



**OZARKS
AFRO
AMERICAN
HERITAGE
MUSEUM
ONLINE**

Identification Session # 2

Items OAAHM0086-OAAHM0091

Dorothy Berry: It's June 22 2013, photo I.D. session #2 with Father Moses Berry. Now we'll be looking at the furniture from the museums collection. Starting with this piece (OAAHM0086), just the furniture itself, just the piece itself not the contents.

Father Moses Berry: That's a cabinet that was given to Marie Boone from Nathan Boone; Marie was Nathan Boone's slave and his lover. He was also her lover and they had a child, Caroline who Marie gave the cabinet to, who was my great grandmother and Caroline gave it to my Grandpa Luther [Berry] and Luther gave it to my Uncle Lawrence [Berry] and my Uncle Lawrence gave it to me. That piece is probably from the mid to late 1800s and it's a beautiful oak cabinet, oak china cabinet.

DB: Now where was that before the museum, was it in use or was it...

FM: It was this house [The Berry Homestead in Ash Grove, Missouri], actually it was right here for many years in this house and then it was in my Uncle Lawrence's living room until he died, and when he died we took it back to St. Louis with us and it was in our house for quite some time. It was in this house when we first moved here and then after, actually it was in the same position where that television now sits which was its original place or at least its place

during my childhood [1950s] and...but it was such a unique and important piece that we decided to bring it to the museum.

There were three cabinets that we have and the other one is in the room right behind you, you know, from that era the 1800s and so that's a little bit about that cabinet, I don't know much more about its origins

DB: And this clock (OAAHM0087)?

FM: That's a clock that belonged to Wallace White and Wallace White had that when he left the army, the Missouri state cavalry so it's probably from around 1860-something to the 1870s.

DB: And where was that clock?

FM: It was in Uncle Lawrence's house, it belonged to his grandfather. And that was in his house, a beautiful, beautiful piece. It still keeps very good time. It has the pendulum... it has the little whole in the front is a keyhole for the key that winds the mechanism inside the clock and has two swinging pendulums in the back... one single pendulum rather that also marks time and strikes the hour.

DB: And this chair (OAAHM0088)?

FM: That's a chair, very old chair, probably around the 1890s. It's a beautiful piece, it's a gliding chair, well it's not a true, it's not a gliding chair, it works from the same principle as a buckboard. It has two big springs on either side of the chair underneath, that are on a curved piece of wood and when you rock the swing, when you rock it glides on those springs and has wooden wheels...beautiful piece.

And that's an old family chair (OAAHM0089), its probably from late 1900s, excuse me, early 1900s, probably, around 1910 or something of this nature. It's hand carved and it's made of a cherry wood.

DB: Was that carved by someone in the family or was it...

FM: I don't know, I don't know. I only know that it was just a regular family piece, a functional piece.

DB: And this icebox (OAAHM0090)?

FM: My Grandma [Mamie] Berry's icebox. It's probably from around 1910, something in that time period, 1920. It was identified by the late John Holston, one of the founders of the Holston Cancer Center in Springfield, Missouri who was also a great friend of my great grandpa Wallace White.

His [Holston] first job was delivering ice in Ash Grove, Missouri and underneath that icebox, underneath the lid on the top where the block of ice goes, has certain indentations that he was able to identify as Mamie's icebox because she would always make sure that they would beat down the ice that was in there so she could get every bit of her ice from the ice man/

DB: So how did he come about having to identify? Where was it that it needed to be identified?

FM: It was in the museum, it didn't need to be identified, but he said "that's Mamie's ice box" and I thought "Well, he's just an old guy, of course, that's what it says on there." And he said "and I can tell you why it's Mamie's and the reason why it's Mamie's, because I can show you on the lid, because she would always make us hit it down rather than chip off the excess," which the ice man used to use for themselves.

DB: And this small child's size chair (OAAHM0091)?

FM: It's a small child's chair. It was made by a man named Ly Schaden. Ly Schaden was a slave who made that chair in 1875. He is listed in the slave narratives, the Federal Writers papers, and he is made mention of there and

you can find this online, pretty easy, by looking at slave narratives from Greenfield Missouri. As well, since I'm thinking about it, we also have a relative named William Danforth and Danforth was also part of the slave narratives, he lived in Bois D'arc, Missouri.

DB: So how did you get this other fellow's chair?

FM: Oh that chair's been in our family for a long time, in my mom's family [Wanda Berry nee Carlock], everybody in our family, all the children sat in that chair from my grandpa to my mom to me and my brothers and sister as well as my own children, Dorothy and Elijah, sat in that chair.

And you can see that the top slat has been removed because they would use that, they would turn it on it's side or on the front runners and would turn it upside down and the children would use that as a walker. You can tell by the way it's smooth, been worn smooth on the front, from scooting around the cabin floor.

DB: What cabin?

FM: Just the floor, scooted on a wooden floor.

[Break]

DB: And now you wanted to add something about the ice box?

FM: That icebox is made of oak and was made by the sanitary refrigerator company. I looked it up online and online it says they were from around 1890s-1920.