

## Strange But True, Part 2

### Tchoupitoulas in Texas?

The Tchoupitoulas Hotel and Steakhouse, an establishment with such a uniquely New Orleans name, now closed, is located in Crockett, Texas. This city in Houston County, Texas, with a population of circa 6,500, was incorporated in 1837 and named for the Alamo hero, Davy Crockett, who reportedly camped in the vicinity on his way to the famous battle.



*The Tchoupitoulas Hotel and Steakhouse, Crockett, Texas*

According to John Churchill Chase, "Tchoupitoulas cannot be side-tracked in discussing any phase of New Orleans history, because no name takes in more of the territory which is the present city; no native word appears more ancient." From the Choctaw Indian dialect, it is perhaps the oldest of place names in New Orleans, which renowned LSU etymologist William Alexander Read (1869 – 1962), has broken down as follows: "*hatcha*", meaning (river), "*pit*", meaning (at) and "*itoula*", meaning (reside) – i.e., "those that reside at the river", or the "river people".

Historian John Smith Kendall wrote, "Among the earliest thoroughfares in the upper part of the city was Tchoupitoulas Road — the Chemin de Tchoupitoulas, or "fish hole" road, which led up the river to Bayou Tchoupitoulas. This was originally an Indian path." This gives credence to another explanation of the name, a combination of French and Choctaw, "*Choupic ques tous la*", meaning that the mudfish were all there — a comforting thought.

To make the existence of the Tchoupitoulas Hotel in Texas even stranger, Crockett is also home to the Camp St. Café & Store.



What makes it especially strange is that the Camp St. Cafe & Store is neither on Camp Street, nor is it actually a café. Because teamsters had often camped on the land with their wagons, it was originally called Camp Street; but, some years ago, Crockett, Texas, changed the name of Camp Street to Third Street. As for being a café, the only food available is an assortment of candy bars. The store is nothing more than a gift shop, but on most Saturday evenings, and some times during the week, the place comes alive with a range of musical performances.

On the wall near the back of the store hangs a picture of Charles "Honeyman" Otis, influential New Orleans drummer who could always be seen with a toothpick dangling from his mouth. "The Honeyman",

or "Honeyboy" began his career at age 15, backing the legendary Professor Longhair, who brought him his first union card. Since 1964, as a member of Joe Jones' ("You Talk Too Much") Crescent City Band at the New York World's Fair, Charles Otis has inspired countless New York studio musicians. Other drummers, bandleaders and soul singers like Don Covay have asked: "How does Otis make it sound like he is playing the beat backwards?" "Is he available?" Mentor to Joseph "Zigaboo" Modeliste of the Meters, he has played or recorded with such artists as Dave Bartholomew, Fats Domino, Lloyd Price, The Dixie Cups, Lionel Hampton, Big Joe Turner, Lightnin' Hopkins, Shirley and Lee, Chuck Berry, The Drifters, The Coasters, Otis Redding, Sam Cooke, John Hammond and many more. Charles "Honeyboy" Otis was inducted into the Blues Hall of Fame as a Legendary Blues Artist on December 4, 2011, and died October 6, 2015. Another great New Orleans artist, virtually unknown to the public at large, has left us.



*The late, great "Honeyman", Charles Otis — with toothpick*

Camp Street in New Orleans, as you know, runs parallel to Tchoupitoulas Street, but did you know that part of Camp Street was once called "Liberal" and another part "Coliseum"?

### **Delmonico Stake**

No, "stake" is not a misspelling. Read on to learn why.

Although it may seem odd to us that there's a Tchoupitoulas Hotel in Texas, it might appear equally strange to a New Yorker that there is a Delmonico in New Orleans — and it's been here for over 120 years. Delmonico's is the name of various New York City restaurants, the first of which was on South William Street in lower Manhattan, founded in the 1830s by John, Peter, and Lorenzo Delmonico (of Switzerland). Renowned for offering an *à la carte* menu to lunching businessmen, it also claims to have invented "Delmonico steak" and "Lobster Newburg." Our local Delmonico on St. Charles Avenue was founded in 1895 and reopened by Emeril Lagasse in 1998 after an extensive historic renovation. It continues to serve a modern style of Louisiana Creole cuisine along with Emeril's take on some New York classics, such as "Crabmeat Remick," first served at Delmonico's in New York.

But did you know that Louisiana's only Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Edward Douglass White (November 3, 1845 – May 19, 1921), was married to a part owner of the famed New York City Delmonico's? White, born in Lafourche Parish, married Virginia Leita Montgomery, the widow of Linden Kent, on November 6, 1894, in New York City. She owned a "stake" in the historic restaurant property.

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**JUSTICE WHITE**

**Present at the Sale of the Old  
Delmonico Property.**

[Special to the Picayune.]

New York, April 26.—Justice Edward  
D. White, of the United States supreme  
court, whose wife owned a part interest  
in the old Delmonico property, which was  
sold here to-day, was present at the sale.

*An article in the Picayune, dated April 27, 1900, announced Mrs. White's presence at the sale of the Delmonico property the day before.*

### **New Orleans Doughnut Recipe?**

Krispy Kreme Doughnuts, Inc., of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, produces an incredibly delicious quality doughnut, and for years has

made the claim that their secret recipe was the creation of a French chef from New Orleans named Joe LeBeau. To view Krispy Kreme's iconic "Original Glazed" doughnuts emerge at the Clearview Parkway location in Metairie is a joyful experience for kids of all ages. But is the company's long-time origin story at all accurate?



According to the company's history, which would change from time to time, young Vernon Carver Rudolph, along with his brother Lewis, began working in 1933 for Uncle Ishmael Armstrong, who owned a small general store on Hill Street in Paducah, Kentucky. Armstrong, or perhaps Vernon Rudolph, himself, purchased Joe LeBeau's Paducah doughnut shop along with the recipe for his yeast-raised doughnuts. Moving their operation to Nashville, Tennessee, Vernon Rudolph soon decided to strike out on his own, deciding on Winston-Salem, North Carolina, as a promising shop location.

Employing Joe LeBeau's secret recipe, doughnuts were now being sold from the fourth Krispy Kreme establishment on July 13, 1937. Zealous customers guaranteed the shop's retail success, and brother Lewis joined Vernon in expanding the company. Winston-Salem was chosen

as the company's national headquarters four years later. In the early 1950s, the brothers invented their own doughnut machine, which they called the Ring King, Jr. Each machine could turn out an impressive 30-75 dozen doughnuts per hour. After expansion during the 50s and 60s, Beatrice Foods acquired Krispy Kreme as a wholly-owned subsidiary in 1976, but a group of franchisees bought the corporation back in 1982. In 2016, a German investment firm acquired Krispy Kreme for \$1.35 billion.

Trouble with the story is that there was no doughnut shop sold in Paducah in 1933, nor was there a Joe LeBeau. Vernon Rudolph's son, Carver Rudolph determined these facts after having received a call from Paducah-based historian Barron White in 1997 who wanted to know more about the company history. Two years later, in 1999, Carver learned that the creator of the fabulous light and fluffy doughnut recipe was Joseph G. LeBoeuf, not LeBeau, but, sadly, LeBoeuf had died several months earlier in Louisville, Kentucky, where he had moved with his family years before. At age 93, tourist river boat *Belle of Louisville* First Mate Joseph G. LeBoeuf died, totally unaware that he was the source of Krispy Kreme's wonderful recipe.



*Joseph LeBoeuf (February 6, 1906 – May 9, 1999)  
grew up in Lake Charles, Louisiana, not New Orleans.*

Joseph LeBoeuf began work as a cook and deckhand on an Army Corps of Engineers dredge boat at age 16 and was transferred to Paducah in

the early 1930s. He and his wife, Irma LeBlanc, raised a family there until later moving to Louisville, Kentucky. An excellent cook, Joe often cooked his own doughnuts at home. Carver Rudolph verified that LeBoeuf was the source of the Krispy Kreme secret recipe by comparing recipe notes with LeBoeuf's family and discovering that two of the secret ingredients and one of the preparation techniques matched up. LeBoeuf's wife and four daughters revealed that Joe never owned a doughnut shop, never mentioned the Krispy Kreme recipe (although he did love Krispy Kreme doughnuts and considered them his favorites), and never, to their knowledge, was paid any money for the formula. He probably was flattered to gladly share his recipe free of charge to Ishmael Armstrong. Still, it's a shame he never learned what an important role he played in such a profitable enterprise.

From Australia (where the first Krispy Kreme opened outside the U.S. in 2003) to Japan, from India to Great Britain, Krispy Kreme has over 1,000 locations around the globe. When Krispy Kreme entered the New Orleans market in 2000, an astounding 10.3 million units were sold in the first year of operations! That's a lot of dough!

And although Krispy Kreme is without a New Orleans provenance, Joe LeBoeuf is still a native Louisianian — and his doughnut recipe has a tremendous local, as well as worldwide, following.

## **NED HÉMARD**

New Orleans Nostalgia  
"Strange But True, Part 2"  
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