



READING NOTES / TWO SOURCE PAGES

Sergei Lukiyanovich Ermolaeff - 'Serge Ermoll' remembers old Shanghai jazz

The document

A handwritten survey headed “Progress of Jazz Music after Boxers Rebellion in Far East” and “All Full time Bands”. It names musicians, ensembles, venues and engagements in Shanghai and elsewhere in Asia, then continues into Australian jazz and Serge Ermoll Jr’s career.

Authorship and dating

The first page bears “Serge Ermoll Snr” beside an Australian correspondence stamp. This supports attribution to Serge Ermoll Sr, although no signature or date is visible. References to deaths in 1980 and February 1986 suggest that at least part of the text was written or amended in or after 1986. The latest explicit date is not necessarily the date of the whole document.

What the account offers

Its value lies in a working musician’s recollection of personnel, travel, instruments, professional networks and employment. Shanghai is connected to Harbin, Hong Kong, Singapore, Java, Japan, Manila, Sydney, Melbourne and London. The heading invokes the Boxer Rebellion, but the visible entries begin in 1923 rather than documenting that earlier period.

How to read this transcription

This is a lightly normalised reading transcription, not a facsimile or independently verified chronology. Capitalisation, spacing and punctuation are regularised; names, dates and claims are retained, except for the requested spelling and terminology changes. Square brackets identify uncertainty, cropped text or editorial explanation. Marginal notes are placed beside the entry they appear to qualify. Crossed-out words are omitted where the surviving reading is clear.

Source limitations

The four supplied photographs show two pages, each photographed twice. Page one is substantially clearer. The left edge of page two is cropped and its writing is densely compressed; some dates, names and phrases cannot be recovered confidently. The account contains inconsistent dates and durations, which have not been silently corrected.



SOURCE PAGE ONE / PART 1

Shanghai: the early bands

Heading and correspondence

"Progress of Jazz Music after Boxers Rebellion in Far East." "All Fulltime Bands." Page 1.
Correspondence: Box 48 P.O. Punchbowl, N.S.W. 2196, Australia. Tel. 53-7785. Serge Ermoll
Snr. [A second telephone number is crossed out.]

Scope

"Far East well known bands and musicians (top rates) only."

1923 - Harry Carry

Shanghai. First from U.S.A. in 1923 was pianist Harry Carry, "Palace of Dance", 6 men: 3
Filipinos, 2 Russians and H. C., American.

1923 - Jack Lipy

Shanghai. Jack Lipy, drummer from U.S.A., played at "Lido Tavern" (old Carleton), dance
hall. 5 Filipinos and J. L.

1923-24 - Whitey Smith

Whitey Smith (drummer), from San Francisco, Calif., U.S.A. 5 Americans, 1 Portuguese,
Macao; Pat [Caruzio?], sax/violin; 4 Russians; Nick, lives in Sydney (trumpet); Bob Koff in
Queensland (bass); Shtofer, Russian, sax/violin, now in U.S.A. Americans: sax player
Summers; Selli [uncertain] (banjo, guitar), U.S.A.; Jimmy Feer, U.S.A., pianist from Paul
Whitman's band; also trombone player, Russian Peter Temnev, now in U.S.A.

1921-32 - Cinderella

Whitey Smith's own night club "Cinderella". New big band, 11 men from Harbin plus Whitey
Smith (drums). After 2nd war he became a millionaire in Manila with his own casino night
club. See book "How I Became a Millionaire". [The date appears as 1921-32 in the
manuscript.]

About 1925 - Teddy Wetherford

"Big Black band", Teddy Wetherford (pianist), from U.S.A. 10-12 men played at American
Womens Club, "Madrid", New Carleton, Canidrome, in Shanghai. Played for many years.



SOURCE PAGE ONE / PART 2

Music Masters and visitors

1927-28 - Misha Bakaleinikoff

Misha Bakaleinikoff (brother of Paramount music director Bakaleinikoff [film]). Misha: pianist, arranger, composer, virtuoso bass [string], choreographer. Russian big band with Lidia Roberti ["Lida" added above]; latter she was film star (comedian), in U.S.A., H. Wood [Hollywood], [and/or in Shanghai - unclear]. This band played at New Carleton.

1924 - Jack Carter

Jack Carter (drummer), jazz show band, American Black with two girls: [Lavada?] Snow and Valada Snow; played trumpet. One Filipino trombone, Jimmy [Nes?], [Angela written above]. After went to Singapoure, Java, and India. In Shanghai played in Plaza Hotel.

1929-30-31 - Henry Nathan

Henry Nathan, American from Singapore, came to Shanghai. Violinist, sax alto (very good). Piano Bill Hegamin (American Black); Australian guitarist Donot Know Name. 3 Russians, 4 Americans. Played at Cathay Hotel, Sir Victor Sassoon's Co.

1923 and 1930 - Serge Ermoll

[Boxed note:] S. Ermoll with Monia Litter, pianist. 1923: Russians, Czechs, Latvians, 7 men. S. Ermoll drummer, trumpet player, photo on the [door?]. St. George ballroom Ginsburg, Dairen. 1930 Music Masters.

1930 and 1935-36 - Music Masters

Serge Ermoll's Music Masters, 1930. Astor House, Majestic, and Hongkong-Shanghai Hotels Ltd. 1935 Paramount Hotel with Rudolf Friml, famous composer of "Rose Marie" and pianist, improviser also. Serge Ermoll was his arranger in 1935-1936; also composed together "Hai Bai" [uncertain] and "Fernshore" [uncertain].

Recordings and Charles Thode

Charles Thode, American pianist, composer of "Girl of My Dreams", played with Serge Ermoll's Music Masters. Also recorded for Pathé and Columbia, Shanghai. "See photo." 13 men.

1937-38 and after World War II

Harbin, Manchuria, Cabaret Fantasia; Shanghai, Lido Ballroom; Tsingtao Resort [summer]. After War 2, Shanghai Symphony Orchestra: played French horn and arranger; at night jazz gigs.



SOURCE PAGE ONE, CONCLUSION / PAGE TWO, PART 1

From Shanghai to Australia

1952-60 - Australian engagements

1952 Sydney gigs. 1953 Colony Club with Tommy Trinder and Tony Lamond and Mickey Kaye. 1955-60 Enfield [Turf?] Bowl Hotel and Rugby League Headquarters, Phillip St, Sydney.

1938 - Don José

Shanghai. Don José (Pipito Alindado), jazz band. 11 men, Filipinos and Russian. Don José singer and guitarist, top rate.

1936 - Edie's Jazz Men

Edie's Jazz Men, Shanghai, Casanova. 10 men.

1936-37 - Buck Clayton

1936 Shanghai. Buck Clayton (famous trumpet player), his big jazz "coloured band", played at Canidrome, 12 men. 1937 B. C. band played at Casanova Ballroom.



SOURCE PAGE ONE, CONCLUSION / PAGE TWO, PART 1 / CONTINUED

Asian engagements continued

1930 / 1936 - Henry Nathan [page two]

Shanghai. Henry Nathan, American, sax-violin, [ex?] Paul Whatham's [as written; uncertain] member, Cathay Hotel. 10 men: 4 Americans, one Australian (good guitarist) and 5 Russians, in 1936. New Sir Victor Sassoon's night club, "Siros", without windows, with own power station; also switchboard for bandleader and microphone on each music stand and grand piano. [The left-side year is cropped.]

1929 / 1933 - Serge Guy

[1929, partly cropped.] Serge Guy, Shanghai big band played in Java, Batavia, Hotel des Indes and Soerobaia, Circle Artistique. 1933: 8 Russians, 2 Dutch, 2 Filipinos went to Berlin, Germany, contracted 6 months and came back to Shanghai.

1931 - Dan Koletz

[Year partly cropped.] Dan Koletz, from Shanghai, 8 men worked in Java, Soerobaia, Circle Artistique. During great earthquake in Japan, Koletz's band worked in Yakohama Hotel and lost his hotel in fire. After, D. K. played in Sydney for many years in top places. He died in Perth about 10 years ago; outstanding pianist.

Nick Korin

[Beginning cropped.] Nick Korin, Shanghai big band. Before War II, Hong Kong Hotel (Hongkong), Russians, 10 men. N. K., after occupation by Japanese army and after war, went back to Shanghai, "Ambassador Ballroom". [Boxed date: 1929-35; exact association uncertain.]



SOURCE PAGE TWO / PART 2

Bands, broadcasts and journeys

Don Hopkins and Al Bowly

[Beginning cropped.] Don Hopkins, Australian drummer. Big band in Sigapoure, Ruffles Hotel, with Russian musicians from Shanghai: Monia Litter, Spilman, Inocent Nick and few more. Also guitarist Al Bowly [“singer” added] made famous records with Ray Noble in London, including “Letter to My Mother” and “Goodnight Viena”, and more hits. Monia Litter, very well known pianist in London now. Inocent Nick was in camp in Singapore, was sentenced to death by Japanese army but was lucky, came to Sydney; [piano?] with Herb Marks for many years (trumpet, bass, banjo and balalaika); died in 1979-80?

Nathan Rabin

[Beginning cropped.] Nathan Rabin, trumpet player, brought from U.S. to Shanghai. Big Black band, Canidrom [“ballroom” inserted].

[...stine] Danilow

[Given name cropped.] Danilow, just before II war, played clarinet and sax, Shanghai French club. [Number cropped] Russian men, under management of Bill Jupp from B.A. Tobacco Co. 1950 visit Melbourne. Played with Melbourne Symphony and jazz bands for many years and died in 1980 in Melbourne.

1933 - Oleg Lundstrem

[Name partly cropped.] Oleg Lundstrem, big jazz band. 1933 China, Harbin, Yacht Club, Shanghai Y.M.C.A., Paramount Hotel. After II war went to Moscow. Now he is “Melodia” recording artist. [Unclear beginning] jazz arranger, 22 new members now famous, still with Melodia recording. Bachelor of Music (Art) of Moscow Conserv[atory]. Eugene Gloma was his leading 1st trumpet; now is in Sydney for 85 years [as written] with Serge Ermoll and Mickey Kaye.



SOURCE PAGE TWO / PART 2 / CONTINUED

Pianists and show bands

Eugene Gloma

[Continuation in boxed note:] Eugene Gloma, 1908 [birth year?], Kamines, Shanghai [place/name uncertain].

1935-36 - Pianist [name cropped]

[Beginning cropped.] Batavia, Java, Nederland Hotel. Shanghai top pianist. Sydney, Australia Hotel, with Sid Simson for many years till last day of Australia Hotel. [Boxed date 1935-36.]

José Contreras

[Beginning/date cropped.] José Contreras, big Filipino band, Shanghai, Mee Komay Ballroom.

Tommy Harrisson

[Date cropped, ending "11".] Tommie Harrisson (British), singer, big band, Shanghai, Metropole Garden, with Mickey Kaye.

[1942?] - Mickey Kaye's show band

[Date partially cropped.] Mickey Kaye's big show jazz band in Shanghai, Nanking Theatre. Musical production "On with the Rhythm", with Serge Ermoll, arranger. [Beginning cropped] piano, trumpet, vibraphone, marimba. International members: Rumanian, Czech, French, Australian, Polish, Yugoslavs, Hungarians, Austrian, Filipinos, etcetera.



SOURCE PAGE TWO / PART 3

Later careers and final notes

1976 - Mickey Kaye

Micky Kaye visited U.S.A., San Francisco. Played one season at famous Fairmont Hotel, New Orleans Room. Now in Sydney, life member of Mus. Union. 1958 recorded "Carinia" [uncertain], "He's the Drummer", "Drumstick", "Jungle Drum Fantasy", and many more (as drummer). [A small superscript-like "60" follows the first title; meaning unclear.]

Serge Ermoll Jr

Serge Ermoll Jr, born in 1943, Shanghai. 1953 in Sydney. 1955 played trumpet. With partner Sunny Pratt (drummer), many of Sydney top spots as "Rhythm Virtuosos". [Beginning cropped] and with Stan Bourne, also TV Ch. 9, Jazz College, and with Micky Mouse Club. In U.S.A., only two Australians, S. E. Jr and Sunny Pratt, played as guest artists.

1958 onwards - Serge Jr's career

In 1958 Serge Jr [began?] his career playing piano in Sydney, El Rocco. 1966 London. In 1970-1975, BBC Radio, Nightride. ["Hear this" or similar marginal words unclear.] [Beginning cropped] with Chris Karen of Dudley Moore Trio, deputy for Brian Lemon; also with Pete Morgan, Brian [name unclear], Brian Spring; at Villa de Cesari with Shirley Bassy and Tony Oxley [following words unclear]. [Beginning cropped] London with Spike Heatley, Chris Pine, Kathy Stobart, Stan Seaman. [Final abbreviation unclear.]

Mario Belini

[Beginning cropped.] Mario Belini, big jazz band (12 men) from Shanghai, contracted for 1 year to Manila, Philippines. ["...-Lat Auditorium", venue cropped.] Eleven Russians and 1 Filipino.

1937 - Harbin and Sydney

1937 Harbin, American Bar. Pogodin, sax [unclear word or abbreviation]. [Beginning cropped] jazz. After II war played cello in Sydney Symphony Orchestra for many years. Died in Feb. 1986.



SOURCE PAGE TWO / PART 3 / CONTINUED

Notes on the surviving text

Editorial observations

The document moves between dates rather than maintaining a strict chronology. “1921-32” follows a 1923-24 entry; the handwritten “85 years” is left as written; and several postwar Australian dates need comparison with other records. Likewise, spellings such as Wetherford, Whatham, Lundstrem and Bowly should be checked against contemporary programmes, press and recording catalogues before being standardised.

Historical language

At the user’s request, the name is standardised to “Whitey Smith” and racial terminology is updated to “Black”. These are editorial changes to the reading transcription. This transcription distinguishes the author’s recollections from established historical findings and avoids supplying names or missing phrases where the photographs cannot support a confident reading.