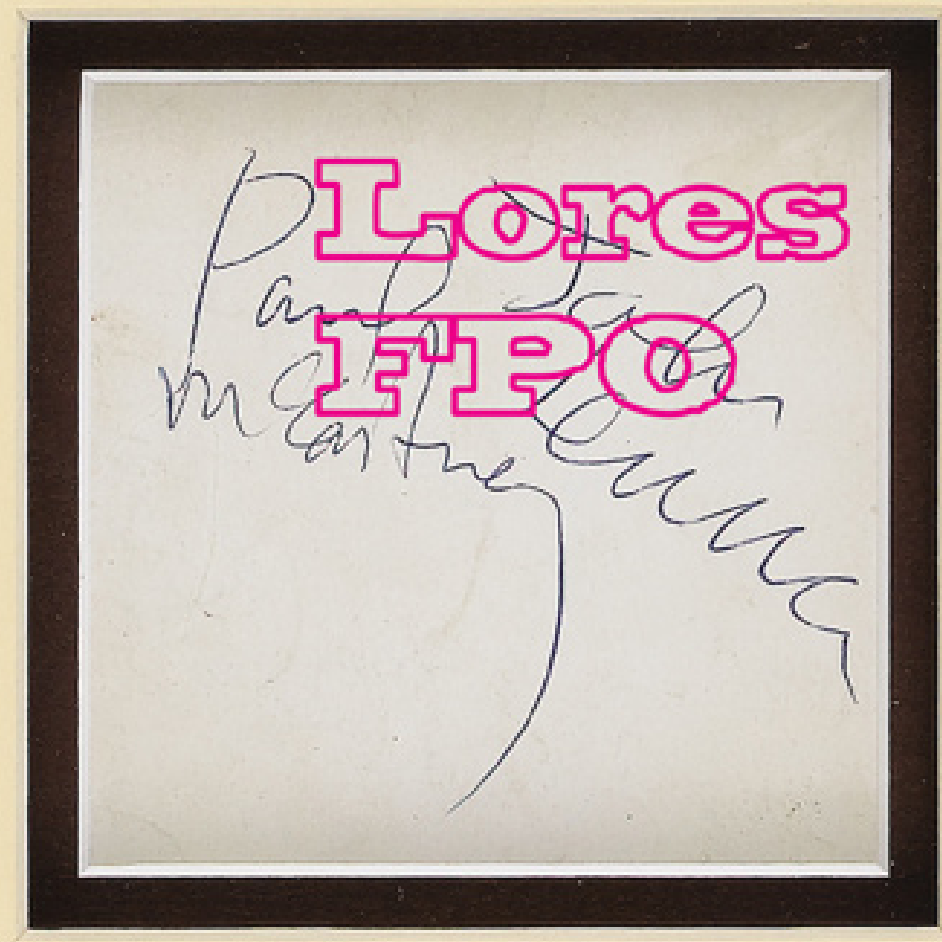
Interview with
Rolling Stone magazine
(December 1970)

John Lennon performs on stage with his first band, the Quarrymen, at a church function in Woolton, Merseyside, on July 6, 1957.



Paul McCartney signed photo, inscribed, "To Dianne Love Paul McCartney XXXX," with "Hello Dianne!!!" added in a word balloon, and signed by McCartney in black ink, sold in 2006 for \$478.

He certainly couldn't have realized it at the time, but July 6, 1957, would turn out to be a very significant day in the life of 16-year-old Lennon. The British schoolboy and his skiffle band, The Quarrymen, were performing at the Woolton Parish Church garden fete in Liverpool, when an important introduction was made. "A mutual friend who brought Paul [McCartney] along introduced him to me saying, 'I think you two will get along'," Lennon told New York disc jockey Scott Muni in 1975. Quite an understatement!



John Lennon and Paul McCartney autographs, on the back of a Beatles promo card, obtained by a fan during a show at the Floral Hall Ballroom, Morecambe, Lancashire, circa 1962-63, sold in 2006 for \$4,182.50.



*“We thought we’d be really big
in Liverpool.”*

Paul McCartney,
on the Beatles’
early expectations
of their success (2007
interview with Larry King)