To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Dana M. Moody entitled "Keyboard instrument manufacturers and casements in the Natchez, Mississippi Area (1850-1860): A historic study" I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Interior Design.

Josette H. Rabun, Major Professor

We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:

Accepted for the Council:

Associate Vice Chancellor
and Dean of the Graduate School

Keyboard Instrument Manufacturers and Casements in the Natchez, Mississippi Area (1850-1860):

A historic study

A Thesis
Presented For The
Master of Science
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Dana M. Moody
May, 1995

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DEDICATION

To my mentor, Dr. Gale Dickerson,
Department of Interior Design at
The University of Southern Mississippi,
who inspired me to reach past all expectations
and discover my real potential.

and

To my parents,
Robert and Bernice Moody of Raymond, Mississippi
for their love, encouragement, and
most of all, their patience.

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ABSTRACT

The 1850s keyboard instruments existing in Natchez, Mississippi are valuable surviving objects of nineteenth-century America warranting careful research, preservation and interpretation. Natchez is nationally recognized for its antebellum structures; many housing their original furnishings. Previous research has centered primarily on the genealogical background of the owners and the architectural significance of the structures.

An understanding of the decorative art practices of the mid-nineteenth-century American society requires reliable information on the physical characteristics of the furnishings and an understanding of the atmosphere within which they were produced. The purpose of this study was to establish the historical and physical documentation of the existing 1850s keyboard instruments originally owned by the people of the Natchez, Mississippi area.

The traditional method of historical research was employed. A thorough search of Adams County Courthouse records, including inventories, appraisals, probate dockets and personal tax records, was conducted. These data were compared to family histories and markings found on the keyboard casements in order to gain a complete historic background of the existing 1850s keyboard instruments in Natchez. An examination of 1850s Natchez area newspaper advertisements provided an understanding of what was available to the people of Natchez, as well as the society in which the keyboard instruments were produced. After examining the keyboard instruments closely, the styles and ornamentation was

documented for further research and future preservation.

The 1850s keyboard instruments existing in Natchez, Mississippi were found to reflect the furnishing styles of this period and represent the social stratification of this society. The instruments showed signs of the Industrial Revolution, not only through technology, but also in a move directed toward the middle class with mass production and smaller casements.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Introduction Statement

During the nineteenth century music became an important part of almost every American home. It was considered an essential part of cultural training for the socially elite young women to learn to play some type of keyboard instrument. Therefore, the Victorian parlor was not considered properly furnished without a musical instrument on which these young ladies could entertain friends and family with light classical pieces (Ormsbee, 1952). In many ways the acquisition of a keyboard became a significant event in itself. Ames states that the event

> would transform them in their own eyes and in the eyes of others. They would become worth more... and acquire greater status. By doing so they would receive more respect and deference from others which, in turn, make them feel better about themselves (Ames, 1989).

Statement of the Problem

This study was conducted to establish a historical and physical documentation of the existing 1850s keyboard instruments originally owned by the people of the Natchez area. As with much of the South, little information exists on the decorative arts in Mississippi; hence, a goal of this study is to contribute to the Southern American material culture body of knowledge and to the history of Mississippi. Several investigations of Natchez decorative arts, through a computer assisted literature search, uncovered

information such as the Bacot and Lambdin study in Antiques Magazine concerning Edwin Lyon, a Natchez marble mason; however, apparently a study of Natchez focusing on keyboard instruments has yet to be undertaken.

Need for Study

Scholars have published articles on certain individual buildings in the Natchez area and their respective collections in such publications as The Magazine Antiques, American Preservation, and Colonial Homes. The staff of the Historic Natchez Foundation is taking an inventory and cataloging decorative arts objects in the city's historic houses. Because the Historic Natchez Foundation is first and foremost a historic preservation organization and the organization's time and staffing is limited, an in-depth study of the city's decorative arts has not been feasible. Using discoveries of stenciled and labeled furniture and from cursory examinations of nineteenth-century newspapers on microfilm, staff members have made some generalizations about the decorative arts heritage of the city (Miller, personal communication, August, 1993).

The documentation of existing keyboard instruments, as an example of the overall period furnishings in Natchez from 1850 to 1860, will provide invaluable historic information. Scholars interested in the history of Natchez, the South, or any other city in America will find a wealth of information through this analysis.

Objective

As stated in the introduction, the purpose of this study was to establish a historical and physical documentation of the existing keyboard instruments manufactured between the years 1850 and 1860 which were originally owned by people of the Natchez area. To accomplish this objective, a thorough search of Adams County Courthouse records and family histories has been undertaken along with an examination of Natchez area newspaper advertisements. A thorough evaluation of the existing casements was also performed.

Limitations of the Study

There were three important limitations to this study: place, time, and subject manner. These are defined so that the information compiled represents a broader perspective of Victorian decorative arts.

The location for this study was limited to the Natchez, Mississippi and the surrounding area for several reasons. The city has a renowned reputation for being the center of the Cotton Kingdom before the Civil War (Cooper, 1957). Its affluence testifies to the fact that the material culture of its society paralleled other important ante-bellum cities. A study of the nineteenth century decorative arts of Natchez, the richest small town in mid-nineteenth-century America (Gandy & Gandy, 1978), provides the scholar with a sub-group for a much broader interpretation of interiors and furnishings of that time period. Furthermore, a large library of nineteenth-century Natchez

newspapers is available on microfilm (approximately 80 reels dating before 1861) along with a courthouse whose records extend unbroken throughout the nineteenth-century.

Due to an enormous amount of material, this study was limited to one decade, 1850 to 1860. This represents the point when Southern agriculture and its attendant wealth had reached its height. The culminating year of this study represents the last full year in which the State of Mississippi prospered in the Union before Succession's effects were felt in a collapsing economy (James. 1968).

This decorative arts study was limited to keyboard instruments for several reasons. Pianos are easier to identify than other pieces of furniture because piano manufactures traditionally placed their mark above the keys of the instrument, possibly creating proof of origin and period. Also, the documentation of pianos taken from the advertisements of the 1850s Natchez area newspapers give in-depth information on the manufacturers/retailers and the new technologies developed during this time. Finally, because of the size and durability of the piano and the important role it played in this society's social life, it is less likely that one would be removed from the area, therefore, creating a much better chance of finding existing examples.

Significance

This study appears to enter into a new area of investigation in nineteenth-century American decorative arts. As a body of

information it can not only serve as a resource to those interested in the development of keyboard instruments and the role they played in the Southern material culture, but it reflects a larger interpretation of decorative arts, especially furniture, in Natchez, Mississippi and Victorian America. Furthermore, an accumulation of similar studies is essential to create an overall understanding of decorative arts during this period.

Key Terms and Definitions

The following terms are defined to aid the reader:

Acanthus Leaf: a carved motif that resembles the foliage of the acanthus (Pegler, 1986).

Boudoir Piano: a vertical stringed piano with an upright casement (Grover, 1976).

Cabriole Leg: a curved leg on furniture that has an outcurved knee and incurved ankle (Ormsbee, 1952).

Cartouche: ornamental feature that usually resembles an unrolled scroll or an oval tablet (Ormsbee, 1952).

Casement: the box-like structure forming the exterior of the piano (Ormsbee, 1952).

Cottage piano: small upright piano usually made of less expensive woods (Clinkscale, 1993).

Diaper Work: a repeating pattern that resembles a geometric design or lattice work (Pegler, 1986).

Grand Piano: a horizontal, harp-shaped piano, (New Illustrated Webster's Dictionary of the English Language, 1994).

Key Span: the total amount of octaves found on a keyboard.

Knee: the outcurved portion located on the upper part of a cabriole leg (Ormsbee, 1952).

Lyre: the pedestal housing for keyboard pedals found under a square or grand piano. This pedestal often depicts the shape of a lyre instrument, but does not have to (Baines, 1992).

Melodeon: a small reed organ (New Illustrated Webster's Dictionary of the English Language, 1994).

Nameboard: piece of wood located behind the keyboard that displays the maker's name; often has a name plaque or nameplate attached to it (Clinkscale, 1993).

Name Plaque: small wooden or ceramic plate with the name of the maker stamped on it; (Clinkscale, 1993).

Nameplate: a small metal plate with the maker's name etched, stamped, or engraved on it (Clinkscale, 1993).

Octave: a series of eight notes/keys (New Illustrated Webster's Dictionary of the English Language, 1994).

Ormolu: bronze ornaments, hand chased and surfaced with gilt, that are applied to furniture; often in the form of mounts, moldings, and medallions (Pegler, 1986).

Piano: a stringed musical instrument with felt-covered hammers; it is operated from a manual keyboard (New Illustrated Webster's Dictionary of the English Language, 1994).

Pianoforte: soft-loud; a general term for the piano that has been used since the early 18th-century, (Clinkscale, 1993).

Piccolo: a low upright piano, with a very easy touch; it recommended itself by its cheapness and durability (Blom, 1969).

Plinth: a base on case furniture which is set solidly flat on the floor (Pegler, 1986).

Signature: an inscription in the maker's own hand (Clinkscale, 1993).

Soundboard: large, thin piece of wood located under the strings and attached to the case for the purpose of amplifying the vibrations of the strings (Clinkscale, 1993).

Square Piano: a piano with a horizontal rectangular case (New Illustrated Webster's Dictionary of the English Language, 1994).

Upright Piano, Vertical Piano: a piano with an upright case; the strings are vertical and over-strung to save space (New Illustrated Webster's Dictionary of the English Language, 1994).

Whorl Foot: an up-curved foot in the shape of a scroll (Ormsbee, 1952).

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND

Preparation for a study of Natchez, Mississippi pianos (1850-1860) required a background review of literature in three areas. First, the literature describing the development of Natchez, Mississippi and its architectural history was examined for an understanding of the historical and social background and setting of this market. The second topic reviewed was on the background of the keyboard instrument market and its influence on the Natchez area. Finally, a review was conducted on the history of nineteenth-century interiors and furnishings in the United States from 1800 to 1860 and how they influenced the 1850s keyboard casements.

Nineteenth-Century Natchez, Mississippi

The city of Natchez takes its name from the sun-worshipping Indian tribe once located in the same area as the city's current location. Its history began when Bienville, the French explorer and colonizer, arrived and established a fort on the high river bluffs known as Fort Rosalie (Cooper, 1967). Natchez has subsequently lived under five different flags (Oliver, 1940). With the end of the French and Indian War, British troops took over the fort (Kane, 1947). As the American Revolution broke out, Britain began to loose her lands in the New World, relinquishing the Natchez area to Spanish rule (Cooper, 1957). Though only in power for a short time, the Spanish occupation had a strong influence on the layout of the town (Newell & Compton, 1935).

Meanwhile, Natchez continued to grow. By the time Spain yielded it to the United States, Natchez had become a thriving community. Its growth was vigorous as wealth poured into the region (Register, 1969). Located in the geographic center of the world's richest cotton lands, Natchez became the symbolic capital of the ante-bellum Cotton Kingdom and one of the great ports of the Mississippi River (Cooper, 1957).

Money from abundant cotton crops flowed into the hands of the planters and shippers, who began to turn to an outward display of wealth (Cooper, 1957). Slave labor built at least a hundred houses of masterly design within a radius of a few miles (Kane, 1947). They had an abundance of architectural materials right at their fingertips. The forests and swamps were full of gigantic trees, while the clay found on the river banks and in the hills was used to make bricks. Many planters also owned slaves who were artisans, cabinetmakers, carpenters, and drafters by trade. But if not locally found or desired, materials and artisans could easily be brought into the town from the Mississippi River (Kane, 1947).

There were many different architectural styles used in Natchez. The earliest homes were influenced strongly by the French and Spanish settlers. As large numbers of people began to move into the area, they brought with them the Georgian style and, later, the Greek Revival style. The planters found that the Greek Revival style suited their "enlarged ambitions, increasingly heavy pocketbooks, and the hot climate". Thick Doric columns capped with pediments framed many homes. In adapting these houses to the Natchez

climate and the air of aristocracy, local builders raised ceilings, widened halls, and enlarged doorways. Later, in the last decade before the Civil War, elaborate details flourished for elaboration's sake (Kane, 1947).

During the 1850s, the town was the richest town per capita in North America and had more millionaires than any other single town or city in the United States (Gandy & Gandy, 1978). Although the population numbered only 6,612 in 1860, Natchez was a recognized center of wealth in the country (James, 1968).

If one is to designate the point of decline for Natchez, the year of 1861 would be the obvious choice. There was no gradual tapering off; once the Civil War began, an immediate end to prosperity for Southern planters followed (Cooper, 1957). From 1861 to 1865, Natchez was part of the Confederate States of America, as the state of Mississippi, along with rest of the South, engaged in the Civil War. Natchez was lucky enough to stay out of the main path of fighting and sustained only minimal physical damage (Newell & Compton, 1935). With the Confederate surrender at Appomattox, once again Natchez looked to the Mississippi River and the cotton fields for salvation, but the railroad gradually made the steamboats obsolete, stranding Natchez in what Smith and Owens described as "a world of weed-choked cotton fields and ruptured family fortunes" (Smith & Owens, 1969). Although the Civil War ruined the established economy of Natchez, its effect on the physical aspect of the town was minimal. This was eventually beneficial to historians and the economy because the planting families who retained their

houses had little money for remodeling, thus preserving the grand reminders of life in Natchez before the Civil War. The opulence of Natchez in the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century could not be exceeded or matched by succeeding generations. To these descendants fell the task of caring for and living with the styles of their ancestors even when those styles were out of fashion (Cooper, 1969). Because of their careful stewardship, the people of Natchez today have the most comprehensive collections of complete and authentic pre-Civil War interiors of any American city.

Origin of the Keyboard Instrument Market and its Relationship with Natchez, Mississippi

Origins of keyboard instruments can be traced as far back as 582 BC in Greece when experiments were conducted regarding the mathematical relations of musical sound. This was performed on an instrument called the *monochord*. The evolution of the keyboard instrument introduced many new features including a movable bridge, harp-shaped strings, a hammer action, and keys. By the early 1700s AD the latest keyboard instrument was called the *pianoforte* (Dolge, 1972).

The pianoforte was an expression of the high arts and only appealed to people of culture and refinement. Consequently, the piano industry could only survive in countries where there was an accumulation of wealth. Italy's vast trade with the Orient brought about the age of Renaissance and rich nobility supported the arts generously producing master works of architecture, sculpture,

painting, literature, and music. These characteristics were mirrored in other European countries such as Germany, France and England (Dolge, 1972).

America, the new world, presented an entirely different atmosphere for the keyboard instrument industry. Although America lacked the nobility and aristocracy of the old world, it was so rich in natural resources that even in the early days, the piano industry was lucrative. By the middle 1800s, America rivaled the keyboard instrument market in Europe (Dolge, 1972).

The keyboard instrument industry of the lower Mississippi River area was much different than that of the rest of the United States. This was the result of two important factors; the first being in the form of transportation. Although railroads linked many isolated parts of the country to America's Eastern cities (Butler, 1865), the people of Natchez dealt more with the European markets because the closest railroad station required five or six hours of traveling to reach. On the other hand, ships were able to come from the Atlantic Ocean, into the Gulf of Mexico, through New Orleans, and up the Mississippi River to Natchez bringing shipments from France, England, Italy, Greece, and Egypt. The second factor influencing this market was the affects of the higher humidity found in the lower Mississippi River region on the casements of the keyboard instruments. This also gave pianos from Europe a slight upper hand. These manufacturers cured and dried the wood used for their keyboard casements specifically to meet the European climate conditions. Because the humidity of the lower Mississippi River

region was similar to that of Europe (Eschete, 1979), those instruments suited Natchez well.

However, eventually the turmoil resulting from the French Revolution created an upheaval in Europe and forced the people of Natchez to import from the Eastern American cities. Many wealthy families also began to travel north to cooler climates during the summer, where they placed orders direct to the manufacturers (Newell & Compton, 1935). It has also been found that some keyboard instruments were shipped down river from St. Louis, Louisville, and Cincinnati.

Nineteenth-Century United States Interiors and Furnishings, to 1860 and Their Influence on Keyboard Casements

Nineteenth-century decorative arts can best be understood within the overall historical context in which they were produced (Butler, 1965). Many new factors affected the development of furniture design in the United States at this time. By 1825, America was feeling the effects of the Industrial Revolution, and many manufacturers had already begun to use machines and assembly-line techniques (Butler, 1965). The new methods of production allowed vast amounts of furniture to be manufactured cheaply (The History of Furniture, 1976); therefore, more products were available to the middle class through mass production (Butler, 1965). In turn, the time-honored pride in craftsmanship began to decline (Butler, 1985). Furniture producers and designers, striving for novelty as

well as elegance, created ever-changing styles, with new adaptations either consorting with or crowding out those already popular. This resulted in a surface confusion (Ormsbee, 1952), and a rapid succession of confused styles which overlapped and were inconsistently applied (Whiton, 1974).

The general design influence that extended throughout the nineteenth century is known as *revivalism*. Butler describes revivalism as "the borrowing of decorative detail, or even the entire design vocabulary of a style that had been popular at an earlier time" (Butler, 1865).

Revivalism began at the end of the eighteenth century with a style known as *Neoclassical*. The architectural term *Federal* is used to denote the beginning of the Neoclassical period in America because it was introduced during America's Federal age and lasted until about 1820. Earlier keyboard instruments found in the Natchez area have casements of this style as seen in an example of a pianoforte manufactured by E. N. Scherr of Philadelphia located at Hope Farm (Figure 1). The Federal influence is represented by the thin turned legs supported by the trestle base.

The second phase of Neoclassicism in the United States is called the *Empire* style. Popular for more than twenty years, it was greatly influenced by the ancient Greek and Roman styles (Butler, 1965). With this style, furniture was usually made of mahogany wood with ormolu mounts and legs were often made in the forms of lion's paws, sabres, and heavy tapering columns (Otto, 1965). This style is seen in many of the 1840s and 1850s keyboards of the



Figure 1. Pianoforte with Neoclassic Federal Casement Manufactured by E. N. Scherr of Philadelphia (c.1817) Located at Hope Farm, Natchez, Mississippi

Natchez area. This can be observed in an example of a melodeon (Figure 2) owned by Marion and Caroline Vance Smith of Glen Mary. Manufactured by Prince & Co. of Buffalo, New York, it has straight lines and slender, tapering legs.

The most popular furniture style of the mid-nineteenth century in the United States was the *Rococo Revival* style. Its curvilinear lines contrasted with the perpendicular lines of the other revival styles (Ormsbee, 1952). Inspired by the styles of the French court of Louis XV, the main features of Rococo Revival were the cabriole leg, curved surfaces, delicate S-scrolls and C-scrolls, and carvings of birds, fruit, flowers, shells, and other natural objects. (Butler, 1965). Many keyboard casements were represented in the elegant flowing curves of this period. These were featured by cabriole legs with cartouches or carved fruit at the knee and whorl feet. It was also common for keyboards of this style to have shaped aprons and pierced fretwork. An example of this is seen in a square piano (Figure 3) at Lansdowne manufactured by Chase. Other common characteristics of keyboard instruments of this style included designs of gilt, mother-of-pearl inlay candle holders and lyre shaped motifs (Michel, 1963).

Low-priced, simplified versions of the revival styles, known as *cottage furniture*, also appeared on the market around 1845. These pieces were constructed of cheap woods often painted in rich tones (Otto, 1865). They were often associated with an *Elizabethan Revival* style, which incorporated rope and bobbin turnings (Bishop and Coblentz, 1982). Each month Godey's Lady's Book published line



Figure 2. Melodeon with Neoclassic Empire Casement Manufactured by Geo. A. Prince & Co. (c.1855) Located at Glen Mary, Washington, Mississippi



Figure 3. Square Piano with Victorian Rococo Revival Casement Manufactured by Chase (c. unknown), Located at Lansdowne, Natchez, Mississippi (Miller, 1977)

drawings of cottage furniture (Ormsbee, 1952). Cottage pianos, (Clinkscale, 1993) were created specifically to fit into small spaces (Dolge, 1972). An example of this can be seen in an upright piano manufactured by Pleyel of Paris at Stanton Hall (Figure 4).

During the 1850s several other furniture design styles emerged including *Gothic Revival*, *Renaissance Revival*, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, and *innovative furniture.* Keyboard instruments of this period show little influence from these styles except for a few small motifs.



Figure 4. Cottage Piano Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris (c.1857-1861), Located at Stanton Hall, Natchez, Mississippi

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The problem of establishing historical and physical documentation of the existing 1850s keyboard instruments originally owned by the people of the Natchez area was best explored by the historical method of research (Touliatos and Compton, 1988). Both primary and secondary sources of data were researched in order to obtain a complete analysis.

Sample Collection

The samples used for this study included Adams County personal tax records, inventories and estates of Adams County piano owners, and newspapers published in the Natchez, Mississippi area between 1850 and 1860. The researcher also conducted a thorough examination of keyboards currently existing in the Natchez, area.

Data Collection

Natchez newspapers were one of the main primary sources of information for this study. Publication of a Natchez newspaper began in the late eighteenth-century and during the 1850s four newspapers were published consecutively, though two often changed names (Figure 5). Currently, there is a large library of nineteenth-century Natchez newspapers available on microfilm. These microfilm reels, obtained through various interlibrary loans, provided information about keyboard manufacturers/retailers, technologies and origins. Newspaper advertisements were then

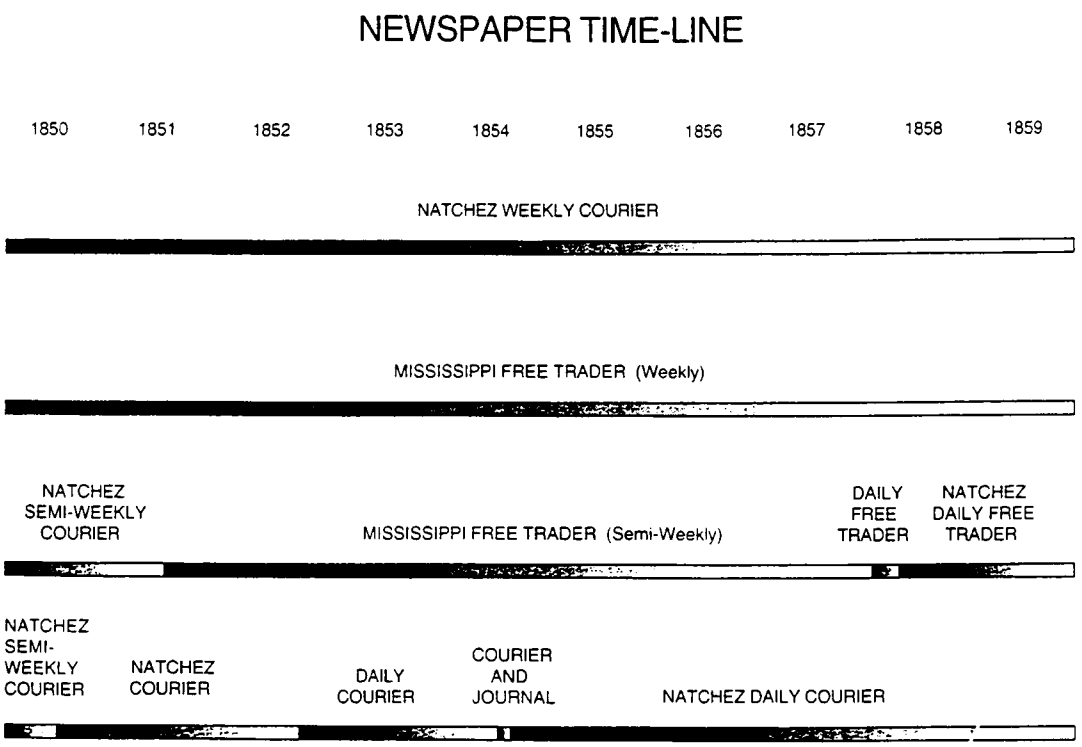


Figure 5. Time-line of Newspapers Published In Natchez During the 1850s

arranged by filling out forms created by the researcher (See Appendix A: Newspaper Recording Forms). Through this process, the first appearance of each piano advertisement was given a code number. The name of the manufacturer/retailer was recorded, along with the year, origin and description of the significant information found in the advertisement.

A thorough search of Chancery Court papers located in the Adams County Court House uncovered numerous inventories, appraisals, estate dockets and record of estates. All of the above documents associated with the 1850s time period that listed a piano were photocopied and used for further comparisons. Though these primary sources only give slight information about the piano itself, they do provide insight into market values of the keyboard instruments.

Adams County Personal Tax records proved to be another valuable primary source of data because these records showed that people were taxed for owning a piano. Since only a limited number of these forms still exist on microfilm, the following range of years was recorded: 1846, 1852, 1861 and 1876. By looking at the broad range of tax records one gains an understanding of the importance that pianos had on the Natchez area during the 1850s as compared to other decades. Also, the comparison of the 1852 tax records to the 1861 tax records reveals almost all of the people who obtained new pianos during this nine-year period. The information on these records was recorded on a form created by the researcher (See Appendix B - Tax Record Recording Form) and includes the names of

names of the people who owned pianos, how many they owned, and the value of the piano.

Finally, several owners of 1850s pianos were identified through an on-site search of existing 1850s keyboard instruments in the Natchez area. Once a keyboard instruments was located, the owners were interviewed for background information. Examination of the casement included measurements and thorough photo documentation. When the serial number could be found, the Pierce Piano Atlas provided confirmation of the date. By examining existing keyboards, the researcher identified further manufacturers and sometimes the retailers, who brought the instrument into the area. Finally, examination of existing keyboards provided evidence of the period furniture styles influencing their casements.

Data Analysis

Comparison of existing pianos in the Natchez area to courthouse records and family histories showed evidence of the historical background of the keyboard instrument. A thorough inspection of the keyboard casements usually provided a serial number and sometimes an address of the manufacturer, creating a basis for determining the manufacture date. Natchez newspapers during this period were used to create an understanding of the environment surrounding the time these keyboard instruments were created.

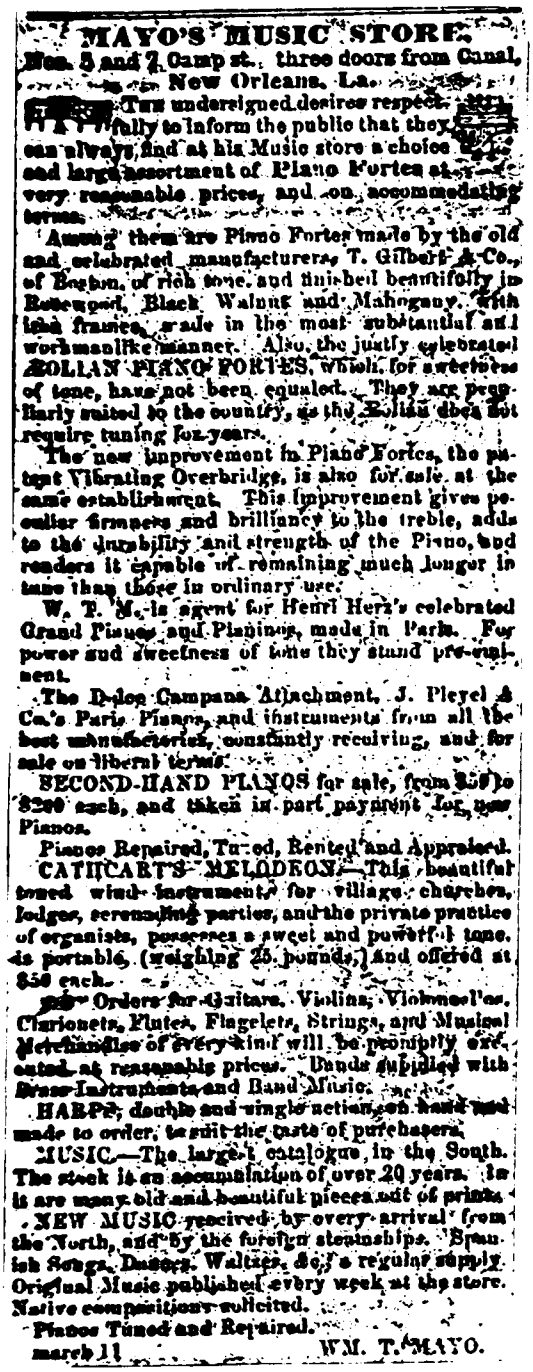
CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Natchez Area Newspaper Advertisements

A significant portion of this study is based on keyboard advertisements found in the 1850-1860 Natchez, Mississippi newspapers. Although the individual advertisements vary in the amount of information given, examination of the overall group of advertisements yields pertinent information.

During the 1850s a wide variety of keyboard instruments were available to the people of Natchez through these advertisements. These included the melodeon, square piano, pianoforte, grand piano, parlor grand piano, and upright piano, also referred to as the boudoir piano, cottage piano, and piccolo. Likewise, the variety of keyboard sizes ranged from five octaves to seven and three quarters octaves. The advertisements also show that the majority of keyboard instruments were offered with either rosewood or mahogany casements. One exception was an advertisement (Figure 6) made by Mayo's Music Store in New Orleans which offered a pianoforte "finished beautifully in black walnut" (The Natchez Weekly Courier, 1851, March 12). Most of the advertisements provide little description of the casements except a few statements about rounded corners and carved moldings (Natchez Weekly Courier, 1850, August 14). Only one advertisement, found in the Natchez Weekly Courier subscribed by William Nash, goes so far as to describe the keyboard casement as being designed in the Louis XIV style (Natchez Weekly Courier, 1956, May 7).



MAYO'S MUSIC STORE.

Nos. 5 and 7 Camp st., three doors from Canal,

New Orleans, La.

THE undersigned desires respectfully to inform the public that they can always find at his Music store a choice and large assortment of Piano Fortes at very reasonable prices, and on accommodating terms.

Among them are Piano Fortes made by the old and celebrated manufacturers, T. Gilbert & Co., of Boston, of rich tone, and finished beautifully in Rosewood, Black Walnut and Mahogany, with iron frames, made in the most substantial and workmanlike manner. Also, the justly celebrated ÆOLIAN PIANO FORTES, which, for sweetness of tone, have not been equaled. They are peculiarly suited to the country, as the Æolian does not require tuning for years.

The new improvement in Piano Fortes, the patent Vibrating Overbridge, is also for sale at the same establishment. This improvement gives peculiar firmness and brilliancy to the treble, adds to the durability and strength of the Piano, and renders it capable of remaining much longer in tune than those in ordinary use.

W. T. M. is agent for Henri Herz's celebrated Grand Pianos and Pianinos, made in Paris. For power and sweetness of tone they stand pre-eminent.

The Dolce Campana Attachment, J. Pleyel & Co.'s Paris Pianos, and instruments from all the best manufactories, constantly receiving, and for sale on liberal terms.

SECOND-HAND PIANOS for sale, from $50 to $200 each, and taken in part payment for new Pianos.

Pianos Repaired, Tuned, Rented and Appraised.

CATHCART'S MELODEON.—This beautiful toned wind instrument, for village churches, lodges, serenading parties, and the private practice of organists, possesses a sweet and powerful tone, is portable, (weighing 25 pounds,) and offered at $50 each.

☞ Orders for Guitars, Violins, Violoncel'os, Clarionets, Flutes, Flageletz, Strings, and Musical Merchandise of every kind will be promptly executed at reasonable prices. Bands supplied with Brass Instruments and Band Music.

HARPS, double and single action, on hand and made to order, to suit the taste of purchasers.

MUSIC.—The largest catalogue in the South. The stock is an accumulation of over 20 years. In it are many old and beautiful pieces out of print.

NEW MUSIC received by every arrival from the North, and by the foreign steamships. Spanish Songs, Dances, Waltzes, &c., a regular supply. Original Music published every week at the store. Native compositions solicited.

Pianos Tuned and Repaired.

march 11 WM. T. MAYO.

Figure 6. Advertisement for Mayo's Music Store (The Natchez Weekly Courier, 1851, March 12)

As with other aspects of industry during the nineteenth century, the keyboard was greatly affected by the Industrial Revolution. Advertisements show a constant trend for new innovations to keyboard designs. Among these new inventions was a devise called the *Coleman's Aeolian Attachment*, which apparently allowed for a small organ to be placed inside the piano so that the keys could operate both instruments (Eschete, 1979). Other add-on devices advertised include the *Dolce Campana* and the *vibrating overbridge*. Advertisements also mention such improvements as the *patent action*, *sliding disk*, *reverse piano top*, the *grand action*, *tubular bar*, *Hall's Celestial Triple String*, *Horst's Iron Frame* and the *suspension bridge*.

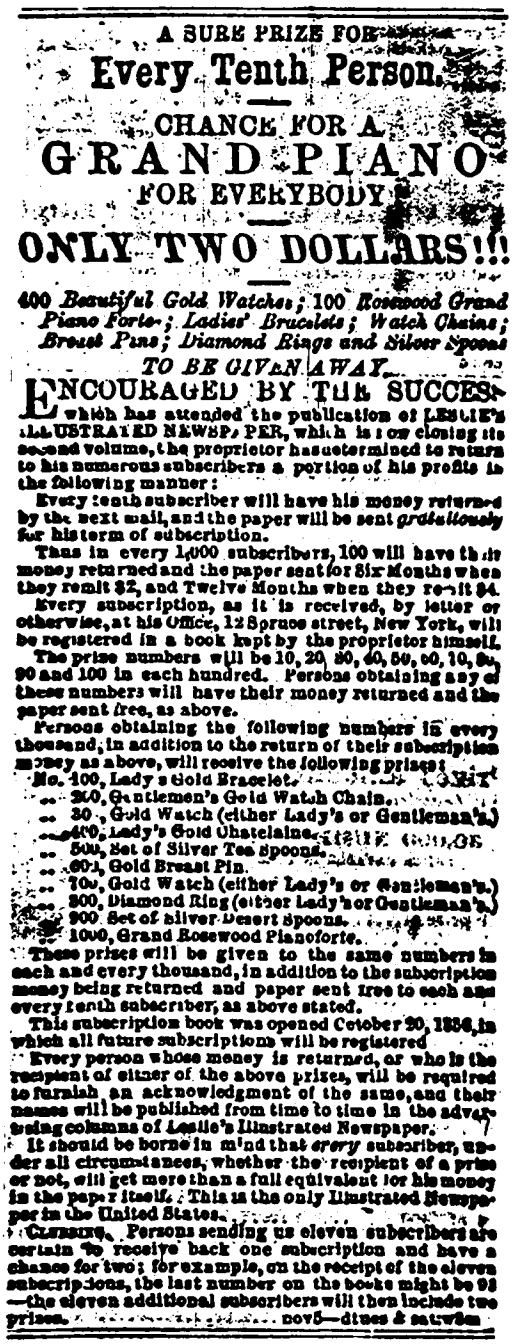
Although the many advances in the manufacture of keyboard instruments are evident in the newspaper advertisements, these same advertisements also give the reader an inside look into the problems facing the manufacturers, the most evident of which seems to be the effect of the humid Southern climate on the instruments. The humidity affected the instruments' tone retention, a major consideration for all manufacturers. It actually gave pianos from Europe a slight upper hand with this market. These manufacturers cured and dried the wood used for their keyboard casements specifically to meet the European climate conditions. Because the humidity of the lower Mississippi River region was similar to that of Europe (Eschete, 1979), those instruments suited Natchez well.

The advertisements also described how instruments were transported into the Natchez area. Several local retailers describe pianos arriving by steamer through New Orleans. The Mississippi Free Trader published the fact that retailer I. H. MacMichael had received a shipment of pianos by the steamer *J. M. Wright* (Mississippi Free Trader, 1854, August 29).

One advertisement that appeared in an 1856 issues of the Natchez Weekly Courier (Figure 7) brings into perspective the important role that pianos played in this society. This advertisement was a promotion for Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper where every tenth subscriber won a prize. The grand prizes of the promotion were rosewood grand pianofortes (Natchez Weekly Courier, 1856, November 5).

During the period evaluated for this study, thirty-two different sources offered keyboards for sale. These can be broken down into several types of retailers: the general merchant, the music store owner, the agent and the manufacturer.

It appears that the general merchant is credited with supplying the lower Mississippi River region with the majority of its keyboard instruments before 1830, even though they only kept one or two keyboard instruments on hand at a time (Eschete, 1979). By 1850 one such merchant, John Liddle, had a strong influence on the keyboard market in Natchez. In his advertisement on August 14, 1850 (Figure 8), Liddle notifies the public that he is making arrangements to exhibit and sale more pianofortes at his store (Natchez Weekly Courier, 1850, August 14) known as the Granite



A SURE PRIZE FOR

Every Tenth Person.

A CHANCE FOR A

GRAND PIANO

FOR EVERYBODY.

ONLY TWO DOLLARS!!!

400 Beautiful Gold Watches; 100 Rosewood Grand Piano Fortes; Ladies' Bracelets; Watch Chains; Breast Pins; Diamond Rings and Silver Spoons

TO BE GIVEN AWAY.

ENCOURAGED BY THE SUCCESS which has attended the publication of LESLIE'S ILLUSTRATED NEWSPAPER, which is now closing its second volume, the proprietor has determined to return to his numerous subscribers a portion of his profits in the following manner:

Every tenth subscriber will have his money returned by the next mail, and the paper will be sent *gratuitously* for his term of subscription.

Thus in every 1,000 subscribers, 100 will have their money returned and the paper sent for Six Months when they remit $2, and Twelve Months when they remit $4.

Every subscription, as it is received, by letter or otherwise, at his Office, 12 Spruce street, New York, will be registered in a book kept by the proprietor himself.

The prize numbers will be 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90 and 100 in each hundred. Persons obtaining any of these numbers will have their money returned and the paper sent free, as above.

Persons obtaining the following numbers in every thousand, in addition to the return of their subscription money as above, will receive the following prizes:

No. 100, Lady's Gold Bracelet.
" 200, Gentlemen's Gold Watch Chain.
" 300, Gold Watch (either Lady's or Gentleman's.)
" 400, Lady's Gold Chatelaine.
" 500, Set of Silver Tea Spoons.
" 600, Gold Breast Pin.
" 700, Gold Watch (either Lady's or Gentleman's.)
" 800, Diamond Ring (either Lady's or Gentleman's.)
" 900 Set of Silver Dessert Spoons.
" 1000, Grand Rosewood Pianoforte.

These prizes will be given to the same numbers in each and every thousand, in addition to the subscription money being returned and paper sent free to each and every tenth subscriber, as above stated.

This subscription book was opened October 20, 1856, in which all future subscriptions will be registered.

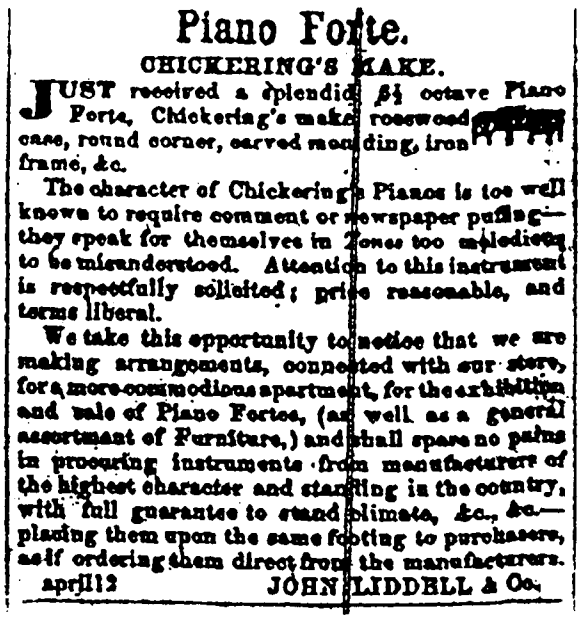
Every person whose money is returned, or who is the recipient of either of the above prizes, will be required to furnish an acknowledgment of the same, and their names will be published from time to time in the advertising columns of Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper.

It should be borne in mind that *every* subscriber, under all circumstances, whether the recipient of a prize or not, will get more than a full equivalent for his money in the paper itself. This is the only Illustrated Newspaper in the United States.

CLUBBING. Persons sending us eleven subscribers are certain to receive back one subscription and have a chance for two; for example, on the receipt of the eleven subscriptions, the last number on the books might be 93—the eleven additional subscribers will then include two prizes.

nov5—dtues & sat1w6m

Figure 7. Advertisement for Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper. (Natchez Weekly Courier, 1856, November 5)



Piano Forte.

CHICKERING'S MAKE.

JUST received a splendid 6½ octave Piano Forte, Chickering's make rosewood case, round corner, carved moulding, iron frame, &c.

The character of Chickering's Pianos is too well known to require comment or newspaper puffing—they speak for themselves in tones too melodious to be misunderstood. Attention to this instrument is respectfully solicited; price reasonable, and terms liberal.

We take this opportunity to notice that we are making arrangements, connected with our store, for a more commodious apartment, for the exhibition and sale of Piano Fortes, (as well as a general assortment of Furniture,) and shall spare no pains in procuring instruments from manufacturers of the highest character and standing in the country, with full guarantee to stand climate, &c., &c.—placing them upon the same footing to purchasers, as if ordering them direct from the manufacturers.

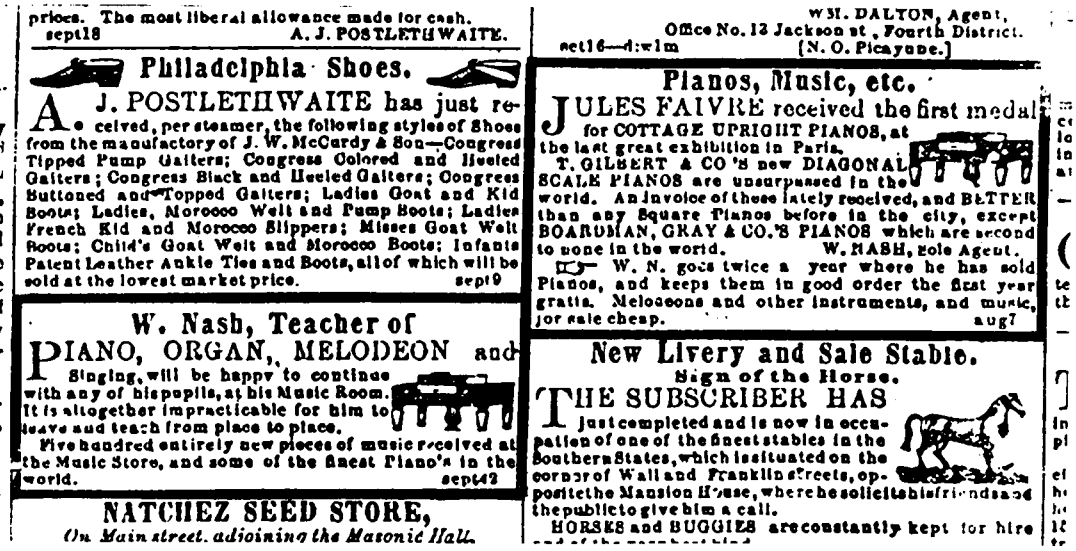
aprl112 JOHN LIDDELL & Co.

Figure 8. Advertisement by John Liddle (Natchez Weekly Courier, 1850, April 17).

Store. An advertisement in the same paper on September 15, 1852 describes the expected arrival of eight pianofortes (Natchez Weekly Courier, 1852, September 15) as Liddle attempted to compete in this growing keyboard market. By the end of 1857, Liddle entered into a partnership with a man named Chamberlain (Natchez Weekly Courier, 1857, September 30) and within months the ownership again changed, this time to Chamberlain & Smith (Natchez Weekly Courier, 1858, February 10).

By the 1850s, the prominent keyboard retailers in Natchez were the *music store owners*. Not only did their advertisements appear repeatedly in almost all the newspaper issues, but it was common to find more than one advertisement in the same issue. This was the case in the October 15, 1856 issue of the Natchez Weekly Courier where two advertisements by William Nash appear side by side (Figure 9) (Natchez Weekly Courier, 1856, October 15). Nash's success as a keyboard retailer can to some extent be credited to his reputation as one of the leading music teachers in the area. Through teaching, he, along with other teachers, helped to increase the demand for keyboard instruments in the lower Mississippi River region (Eschete, 1979).

Advertisements also appeared in the newspapers by music store owners in New Orleans such as William Mayo (Figure 5, p. 26) and Henry Parson, who according to the October 3, 1855 issue of the Natchez Weekly Courier , opened a branch of his music store on Main Street, Natchez (Natchez Weekly Courier, 1855, October 3).



prices. The most liberal allowance made for cash.
sept18 A. J. POSTLETHWAITE.

Philadelphia Shoes.

A. J. POSTLETHWAITE has just received, per steamer, the following styles of Shoes from the manufactory of J. W. McCurdy & Son—Congress Tipped Pump Gaiters; Congress Colored and Heeled Gaiters; Congress Black and Heeled Gaiters; Congress Buttoned and Topped Gaiters; Ladies Goat and Kid Boots; Ladies, Morocco Welt and Pump Boots; Ladies French Kid and Morocco Slippers; Misses Goat Welt Boots; Child's Goat Welt and Morocco Boots; Infants Patent Leather Ankle Ties and Boots, all of which will be sold at the lowest market price. sept9

W. Nash, Teacher of

PIANO, ORGAN, MELODEON and Singing, will be happy to continue with any of his pupils, at his Music Room. It is altogether impracticable for him to leave and teach from place to place.

Five hundred entirely new pieces of music received at the Music Store, and some of the finest Piano's in the world. sept42

NATCHEZ SEED STORE,

On Main street, adjoining the Masonic Hall.

W. M. DALTON, Agent,
Office No. 12 Jackson st., Fourth District.
oct16—d:w1m [N. O. Picayune.]

Pianos, Music, etc.

JULES FAIVRE received the first medal for COTTAGE UPRIGHT PIANOS, at the last great exhibition in Paris.

T. GILBERT & CO 'S new DIAGONAL SCALE PIANOS are unsurpassed in the world. An invoice of these lately received, and BETTER than any Square Pianos before in the city, except BOARDMAN, GRAY & CO.'S PIANOS which are second to none in the world. W. NASH, Sole Agent.

☞ W. N. goes twice a year where he has sold Pianos, and keeps them in good order the first year gratis. Melodeons and other instruments, and music, for sale cheap. aug7

New Livery and Sale Stable.

Sign of the Horse.

THE SUBSCRIBER HAS just completed and is now in occupation of one of the finest stables in the Southern States, which is situated on the corner of Wall and Franklin streets, opposite the Mansion House, where he solicits his friends and the public to give him a call.

HORSES and BUGGIES are constantly kept for hire

Figure 9. Advertisements for William Nash (Natchez Weekly Courier, 1856, October 15)

Another kind of retailer whose advertisements appeared in the Natchez newspapers was the *agent*, a retailer who represented one particular business. An example of this is in the May 1, 1858 issue of the Natchez Daily Free Trader, where the music store owner, L. Gabrich of New Orleans, explains that his agent, Andre Dies, will travel the country to take orders for musical instruments (Natchez Daily Free Trader, 1858, May 1). The advertisements of I. H. MacMichael, sole agent for Timothy Gilbert & Co. of Boston (Figures 10 & 11) is an example of an agent for a manufacturer. MacMichael's advertisements consistently appeared in the Natchez newspapers until his death in 1854, when his wife, Mrs. E. L. MacMichael, took over the business.

Newspapers also published random advertisements dealing with the sale of keyboard instruments. These included those being sold by auctioneers, private sales, and administration sales.

Several manufacturers began to submit their own advertisements to the Natchez public. For example, in the June 11, 1857 issue of the Natchez Daily Courier (Figure 12), William Knabe of Baltimore discussed at length the virtues of the instruments created by his company (Natchez Daily Courier, 1857, June 11).

These advertisements cite twenty-nine different keyboard manufacturers whose instruments were available to the people of Natchez (Figure 13). The manufacturers were located in such Northern cities as Boston, New York City, and Philadelphia, as well as the upper-Southern city of Baltimore and the country of France.



Figure 10. Advertisement by I. H. MacMichael (Natchez Weekly Courier, 1854, September 27)

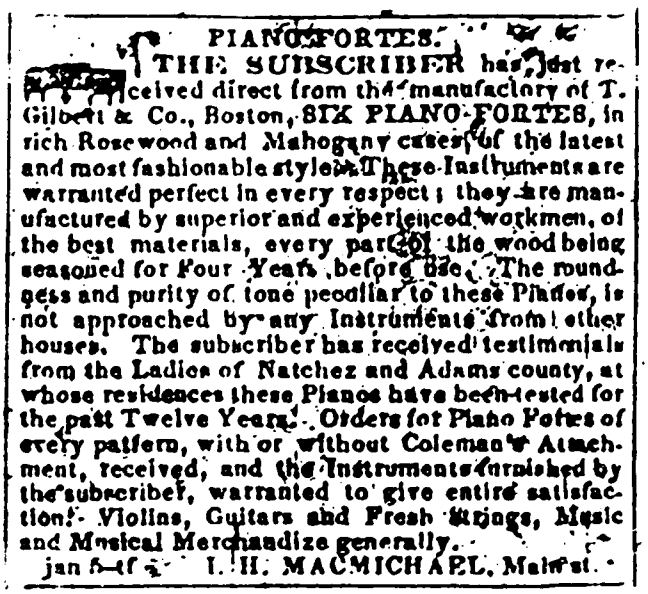
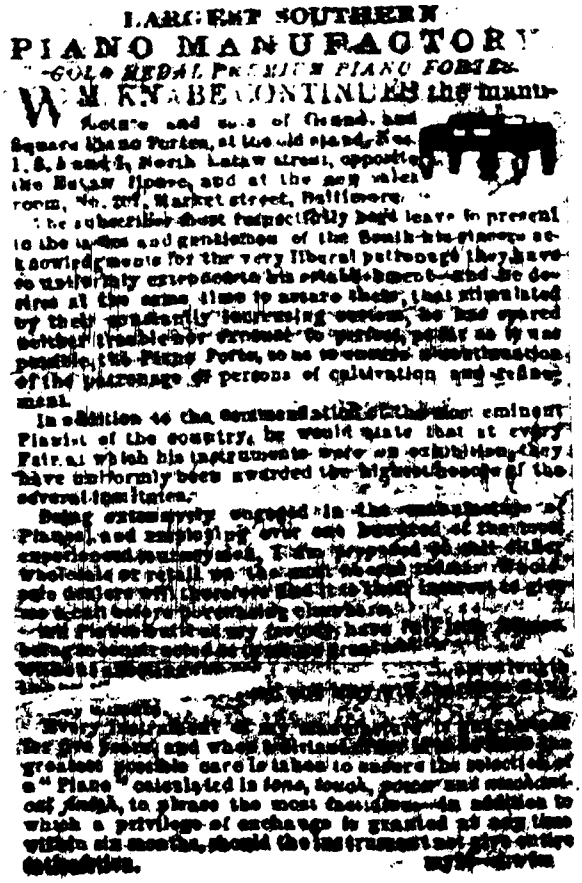


Figure 11. Advertisement for I. H. MacMichael (Natchez Weekly Courier, 1850, February 2)



LARGEST SOUTHERN

PIANO MANUFACTORY

GOLD MEDAL PREMIUM PIANO FORTES.

WM. KNABE CONTINUES the manu-

facture and sale of Grand and Square Piano Fortes, at the old stand, Nos. 1, 3, and 5, North Eutaw street, opposite the Eutaw House, and at the new ware-room, No. 207, Market street, Baltimore.

The subscriber most respectfully begs leave to present to the ladies and gentlemen of the South his grateful acknowledgments for the very liberal patronage they have so uniformly extended to his establishment—and he desires at the same time to assure them, that stimulated by their unanimously flattering notices, he has spared neither trouble nor expense to perfect, partly as he was possible, the Piano Forte, so as to ensure a distribution of the patronage of persons of cultivation and refinement.

In addition to the commendations of the most eminent Pianists of the country, he would state that at every Fair at which his instruments were on exhibition, they have uniformly been awarded the highest honors of the several institutes.

Being extensively engaged in the manufacture of Pianos, and employing over one hundred of the most experienced workmen, he is prepared to sell either wholesale or retail, on the most reasonable terms, and to guarantee that they shall give satisfaction, or the purchaser shall have the option of returning them within twelve months from the time of purchase.

Every instrument of his manufacture is warranted to give full satisfaction, and the greatest possible care is taken to secure the selection of a "Piano" calculated in tone, touch, power and elasticity of finish, to please the most fastidious—in addition to which a privilege of exchange is granted at any time within six months, should the instrument not give entire satisfaction.

Figure 12. Advertisement by William Knabe of Baltimore (Natchez Daily Courier, 1857, June 11)

MANUFACTURERS FOUND IN NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI ADVERTISEMENTS (1850-1860)

New Orleans, Louisiana
Asbrand & Werlein
Charles Horst
Jules Faive

Boston, Massachusetts
Chickering & Sons
Lemanuel Gilbert
Timothy Gilbert & Co.
Hallett, Davis & Co.
T. D. & H. W. Smith

Baltimore, Maryland
William. Knabe & Co.

Buffalo, New York
Carthart
Prince & Co.

Philadelphia
Conrad Meyer

New York, New York
Boardman Gray & Co.
Dubois, Bacon & Chambers
John Durham
A. H. Gale & Co.
H. Hanson
Light & Bradbury
Nunns & Clark
Nunns & Fisher
Steinway & Son
J. F. Warner & Co.
Horace Waters

Paris
Erard
Henri Herz
Pleyel

Other
C. E. C. Gipser
Peters, Cragg & Co.

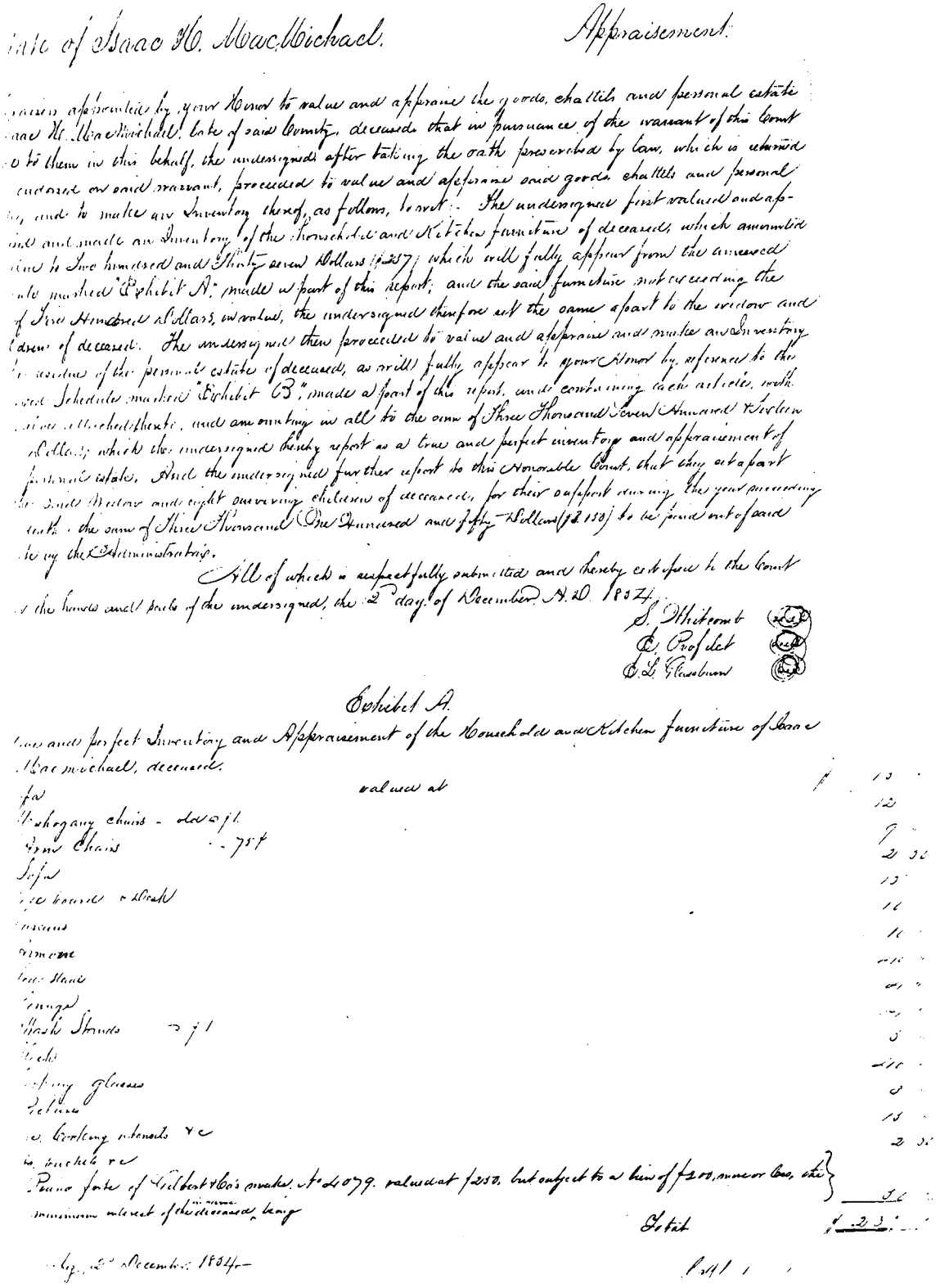
Figure 13. Manufacturers Found in Natchez, Mississippi Advertisements (1850-1860) Organized by Location

Adams County Courthouse Records

A complete search of the Adams County Courthouse records further document the Natchez area pianos and substantiate the origins of those extant in the Natchez area. This search included inventory and appraisal books, probate packets and estate records. The only relevant information found on the pianos was their ownership and appraised market value at the time the document was filed. The one exception to this is the appraisal of the estate of Isaac H. MacMichael (Figure 14), who was previously discussed as the advertised sole agent of T. Gilbert & Co. Pianos. The MacMichael appraisal shows that his piano was not only the most valuable object listed in the inventory, but that it was also important enough to state the manufacturer's name (Gilbert & Co.), and the make number (4079). This also establishes the fact that T. Gilbert & Co. pianos once existed in the Natchez area.

Adams County Personal Tax Records

Investigation of extant Adams County Personal Tax Records reveal information on taxation of valuable personal objects, including pianos, and should embody all residents of Adams County. The documented years within the scope of this study were all used to compile the necessary information due to the limited number of surviving records. These include the years of 1846, 1852, 1861, and 1876. The following tabulated data records the total number of pianos taxed for each of the above years and the average piano value. One can see that there were a significant number of new pianos



Estate of Isaac H. MacMichael. Appraisement.

Exhibit A.

Figure 14. Appraisal of the Estate of Isaac H. MacMichael (Inventory & Appraisal #7, 1854)

purchased between 1846 and 1852, presenting an approximate 36% increase. The number of pianos had increased by 50% from 1846 to 1861. The data also shows the severe economic collapse brought about by the American Civil War and Reconstruction. Both the number of pianos owned and their relative values had plunged by 1876.

Adams County Personal Tax Records Sample

Information Recorded	1846	1852	1861	1876
Number of Pianos Taxed	160	218	297	119
Average Value	$160	$170	$166	$84

Extant 1850-1860 Pianos of the Natchez Area

The city of Natchez is rich in architectural history and original furnishings, and many nineteenth century keyboard instruments are available for study. The challenge of this research was to determine which of the extant instruments was manufactured between 1850 and 1860 as well as show original ownership by people of the Natchez society. It is obvious from the above data that many of the keyboards acquired by Adams County citizens during the 1850s disappeared from the area. The American Civil War and Reconstruction devastated many family fortunes. Maintenance of the instruments was necessary for their preservation, and many instruments became unusable. In turn, many were destroyed or converted for some other use such as desks or tables. An example of

this is seen in an office table located at the Vicksburg Courthouse Museum (Figure 15). The central body of the instrument was removed and the top was placed directly upon the base. Many other pianos were stored in attics, basements and barns, where they were forgotten and neglected. For example, the box of keyboard remains shown in Figure 16 was once a prized square pianoforte manufactured by Wm. Knabe & Co. of Baltimore. The remains were found stored in an unoccupied house in Raymond, Mississippi.

Dates for the existing keyboard instruments found in the Natchez area were determined by one of three methods. Each casement was searched for identifying marks such as serial numbers or addresses. When the serial number was found, the Pierce Piano Atlas provided the manufacture date. When only the manufacturer's address was available, the approximate date was determined by identifying the years when the manufacturer was located at that address. When no visible marks could be found, family histories were examined. This information was evaluated by the researcher for credibility by comparing the data to public records.

Another factor being addressed in this study was whether or not the extant keyboard instruments were originally owned by people in the Natchez area. Keyboards that were determined to have been brought to the area by other sources were immediately disregarded. All those remaining in the study were originally brought to Natchez as far back as they have been recorded.



Figure 15. Table Made From a Square Piano Located at the Vicksburg Courthouse Museum

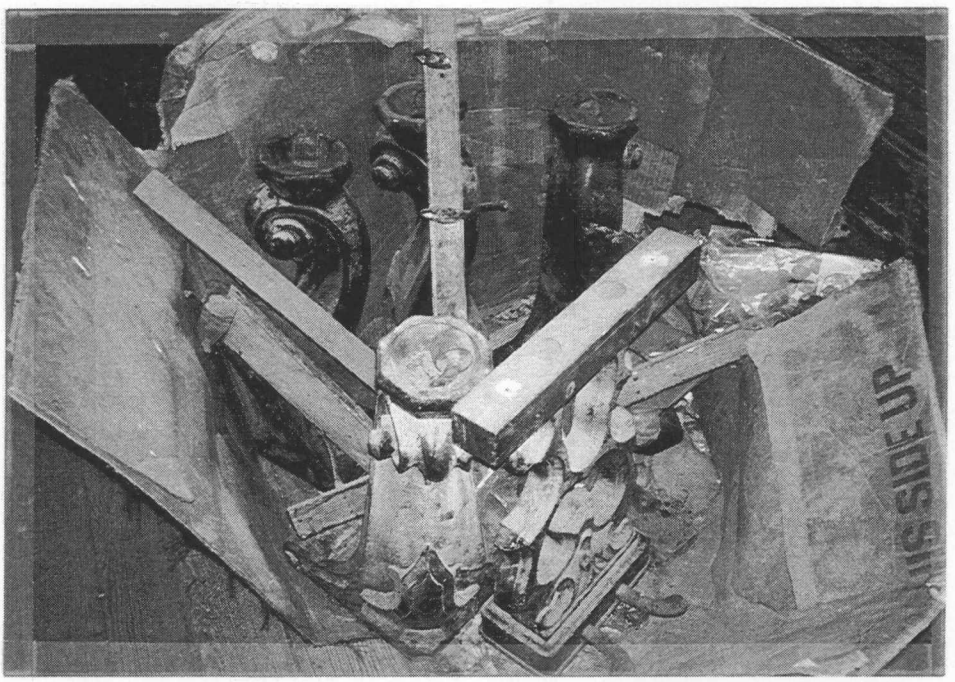


Figure 16. Box of Keyboard Remains Found at Waverly, Raymond, Mississippi

Auburn

Auburn (Figure 17) was built in 1812 by architect Levi Weeks for Lyman Harding. In 1827, the mansion was purchased by Dr. Stephen Duncan (Cooper, 1957), one of America's first millionaires. In 1911 Dr. Duncan's heirs deeded Auburn and its grounds to the City of Natchez as a recreational facility, free to the public (Smith & Owens, 1969). The pianoforte being researched for this study, manufactured by Chickering of Boston (Figure 18), was donated to Auburn by Mrs. Doris Beeson. It had been stored in a barn for years and received some damage when the building was struck by lightning (Daily, B., personal communication, 1995).

Chickering pianos created a sensation throughout the world and won the highest awards at many exhibitions. An undisputed leader in the trade, Chickering was producing more than 1000 pianos a year by 1852. Tragically, that same year the factory was destroyed by fire, but the company was so well established that it was able to rebuild a plant immediately on Tremont Street, Boston (Eschete, 1979).

The casement of Auburn's pianoforte is designed in the neoclassic style, as evidenced by its large, straight, tapering legs sitting on rounded feet (Figure 19). The instrument measures 37 inches tall, 72 inches wide and a 36 inch deep. The key span is 6 1/2 octaves and the rosewood casement has rounded corners. The metal-work inside (Figure 20) is by far the most decorative part of the pianoforte with ornamentation of a large rosette surrounded by scrolling foliage. The manufacturer's address is also found on the



Figure 17. Auburn (c.1820), Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 18. Pianoforte Manufactured by Chickering of Boston (c.1853), Located at Auburn, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 19. Detail of Leg on Pianoforte Manufactured by Chickering of Boston (c.1853), Located at Auburn, Natchez, Mississippi

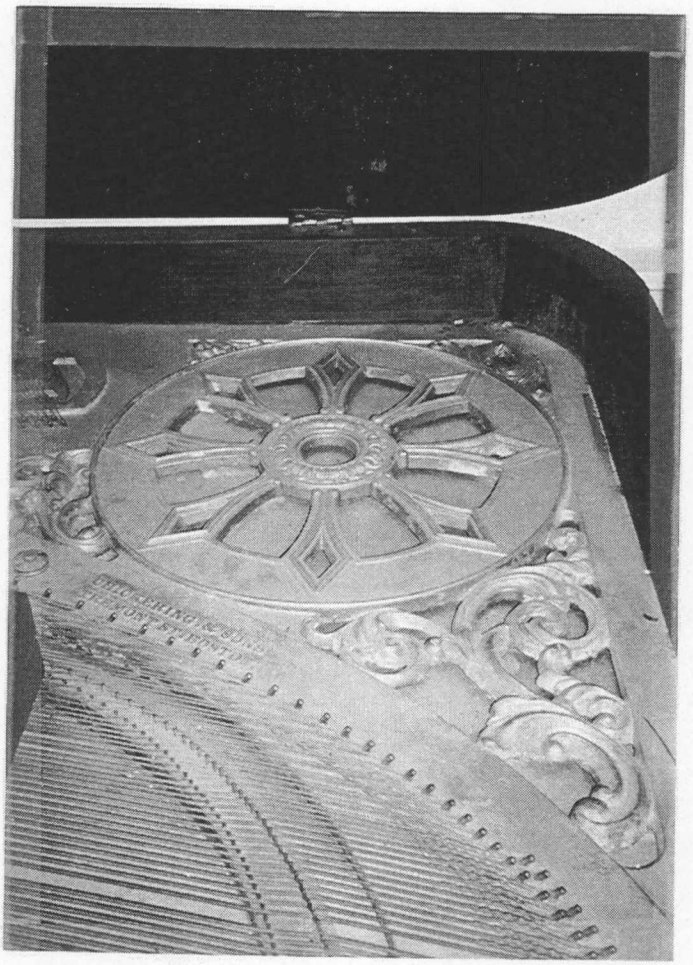


Figure 20. Detail of Metal-work on Pianoforte Manufactured by Chickering of Boston (c.1853), Located at Auburn, Natchez, Mississippi

metalwork (Figure 21). It reads:

Chickering, & Sons
Tremont St. Boston

Because no serial number is visible, this address was used to date the pianoforte as one of the early pieces made at the 1852 factory. A comparative example of a Chickering square piano (Figure 22), number 19426, owned by the Rowland Family of Puente, California, is pictured in a book compiled by N. E. Michel. Manufactured between 1855 and 1860, this piano shows identical features to the Chickering at Auburn (Michel, 1963).

Shady Side

Shady Side (Figure 23) was built in 1852 by Ralph North. Civil War debts forced foreclosure in 1867 when O. K. Field bought the house. He owned it until 1882, when he sold it to Mary E. Jackson. The house was foreclosed upon again in 1890 and went into the hands of the Junkin family. Shady Side remained in the Junkin family until 1972, although it was vacant for some time. In 1972 the Thomas M. McNeely family bought the house and are the present owners, (McNeely, T., personal communication, 1995).

When the McNeelys purchased Shady Side, several pieces of furniture were included in the sale, among them the piano shown in Figure 24. It was manufactured by Ernest Gabler of New York (Figure 25), and the McNeely family believes it was part of the original Shady Side furnishings once belonging to Ralph North (McNeely, T., personal communication, 1995). The piano is about the same age as the house, and the 1861 personal tax records show that Ralph North

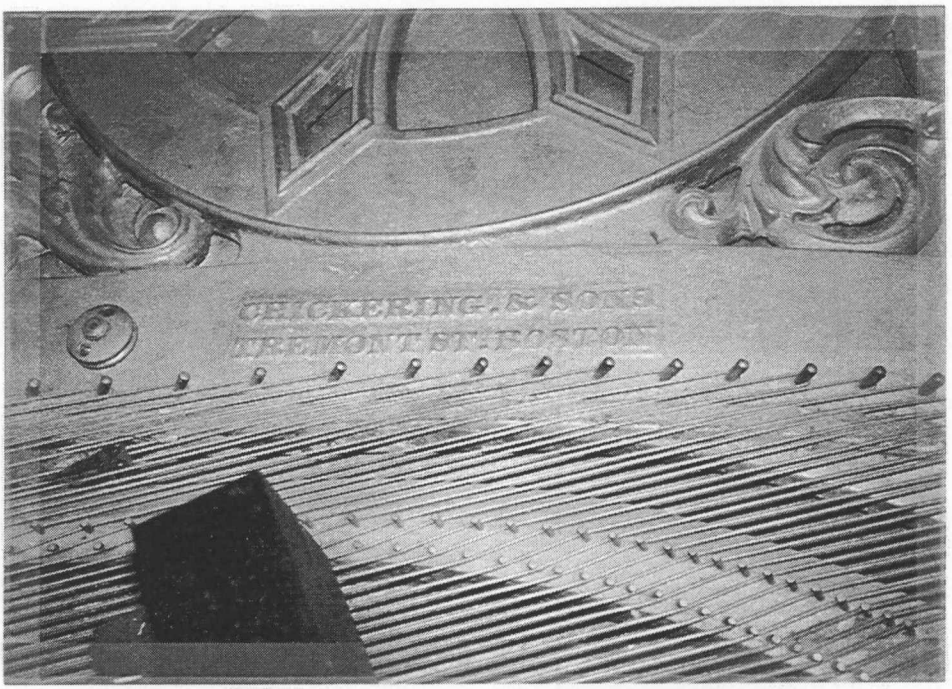


Figure 21. Manufacturer's Address found on Pianoforte Manufactured by Chickering of Boston (c.1853), Located at Auburn, Natchez, Mississippi

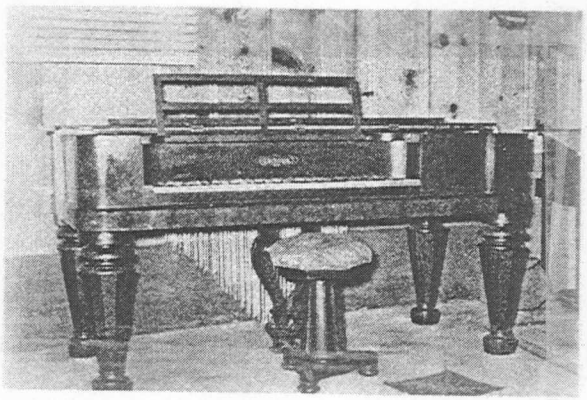


Figure 22. Comparative Example of a Chickering Square Piano (Michel, 1963)



Figure 23. Shady Side (c.1852) , Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 24. Piano Manufactured by Ernest Gabler (c.1855), Located at Shady Side, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 25. Detail of Nameboard on Piano Manufactured by Ernest Gabler (c.1853), Located at Shady Side, Natchez, Mississippi

was taxed for owning a piano valued at $150. Tax records do not show O. K. Field owning a piano (Adams County Tax Record, 1861), making it seem less likely that Field would have brought one of this age into the house. A dealer's tag is located inside the front left corner of the instrument (Figure 26), but it is badly damaged, making the retailer's name unreadable; however, it does show that the piano was purchased in New Orleans.

The casement of the piano was designed in the Victorian Rococo Revival style. The cabriole legs (Figure 27) are heavily carved with a fruit motif on the knee and a whorl foot sitting on a stump plinth. The lyre (Figure 28), formed by carved reverse C-scrolls, projects brass pedals. The most decorative part of the casement is the nameboard (Figure 29), which features inlaid mother-of-pearl, trimmed with gilt and paint depicting scrolling foliage and flowers. The music rack is made up of scrolling pierced wood with a central lyre motif. The casement has rounded corners, a shaped apron and measures 38 inches high, 80 1/2 inches wide and 39 1/2 inches deep, with a key span of 7 1/4 octaves. Painted flowers ornament the soundboard (Figure 30).

Little information is recorded about the manufacturer. Ernest Gabler came from Germany to New York in 1851, where he operated his own piano business from 1854 (Dolge, 1972) until 1931 (Ehrlich, 1990). His instruments were moderately priced and of good quality (Spillane, 1969).

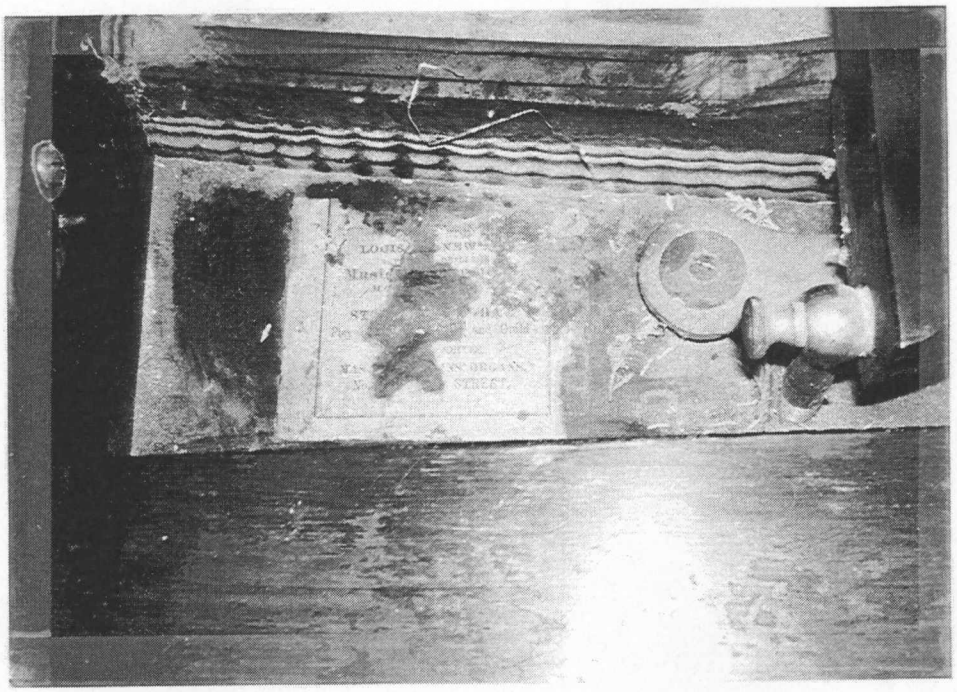


Figure 26. Detail of Dealer's Tag on Piano Manufactured by Ernest Gabler (c.1853), Located at Shady Side, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 27. Detail of Leg on Piano Manufactured by Ernest Gabler (c.1853), Located at Shady Side, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 28. Detail of Lyre on Piano Manufactured by Ernest Gabler (c.1853), Located at Shady Side, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 29. Front View of Piano Manufactured by Ernest Gabler (c.1853), Located at Shady Side, Natchez, Mississippi

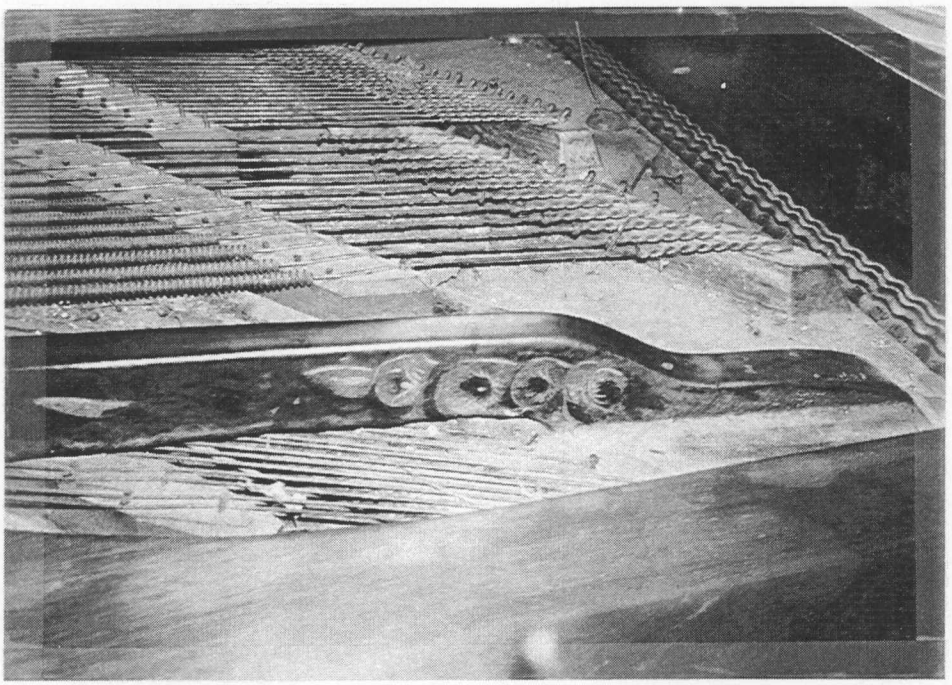


Figure 30. Detail of Ornamentation Inside the Piano Manufactured by Ernest Gabler (c.1853), Located at Shady Side, Natchez, Mississippi

Melrose

Built from 1847 to 1848, Melrose (Figure 31) was the home of John T. McMurran. After a number of family tragedies during the Civil War, McMurran sold Melrose and its extensive inventory of furnishings in 1865 to George Malin Davis (Cooper, 1957). Melrose remained in the hands of the Davis descendants until 1976, when it was sold to Mr. and Mrs. John Callon. They ran the house as a bed & breakfast for fourteen years until 1990, when the National Park Service purchased the property (Jenkins, K., personal communication, 1995).

The furnishings inside Melrose are a mix of original furnishings and period antiques, most of which are original to the Natchez area. There is some controversy as to when the piano being researched for this study actually came into the house. An inventory of furnishings sold with the house in 1865 lists "1 Piano, stool, and music stand" (Inventory of Melrose Furnishings, 1865), but an interview conducted in 1975 with Mrs. Marian Ferry states that the piano belonged to her great-grandmother, Mrs. George Malin Davis (Miller, 1975). Either way, it seems safe to assume that this piece has been in Natchez since it was first purchased.

The square piano was manufactured by Knabe, Gaehle, & Co. of Baltimore (Figure 32). Its casement was designed in the Victorian Rococo Revival style as evident in the scrolling curves throughout. The cabriole legs (Figure 33) feature a carved shell motif on the knee and a whorl foot in the form of an acanthus leaf sitting on a stump plinth. The acanthus motif is repeated on the brass peddles



Figure 31. Melrose (c.1848), Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 32. Square Piano, Manufactured by Knabe & Gaehle of Baltimore, (c.1850), Located at Melrose, Natchez, Mississippi

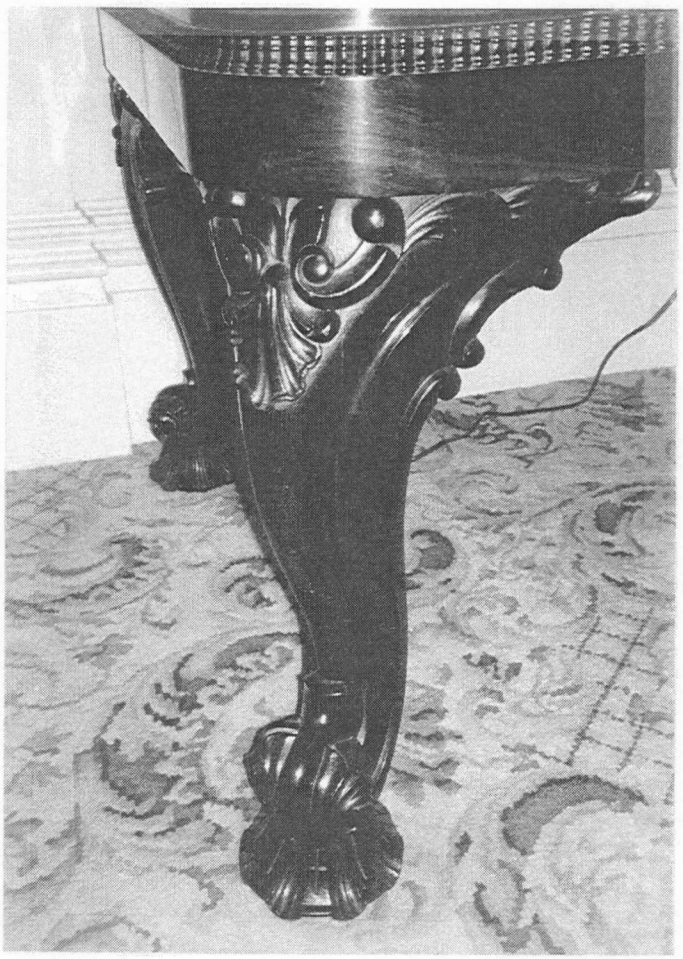


Figure 33. Detail of Leg on Square Piano, Manufactured by Knabe & Gaehle of Baltimore, (c.1850), Located at Melrose, Natchez, Mississippi

(Figure 34), and the lyre continues the theme of scrolling foliage. The rosewood casement has rounded corners and measures 37 inches high, 76 1/2 inches wide, 38 inches deep with a key span of 6 3/4 octaves. Candle holders lined with red felt are flanking the keys (Figure 35) and above the nameboard sits a music rack (Figure 36) of a scrolling pierced wood design. One of the beautiful aspects of the piano, but rarely seen, is the inside (Figure 37) where the metal ornamentation depicts scrolling stylized foliage (Figure 38).

The serial number of the piano (2506), located on the metal bar behind the lyre (Figure 39), was not useful in determining the date of manufacture because no known list of serial numbers for Knabe, Gaehle & Co. exists. It is known that the two men were in partnership with each other from 1839 to 1854, (Spillane, 1969) when Gaehle withdrew from the business and the company's name became Wm. Knabe & Co. (Dolge, 1972).

Bontura

Bontura (Figure 40), was described in 1852 as the "new house of Robert Smith...a free man of color" who not only operated his own business, but also owned slaves (Miller & Miller, 1985). However, the house is probably best known for its second owner, Josef Bontura, for whom the structure is named (Cooper, 1857). Eventually, the house was donated to the National Society of Colonial Dames of America in the State of Mississippi (Smith & Owens, 1969), and recently they sold the property and it's furnishings to Hal Garner.



Figure 34. Detail of Lyre on Square Piano, Manufactured by Knabe & Gaehle of Baltimore, (c.1850), Located at Melrose, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 35. Detail of Candle Holders on Square Piano, Manufactured by Knabe & Gaehle of Baltimore, (c.1850), Located at Melrose, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 36. Detail of Music Rack on Square Piano, Manufactured by Knabe & Gaehle of Baltimore, (c.1850), Located at Melrose, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 37. Inside Square Piano, Manufactured by Knabe & Gaehle of Baltimore, (c.1850), Located at Melrose, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 38. Detail of Ornamentation Inside Square Piano, Manufactured by Knabe & Gaehle of Baltimore, (c.1850), Located at Melrose, Natchez, Mississippi

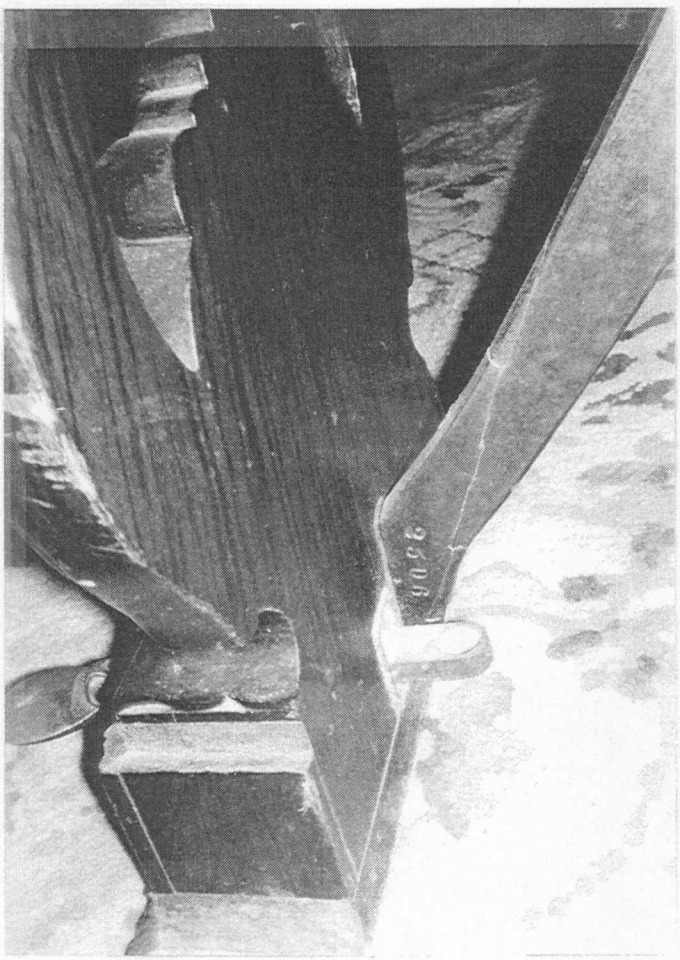


Figure 39. Detail Showing Serial Number on Square Piano, Manufactured by Knabe & Gaehle of Baltimore, (c.1850), Located at Melrose, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 40. Bontura (c.1852), Natchez, Mississippi

Located in Bontura is an upright piano (Figure 41) manufactured by Pleyel of Paris (c.1848-1854). However, the piano did not originate in Bontura, rather it was first located in the Destreham Plantation located south of Natchez on the Mississippi River. The Ladies of the National Society of Colonial Dames of America brought it to Bontura (Young, personal communication, 1995).

The casement, made of ebonized rosewood, features legs (Figure 42) of scrolling acanthus leaves ending in lion paws on a plinth. It measures 46 inches high, 54 1/2 inches wide, a 24 1/2 inches deep with a key span of 6 3/4 octaves. There are built-in square candle holders (Figure 43) on the key cover and highly ornate brass handles (Figure 44) on the side panel. Identical name plaques, located both on the nameboard (Figure 45) and inside the top cabinet flap (Figure 46), read...

MEDAILLES D'OR 1927-34-39-44
hors de Concours 1949
IGNACE PLEYEL & CONPie
PARIS

The two serial number markings, located, inside the bottom flap of the cabinet (Figure 47) and in the back right corner of the top cabinet (Figure 48), read...

DV
18802
HERRIC

The music rack is also stored inside the top cabinet (Figure 49).

The manufacturer, Pleyel, is one of the most famous piano makers in Europe. Founded by Ignace Joseph Pleyel in 1807 and



Figure 41. Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1848-1854), Located at Bontura, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 42. Detail of Leg on Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1848-1854), Located at Bontura, Natchez, Mississippi

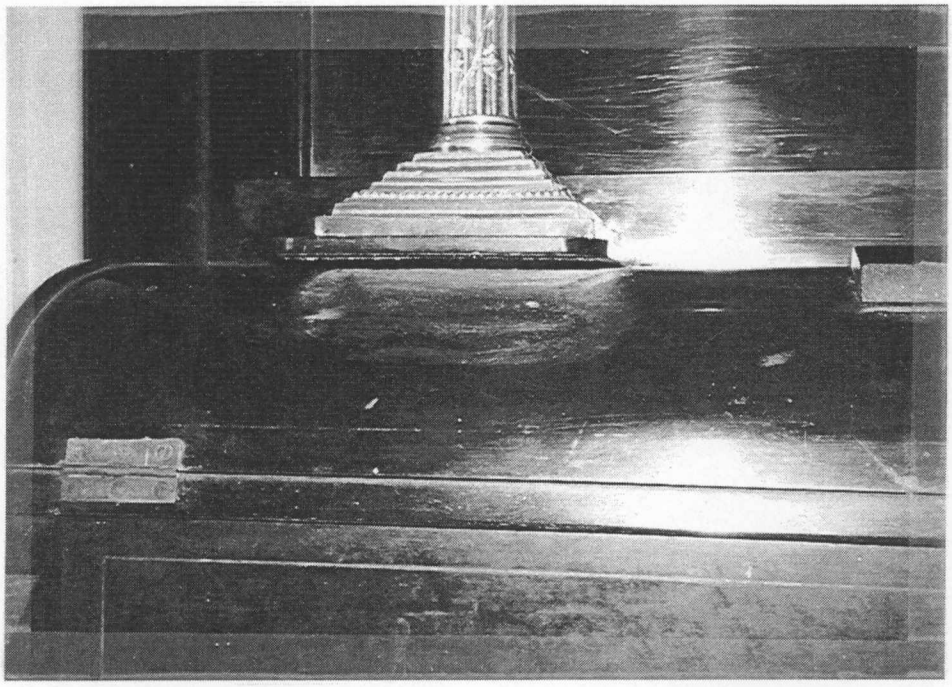


Figure 43. Detail of Candle Holder on Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1848-1854), Located at Bontura, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 44. Detail of Brass Handles on Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1848-1854), Located at Bontura, Natchez, Mississippi

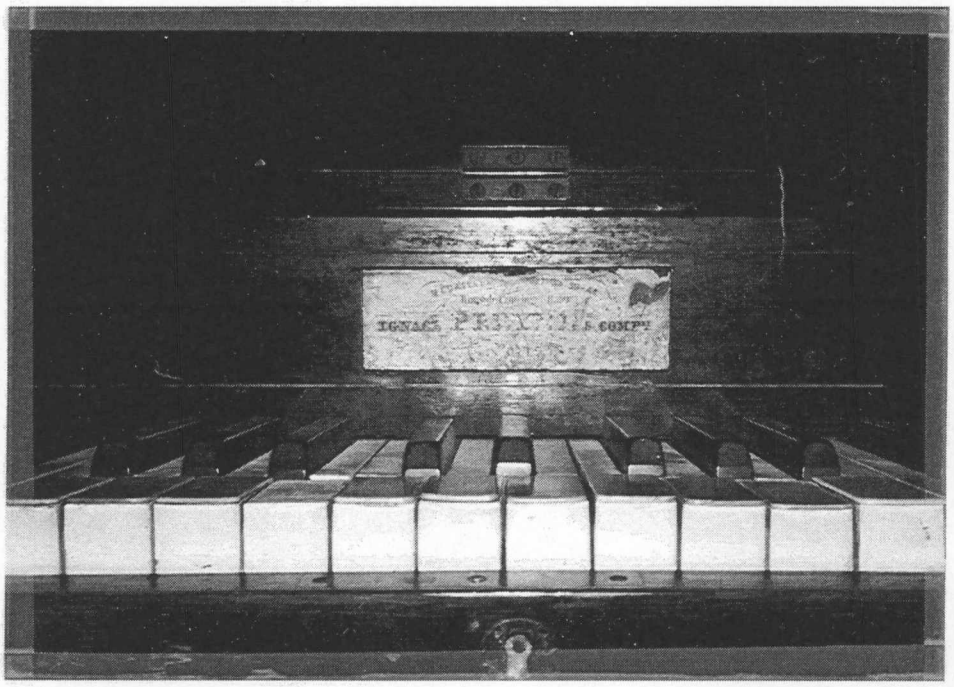


Figure 45. Detail of Name Plaque on the Nameboard of the Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1848-1854), Located at Bontura, Natchez, Mississippi

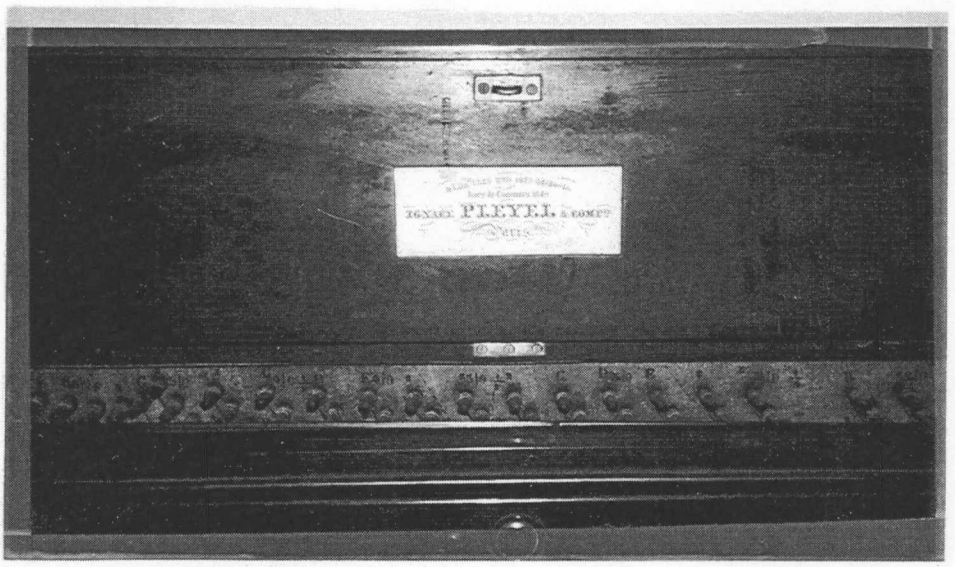


Figure 46. Detail of Name Plaque Inside the Top Cabinet Flap of the Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1848-1854), Located at Bontura, Natchez, Mississippi

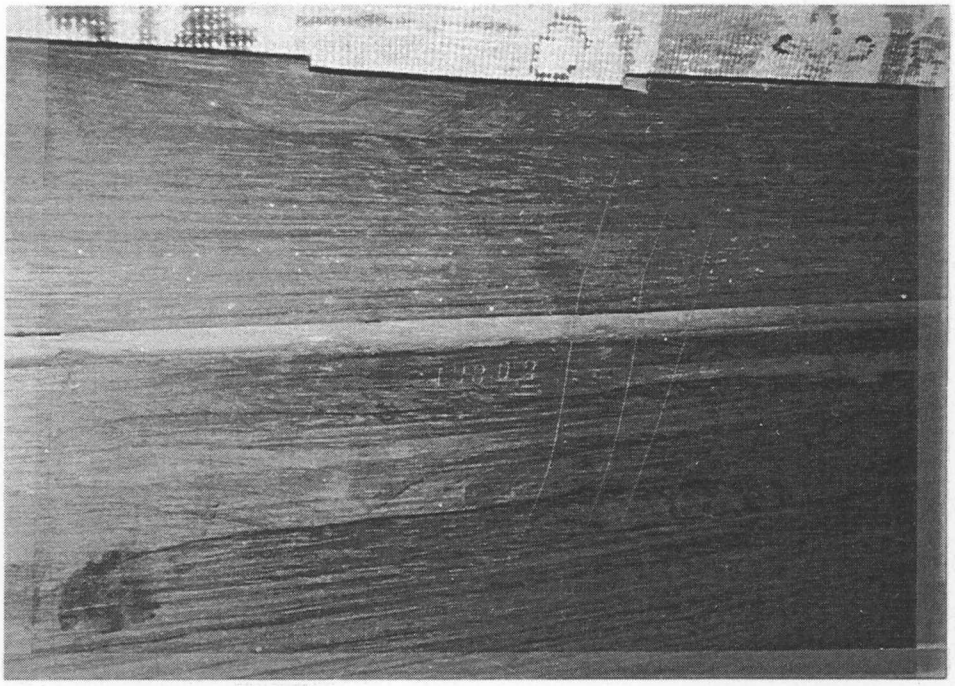


Figure 47. Detail of Serial Number Inside the Bottom Flap of the Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1848-1854), Located at Bontura, Natchez, Mississippi

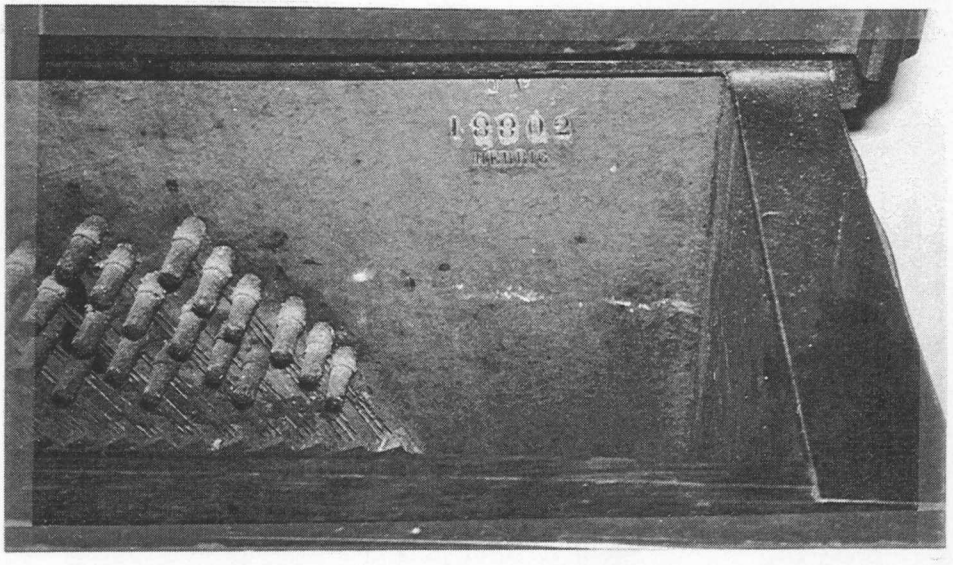


Figure 48. Detail of Serial Number Inside the Top Cabinet of the Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1848-1854), Located at Bontura, Natchez, Mississippi

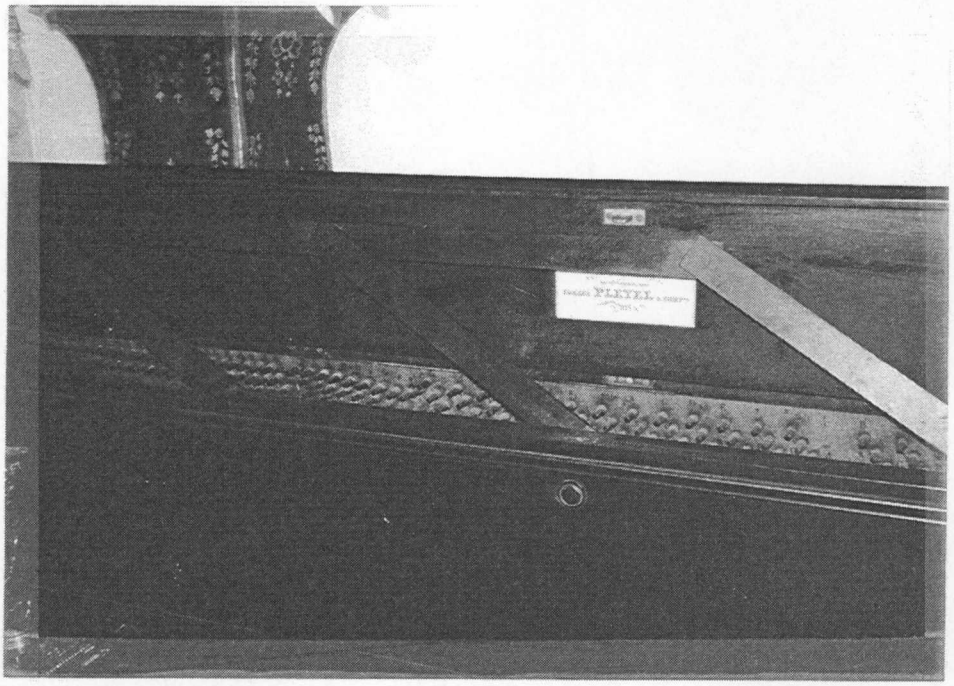


Figure 49. Detail of Music Rack Inside the Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1848-1854), Located at Bontura, Natchez, Mississippi

continued by his son Joseph Stephen Camille, Pleyel is well known for his design for its small vertically strung piano. Pleyel called these models *pianinos* (Clinkscale, 1993).

Rosalie

Probably the most historic site in Natchez is Rosalie (Figure 50), which sits adjacent to the site of Fort Rosalie. The house (c.1820) was built by Peter Little (Cooper, 1957) and after his death around 1857, Andrew Wilson purchased Rosalie (Smith & Owens, 1969). During the Civil War, when Union troops were approaching Natchez, the Wilsons buried many of the household furnishings in the hillside; therefore, Rosalie still has many of its original furnishings. The Mississippi State Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution purchased the mansion in 1938 and restored the house and grounds to its present state (Cooper, 1957).

Andrew Wilson bought the piano at Rosalie (Figure 51) as a gift to his adopted daughter, Fanny Wilson (Prince, C., personal communication, 1994). It was manufactured by Pleyel of Paris between 1855 and 1857. Camille Pleyel, a good friend of Frederic Chopin, used Chopin's endorsement of Pleyel pianos for the company's success in the early days. Chopin apparently appeased Pleyel by using a Pleyel upright for the warm-up of many of his concerts (Clinkscale, 1993).

The Pleyel at Rosalie is an upright with scrolling S-shaped legs (Figure 52), each ornamented with acanthus leaves ending in a whorl foot sitting on a plinth. It measures 45 1/2 inches tall, 53



Figure 50. Rosalie (c.1857), Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 51. Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1854-1857), Located at Rosalie, Natchez, Mississippi

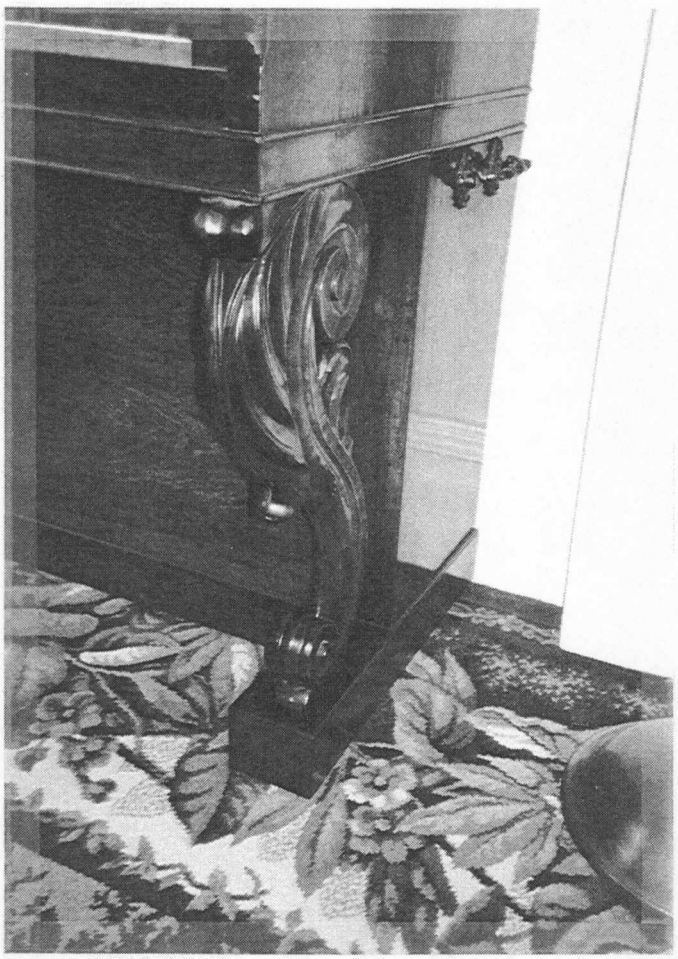


Figure 52. Detail of Leg on Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1848-1854), Located at Rosalie, Natchez, Mississippi

inches wide, 24 1/2 inches deep and has a key span of 7 octaves. Other unique features are the built-in square candle holders on the key cover (Figure 53) and ornate brass handles on the side panel (Figure 54). A damaged name plaque can be found on the nameboard (Figure 55) and once read...

Medailles d'Or	MEDAILLE D'HONNEUR	Hors de Concours
EN	Exp. Universelle	EN
1827,34,39,44	de 1855	1849

IGNACE PLEYEL & CONPie
PARIS

A space with missing plaques (Figure 56), located on the inside of the top casement flap, once held the maker's signature and a round award medal plate. The serial number (24075 D) is found in the back, right corner of the top cabinet (Figure 57). One may view the harp-shaped strings by lowering the bottom cabinet panel (Figure 58) while the music rack is hidden inside the top of the casement.

Stanton Hall

Frederick Stanton finished building Stanton Hall (Figure 59) around 1857 (Cooper, 1957). Tragically, Stanton died within a year of moving into his new home (Smith & Owens, 1969). The family continued to own the house until 1894, when it was converted to the Stanton College for Young Ladies. In 1938 the Pilgrimage Garden Club purchased the house and converted it to a museum, retaining some of the Stanton family furniture as well as other historic Natchez pieces (Miller & Miller, 1985).



Figure 53. Detail of Candle Holder on Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1848-1854), Located at Rosalie, Natchez, Mississippi

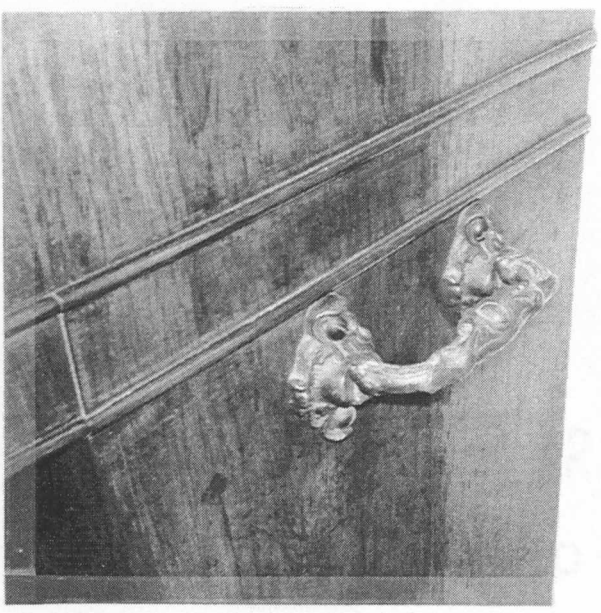


Figure 54. Detail of Handle on Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1848-1854), Located at Rosalie, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 55. Detail of Name Plaque on Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1848-1854), Located at Rosalie, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 56. Detail of Missing Plaques Inside Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1848-1854), Located at Rosalie, Natchez, Mississippi

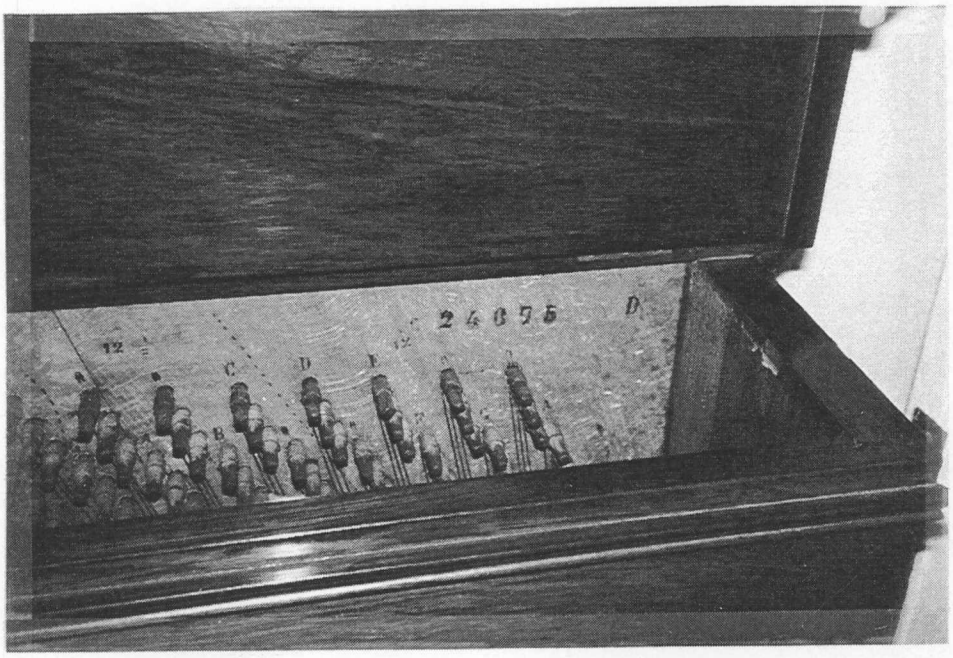


Figure 57. Detail of Serial Number Inside Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1848-1854), Located at Rosalie, Natchez, Mississippi

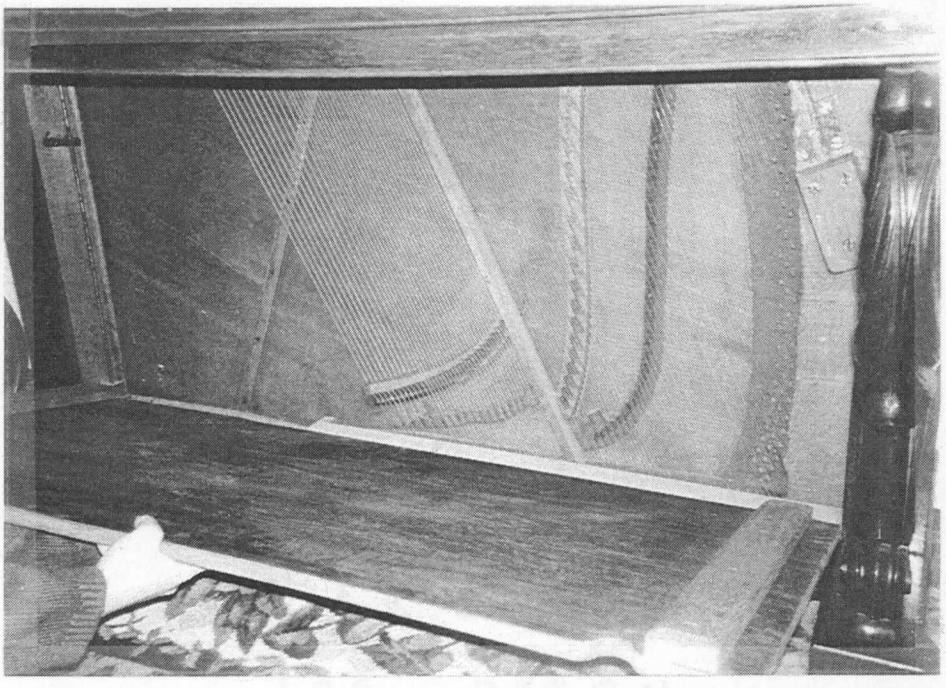


Figure 58. Detail of Strings Inside Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1848-1854), Located at Rosalie, Natchez, Mississippi

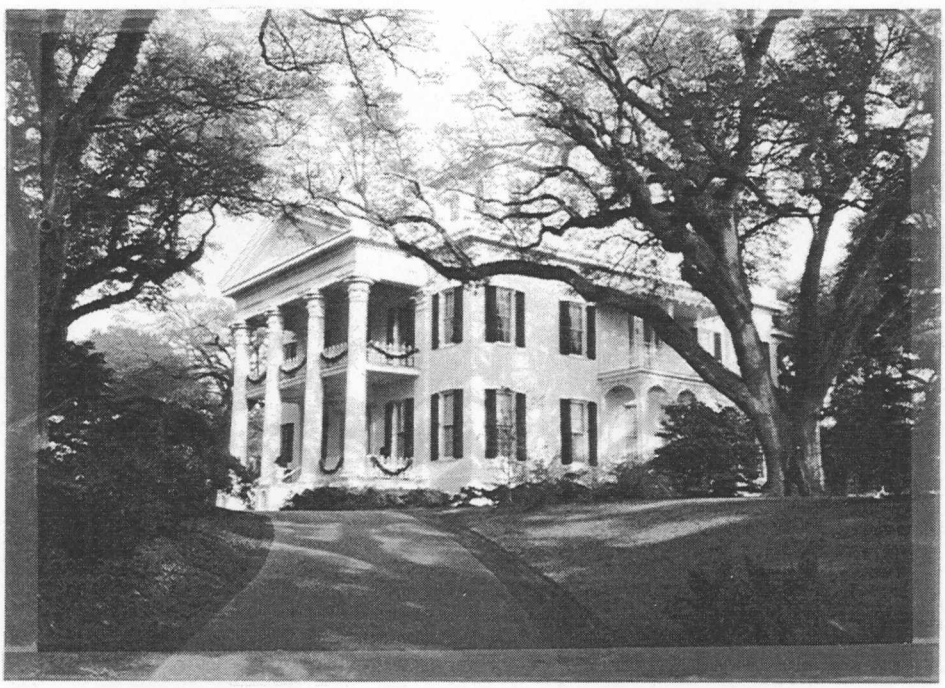


Figure 59. Stanton Hall (c.1857), Natchez, Mississippi

Because the museum has no record of its origin, it is believed that the upright piano in Stanton Hall (Figure 60) was donated to the house in 1938 (Firman, D., personal communication, 1994). The instrument was manufactured by Pleyel of Paris between 1857 and 1861. Auguste Wolff, Camille Pleyel's son-in-law, became head of the company after the his death in 1855, and changed the name to Pleyel, Wolff & Cie (Clinkscale, 1993), as reflected in the name plaque (Figure 61) located inside the top cabinet flap, which reads...

Fabrique pour l'exportation
Pleyel, Wolff & Cie

Beneath the name plaque is a medal of honor for Pleyel & Co.

The casement of the piano measures 50 1/2 inches tall, 53 inches wide and 27 1/4 inches deep, with a key span of 7 octaves. The piano is featured with scrolling S-shaped legs (Figure 62) ornamented with carved acanthus leaves ending in a whorl foot, sitting on a plinth. It also has round candle holders on the key cover (Figure 63) and ornate brass handles on the side panels (Figure 64). The brass pedals (Figure 65) have a bas relief floral design ending in a cartouche of diaper work. The nameboard presents a damaged name plaque (Figure 66) identical to the one on the Pleyel piano at Rosalie. This name plaque is bordered and flanked by a scrolling design of inlaid metal. The music rack and the serial number (27945 MP) is found in the upper cabinet (Figure 67).



Figure 60. Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1857-1861), Located at Stanton Hall, Natchez, Mississippi

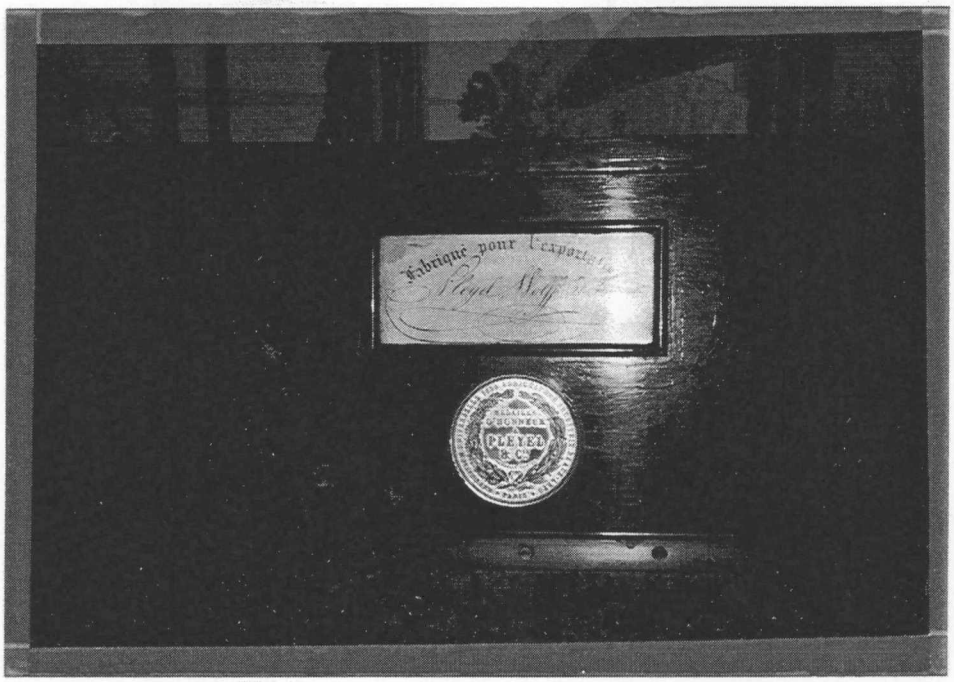


Figure 61. Detail of Name Plaque Inside Top Cabinet Flap of Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1857-1861), Located at Stanton Hall, Natchez, Mississippi

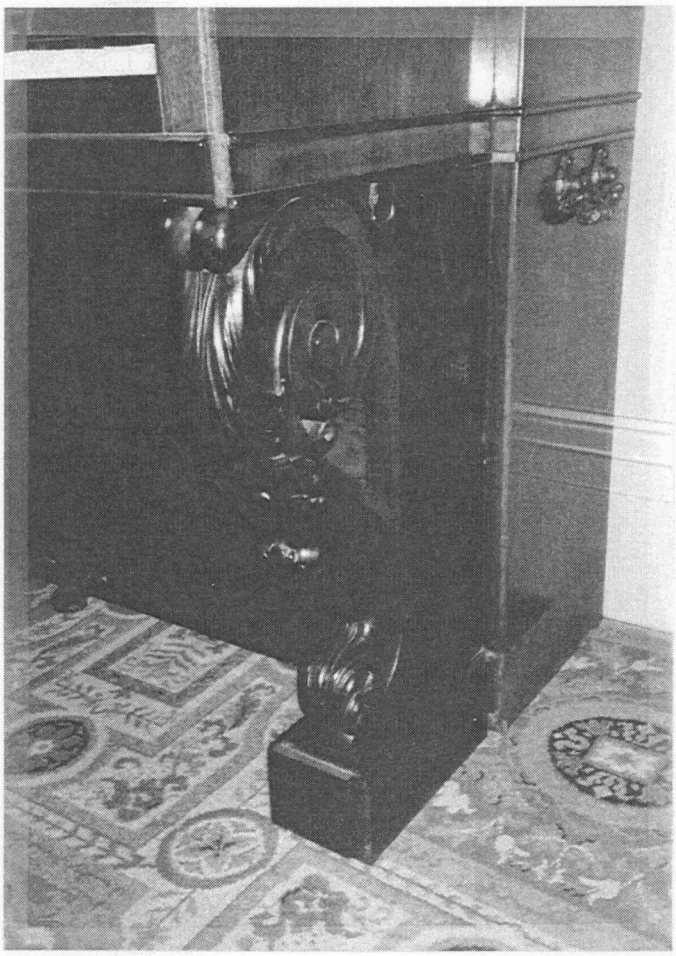


Figure 62. Detail of Leg on Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1857-1861), Located at Stanton Hall, Natchez, Mississippi

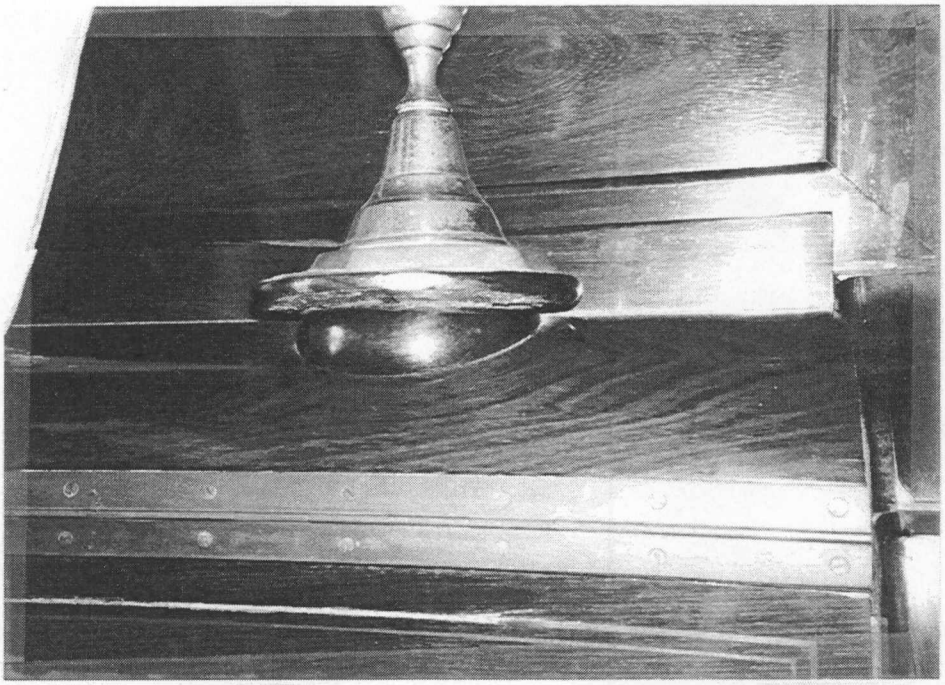


Figure 63. Detail of Candle Holders on Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1857-1861), Located at Stanton Hall, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 64. Detail of Handle on Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1857-1861), Located at Stanton Hall, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 65. Detail of Pedals on Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1857-1861), Located at Stanton Hall, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 66. Detail of Name Plaque on Nameboard of Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1857-1861), Located at Stanton Hall, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 67. Detail of Serial Number Inside Top Cabinet of Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris, (c.1857-1861), Located at Stanton Hall, Natchez, Mississippi

Glenfield

Glenfield (Figure 68), built by William Cannon, features a Gothic character that dates around 1850. It was sold to O. K. Field in 1883 and has remained in the hands of the Field ancestors since this time.

Glenfield's present owner, Mrs. Marjorie Meng, states that the pianoforte (Figure 69) was in the house when her great-grandfather, O. K. Field, moved there from Shady Side (Meng, M., personal communication, 1995). Tax records of 1852 show that William Cannon owned a piano valued at $100 (Adams County Tax Record, 1852). The instrument has not been moved since the time of O. K. Field's arrival (Meng, M., personal communication, 1995) and today it is in the same place as it is shown in a photograph taken in the 1940s at Mrs. Meng's wedding (Figure 70).

The pianoforte was manufactured by W. Sassenhoff of Bremen, according to the inlaid nameboard (Figure 71). The only information that exist on this piano maker states that he was located in Bremen, Germany around 1853 (Pierce, 1982). Sections of pierced scrolling wood flank the name plaque. The Neoclassic style of the casement is evident in the straight lines throughout and the straight tapering legs (Figure 72). Some time in the past someone scratched writing into the wood (Figure 73) close to the soundboard, but the writing is not legible.



68. Glenfield (c.1850), Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 69. Pianoforte, Manufactured by W. Sassenhoff of Bremen, Germany (c.1853), Located at Glenfield, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 70. 1940s Photo Showing the Pianoforte in the Background at Glenfield, Natchez, Mississippi

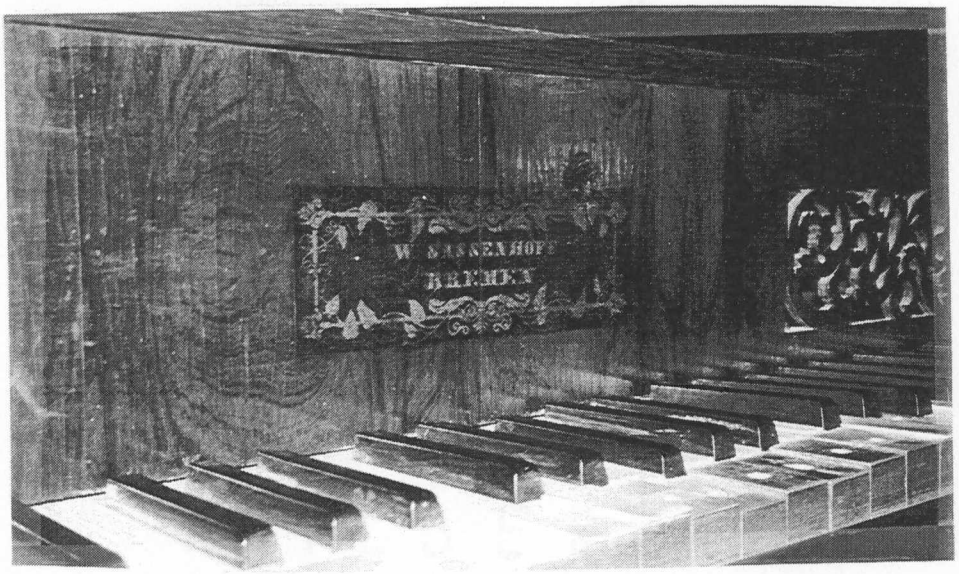


Figure 71. Detail of Nameboard on Pianoforte, Manufactured by W. Sassenhoff of Bremen, Germany, (c.1853), Located at Glenfield, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 72. Detail of Leg on Pianoforte, Manufactured by W. Sassenhoff of Bremen, Germany, (c.1853), Located at Glenfield, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 73. Detail of Scratched Writing into the Case of the Pianoforte, Manufactured by W. Sassenhoff of Bremen, Germany, (c.1853), Located at Glenfield, Natchez, Mississippi

Excluded Keyboard Instruments

Mention should be made of a few keyboards that were excluded from this study due to lack of information. One was a pianoforte (Figure 74) manufactured by P. Peterson, Horneman & Ersley of Kjobenhevn and located at The Banker's House. The second was a melodeon (Figure 75) manufactured by Geo. A. Prince & Co. of Buffalo, New York and located at Glen Mary. Both keyboards fit into the time period, but their origins could not be confirmed because both were acquired through antique dealers (Stower, L. & Vance-Smith, C., personal communication, 1994).

A third keyboard excluded from the study is a piano (Figure 76) manufactured by Chase. Its original ownership is known because it has always been in Lansdowne (Nobles, personal communication, 1994), but there is some question as to the year it was manufactured. The Pierce Piano Atlas shows several companies by the name of Chase. Only one was established as early as the middle 1850s, but the serial number (2995) found on the instrument at Lansdowne does not fit into the company's listing (Pierce, 1982).

Longwood has one of the most controversial keyboards (Figure 77) identified during this study. Staff members state that this instrument was the only piece of furniture to get through the blockade from Philadelphia before the Civil War in 1861. They also state that the existing crate located on the main level of the house (Figure 78) is the one in which the piano was shipped (Aubic, C., personal communication, 1994). A grand piano was ordered from Philadelphia, but the furniture shipment is recorded to have been



Figure 74. Pianoforte, Manufactured by P. Peterson, Horneman & Ersley, (c.1853), Located at The Banker's House, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 75. Melodeon, Manufactured by Geo. A. Prince & Co., (c.1855), Located at Glen Mary, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 76. Piano, Manufactured by Chase (c. unknown), Located at Lansdowne, Natchez, Mississippi



Figure 77. Grand Piano (c. unknown) Located at Longwood, Natchez, Mississippi

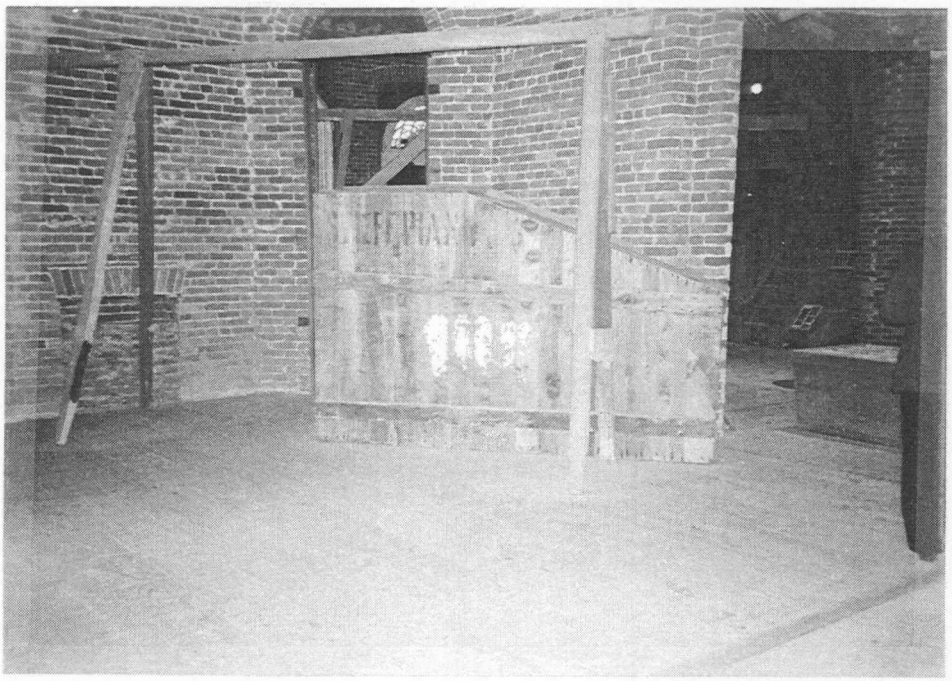


Figure 78. Piano Crate (c. unknown) Located at Longwood, Natchez, Mississippi

stopped by the blockade. Also, the crate had a label that read "Manufactured expressly for the Stieff Piano Company, Royal Street, New Orleans, La" (Whitwell, 1975). The name plaques on the piano have been destroyed, but the serial number (19513) was found. If this serial number belongs to a Stieff piano, it would have been manufactured between 1904 and 1905 (Pierce, 1982). Also, 1852 personal tax records show that Haller Nutt, the original owner of Longwood, already owned one piano worth $200 (Adams County Tax Records, 1852).

Significance of Newspaper Advertisements

By comparing the list of manufacturers who were advertised in the 1850-1860 Natchez area newspapers (Figure 13, p. 37) to the manufacturers of the extant 1850s keyboards included in this study (Figure 79), one can see that five of the seven existing pianos were manufactured by one of the advertised manufacturers. Although there are many sources that influenced the buying of keyboard instruments that are not represented in this study, it is evident that newspaper advertisements did play a major role in what was actually bought in the Natchez, area.

A search was also conducted of 1850s keyboards that were originally owned by people in nearby towns along the Mississippi River in order to reiterate the previous findings. The following three towns in Mississippi were included in this portion of the study: Port Gibson, Vicksburg, and Woodville (Figure 80). Seven keyboards that fit these criteria were located.

MANUFACTURERS OF EXISTING 1850s KEYBOARDS FOUND IN THE NATCHEZ AREA

LOCATION	MANUFACTURER
Auburn	* Chickering & Sons
Shady Side	Ernest Gabler
Melrose	* Knabe, Gaehle, & Co.
Bontura	* Pleyel
Rosalie	* Pleyel
Stanton Hall	* Pleyel
Glenfield	W. Sassenhoff

* Manufacturers who advertised in Natchez, Mississippi newspapers

Figure 79. List of Manufacturers of Existing 1850s Keyboards Found in the Natchez, Mississippi Area with Emphasis Placed on Those Which Were Advertised in the Newspapers of This Area

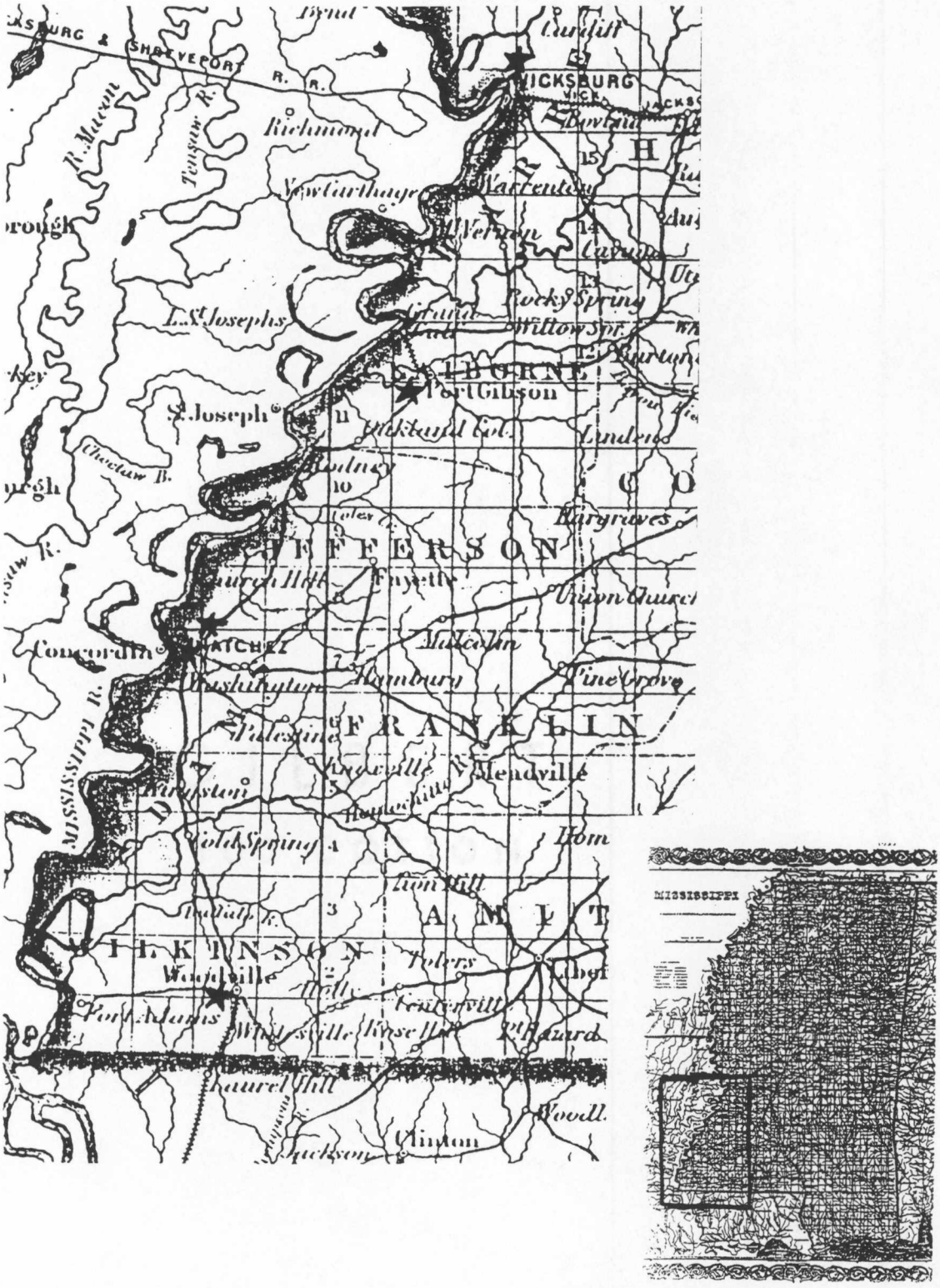


Figure 80. 1855 Map Showing Nearby Towns Along the Mississippi River From Natchez (Colton, 1855).

The historic town of Port Gibson, Mississippi is located approximately 45 miles north of Natchez. A Chickering piano (Figure 81) was found in this town at Oak Square, the home of William and Bel Lum. A few houses down the street is the Ezabel Person Home where a piano manufactured by Mathews & Slade of Brooklyn, New York (Figure 82) is located. It actually originated at Oak Square. Also, located in Port Gibson in the home of Mrs. Charles Barland is a piano manufactured by Steinway of New York between 1858 and 1860 (Figure 83). It has always been owned by the Hughs family of Port Gibson.

Vicksburg, Mississippi is situated about 30 miles upriver from Port Gibson. Several keyboards of the Vicksburg area are located at the Vicksburg Courthouse Museum, two of which were manufactured during the 1850s. The first of these is a square grand piano (Figure 84) manufactured by Wm. Knabe & Co. of Baltimore dating around 1858. It was donated to the museum by the Sisters of Mercy. The second 1850s keyboard found at the Vicksburg Courthouse Museum is a melodeon (Figure 85) manufactured by F. Spang of Syracuse, New York. It was originally in the parlor of the McCardle home in Vicksburg.

Rosemont, the boyhood home of Jefferson Davis, is located in Woodville, Mississippi, forty-five miles down the Mississippi River from Natchez. An upright piano, manufactured by Pleyel of Paris between 1854 and 1855 (Figure 86), was given to Jefferson Davis's niece, Anna Aurelia Stamps Farish, by her parents (Caldeira, E., personal communication, 1995). Woodville is also the site of the



Figure 81. Piano, Manufactured by Chickering of Boston (c.1855), Located at Oak Square, Port Gibson, Mississippi



Figure 82. Piano, Manufactured by Mathews & Slade of Brooklyn, New York (c.1855), Located at the Person Home, Port Gibson, Mississippi



Figure 83. Square Piano, Manufactured by Steinway & Sons of New York (c.1858-1860), Located at the Barland Home, Port Gibson, Mississippi



Figure 84. Piano, Manufactured by Wm. Knabe & Co. of Baltimore, (c.1858), Located at the Vicksburg Courthouse Museum, Vicksburg, Mississippi



Figure 85. Melodeon, Manufactured by F. Spang of Syracuse, New York (c.1850), Located at the Vicksburg Courthouse Museum, Vicksburg, Mississippi



Figure 86. Piano, Manufactured by Pleyel of Paris (c.1854-1855), Located at Rosemont, Woodville, Mississippi

Bowling Green Plantation. The mansion at Bowling Green was burned during the Civil War; however, the grand piano, manufactured by Steinway & Sons of New York (Figure 87), was one of the few objects saved from the fire (McG, 1864, October 26). The piano remains in the original family and is located in the home of Dr. W. Wayne Lake of New Orleans.

Of the seven existing 1850s keyboards originally owned by people in towns along the Mississippi River from Natchez, five were made by manufacturers who advertised in the Natchez area newspapers (Figure 88). This comparison, along with the one conducted of the Natchez area, not only shows that the newspaper advertisements somewhat influenced what was being bought, but also shows the importance of researching newspapers when conducting historical research projects.

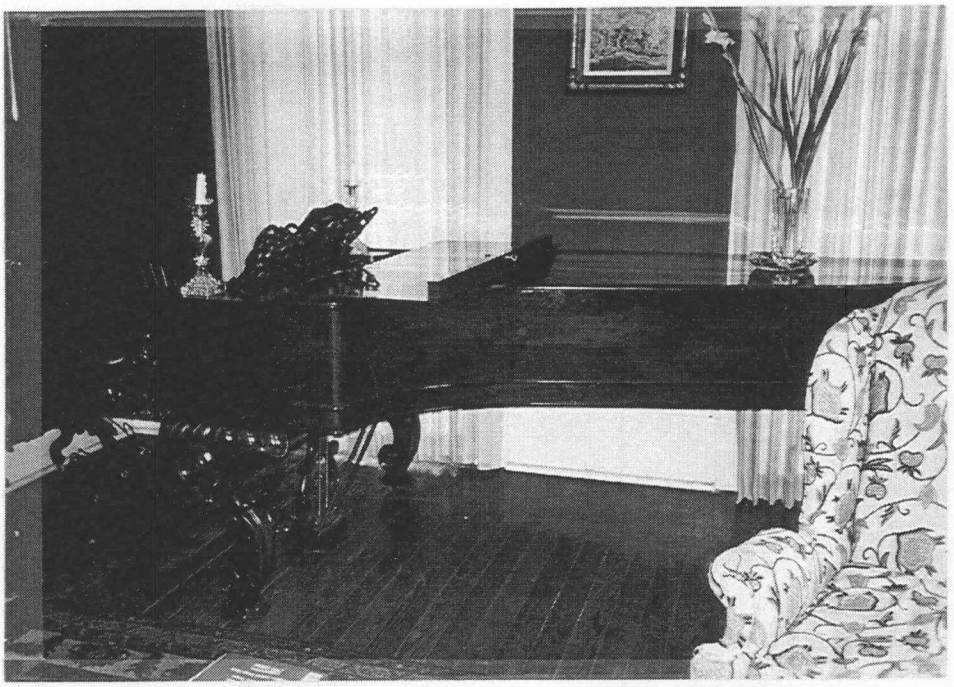


Figure 87. Grand Piano from Bowling Green Plantation, Woodville, Mississippi, Manufactured by Steinway & Sons of New York (c.1858), Located in the Lake Residence of New Orleans, Louisiana

MANUFACTURERS OF EXISTING 1850s KEYBOARDS FOUND OUTSIDE THE NATCHEZ AREA

TOWN	LOCATION	MANUFACTURER
Port Gibson:	Oak Grove	* Chickering & Sons
	Person Home	Mathews & Slade
	Barland Home	* Steinway
Vicksburg	Vicksburg Courthouse Museum	* Wm. Knabe & Co.
		F. Spang
Woodville	Rosemont	* Pleyel
	Bowling Green	* Steinway

* Manufacturers who advertised in Natchez, Mississippi newspapers

Figure 88. List of Manufacturers of Existing 1850s Keyboards Found Outside The Natchez Area with an Emphasis on Those Advertised in the Local Newspapers

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Summary

Natchez, Mississippi was a prosperous city based on agriculture and shipping due to abundant cotton crops and its strategic location on the Mississippi River. The bountiful upper class displayed their wealth through their land holdings, their homes, furnishings, and decorative arts, along with their appreciation of entertaining each other. The keyboard instrument played a major role in this lifestyle. Not only did it provide means in which to entertain, but it became a symbol of culture and prosperity.

This study was conducted to establish a historical and physical documentation of the existing 1850s keyboard instruments originally owned by the people of the Natchez area. In order to document the historical background of these instruments, the historical method of research was employed. Once the extant keyboard instruments were located, the owners were interviewed for the family history or known background of the instrument. The data found in Adams County Courthouse records provided a bases to examine the accuracy of this information. Markings found on the extant casements revealed information about the manufacturer, the date of manufacture, and sometimes the retailer. Furthermore, a thorough study of the 1850s newspaper advertisements provided sufficient information of what was available to the people of Natchez, as well as the conditions of the society that influenced

this market. The influence of these newspaper advertisements on what was actually bought, although not the only source influencing this market, became evident once the manufacturers who were advertised was compared to those who made the extant 1850s keyboards.

Documentation of the physical characteristics was performed in order to create a bases for future research and preservation. Detailed photographs were taken of the ornamentation found on the casements, as well as, all other identifying markings. The method used for documenting the physical characteristics of these keyboard instruments produced the following recognizable styles that influenced the over-all design of the casements: Neoclassical Empire, Victorian Rococo Revival, and Victorian Cottage. Although square grand casements prevailed in this society, the effects of the industrial revolution became evident in the amount of upright pianos found.

Suggestions for Further Research

The historical and physical documentation of the existing 1850s keyboard instruments originally owned by the people of the Natchez area provides a basis for further research into early Victorian life in the lower Mississippi River region, the South, and the United States. The data developed in this study should be compared to other collections of data concerning Victorian furnishings in Natchez, Mississippi. The newspaper research could expand to a study of coinciding decorative arts advertisements. A

comparison of advertisements placed by manufacturers/retailers to particular furnishings after a study is made of labeled, stenciled, and signed decorative arts in the various Natchez collections could be conducted. These studies would create a guide for correctly furnishing a period home in the Natchez area and possibly other areas of the country.

Another step in the exploration of this study could be expanding the time limitations in order to gain an understanding of the role of the keyboard instruments throughout the history of Natchez. Comparisons of similar studies throughout the South, as well as the United States may show regional distinctions, if any, as well as the level of antebellum culture in the South.

Natchez offers a special opportunity for scholars who want to make major contributions to the body of knowledge about American decorative arts. The contribution of nineteenth-century affluence, preserved buildings and unrestored interior decoration, continuity of family ownership, a large body of nineteenth-century newspapers, and a courthouse whose records extend unbroken from the eighteenth-century is almost unique among America's great historic cities. This research should be invaluable to the Natchez area, Mississippi, and to the overall body of knowledge about American decorative arts.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A.

NEWSPAPER RECORDING FORMS

OBJECT_____ **CODE #**_____

MANUFACTURER/RETAILER: _____OF_____

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YEAR_____ ORIGIN_____

DESCRIPTION_____

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CITATION_____

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OBJECT_____ **CODE #**_____

MANUFACTURER/RETAILER: _____OF_____

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CITATION_____

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APPENDIX B.

TAX RECORD RECORDING FORMS

PERSONAL TAX ROLLS
ADAMS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI, 18__

NAMES OF PROPERTY OWNERS	*NO. OF PIANOS*	*VALUE OF PIANOS*

VITA

Dana M. Moody was born in Jackson, Mississippi on December 19, 1969. She graduated high school from Rebul Academy in Learned, Mississippi in May, 1987. The following August she entered Hinds Community College in Raymond, Mississippi where she acquired an Associate degree in Interior Design. In August of 1989 she transferred to The University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. There she received the Bachelor of Science degree in Interior Design in August, 1992. During the previous summer she interned with the Henry Frances duPont Winterthur Museum's Interior Design Group located outside Wilmington, Delaware. In September, 1992, she accepted a Graduate Teaching Assistantship in the College of Human Ecology at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She received the Master of Science degree in Interior Design with a minor in Art and an emphasis in Museology in May, 1995. During this time she received an internship as a registrar for the Historic Natchez Foundation in Natchez, Mississippi. She also practiced as a registrar for the Hazen Historical Museum Foundation and served as the museum chairman for the Confederate Memorial Hall, both in Knoxville, Tennessee. The author is a present or past member of Kappa Omicron Nu Honor Society, National Trust for Historic Preservation, American Society of Interior Designers, student chapter, and Student Home Economics Association, President.