

JACK TEAGARDEN  
Reel I--Summary--Retyped  
October 30, 1959

Others present:  
Mrs. Addie Teagarden  
Georgia Burrows, a photographer  
Richard B. Allen

Georgia Burrows, reporter for the New Orleans States-Item, asks if the people of Asia [in reference to a U. S. State Department-sponsored tour the Teagarden band took] understand and/or have a real feeling for jazz. The Teagardens reply that they do have a feeling for it, that they are exposed to it via radio, particularly the Voice of America program.

In response to Mr. Allen's question, the Teagardens reply that the king of Siam [Thailand] plays with his own band when the Teagarden band is not in Siam; the band is composed of the king's cabinet members, one of whom, the bass player, was once ambassador to the U. S. Teagarden says that he has a "bunch of music over there to send to him [the king]." In response to Mr. Allen's question about how Ray Bauduc got his first break, Teagarden says that the first time he ever saw Bauduc, Bauduc was "barnstorming" with Johnny Bayersdorffer, and were in Shreveport at the time. They barnstormed to the west coast, and all over the country, working just enough to pay expenses. When Teagarden got to New York [1927], Bauduc was there and working with the orchestra of Freddie Rich. Teagarden went with Ben Pollack's band, and when Pollack decided to merely front the band, Teagarden got Bauduc the drummer's job. The band with Bauduc stayed at one hotel job for about ten years, at which time it became the Bob Crosby band [and presumably left the job.]

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Miss Burrows asks if the Teagarden band is going on another [foreign] tour. Mrs. Teagarden says no, not immediately, but that they are due to go on one to South America, again for the State Department. The Teagarden band has been to England, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Wales, and also to Germany, the Benelux countries-Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, France, Italy, and Switzerland. [In the background] Teagarden remarks, "This thing here is a Cambodian flute," which he shows around. Teagarden says that he can't play it, and Mr. Allen says that Raymond Burke can play it, that he can play anything like that.

The Teagarden band made its Asian tour from September 23, 1958, to January 23, 1959. The band made its European tour[s?] before making the one to Asia. Teagarden answers Miss Burrows' question about Russia by saying he would like to tour Russia, and Mrs. Teagarden says she dreamed the night before that they received a cable about going there. Teagarden says that he has not been anywhere that the people didn't like jazz. It is incredible to Teagarden because people in Europe, especially have wonderful music and folk music of their own, and "the funny part of it is that it's the real, unadulterated jazz that they like--of the swing era. They like Benny Goodman, they like Louis Armstrong, they like music of that type." He says the Europeans can easily play modern jazz, but to play "the other" they have to copy from

recordings, and "it doesn't come natural to them." Mrs. Teagarden says that the king of Thailand likes Jimmie Noone. Mr. Allen explains that Noone was from Plaquemines [possibly St. Bernard] parish, and played around New Orleans [before he went north]. Teagarden says the king of Thailand had Benny Goodman and his band come to Thailand once; he says the king has, he guesses, every jazz record ever made, and that he has a radio station and a theater containing a Hammond organ, a fine grand piano, and all the other equipment. When the Teagarden band was in Thailand, the king had a tape recorder running all the time the band played, even when they were putting an arrangement or a routine together; he wanted every note, everything, even the tuning up. Teagarden responds to the question of the King's musicianship by saying that by our standards over here [the U. S.] he would have plenty of competition, but over there he didn't have any. To the question of the universal appeal of "New Orleans" jazz, Teagarden quotes the king of Cambodia, who said that it expresses freedom, and [has] a very happy beat. When the Teagarden band played at a university in Kandy, Ceylon, and American [diplomatic?] officer said that he didn't think the dean of the university would stay for more than half an hour of the concert, that he never did; but the dean stayed for the entire concert, and would have stayed longer. Teagarden says the officer was speaking of the other kinds

of entertainment that had been brought over there. Speaking about the "far-reaching effects" that jazz tours have had on international relations, Teagarden says the tours have afforded the people their first opportunity of seeing Americans who seemed to be like everybody in the street, and the people seemed to like Americans very much==[at least], "they liked us," and he says he knows the tours have opened up a lot of doors for the "public relations," and that he wished more could be done along that line. Mrs. Teagarden says they get translations [of articles about jazz?] from Japanese newspapers and magazines from the [U. S.] embassy in Japan, and that since the Teagarden trip to Japan there has been "a real upsurge of Dixieland bands." Teagarden says there is a trombonist in Japan who is called "Little T" and a trumpeter who is called "Louie." Teagarden says the Japanese bands learn how to play jazz style from recordings, and that they have developed an ear from American music and have forgotten about their own traditional music, music which Teagarden does not understand. He says that the classical music of India is like jazz, in that there are no notes [notation] and that the music is all improvised; their system of notation is by using numbers. The Indians have a three-string "guitar" on which a bagpipe-like drone is begun, a one-string "violin," which sounds "like a housecat does when somebody stands on his tail," then begins to play ad lib. Mr. Allen says that classical musicians improvised until the 19th century and

Teagarden says that Jewish cantors chant ad lib, very much like the blues.

Teagarden says that the people in the countries where they toured spoke of Marian Anderson and her tour with great respect, and that they liked the [Dave] Brubeck tour, but that the tour which had the biggest impact was the jazz band. At the Brussels world's fair, the jazz music [exhibit] drew the biggest crowd, and adds that the U. S. State Department didn't send Benny Goodman and his band to the fair, that Westinghouse Corporation did. Mrs. Teagarden says that she and the members of the band got letters almost every day of the tour from people they had met on the tour, and that Teagarden sent music to the Philippines, where interest in jazz had "fallen pretty much by the wayside," until the visit of the band. Teagarden also sent books on arranging to film companies in Burma, so that the Burmese could write their own music scores for their movies.

The Teagardens mention some of the other jazz band tours and say that Dizzy [Gillespie] toured the Middle East, and that Dave Brubeck started in Japan and went to Thailand, possibly, and then to Afghanistan. According to Mrs. Teagarden Louis Armstrong also toured. The Teagarden tour was the longest made, including 120 concerts played and taking 18 weeks to complete. Mrs. Teagarden was mistaken for a representative of UNESCO by a woman at a school in Afghanistan, and the woman began telling her what the school needed. ANTA (American

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National Theater and Academy) headed by Bob Schnitzer, sent Rod Alexander and a dance troupe to Afghanistan shortly after the Teagardens returned from abroad, and the Teagardens sent three big cartons of school supplies, via Alexander, to that school in Afghanistan.

Teagarden says that it should be impressed on the U. S. people that jazz should be given serious thought, because it does so much good, that the U. S. should consider jazz as more than just a pastime [for the public]. The people in foreign countries are actively interested in jazz, as much as they are in any art form. Teagarden says that he and his wife wrote a letter of appreciation to a newspaper columnist in Saigon, who had written a nice report of their appearance there. In his reply, the columnist said, "Tell your friend, President Eisenhower, when you get back, that sending your folks over there is about the best thing he ever sent us." The tour program to improve international relations was the idea of Eisenhower, according to Teagarden.

END OF REEL I  
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