

## **Quotable New Orleans, Part 7**

The Crescent City has weathered the ravages of war, the winds and waters of countless hurricanes and the effects of reoccurring deadly yellow fever epidemics. Today, as New Orleans (and the rest of the world) takes protective measures against the onslaught of a global pandemic, it is good to look back upon some memorable quotes associated with our remarkable city.

What follows is the seventh presentation of "Quotable New Orleans," featuring another diverse collection of notable quotations having a connection to this unique Southern metropolis.

### **On the Insular Nature of the Crescent City:**

New Orleans is both intimately related to the South and yet in a real sense cut adrift not only from the South but from the rest of Louisiana, somewhat like Mont St. Michel awash at high tide.

- WALKER PERCY



*Normandy's Mont Saint-Michel at high tide in 2015,  
with its a narrow causeway submerged by the sea*

## On Mardi Gras:

Back in 1837, perhaps the cry from the crowds was, "Eh, m'sieur! jettes-moi quelque chose!" But it wasn't long, I'll bet, before it was translated into, "Hey, mister! Throw me sump'n!" And that's the theme song of Carnival.

- CHARLES L. "PIE" DUFOUR



World War I swept away many of the old social hierarchies throughout Europe, but in New Orleans the position of the elite remained intact and unchallenged. The old ruling class had lost not a sequin.

- HENRI SCHINDLER

In New Orleans I have noticed that people are happiest when they are going to funerals, making money, taking care of the dead, or putting on masks at Mardi Gras so nobody knows who they are.

- WALKER PERCY

## On Dining:

I consider New Orleans, San Francisco and New York America's three leading cities for food. And New Orleans above all is the mecca of bon vivants. It is fine to be back home again. As soon as this prohibition farce is over, which will be soon, New Orleans will take its rightful place again as the city no other city ever eclipsed for life, wines and food.

- GASTON ALCIATORE, 1933



The irony of our marriage is that I spend my entire day telling people where to eat, and Mackie spends his entire day telling people what not to eat.

- SANDY SHILSTONE, past President and CEO of the New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation, civic and arts activist and wife of Mackie Shilstone, the city's premier fitness guru

New Orleans is a glorious mutation. The South, but not quite the South. America, but weirder and more fun. It is where so much that is good and glorious and unique about America was born. Unlike anywhere else, it sounds different, behaves different, tastes different. And like a great meal or good bourbon, is something to be savored.

- ANTHONY BOURDAIN

## **On Epidemics, Pandemics and Other Disasters:**

In one respect New Orleans has set an example for all the world in the fight against yellow fever. The first impression was the complete organization of the citizens and the rational and reasonable way in which the fight has been conducted by them. With a tangible enemy in view, the army of defense could begin to fight rationally and scientifically. The ... spirit in which the citizens of New Orleans sallied forth to win this fight strikes one who has been witness to the profound gloom, distress, and woe that cloud every other epidemic city.

- RUPERT BOYCE, Dean of Liverpool School of Tropical Diseases, 1905



*Horse-drawn New Orleans ambulance during the 1905 yellow fever outbreak, the last to strike the city*

Through pestilence, hurricanes, and conflagrations the people continued to sing. They sang through the long oppressive years of conquering the swampland and fortifying the town against the ever threatening Mississippi. They are singing today.

- LURA ROBINSON, *It's An Old New Orleans Custom*, 1948

Don't believe any false rumors, unless you hear them from me.

- NEW ORLEANS MAYOR VICTOR H. SCHIRO, at the time of Hurricane Betsy, 1965

We will let the data dictate the dates.

- NEW ORLEANS MAYOR LATOYA CANTRELL, 2020

### **On Louisiana:**

[T]his little event, of France possessing herself of Louisiana, which is thrown in as nothing, as a mere make-weight, in the general settlement of accounts, this speck which now appears as an almost invisible point in the horizon, is the embryo of a tornado which will burst on the countries on both shores of the Atlantic and involve in its effects their highest destinies.

- THOMAS JEFFERSON, in an 1802 letter to Pierre Samuel Du Pont de Nemours

The State of Louisiana has always been my favorite portion of the Union.

- JOHN JAMES AUDUBON

### **A City Like No Other:**

New Orleans is unlike any city in America. Its cultural diversity is woven into the food, the music, the architecture – even the local superstitions. It's a sensory experience on all levels and there's a story lurking around every corner.

- RUTA SEPETYS, *New York Times* No. 1 best-selling author whose second novel, *Out Of The Easy*, takes place in New Orleans

### **Of a Literary Nature:**

Under the twinkle of numberless candles, and in a perfumed air thrilled with the wailing ecstasy of violins, the little Creole capital's proudest and best were offering up the first cool night of the languidly departing summer to the divine Terpsichore.

- GEORGE WASHINGTON CABLE, *The Grandissimes: A Story of Creole Life*

## **Little Richard on New Orleans:**

The world lost a Rock and Roll legend on May, 9, 2020: the late, great Little Richard. Richard Wayne Penniman recorded his first hit record, *Tutti Frutti*, at Cosimo's J&M Studio in New Orleans almost 65 years ago. The rest is history. Here's what Richard had to say about the Crescent City:

"New Orleans is, to me, the capital of music. I've always respected it as that, and always will."

"New Orleans (is) a very inspirational city for me as far as it comes to music. All my hits was made there."

"Well, the city is a very unique city, it's a rock and roll city, and it's a jazz city, as well as a rhythm and blues city. It's a musical palette."



*Fats and Little Richard after the 2009 Fats Tribute Concert,  
"The Domino Effect" – The world misses them both.*

"He influenced me as an entertainer, period. I loved him ... He could make a piano talk."

- on the late, great Fats Domino

**And a Little Lagniappe:**

If it's good for New Orleans, I'm for it.  
- MAYOR VICTOR H. SCHIRO

**NED HÉMARD**

New Orleans Nostalgia  
"Quotable New Orleans, Part 7"  
Ned Hémard  
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