

EPISODE TITLE: Chiffarobe

CIRCA: 1900 - present

Guest Interview: Family owners of heirloom pieces. State-wide interviews with antique dealers.

Project: Chiffarobe

Get a Cajun to tell you a story from his childhood and the two words “Ma-ma” and “chiffarobe” will probably get used in the same sentence at least once before it’s done. This compact combination dresser-armoire-hatbox has made its way into the homes Cajuns in every social stratum.

Many early 20th century homes had no built-in closets. Seldom hand-made, these inexpensive miniature armoires could be found in designs specifically for gentlemen or ladies or for no gender preference. They were commonly made in white oak or secondary hardwoods such as poplar and gum.

In this episode, Roy will copy a very common version of the chiffarobe. Originally made of poplar, the copy will be made of red oak with some structural improvements.



Original of stained poplar



Recreation of stained red oak