

MAURICE DURAND  
I [of 2] --Digest--Retyped  
August 22, 1958

Also present: William Russell  
Manuel Manetta

[Durand died in San Francisco, November 23, 1961]

(Thanksgiving Day)

This interview was conducted in St. Bernard Parish [down-  
river from the city of New Orleans proper] on July 4, 1893. He  
began playing music when he was 10-12 years old; his first teacher  
was one of his uncles who played with the Terminal Brass Band. He  
later took lessons from Professor Jim Humphrey. His mother and  
father did not play music, but he had two uncles who did; the  
Terminal Brass Band uncle's last name was Pierre, MD's [maternal?]  
family name. MD is Catholic. The only instrument he has played  
is the trumpet. He played with such jazz bands as those of Buddy  
Petit, Sam Morgan and Chris Kelly, and with Manuel Perez band,  
the Tuxedo Brass Band and the Onward Brass Band. MD also worked  
with Manuel "Fess" Manetta, then playing accordian, on house party  
jobs; they worked together in Manuel Perez's orchestra at the Parisian  
Roof Garden. When that orchestra left that job, MD and Perez formed  
the Onward Brass Band. [Check this. Perhaps he means Imperial.  
See below. Reel II, p. 5]. MD also co-led the Durand and (Willie,  
the younger) Humphrey band; Humphrey's grandfather was Jim Humphrey,  
one of MD's teachers. Besides MD on trumpet and Humphrey on  
clarinet, the band had Bebe Matthews, drums, Buddy Johnson, trombone,  
[Jerry?] Green, banjo and Jimmy Johnson, bass.

When young, MD was a fan of Freddy Keppard, with "Big Eye"  
Louis [Nelson] Delisle on clarinet; MD, who knew four tunes at the  
time, would beg Keppard to let him play; when MD had finished his  
tunes (the only title he remembers is "I Wish I Could Shimmy Like

My Sister Kate"), he could only start over; Big Eye would play a signal for Keppard to return to the stand. The first number MD ever played was a six-eighth march, "Shoulder Strap", which the Terminal Brass Band had. MD remembers a few of the Terminal members: Sunny Henry played bass [! !]; Norm Manetta was in it, as was Paul Pierre [the uncle?]; the leader, Brazhear [Spelling?], played trumpet, and [Louis Rodriguez] played trombone. MD followed all the brass bands in those days, including the ones having Freddy Keppard, Manuel Perez and Joe Oliver in them. His favorite trumpet player was Manuel Perez; MD wanted lessons from him, but he, being too busy, recommended that he study with Professor Humphrey, which he did for about one year. Humphrey encouraged MD and Willie Humphrey to organize their own band. MD studied the Arban method book. Later he began playing duets with MM at the latter's house, and got some ideas from him. WR mentions Albert Glenny; MM reminisces about some job and the fun afterwards, and mentions the name of bassist Johnny Prudence. Prudence played with Wooden Joe Nicholas. MM Says the job he mentioned had just himself on accordian and MD on trumpet, and that "Sister Kate" had just come out [Compare above]; he heard it played at West End, by a group playing next to his cottage. MD and MM used the Amos and Andy [radio show] theme song, "The Perfect Song," as their theme also. MD tells of joining the 32-piece Army band led by Amos White, in 1918 in Kansas City, later going to Hoboken, New Jersey, and overseas to England and France. There were nine trumpeters in the band, so White taught MD E<sup>b</sup> clarinet, which he played in that band; MD says it was easier than trumpet. MD says he was issued a Buescher trumpet [probably the time he changed from cornet to

MAURICE DURAND

I [of 2]--Digest--Retyped  
August 22, 1958

trumpet] in France, and that White had a York trumpet. MD's favorite instrument is a G. G. Conn. MD started playing music on a cornet, which was equipped with a set of tuning shanks; discussion follows. MD thinks the trumpet is easier to blow than cornet; he thinks the cornet tone is louder and less projected. MD still has the C. G. Conn trumpet he played in New Orleans, and will keep it until he dies. Now and then he plays "Mack, the Knife" on it. MD identifies people in a photograph: Buddy Johnson's brother, Yank [Johnson], Manuel Perez, Papa Celestin, Ernest Trepagnier, Charlie Love, Georgie Hooker (baritone horn). [Check with WR about this photo.] *See MD's copy of photo* The two bands shown were playing for the Bulls's Club parade; Love was playing with Celestin, while Perez, Hooker, and Johnson were with MD. The photo was taken 30-35 years ago, at the Bulls's Club at Eighth and Daneel. MD played with Frankie Duson's orchestra (he thinks) at the Bulls's that same night, Labor Day.

Once, when Perez was ill, MD was to lead the Onward Brass Band for Eddie Vinson's funeral, over the river; not knowing whom to expect, MD worried about the extra cornet player Perez was to send, until the bandsmen saw Louis "Dipper" Armstrong approaching to play the job. Then all was all right. MD had a trumpet with a cornet mouthpiece (in a bit); Armstrong tried it, liked it; MD liked Armstrong's mouthpiece. (Armstrong was then playing at [Tom] Anderson's with [Albert] Francis [drums], Paul Domingues, violin and Luis Russell [piano]). Armstrong finished the funeral, left to go to his job, went to Chicago the next day, with MD's mouthpiece. They never exchanged mouthpieces, just letters about

them, because they were both using them. There is talk about Eddie Vinson and where and when he died; MD and MM say he died in New York, and his body was shipped to Algiers; WR thinks he died later [than 1922, when Armstrong went to Chicago], in Chicago. MD says Armstrong remembers the funeral. Vinson lived opposite the Naval Station in Algiers.

*France*  
[Vinson's father's funeral] See Louis Armstrong, Satchmo, p.227].

*lc*  
Another photo, of Perez's band at the Parisian Roof Garden (opposite the old Parish Prison), shows Alfred Williams, drums, Earl Humphrey, trombone, MD, trumpet, Perez, Adolphe "Tats" Alexander [Jr.] [Sax and clarinet?], Osceola Blanchet, piano, Eddie Cherrie, clarinet and sax, Caffrey Darensbourg, [banjo] and Jimmy Johnson [bass]. [See Ramsey and Smith, Jazz Town.] *On Pithon Temple Roof Garden* [See Ramsey and Smith, Jazz Town.] Discussion of Darensbourg's relation, if any, to Joe Darensbourg, of Ory's band. MM identifies persons shown in a photograph of the Charlie McCurdy-Bab Frank Peerless Brass Band: Jean Vigne, drums; George Fihle, trombone; McCurdy, clarinet; Andrew Kimball, trumpet; Coochie Martin, guitar; Frank, piccolo; Oke Gaspard, [bass]. MD got the photo from John Robichaux, when he bought some music from Robichaux. MM thinks the Peerless organized about 1905; the photo has the date 1906 on it. Frank had a flute, but specialized on piccolo.

Some trombonists MD has liked are Kid Ory, Frankie Duson (with whom he played). MD played with a lot of good trombonists, like Sunny Henry, Buddy Johnson and Harrison Barnes. MD says Duson played smoother than Ory, Ory being more jazzy. Duson

played slide trombone when MD was with him; the first time MD played with Duson was at the Royal Garden, at Gravier and Rampart; the band broke up and MD went to the [Parisian] Roof Garden. There is discussion about Royal Garden and Winter Garden; they were the same, the name Winter Garden being later. Fabacher's Restaurant was near-by. The Pelican was on the back-of-town, uptown side of the corner. MD was in the first band that played at the Astoria; he doesn't remember the name of the leader.

Willie Humphrey, playing in the same brass band, congratulated MD and Manuel Perez on playing the same way, saying he couldn't tell when one was playing and the other one wasn't. Perez taught MD a lot about trumpet; George Moret, with whom MD also played, also taught MD a lot. MD explains to WR that "one up and one down" means one trumpet player [usually trumpet] is playing while one trumpet player is resting; both play at the beginning and the end of the piece.

End of Reel I

MAURICE DURAND  
 II [of 2]  
 August 22, 1958

Also present: William Russell  
 Manuel Manetta

Jimmie Noone is mentioned.

In a brass band, the two trombones (first and second) did not alternate as the two solo trumpets did; MD explains that the bands, like the Onward Brass Band, usually used two solo trumpets (these being the ones which alternated) and one first trumpet, the first trumpet part being a harmony (or second) part (MD says he liked to play first trumpet, as it was different). Sometimes the lead would be cued in on the first trumpet part. The instrumentation of the Onward consisted of tuba, two trombones, baritone [horn[, alto horn, ~~clarinet~~, [only] two trumpets, snare drum and bass drum; MD says clarinet [sic] was added later [?]. The band used saxophone later, when Adolphe Alexander [Jr.] was added. MD didn't play in Perez's Imperial dance band [orchestra], but he did play in the Imperial [not Onward] Brass Band; in that band were Perez, [trumpet] soloist and leader; MD, soloist [trumpet]; James MacNeal's son, first (B<sup>b</sup>) trumpet; Earl Humphrey and Yank Johnson, trombones; MM, baritone horn; Jim Ball, bass horn; Eddie Cherrie, (B<sup>b</sup>) clarinet; Adolphe Alexander, Jr., saxophone; Henry Martin, bass drum and Alfred Williams, snare drum. The Imperial Brass Band was chronologically later than the Onward Brass Band. MM adds to the Imperial personnel: Walter ["Fats"] Pichon, (the pianist) alto horn. MM says that when the Onward Brass Band was organized, the original personnel consisted of Perez, leader and trumpet [cornet] soloist, and Andrew Kimball, cornet soloist; Peter Bocage, first trumpet; Buddy Johnson and

Vic Gaspard, trombones; Lorenzo Tio [Jr.], clarinet; Adolphe "Taton" Alexander [Sr.], baritone horn; [Isidor] Barbarin (Paul Barbarin's father), alto horn; Eddie Atkins (who also played trombone in those days), baritone horn [two baritones in one band?]; "Dandy" Lewis, bass drum; Eddie Jackson, bass horn; "Bebé" Matthews, snare drum. [See photo. Esquire Jazz Book, 1945] Joe Oliver was not in that [original] band; MM says at that time the District had been closed, and the Tuxedo Dance Hall, renamed [The Villa, Davilla's?] had a band in which he played [piano?], Eddie Atkins played trombone, Joe Howard played trumpet and Zeb [Leneries] played clarinet. MD played with Eddie Jackson in the Tuxedo Brass Band; Jackson was a pretty good bass player who would give plenty of [musical] help [support]. MD joined the Tuxedo when [Papa] Celestin quit playing in brass bands; Louis Dumaine became the leader, and MD played solo trumpet. MM says Jackson was a good bass violin player, working with the trumpeter Peter Locaze's Nola Band. MD says he taught Locaze; Locaze, upon seeing MD in a jazz band playing on an advertising wagon [or truck], would tremble, afraid MD was going to "buck" against him; MD never did, however, nor did he ever buck against Kid Rena or Buddy Petit; Punch [Miller] and Chris Kelly, however, would buck; MD says he and Punch and Kelly would sometimes spend most of an afternoon bucking on one corner. One afternoon MD was playing with Frankie Duson's band; they defeated Jack Carey's band, with Punch, in a bucking contest, by playing [written] music, such as "Sally Trombone" and "Miss Trombone"; when Carey's band had moved a few blocks away, MD (who says he couldn't play blues as well as Punch) began playing blues; Punch called for a return,

MAURICE DURAND  
II [of 2]  
August 22, 1958

but when the Carey band got back to the scene of the contest, the Duson band pulled out, leaving Punch frustrated. Willie Humphrey was playing [clarinet?] in the Duson band then, and "Little Alex" [Scott?] was playing bass. MD names some places he played--Economy Hall, San Jacinto Club, Bull's Club, Hope's Hall, Sacred Heart of Mary (Algiers), St. Katherine's Hall and the steamer Capitol. The Durand and Humphrey band was hired by the Streckfus people to play relief (one hour on, one hour off) for the Fate Marable band, the regular band on the Capitol; the event was an extra trip, like an all-day excursion, and was but a single engagement for MD; however, the Streckfuses liked MD's playing, so they sent bassist Henry Kimball to ask him to join the Marable band; MD didn't want to leave his own band, though, so he refused the offer.

MD explains some of the geography of the lower East Bank of the Mississippi River, locating the place where he was born, and the place where Jimmie Noone was born. From Chalmette, descending the river, [some of] the places are the Paris Road, Corinne (where MD was born), Merauxville [now called simply Meraux], Walker's [Lane], Story's, Highland, and Violet (the Ship Island Canal). Noone was born in Merauxville; he played guitar before he took up clarinet. MD says several of them would go to a place in Merauxville, sit on a "gallery" [that is, porch] and play music. Freddy Keppard, courting Noone's sister, advised Noone to take up clarinet instead of continuing to play guitar; Noone took his advice, and was taught by [Paul] Chaligny. Noone

MAURICE DURAND  
II [of 2]  
August 22, 1958

then played with Keppard, Manuel [Perez] and Joe Oliver; he left New Orleans for Chicago, where he played with [Charles] Cook's orchestra. WR says [Johnny] St. Cyr was with that band, too.

\* Then Noone organized his own band, and Guy Kelly [trumpet], who formerly had played with Celestin, worked with him. The last MD heard of Noone he had died in Los Angeles, in 1944. When MD was young and living in Corinne, his mother and others would have dances; "Big Eye" Louis [Nelson] Delisle, Henry Ford, Albert Mitchell and Johnny Gould (MM says he played with them some, too) would provide the music; coming from New Orleans on Saturday night and return to New Orleans on Monday; Noone and his sisters [and presumably his parents] would spend the night [s?] with MD, all the children sleeping in the same bed. MD thinks one of the sisters is still living, in Chicago. MM doesn't know that Keppard married one of the Noone girls, but he says Herbert Lindsay did, but he doesn't know which one. MD says there were three girls, Sissie, Nookie and one other; MD says that when Noone's mother died, he, Eddie Cherrie and Manuel Perez drove to the funeral, and Noone came from Chicago, and there were the three sisters there, also. (Alarm clock rings, to remind WR to call [Kid] ory.) Sissie Noone, the oldest of the girls (MD thinks), lived in Oakland; when she became ill, her Chicago sister took her to Chicago (she lived in the house where MD now lives, and was friendly with his "uncle," his father's cousin), where Sissie died. MD's "uncle" died about seven months ago. MD went to San Francisco to live in 1944; he had quit playing trumpet about when his mother died, about twenty-five years ago [about 1933]. MD says he quit playing because music business was bad, paying seventy-five

MAURICE DURAND  
II [of 2]  
August 22, 1958

cents a night (Kid Rena was playing at the Gypsy Tea Room for that price), and he wouldn't play for that; he went to work in a mop factory, and later went to California, at his uncle's request, to run his "uncle's" business. WR says MD was living in the ninth Ward, below the [Industrial] Canal; there was no canal there when MD first lived there, which was when MD was eight years old (1901); his father and he built the house they lived in.

MD says that in the old day the people in the country would hire New Orleans bands for their dances, but there was a band in "The Cutoff," (on "Fess's side [West Bank]), and that his cousin played accordian in it; others in the little band were bass, banjo, etc., and the band played around the plantations.

When MD first began studying trumpet, he worked from written music, but he says he could fake, too; he says that when he and Octave [Crosby] worked at the Doghouse, Rampart and Bienville, Octave would bring a lot of new sheet music to the job; they would run through it all at the beginning of the evening, then play it again the next night, at which time MD would not need the music, having already memorized all the tunes. He says he was not like George Moret, who played the music strictly and strictly from the music. MD says he himself could play as loud as anyone in a brass band, but he could also play [just] above a whisper.

MD made one record, a cylinder, for Columbia; the title was "Turnip Greens" or "Good Old Turnip Greens."

MAURICE DURAND  
II [of 2]  
August 22, 1958

cents a night (Kid Rena was playing at the Gypsy Tea Room for that price), and he wouldn't play for that; he went to work in a mop factory, and later went to California, at his uncle's request, to run his "uncle's" business. WR says MD was living in the ninth Ward, below the [Industrial] Canal; there was no canal there when MD first lived there, which was when MD was eight years old (1901); his father and he built the house they lived in.

MD says that in the old day the people in the country would hire New Orleans bands for their dances, but there was a band in "The Cutoff," (on "Fess's side [West Bank]), and that his cousin played accordian in it; others in the little band were bass, banjo, etc., and the band played around the plantations.

When MD first began studying trumpet, he worked from written music, but he says he could fake, too; he says that when he and Octave [Crosby] worked at the Doghouse, Rampart and Bienville, Octave would bring a lot of new sheet music to the job; they would run through it all at the beginning of the evening, then play it again the next night, at which time MD would not need the music, having already memorized all the tunes. He says he was not like George Moret, who played the music strictly and strictly from the music. MD says he himself could play as loud as anyone in a brass band, but he could also play [just] above a whisper.

MD made one record, a cylinder, for Columbia; the title was "Turnip Greens" or "Good Old Turnip Greens."

MAURICE DURAND  
II [of 2]  
August 22, 1958

11

(MD plays muted trumpet, playing one phrase of "I'm Confessin' That I Love You" in the middle range, and the next phrase an octave higher.) He says he played in that manner in the old days, but that he doesn't have the lip now. MD learned the non-pressure system of playing; he describes some of it. WR says MM told him P. G. Loral [Spelling?] was one he first saw using non-pressure system, and that someone else told him Arnold Metoyer used very little pressure. MD says he thinks Willie Humphrey told him to try that system.

MD used many various kinds of mutes during his playing career; he put four kazoos together as a mute, used a plunger for a wa-wa mute, used buckets, etc.

End of Reel II