

NEW ORLEANS NOSTALGIA

Remembering New Orleans History, Culture and Traditions

By Ned Hémard

Elementary, My Dear Readers

NCIS (which stands for Naval Criminal Investigative Service) is an extremely popular “police procedural” television drama that has spun off as a New Orleans series. *NCIS: New Orleans*, which airs Tuesday nights on CBS, is set in the Crescent City and it would be highly unusual if you haven’t seen the show filming around town. It premiered on September 23, 2014. The episodes revolve around a fictional team of agents led by Special Agent Dwayne Cassius “King” Pride, Special Agent Christopher LaSalle, and Special Agent Meredith Brody. They handle criminal investigations involving the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps.

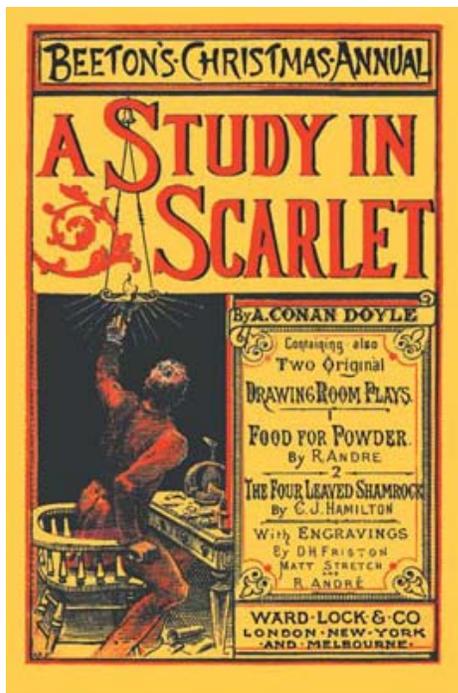


If the *NCIS* team seems to be everywhere you look these days, allow yourself to travel back in literary time and imagine another famous detective team present all around you. Even if their bailiwick was late

Victorian England, I seem to feel their presence all around this historic city. Perhaps you will, too.

Arthur Conan Doyle penned his first Sherlock Holmes story, *A Study in Scarlet*, in novel form in 1886 at the age of 27. In it Holmes expounded:

“Criminal cases are continually hinging upon that one point. A man is suspected of a crime months perhaps after it has been committed. His linen or clothes are examined and brownish stains discovered upon them. Are they blood stains, or mud stains, or rust stains, or fruit stains, or what are they? That is a question which has puzzled many an expert, and why? Because there was no reliable test. Now we have the Sherlock Holmes's test, and there will no longer be any difficulty.”



A Study in Scarlet



Watson and Holmes

After Watson congratulated him, the sleuth of Baker Street went on to state:

“There was the case of Von Bischoff at Frankfort ... the notorious Muller, and Lefevre of Montpellier, and Samson of New Orleans. I could name a score of cases in which it would have been decisive.”

Yes, Arthur Conan Doyle did actually mention New Orleans. It is indeed a city that has all the elements for an intriguing Sherlock Holmes adventure. All the names are there. Had Watson delved deeper into Holmes' comments and questioned him some time later, perhaps the dialogue would have gone something like this:

"Tell me Holmes. What became of that Samson fellow in New Orleans?"

"He was an associate of my nemesis, Professor Moriarty. There have been some strange happenings there in the bustling port city on the Mississippi. A Daniel Moriarty has commissioned a magnificent 85-foot tall monument to his wife in the Metairie Cemetery in New Orleans. She died in 1887. It is said to be the tallest privately owned monument in the United States."

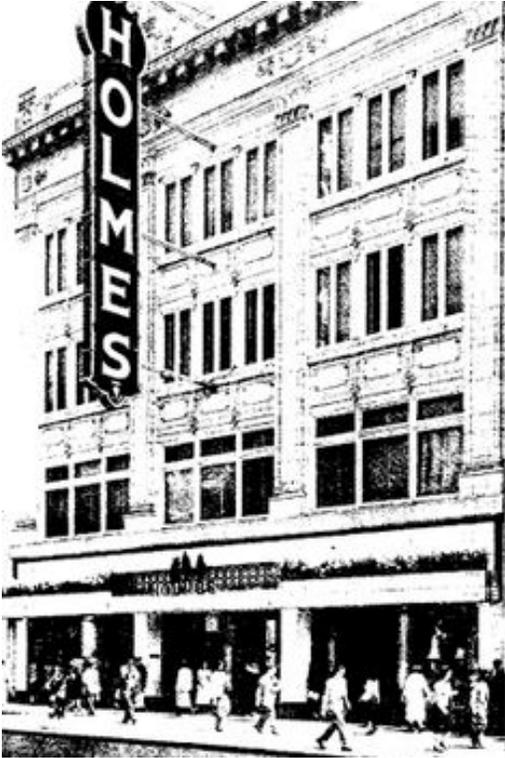


Moriarty in Metairie

Holmes continued, "The huge granite shaft is topped with a cross and adorned on each side by the Graces. The Christian Graces are Faith, Hope and Charity; and *Euphrisyne*, *Aglaea* and *Thalia* (representing beauty, charm and joy) were the Graces in Greek mythology. But therein lies the mystery, my curious Doctor."

"How so, my dear fellow? Does it have anything to do with Thalia Street?"

"No. No. It's not that. You see, there are only three Graces, but the monument has a fourth. Some say she is Mrs. Moriarty herself. In addition, Moriarty was billed \$185,000 for this memorial but refused to pay a mere \$2.50 to correct an erroneous inscription. He must be a relative of my diabolical adversary and these odd occurrences must have some hidden meaning."



New Orleans' favorite Holmes

"It does seem bizarre, I must admit."

"Not only that but there is another Daniel - Mr. Daniel Henry Holmes, proprietor of the D. H. Holmes Department Store in New Orleans. He is no relative of mine, but I believe the name is one of Moriarty's twisted ideas for an alias to hide some illicit activity. Perhaps he has substituted diamonds for Austrian crystals in the carnival regalia imported from London. I'm sure you've read that they have a King crowned in New Orleans each year at Mardi Gras. And Daniel Holmes died in 1898, the very same year that a Mr. Coleman Emanuel Adler from Austria has opened a jewelry store on Royal Street. This will require some eagle-eye detective work. Adler means 'eagle' in German, you know!"

"Is he related to Miss Irene Adler, the actress you encountered in that delicate matter concerning the King of Bohemia?"

"Ah, *the* woman! This we must investigate at once. Watson, book us passage immediately. Quick, the parade's afoot!"



"On the Cunard Line?"

"No, the Second Line!"

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