

## NEW ORLEANS NOSTALGIA

*Remembering New Orleans History, Culture and Traditions*

*By Ned Hémard*

### **Betcha I Know Where You Got Dem Shoes**

For years a frequent salvo of street hustlers and shoe shine boys in the French Quarter, “Betcha know where you got dem shoes” could be good for a few bucks or the opportunity to shine one’s shoes. That was if one did not know that they always had the answer, which was “on your feet” or perhaps “right here on Bourbon Street”. The real correct answer was “I’m Walking”, the title of a song by New Orleans’ own Fats Domino.

Another big hit for Fats was “Walking to New Orleans”. In it he sang “I’m gonna need two pair of shoes when I get through walking the blues.” That was unnecessary if he had decided to go barefootin’ with Robert Parker, another local recording artist. It used to be in New Orleans that replacing worn-out pumps required not the Corps of Engineers but a lady making a trip to the shoe store. Perhaps the two distinctive colors in her spectators had begun to blend and it was time for a new pair.

One location for buying shoes in New Orleans was in operation for many years, the Imperial Shoe Store on Canal Street, where they provided an x-ray sizing machine for your feet. Founded in 1893 by Albert Wachenheim and Samuel Cahn, it was located on the downtown river corner of Bourbon Street across the street from Kreeger’s (later a Foot Locker Store). It stood next door to F. W. Woolworth, which was demolished and rebuilt as the Astor Crowne Plaza Hotel.

Shopping for children’s shoes in New Orleans usually involved shoes by Buster Brown, Red Goose or (if you were in the vicinity of Dryades Street) Cinderella Shoes featuring the Poll Parrot line.



*Buster Brown and his dog, Tige*

George Warren Brown founded the Brown Shoe Company in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1878. Down in New Orleans, Moses Koenigsberg was born the very same year on April 16. He would go on to found King Features Syndicate, Inc., so named because *Koenig* means King in German. He worked under the umbrella of William Randolph Hearst's publishing empire to build what is today the main purveyor of comic strips to newspapers across the nation. The first successful comic character in the papers was "The Yellow Kid" but he was in the rival *New York World*. Hearst saw the potential and lured the Kid's creator, Richard F. Outcault, to his paper, the *New York Journal*. The rivalry between the two papers was sensational and intense, so much so that it resulted in a lawsuit. The court gave the strip to the *World* and the Kid to the *Journal*. From these competitive practices came the term "yellow journalism."

Outcault created another comic strip known as "Buster Brown" in 1902, which featured a boy dressed like Little Lord Fauntleroy. He and his dog, Tige, would always be getting into mischief. In 1904 an executive from the Brown Shoe Company met Mr. Outcault at the St. Louis World's Fair and purchased the rights to the Buster Brown cast of characters and a slightly different name for the company. Most women wore Mary Janes when they were little but are probably unaware that Mary Jane was Buster Brown's sister. From her comes the name for those strapped shoes with the rounded toes, often patent leather. For those who are old enough, "Andy's Gang" with Andy Devine was the show on 50s television that began "Hiya, kids, hiya, hiya, hiya!" Then the kids would sing the Buster Brown theme song ("I got shoes, you got shoes, everybody's got to have shoes, but there's only one kind of shoes for me – good old Buster Brown shoes!"). The best part, however, was to see *Froggy the Gremlin* plunk his magic twanger while *Midnight the Cat* could only reply "Niiiiice!"

Red Goose Shoes is part of the International Shoe Company, which bought Poll Parrot Shoes in 1922 from (don't laugh) Paul Parrot. During the 50s you got a golden egg with a prize inside if you bought a pair of Red Goose Shoes. Poll Parrot offered prizes, as well. In 1937, they launched a radio show starring a young man as the voice of

Captain Roy Dalton, the Master of the ship *Poll Parrott*, as well as the voice of the Captain's parrot. That young actor was, Marvin Miller, who would later play Michael Anthony on "The Millionaire" giving away John Beresford Tipton's millions. He hailed from St. Louis, home of Buster Brown Shoes. Ten years later Poll Parrot began advertising on "Howdy Doody".



*Poll Parrot Shoes logo*



*Red Goose Golden Egg Dispenser ... and a clicker prize*

Haase's Shoe Store on Oak Street has been in operation since 1921 and also excels in the sale of children shoes. But it is also an ideal location for purchasing a pair of white bucks, always fashionable with white linen or seersucker from Easter to Labor Day. GH Bass & Co.

had made Pat Boone's favorite shoes for many years but discontinued their manufacture a short time ago. This put Haase's in the midst of a most difficult predicament.

**For Mother**  
 A pair of those Comfort Shoes that look so dressy, so neat and so soft. With sensible, comfortable heels, **\$4 and \$5.**

—or—  
 Bedroom or House Slippers of either kid, felt or quilted satin, 59c, **\$1.25, \$1.50, \$2, \$2.50.**

**For Father**  
 The Beacon Kling Arch All-Leather Dress Shoe, the shoe with that special arch; a snug fit that makes walking a pleasure, **\$6.**

When dad comes home tired out from a strenuous day, he'll appreciate the restfulness of our Fireside Slippers of felt or leather, 75c, **\$1.50, \$2.25, \$3.50.**

**For Sister**  
 Wouldn't she be tickled to get ONYX Pointex Heel, Sheer Chiffon HOSE, so stylish and they are "bears for wear." They come in all the latest shades, **\$1.50 to \$1.95.**

—or—  
 A pair of our beautiful patent or satin Pumps, with high graceful heels, **\$4 and \$5.**

**For Brother**  
 A pair of Black or Tan Calf-skin Oxfords, made over the very latest "Collegian" lasts, **\$3.50, \$4, \$5.**

—or—  
 A pair of Sporty Socks of pleasing color at 50c or \$1—and, too—he would appreciate a pair of Fireside Slippers to slip on while spending the evening at the radio with dad.

Open Evenings Until  
 9 P. M.—Saturdays 10:30 P. M.

**HAASE'S**  
**SHOE STORE**  
**8119 Oak St.**  
 Just Off Carrollton Ave.  
 Mail Orders Promptly Filled  
 Send Money Order—Include 15c for Parcel Post Charge

Haase's Christmas ad  
 Times-Picayune  
 December 16, 1927

*If You Believe in a Greater New Orleans and a Greater Louisiana, Attend the*  
**National Farm and Live Stock Show**  
*New Orleans, November 11 to 16, inclusive*

*Imperial Shops Specializing*  
*Exclusively in Better-Grade*

**Shoes for Youngsters**



**AS YOU BEND THE TWIG, so it will grow.**  
 Most, if not all, the foot troubles that come to men and women could have been prevented in childhood days by the providing of proper shoes. So it behooves Mothers and Fathers to see that their children are **WELL FITTED** in shoes. The Imperial **SPECIALIZES** in Children's Footwear—has special departments and special fitters for this phase of our business. Bring your Youngsters in **SATURDAY**—special souvenir to every child.

**BALLOONS FREE!**

*Messaline Floor—*  
**Exclusive Shop for**  
**MISSES AND CHILDREN**



**A "RECLUSED" little corner**  
 —all for little folks. Plenty of room, plenty of time, plenty suggestions; stocked and furnished to properly fit and dress feet from Baby Days to High School Years.

We carry every worth-while style in infants' footwear, and we employ only careful, conscientious salesladies who are experts in this phase of shoe-selling.

The growing girl is just as particular about her shoes as the grown-up. Shoes that **FIT THE FEET**, and dress it, too. Expert fitters always in attendance.

*Rear First Floor—Exclusive Shop for*  
**"Real" Boys**



**FIRST** fit the feet properly; then dress it durably; then supply **STYLE** that is manly and modern. That's the aim of The Imperial Boy's Shop—that's why we're "showing" the best-dressed Youngsters in town. New fall models are here—"Just Like Dad's."

**\$2.50 to \$3.50**

**IMPERIAL SHOE STORE**  
**LARGEST SOUTH**  
 CANAL AT BOURBON

Imperial Shoe Store ad  
 Times-Picayune  
 November 4, 1916

Haase's had a huge order for white bucks to fill but no source. They convinced another company into producing them especially for the store, and the order was filled. That was no mean feat (pardon the pun). The huge order was from the St. Augustine Purple Knights and their incredible band, the Marching 100 (that's 200 feet that need shoes). Carnival parades, it seems, are a most acceptable dispensation for wearing white bucks before Easter.



**it active**



**These Authorized  
Buster Brown  
retailers will fit  
your child perfectly**

**NEW ORLEANS.**

**CARROLLTON**

Haase's Shoe Store,  
8119-21 Oak Street

**JEFFERSON PARISH**

Ref's Dept. Store,  
8345 Jefferson Highway

**LAKEVIEW SECTION**

Schiro's Shoes (Lakeview),  
874 Harrison Avenue

**MID CITY**

Suburban Shoe Store,  
116 No. Carrollton Avenue  
Louis Sport Shoe Stores,  
1452 N. Broad Street  
2524 Dauphine Street

*In 1957, one could buy Buster Brown Shoes at Haase's in Carrollton, Schiro's in Lakeview and at other locations.*

**NED HÉMARD**

New Orleans Nostalgia  
"Betcha I Know Where You Got Dem Shoes"  
Ned Hémar  
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