

## From the Highlands to the Lowlands

Captain John Mackenzie served as an officer in the Peninsular War, under the Duke of Wellington, and later fought in the Battle of New Orleans. It is understandable how this faraway Scot made his way to the Chalmette Battlefield that cold January in 1815, but others of Clan Mackenzie have made their mark on the Crescent City.



*Andrew Jackson faces the British at the Battle of New Orleans, illustration by Frederick Coffay Yohn, circa 1922*

The members of this Highland clan, traditionally associated with Kintail and the lands in Ross-shire, were of Celtic stock and not among those originating from Norman ancestry. The surname *Mackenzie*, derived from Gaelic, is an Anglicized form of *MacCoinneach*. *Coinneach* (meaning handsome, comely or fair) is the early form of the name

Kenneth. The original Kenneth, who lived in the thirteenth century, was descended from Gill'Eòin of the Aird, from whom can also be traced the once powerful Earls of Ross.

The even more powerful Robert the Bruce, King of the Scots, brings to mind the once predominant Dick Bruce (whose domain was amidst the shelves of one of New Orleans' much loved but not forgotten bakery chains, The McKenzie's Pastry Shoppes). He ruled the airwaves with the praises of McKenzie's pies, doughnuts, blackout cakes and king cakes. Plus there were McKenzie's popular "white mountain" rolls, turtle cookies, buttermilk drops and the oyster patty shells for the holidays.



*Dick Bruce, spokesman for the Entringers' McKenzie Pastry Shoppes*

McKenzie's came into existence when a Wisconsin cheese maker named Daniel Entringer moved to Biloxi, Mississippi, in 1924, where he opened the Elektrik Maid Bake Shop (still in operation and nearly a century old). Entringer became acquainted with Henry McKenzie, who later opened a bakery in Uptown New Orleans on Prytania Street. In 1936 Entringer bought McKenzie's business (along with the McKenzie's Pastry Shoppe name) for just \$83.

Daniel Entringer's son Donald (then only 20) took over the management of the bakery, seeing the company grow to over fifty locations. Daniel Entringer died in 1950. McKenzie's slogan was "*There is one in your neighborhood*". McKenzie's didn't invent the king cake but, under Donald's leadership, introduced the plastic baby (after first trying pecans and small china dolls). After this innovation, the popularity of this confection soared into the thousands each year.

In 2000, McKenzie's closed after run-ins with the Department of Health and Hospitals over sanitation code violations and declining sales due to the loss of display space (15% of the company's business) after Schwegmann Giant Super Markets declared bankruptcy. Some local investors attempted a reopening of some of the stores, but that failed in 2001. They sold the right to use the McKenzie's name and its formulas to Tastee Donuts.



*Tastee Donuts McKenzie's location on Harrison Avenue in Lakeview*

Today one can enjoy excellent ice cream and view the familiar McKenzie's sign above the door at Creole Creamery at the old shoppe at 4924 Prytania. And there is a McKenzie operation still in business. Around 1952-53, Donald Entringer and his brother Gerald opened McKenzie's Chicken In-A-Box. In the rear of an old McKenzie's Pastry Shoppe in Gentilly, one can still buy some of the best fried chicken in town. Owned separately from the bakery company, it escaped bankruptcy. Gerald Entringer, Jr., reopened soon after Katrina at 3839 Frenchmen Street on the relative high ground of the Gentilly Ridge.

Not far away from the old McKenzie's location on Harrison Avenue in Lakeview is another historic spot. Just a few houses off Harrison at 6339 West End Boulevard, one can find the house with the distinctive blue-tile roof. The first house in Lakeview was built in 1905, merely a raised cottage used as an office and tool house. But by 1910 a handful of homes went up, and one of the first was the memorable house with the blue-tile roof. Its building materials arrived by barge along the New Basin Canal, which the home faced at that time. Robert Markel was the builder and H. Jordan MacKenzie was the architect. For this, he would be forever known as "Blue-Roof", or "Blue-Tile", MacKenzie.



*Lakeview home designed by H. Jordan "Blue-Roof" MacKenzie*

H. Jordan MacKenzie was a California native who arrived in New Orleans circa 1901. After first working under Thomas Sully, Mackenzie joined up with Moise H. Goldstein in 1906. In an age when Beaux Arts classicism reigned, MacKenzie and Goldstein built a very non-classical home at 1591 Exposition Boulevard in 1907. In 1910, MacKenzie designed the Bayhi House at 4437 Painters Street in Gentilly. This striking 2 ½ story home was modeled after a nineteenth century Norwegian homestead, with its topmost story created by two intersecting bow roofs.

Thomas Sully was the first president of the Louisiana Association of Architects, the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

The New Orleans chapter of the AIA was formed in 1909, and its first social event was a day-long excursion on September 10, 1910, across Lake Pontchartrain on Walter Jahncke's yacht. According to reports of the day's activities, a good time was enjoyed by all. Sam Labouisse (architect for the Delgado Museum, later NOMA) climbed the mast to escape the antics of those imbibing on deck, while "Blue-Roof" MacKenzie had his trousers run up the mast. Meanwhile, Charles Allen Favrot (of Favrot and Livaudais) almost beached the vessel.



*Iconic neon McKenzie's sign at the Creole Creamery at 4924 Prytania*

One of the more recent McKenzie stars in New Orleans' firmament is Michael Terrance McKenzie, better known as Mike McKenzie of the Saints. This talented Miami-born cornerback played the first four years of his career for the Green Bay Packers before joining the Saints in 2004. Although McKenzie was waived before the end of the season and was no longer on the roster when the Saints won its first Super Bowl in early 2010, the team awarded Mike with a Super Bowl ring in recognition of his efforts. He established a non-profit organization, 34 Ways Foundation, to help underprivileged youth and was awarded the 2007 New Orleans Saints Man of the Year Award for his work.

Cincinnati-born Dick Bruce, who helped make McKenzie's bakery items so popular, died in December 1983 at age 59. Donald Entringer died in December 2012, at age 97.



*McKenzie's Chicken In-A-Box*

From a former cheese maker to a former cheese head, from the Battle of New Orleans to a blue-tile roof, Clan Mackenzie has a diverse and interesting history in the Crescent City.

## **NED HÉMARD**

New Orleans Nostalgia  
"From the Highlands to the Lowlands"  
Ned Hémard  
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