

Roussell Street Oak

Downtown Houma

407 Russell Street

Houma, LA [Google Map](#)



The Live Oak tree at 407 Roussell Street in downtown west Houma's age is estimated to be over 125 years old. The local law firm of Bordelon and Shea now occupies the Alcide Bonvillain home.

According to a 1998 interview with Tommy Cobb, Houma Historian, possibilities exist that the tree was there when the first resident was recorded on the 1820s' maps of Houma; when a Mrs. Verret was the occupant at this address.

Testimony of the property describes a white-columned cottage was built on this property by the sister of Judge Hugh Wallis's grandmother. Occupants of that home were John B. Winder, Mrs. James Chauvin, the former Millie Jolet and her sister Mrs. Wallace Hepler. Mrs. Chauvin restored the home to its original style which is considered one of the oldest in Houma.

Owners of the property included J. Arthur Daspit who sold it to Mrs. Rosalie Webb then Facquad Chauvin purchased the home from her. The home is now known as the Facquad Chauvin Home and is now located at 629 Verret Street in downtown Houma. This home was moved by Alcide Bonvillain when he purchased the property from Herman H. Loevenstein in 1904.

Bonvillain was living on Bayou Dularge at Ridgeland Plantation when he moved into the home he designed

and built on the corner of Roussell and School Streets in 1905. During the move to Roussell Street in March of that year, this tree witnessed a very pregnant wife, May who sat on the front steps of this new house to catch her breath when her labor began. When the others realized she was ready to deliver her baby, they grabbed a mattress from one of the beds to put under her and thus their son, Alphonse was born on the front steps of their newly built home.

This home was built as a two-story structure and had over 20 rooms with high French windows in each. For many years, Alcide's two daughters Fanny and Elise who were retired school teachers kept up the house with only the help of a gardener. They did their own sewing and at one time stitched and sewed drapes for all 20 rooms that included the two large front rooms with massive windows. Ms Fanny loved to bake and would create fancy cakes which she would give as gifts for weddings and other occasions.

Alcide was the son of Alphonse Bonvillain and Camille Burguieres of Laura Farm Plantation on Bayou Black near Waterproof. Story written by Trudy Voisin Hebert

[Find a grave Alcide Bonvillain](#)



Photos by Trudy Voisin Hebert

