

Poetic License

Have you ever wondered what some famous poets might have written about New Orleans?

Carl Sandburg (1878 – 1967), American poet whose poem “Fog” made its first appearance in Sandburg’s first mainstream collection of poetry, *Chicago Poems*, published in 1916:

Jog

The jog plays hell
on my little fat feet.

Over Audubon Park
I sit looking for pity,
get up off my haunches
and then move on.



Alfred Noyes (1880 -1958), English poet whose repetitious phrases in "The Highwayman" (1906) create the rhythmic sense of a horseman galloping through the uncertain darkness to a lovers' tryst, with soldiers on their way to ambush him, or just "let him have it":

The Special Man



The number was 2600
On St. Claude Avenue,
The man had a special presence as he ambled into view,
The store was a furniture heaven, with a serious showroom floor,
And the Special Man came jivin'-jivin'-jivin'
The Special Man was arrivin'
At Frankie & Johnnie's door.

He'd a Homburg cocked on his forehead, a cigar hung over his chin,
He kept sayin' "Let `em have it!" again and again and again.
His eyes were always a-twinkle: his suit was always so fly!
He strode with not even a crinkle,
His trousers had nary a wrinkle,
His gold-toothed smile a-twinkle,
As customers came in to buy.

Edward Lear (1812 – 1888), English artist, illustrator, author and poet, renowned for his nonsense verse and prose, and especially his limericks a form of verse he made popular:

A Limerick

There was a young crooner named Connick
Whose singing was truly harmonic.
His career sure did rally
"When Harry Met Sally",
And he's awesome in stereophonic.

Dr. Seuss (real name Theodor Seuss "Ted" Geisel 1904 – 1991), American author, poet and cartoonist, who like Edward Lear could both write and illustrate his many successful works, having sold over 600 million copies by the time of his death:

How the Grunch Sold Christmas

Every Yat down in Yatville liked Christmas a lot ...
So a Grunch figured how to make Christmas real hot!
The "Twelve Yats of Christmas" was the best of his dramas
With Crawfish and Schwegmann's and "Ate by your Mama's".
It could be his head wasn't screwed on just right.
It could be he simply stayed up late at night.
But I think that the reason the tune was so strong
May have been that he hung out at Rockery too long.



Langston Hughes (1901 - 1967), in addition to his fame as leader of the Harlem Renaissance, was an American poet, novelist, playwright, columnist and noted as one of the earliest innovators of the literary art form known as jazz poetry. His poem "Dreams", from *The Collected Works of Langston Hughes*, is parodied below:

Dreams of the Big Win

Hold fast to dreams
For in your soul
The Saints are destined for
The Super Bowl.

Hold fast to dreams
Though still the same
We just can't seem to win
That playoff game.



A memory we will always cherish. Thanks, Drew, and "Go Saints!"

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807 – 1882), American poet and educator whose works include “The Song of Hiawatha”, “Evangeline”, “The Courtship of Miles Standish” and (spoofed below) “Paul Revere’s Ride” (1860):

Gayle Benson’s Ride

Listen, my children, and you shall hear
How they changed the name of Dixie Beer,
In years gone by, Dixie Forty-Five
Was known to everyone alive.
Who remembers those frothy days of cheer?

Will this latest line of the brewer’s craft
Be a Bourbon Street Brew or some Storyville Ale?
Maybe Mardi Gras Malt or a Domino Draft.
Perhaps Toussaint Amber, that can’t fail.
One if on tap, and two if in cans,
We eagerly waited to hear of their plans.
Simply think of Trémé is the answer we got.
Faubourg Beer is the name that they claim says a lot.
For diverse city-folk, how it sure hits the spot!



Dixie Brewery, New Orleans East



New Faubourg Brewing logo

Edgar Allan Poe (1809 – 1849), American writer and poet best known for his poetry and short stories, particularly his tales of mystery and the macabre. Below is my New Orleans parody of his narrative poem, "The Raven", first published in January 1845:

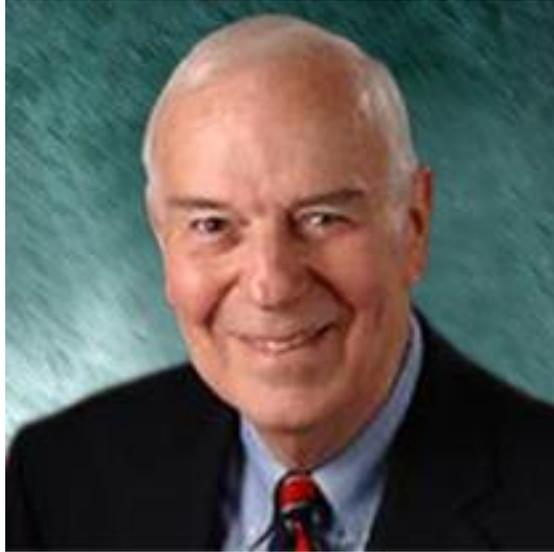
Late Night Ravin'

Once upon an evening dreary,
While I pondered weak and weary.
Over many a curious network
'Til I came to Channel Four.
While I nodded, nearly slumping, suddenly there came a bumping,
A hooded giant was gently thumping, thumping at his master's door.
"It's just Chopsley," I muttered, "Signing Morgus, 'never more';
Only this, and nothing more."

That's all there is, there ain't no more.



Sidney Noel Rideau, whose alter ego was Dr. Momus Alexander Morgus, died at age 90 on August 27, 2020. Bringing joy and humor to countless New Orleanians from his "lab" above the "old city icehouse," he will be deeply missed.



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SEP

*Sid Noel, Morgus the Magnificent
(1929 – 2020)*

NED HÉMARD

New Orleans Nostalgia
"Poetic License"
Ned Hémard
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