



Investigation Summary Report

Oak Alley Plantation Vacherie, La



HISTORY:

In the beginning, there were the trees! Sometime in the early 1700's, probably a few years before the 1718 founding of New Orleans as the colonial seat of government, a settler claimed land from an original royal grant for his dwelling and defined its entrance with an alley of live oaks in two rows leading to the river. Although we do not know how successful he was in his efforts to adapt in the New World, it is clear that his live oaks had no problem. Native to the area, they thrived and by 1722, when the early Capuchin Fathers arrived at St. Jacques de Cabahanoce to establish the settlement of St. James Parish, the young trees had already attained a stature which hinted at the magnificence that was to be theirs.



Into the bustle of development appeared Jacques Joseph Roman, the first known member of the Roman family in Louisiana. A native of Grenoble, France, it is thought that he came to Louisiana to administer the affairs of his noble cousin, Joseph Paris du Vernay, who had been granted a large concession of land up-river from New Orleans. Jacques Joseph's presence in the Colony is mentioned in 1728 when difficulties between him and the concession managers were brought before the Colony's governing council. In 1741 Jacques Joseph Roman married Marie D'Aigle, whose family had moved from Canada, and spent much of the first years of their marriage buying and selling plantations. Of their five children only one son, Jacques Etienne, and his two sisters survived to inherit a sizeable estate.

At the age of 29 Jacques Etienne married Marie Louise Patin, who enthusiastically presented him with a large family. The youngest, Jacques Telesphore, and the 19th century arrived together and found a colony whose fortune was flourishing, due in great part to successes in the field of sugar planting. Sugar quickly became the major crop along the Mississippi as far north as Baton Rouge.



Louisiana, meanwhile, had become a ping pong ball on the political table of Spain and France. In a few short weeks it bounced from the Spanish flag, where it had been since the transfer from French hands by secret treaty in 1763, to the French Tri-Color, to the Stars and Stripes where it remained, achieving statehood in 1812. However, in the brief 3 weeks of the post-revolution French regime (November 30 - December 20, 1803), the Napoleonic Code was introduced, establishing a precedent that would remain and create a legal system in Louisiana distinct from the rest of the Nation.

As the Roman children grew up and married, the family achieved more prominence as leaders of society, and their activities alternated between their plantations in St. James Parish, large cattle lands in St. Landry Parish, and elegant dwellings in New Orleans. Among the latter, was the house now known as Madame John's Legacy on Rue Dumaine, which was purchased by Jacques Etienne's widow for her and her bachelor sons shortly after her husband's death. From here, Jacques Telesphore Roman began his courtship of Celina Pilie, whose very prominent family lived around the corner on Rue Royal. They were married in June, 1834.

Records show that on May 19, 1836, an act of sale before Judge Louis M. Taney transferred ownership of Oak Alley Plantation from Valcour Aime, who had purchased it in 1820, to his brother-in-law, J.T. Roman. This transaction was conditioned so that Valcour Aime would acquire the nearby Roman family estate in exchange for Oak Alley plus cancellation of a bank

debt. In addition, this famous plantation has been the sight of many famous movies such as Interview with the Vampire, Primary Colors, and North & South.

INVESTIGATION & EVIDENCE

We arrived at the magnificent plantation early that evening and from the moment we pulled in, we were in awe at the beauty of the home, property, and adjacent buildings. As soon as we exited our vehicles, we were promptly greeted by the caretakers, whom from the entire night, could not have been more hospitable!

We were given a thorough tour of the home as we did an initial walkthrough, deciding where cameras would be placed. As interesting as the whole home was, our attention was quickly drawn to the attic area which was very intimidating. We quickly set up all our equipment and went "lights out". From there, we branched off into our respectful groups: some monitoring cameras, some doing EVP work, some taking photos, and some basically finding a quiet place to sit and relax.

Throughout the night, several of us had experiences we cannot quite explain. The most common experience were shadows seen in the attic and brief glimpses of the face of the original owner in the mirror! One incident that stuck out was when Dustyn claimed to have been grabbed on his arm, sending an electrical surge through his arm, causing him to drop his camera. He was visually shook up from the experience, being his first true "encounter with the unknown"!

We cannot thank the staff of Oak Alley enough for allowing us to be the FIRST paranormal investigation team to be allowed into the beautiful home. We hope that our professional behavior grants us future visits to the home. There is DEFINITE activity here and we hope to return to capture and experience more! Thanks again!

PHOTOS

