

**MUSIC FOR ALL:  
AMATEUR PIANO MAKING  
IN ANTEBELLUM AMERICA**

by

Alexandra Cade

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in American Material Culture

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## **ABSTRACT**

In rural antebellum America, a curious convergence of piano production and exuberant creativity inspired Backcountry craftsman with little to no formal training in musical instrument making to create their own keyboard instruments. Each amateur-made instrument deviates from the norm, yet displays clear influence from standard piano forms and showcases creative solutions to creating intricate mechanisms that comprise some of the most complex objects extant in the early nineteenth century. Working in more rural regions, the self-taught craftsmen were able to freely explore the possibilities of piano making in ways that would prove difficult in urban centers.

Fusing the cosmopolitan customs of Western art music with the intersection of a wide variety of cultural traditions, self-taught makers of the inland South benefitted from the spread of people, materials, and ideas along the Great Wagon Road. Coupled with the diffusion of parlor culture, itinerant musicians, and amateur players, amateur-made instruments helped contribute to the formation of new and distinct soundscapes across the Backcountry. Drawing upon surviving instruments and primary source materials, this thesis examines a spectrum of amateur-made pianos crafted along the Great Wagon Road and reconstructs the musical and craft environments that shaped amateur instrument making and traditions of performance.

## INTRODUCTION

Between 1806 and 1815, William A. Baker, a merchant of Winchester, Virginia, filled a small book with “recipts of a number of different kinds, collected by him from time to time.”<sup>1</sup> Towards the end of his recipe book, Baker penned a twenty-page “recipe” for a square piano. This set of directions is the first documented manual for the production of a piano in existence.<sup>2</sup> Towards the end of the recipe, Baker boldly declared, “the foregoing is sufficient for any Person to be regulated by to make an Instrument.”<sup>3</sup> Musical instruments, and specifically keyboard instruments, were some of the most complex objects in the pre-industrial age and their construction posed many challenges.<sup>4</sup> While it remains unknown how Baker acquired this highly technical knowledge, his recipe represents an amateur’s optimistic efforts to make a piano. More remarkably, Baker was not the only amateur piano maker working within the American inland South.

In rural antebellum America, a curious convergence of piano production and exuberant creativity inspired craftspeople with little to no formal training to create their own keyboard instruments. Amateur-made instruments deviate from professional norms, yet often display aesthetic influence from conventional piano forms and showcase creative solutions to the construction of intricate mechanisms that comprise some of the most complex technology extant in the early nineteenth century. Once dismissed for their odd qualities, surviving instruments and archival materials

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<sup>1</sup> William A. Baker, *Recipe book*, 1806-1815, Swem Special Collections Research Center, College of William and Mary, Mss. MsV R1, 1.

<sup>2</sup> The earliest illustration of a keyboard instrument was created by French astronomer, physicist, and organist Henri-Arnaut de Zwolle in 1440. Zwolle provides measurements and diagrams for the design, case, and mechanism of a primitive harpsichord, called a *clavisimbalum*. Within this same treatise, Zwolle provided important design information for variety of musical instruments, including lutes and organs. See Anthony Baines, *The Oxford Companion to Musical Instruments*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 156-158.

<sup>3</sup> Baker, *Recipe Book*, 137.

<sup>4</sup> For detailed explanations on the construction of early American pianos, see *Changing Keys: Keyboard Instruments for America 1700-1830*, by John Watson. English single and double actions, the conventional mechanisms within early pianos that produce the percussive tones tied to each key, have upwards of twenty individual parts. For square pianos bearing a standard five to six octave compass, there are at least fifty-five individual units of the action, one for each key.

document a numerically small tradition of amateurism within American keyboard instrument craft. This thesis argues that the presence of amateur-made pianos in the Backcountry of the American South was a regional phenomenon by considering how patterns of the region's musical traditions, trade networks, and craft backgrounds shaped amateur instrument making and traditions of performance along the Great Wagon Road during the antebellum period.<sup>5</sup>

This project is an interdisciplinary study that attempts to fuse scholarly approaches in the fields of musicology, organology, and the decorative arts. Musical objects of the past, including sheet music and musical instruments, must not only be evaluated for their aesthetic qualities and craftsmanship, but for the soundscapes they produce. Pianos were performative objects that shaped social expectations and provided a critical outlet for creativity, as prior to recording technology or radio distribution, the experience of secular instrumental music was limited to those who could play, appreciate the talents of family and neighbors, or attend the occasional concert.<sup>6</sup>

In identifying the geographic scope of this thesis, I chose the route of the Great Wagon Road for several reasons. Extending from Philadelphia to the Carolinas, this critical early American artery catalyzed the convergence of a variety of cultures, religions, and material culture (*fig. 1*).<sup>7</sup> Through the Great Wagon Road, European

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<sup>5</sup> W. J. Rorabaugh. *Craft Apprentices: From Franklin to the Machine Age in America*. (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 1986), 4-5. Rorabaugh elucidates the differences in apprenticeship systems between England and the American Colonies, differences that continued into the early nineteenth century despite the collapse of the guild system in England. Without the stringent legal requirements of the guild system, craft tradition in America enjoyed a higher degree of flexibility in time requirements, limits in number of apprentices. Also, Watson, 14, Watson discusses how the American piano industry grew substantially due to the embargos during the War of 1812, catalyzing the domestic market for keyboard instruments which were no longer accessible from England.

<sup>6</sup> As it required no materials to execute, traditions of vocal music were immediately accessible and played significant roles in religious and cultural practices of early Americans.

<sup>7</sup> Throughout this thesis, the phrase "backcountry" is used as a geographic term that includes the Eastern piedmont region bordering the Appalachian mountain range. It is synonymous with the upper inland South. However, some historians have questioned the term in insinuating lesser and "backwards" settlements in relation to coastal cities. See James Merrell. "Second Thoughts on Colonial Historians and American Indians." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 69, no. 3 (2012), 451-512; 462-468.

migrants infiltrated the mountainous Piedmont and opened a gateway for further Westward expansion. Second, the initial isolation of the inland route fostered an early environment of self-sufficiency and innovation, visible in unique craft and cultural traditions built upon a variety of established European customs.<sup>8</sup> Lastly, the rich trade networks and rapidly developing infrastructure of Anglo-European settlements along the road speak to the pervasive nature of leisure culture, material trends, and social expectations that made their way overland.<sup>9</sup> However much the lives of white immigrants to the Backcountry are mythologized as individualistic and self-sufficient, they were often quite ordinary. Their possession of luxury materials and knowledge of musical instruments displayed a discerning culture of conspicuous consumption on par with urban coastal centers.

\* \* \*

Traditionally, the piano and its performers have been situated within the spheres of polite parlor culture and western art music. Physically, a piano signified gentility, accomplishment, and status. Aurally, it operated as a critical device of entertainment amongst middle and upper class European-Americans. The benefits of possessing a piano were obvious and attractive, contributing to a growing market of consumers and inspiring a new wave of makers in America.

While piano making falls under the broad category of woodworking trades, the skills required for the production of keyboard instruments are more exacting than in mainstream woodworking trades, such as cabinetmaking, joinery, and carpentry. The capabilities of what a piano *can* and *should* be able to do were judged by auditory standards showcased at local performances, whether by accomplished amateurs, internationally-trained professional musicians, or itinerant teachers. Craftsmen of the American backcountry were inspired by standard keyboard instruments, but competing in markets far from urban centers freed their work from conventional comparisons. Pianos, embodying a strong tradition of amateur interaction in performance, proved to be ideal fodder for stretching the limits of amateurism in music and craft.

For the purpose of this thesis, the term *amateur instrument maker* refers to someone who had not received formal training in any aspect of keyboard instrument making. This classification includes pianos, harpsichords, clavichords, and organs. At its core, amateurism typically represented deviation—intentional or not—from professional standards. Amateur makers might be self-taught in the realm of piano

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<sup>8</sup> Parke Rouse. *The Great Wagon Road from Philadelphia To the South*. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973), 169.

<sup>9</sup> Johanna Miller Lewis. “Commercial Development of Rowan County,” in *Artisans in the North Carolina Backcountry*. (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1995), 64.

making, but most possessed a variety of craft backgrounds. For the pianos in this study, the absence of conventions that typically accompanied formal training is reflected in their creative construction. Such remarkable instances of self-taught craft can best be deciphered when set against the demands of the task in a professional context.

Like most early craft traditions, the skills required for keyboard instrument making were taught by hands-on training via an apprenticeship system.<sup>10</sup> This trade-specific education ensured the efficiency associated with specialization and contributed to the mechanical precision crucial for objects as complicated as pianos. In Europe, the creation of a keyboard instrument by an amateur maker was unlikely given competition with established makers, but it was typically illegal per rules of the guild system.<sup>11</sup> Although industrialization transformed many traditional approaches to craft, keyboard instrument trades maintained many craft-like approaches.<sup>12</sup> As American manufacturers began to prosper in the coastal cities of Philadelphia, Baltimore, New York, and Boston, comprehensive knowledge of piano construction usually remained limited to leaders of their firms. For purely economic reasons, amateur makers could not compete against the quality and production levels of large keyboard instrument shops or factories, but the rural amateur maker could operate effectively when tasked with maintenance or bespoke work.

When examining the relationship between amateurism and pianos in the early nineteenth century, the majority of scholarly studies have emphasized the performer.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> See Alfred Dolge, *Pianos and their Makers: A Comprehensive History of the Development of the Piano, from the Monochord to the Grand Player Piano*. (New York: Dover Publications, 1972), 270-272, for an exploration of some of the training networks of American piano making between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, including makers Benjamin Crehore, John Osborn, Alpheus Babcock, and Jonas Chickering.

<sup>11</sup> See Andrew Talle, *Beyond Bach: Music and Everyday Life in the Eighteenth Century*. (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2017), for the competitive nature and workshop practices of 18<sup>th</sup> century German keyboard instrument makers.

<sup>12</sup> See Cyril Ehrlich, *The Piano: A History*. (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1976), 18-20. Ehrlich explores the layout and processes seen within the workshops of the prolific English keyboard instrument maker, John Broadwood.

<sup>13</sup> For examinations of amateurism in female music performance, see Candace Bailey, *Music and the Southern Belle: From Accomplished Lady to Confederate Composer*, (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2010); Leah Giles, "Entertaining a New Republic: Music and the women of Washington, 1800-1825." (M.A. thesis, University of Delaware, 2011); Petra Meyer-Frazier, "American Women's Roles in Domestic Music Making as revealed in Parlor Song Collections, 1820-1870." (PhD

This thesis considers the cultural significance of amateurism within the context of piano making. With hundreds of individual parts and tight tolerances, the production of a piano did not easily lend itself to attempts by untrained makers. While the building of these instruments certainly required skills that overlapped with the trade of cabinetmaking, the task of creating an object that not only possessed a pleasing appearance, but could also produce music, necessitated expertise that surpassed what was offered in other woodworking trades.<sup>14</sup> These qualitative challenges often resulted in instruments with technical idiosyncrasies varying from overbuilding to creative solutions that unwittingly altered sound quality. While this analysis primarily concerns iterations of the square piano, both upright and grand pianos forms existed concurrently. However, the square piano itself, both professionally and amateur-made, speaks to a uniquely American practice. Though the square piano did not flourish in Europe, it retained overwhelming popularity in the United States throughout the first half of the nineteenth century and was technologically transformed by American piano makers.<sup>15</sup>

This thesis is divided into two distinct sections. The first chapter explores a piano crafted by David Pritchard in Iredell County, North Carolina. The chapter discusses cabinetmaking traditions, female accomplishments, and the musical environment of the region that situates the production of an amateur-made piano. The second chapter investigates aspirational amateur keyboard instrument making outside the traditions of the parlor culture. First, it explores the liminal space that the piano recipe occupies as a set of directions within William A. Baker's recipe book and considers how his work falls into the spectrum of trade manuals. The second case study focuses on the idiosyncratic "chest-of-drawers" piano by Thomas D. Davis of Cumberland, Maryland, and explores the placement of an amateur piano within a piece of furniture. The chapter also considers these makers within the Backcountry traditions of shape-note music.

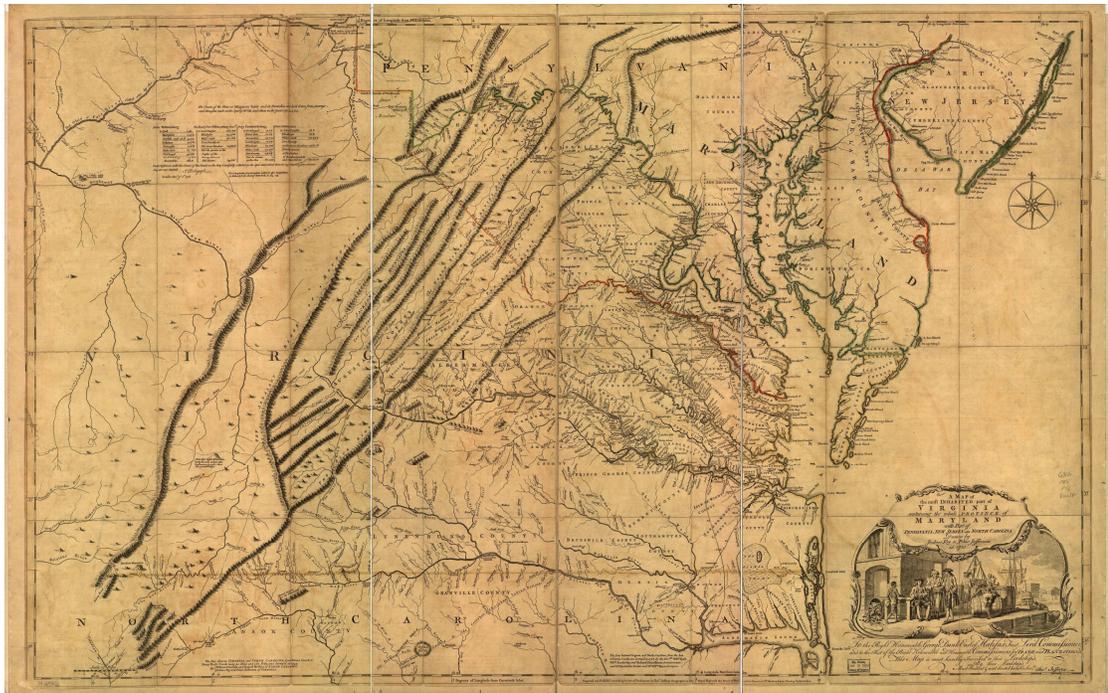
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diss., University of Colorado, 1999); Kristen Lynn Wetzel, "Susan Jane Gaston Donaldson and the Pedal Harp in the Early Republic" (M.A. thesis, University of Delaware, 2003); Tova Karissa Brandt, "Penned and Printed: The Sheet Music Collection of Eliza Ridgely, 1803-1867" (M.A. thesis, University of Delaware, 2001).

<sup>14</sup> Many well-known American piano makers began their careers as Cabinetmakers, including Jonas Chickering and Heinrich Steinway. See Gary J. Kornblith, "The Craftsman as Industrialist: Jonas Chickering and the Transformation of American Piano Making" in *The Business History Review* Vol. 59, No. 3, 349-368.

<sup>15</sup> For a discussion of America's unique relationship with the square piano, see Cyril Ehrlich, *The Piano: A History* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1976), 48-49.

While the analysis of these amateur-made pianos found within this thesis focus on the white men of European descent who physically crafted them, the stories closely involve the young women who learned and performed upon these instruments. For many women, their surviving legacies are inherently tied to the work of these craftsmen. Further, these pianos are representative of craftsmen and consumer livelihoods bolstered by the work of enslaved laborers. While none of the self-taught piano makers in question were members of the plantation-wielding elite, many of them were owners of enslaved individuals whose labor contributed, either directly or indirectly, to the explorations of piano making by innovative artisans.



**Figure 1** A map of the most inhabited part of Virginia containing the whole province of Maryland with part of Pensilvania, New Jersey and North Carolina, by Joshua Fry, Peter Jefferson, and Thomas Jefferys, London, 1755. Hand colored. OH. 77 cm, OW. 124 cm. Courtesy Library of Congress Geography and Map Division. Washington, D.C., cat. no. G3880 1755 .F72.



## Chapter 1

### RURAL GENTILITY: AMATEURISM IN THE PARLORS OF PIEDMONT NORTH CAROLINA

In February of 1840, twenty-one year old Sophia Correll of Rowan County, North Carolina, married farmer David Linn.<sup>16</sup> A happy union to a close friend of her eldest brother Levi, Sophia and David grew up together in the southeastern Rowan County town of China Grove, ten miles below the bustling town of Salisbury.<sup>17</sup> As Sophia transitioned into her new role as the spouse of a farmer, she left behind elements of her girlhood—stepping away from practice at her piano keyboard as other responsibilities took precedence.

A gift from her father during her teenaged years, the keyboard instrument (*fig. 2*) was a highly-coveted sign of accomplishment and entertainment brought to life by the new Mrs. Linn.<sup>18</sup> The control of volume and sound, a principal feature of the piano, mirrored her power to control her surroundings and express herself through

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<sup>16</sup> “MARRIED,” *Carolina Watchman*, February 14, 1840, 3.

<sup>17</sup> Facing an unexpectedly early death, David Linn makes Levi Correll, brother of Sophia, his executor, referring to him as his “trustworthy friend.” See “Rowan County Will Books, Vol 12-14, David Linn, May 1854,” database with images, Ancestry.com, ([https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/9061/004772389\\_00594](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/9061/004772389_00594): accessed November 2017)

<sup>18</sup> Square Piano, held in the collections of the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, acc. no. 5736. Accessioned into the collection of the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (MESDA) in 2012, the instrument had been in possession of the family until that time. According to family history, Sophia Correll Linn was gifted the piano by her father, John Alexander Correll, between 1830 and 1840. The instrument transferred into the hands of her younger sister, Amaline, after the death of their Father in 1843. Thank you to Daniel Ackerman, Curator of the MESDA Collections, and June Lucas, Director of Research at the MESDA, for further discussion on the provenance of this piano.

For a full object description and provenance of the piano, see entry in the online collections database of the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, accessed June 2017, <https://mesda.org/item/collections/piano/21033/>.

music. However, Sophia's piano was significant not only because it fostered amateur musicianship and a degree of independence from antebellum society's strictures about propriety, but also because it was an object of unique and ingenious craftsmanship that embodied American self-sufficiency.

Square in form, the instrument represented the genteel amateurism demanded of young ladies in antebellum America and reflected the particular structure of keyboard instruments favored by consumers in the United States. The presence of such an instrument, likely housed in the parlor, was no doubt a public statement of the Correll family's aspirations; the square piano expressed a cultivated knowledge of social graces, a familiarity with Western art music, and sufficient financial security to maintain and properly use such an object. For Sophia, it represented hours of dedicated practice and the freedom to shape her own soundscape in a time where opportunities to hear music were limited to those who knew how to play, or those who enjoyed close proximity to someone with that knowledge. The benefits of ownership extended beyond the parlor as a long-term investment, shaping the reputation of the Correll daughters within Rowan County Society.

Despite her status as a white woman who enjoyed a comfortable upbringing, Sophia Correll remained very fortunate to receive a square piano. Her father neither purchased the instrument from one of the burgeoning American firms, nor imported an instrument from Europe.<sup>19</sup> Instead, John Alexander Correll turned to a local familial relation in neighboring Iredell County: his distant cousin through marriage, David Prichard.

An understanding of Sophia's piano must begin with a more general understanding of her life in antebellum Rowan and Iredell Counties. One of nine children, Sophia Relena Correll was born in 1819 to John Alexander Correll and Mary

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<sup>19</sup> At the time of his death, John Correll possessed almost 400 acres of land and bestowed almost \$1,000 to his living children. His ownership of nine enslaved people ranks him among the upper levels of ownership levels within the county. See "Rowan County Will Books, Vol. 1 (1837-1845) John Alexander Correll, November 1843," database with images, *Ancestry.com*, ([https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/9061/004778862\\_00761](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/9061/004778862_00761): accessed November 2017) for Correll's property and the "Fifth Census of the United States, 1830, population schedule, Rowan County, North Carolina, John Correll," database with images, *Ancestry.com*, ([https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/8058/4410633\\_00721](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/8058/4410633_00721): accessed 2017) NARA microfilm publication M19, roll 124. Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C., for a comparison of enslavement.

Lewis.<sup>20</sup> By the first decades of the nineteenth century, the Correll family was well established across the North Carolina Piedmont. Multiple Correll cousins had led the way from the German enclaves of Berks County, Pennsylvania, arriving in the fertile hills of Western North Carolina after travelling down the Great Wagon Road in the late eighteenth century. Compiled primarily of Scots-Irish, German, and Moravian settlers, early Rowan County communities were established along ethnic and religious lines. The Pennsylvania German population initially congregated in the eastern part of the county, cultivating community through shared worship in a joint Lutheran and German Reformed church.<sup>21</sup> This enclave, in conjunction with similar groups in neighboring counties, ensured the survival of the group's traditions and distinctive material culture—design aesthetics and craft networks manifested in objects like Sophia's piano. For the Correll family, the neighbors dwelling along Cold Water Creek and time spent worshipping together in Savitz (Mount Zion) German Reformed Church fostered a strong kinship network that persisted into the next generation.<sup>22</sup>

It was likely this kinship network through the Piedmont region that connected Sophia Correll with her homemade piano. David Prichard was born in 1798 in North Carolina and married into the family with his 1817 union to Rachel Correll.<sup>23</sup> While

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<sup>20</sup> In daughter Sophia's marriage announcement, John Alexander Correll held the honorific "esquire." It is unclear if he used the term as a lawyer or other professional. See "MARRIED," *Carolina Watchman*, February 14, 1840, 3.

<sup>21</sup> June Lucas, "Paint Decorated Furniture from Piedmont North Carolina," in *American Furniture* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: 2009) 88-139. For further information on the early Settlements of Rowan County, see Samuel Ervin, *A Colonial History of Rowan County, North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1917) and Catherine Bishir, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

<sup>22</sup> Jacob Crawford Clapp, *Historic Sketch of the Reformed Church in North Carolina* (Philadelphia: Publication Board of the Reformed Church in the United States, 1908), 210-215.

<sup>23</sup> By 1820, both David Prichard and his father Thomas appear on the Iredell County Census. Within the next decade, much of the Prichard family continued west to Fentress County, Tennessee, including David's father and mother, and younger siblings Levi and Thomas Jr.

David remained in Iredell, possibly due to the deep familial relations of his wife, Rachel.

they did not ultimately settle with other Correll relatives in Rowan County, roots to the area were ever-present. The daughter of John Correll and Mary, Rachel Correll was born in 1789 along Dutch Buffalow Creek, the initial settlement of the Corrells arriving from Berks County, Pennsylvania. Not all branches of the family stayed put; The 1810 Census reveals that John Correll moved his family away from the familial Buffalow Creek settlement and west to Iredell County, settling on the headwaters of Third Creek.<sup>24</sup> Unlike eastern Rowan County, the Pennsylvania German population of Iredell was small, often leading families back to Rowan or into Catawba County in order to attend Lutheran or German Reformed worship services. Rachel Correll ultimately chose to attend the local Old Liberty Methodist church, which stood on the property of her brother-in-law. Perhaps it was this religious connection that introduced Rachel to David, as the Pennsylvania German Corrells had become members of a Methodist congregation.<sup>25</sup>

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See “Fourth Census of the United States, 1820, population schedule, Iredell County, North Carolina, David Pritchett [David Prichard] and Thomas Pritchett [Thomas Prichard],” database with images, *Ancestry.com*, ([https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/7734/4433378\\_00216](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/7734/4433378_00216): accessed 2017) NARA microfilm publication M33, roll 80. Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.; “Fifth Census of the United States, 1830, population schedule, Fentress County, Tennessee, Thomas Prichard,” database with images, *Ancestry.com*, ([https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/7734/4433378\\_00216](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/7734/4433378_00216): accessed 2018) NARA microfilm publication M19, roll 176. Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.; “1833 Enumeration, Fentress County, Tennessee,” *Journal of the Tennessee Genealogical Society*, Vol. 27 No. 1, Spring 1980, 11.; Rachel Correll, “John Correll, Rowan Co., NC.,” RootsWeb, <https://lists.rootsweb.com/hyperkitty/list/correll@rootsweb.com/thread/33336841/>. Pritchard’s age is marked as “72” in the 1870 United States Census, indicating his 1798 birth.

“Ninth Census of the United States Census, 1870, population schedule, Alexander County, North Carolina, David Prichard [David Prichard],” database with images,” *Ancestry.com*, ([https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/7163/4277185\\_00473](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/7163/4277185_00473): accessed 2017) NARA microfilm publication M593, roll 1121. Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>24</sup> “Liberty Methodist Church Pushed to Completion by Gem Collector,” *Statesville Record and Landmark*, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 1960, 3.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

By 1840, Rachel and David were living in Western Iredell, near the town of Hiddenite.<sup>26</sup> While Prichard's occupational history is somewhat vague, vital records make it clear that he was a skilled craftsman who was proficient in woodworking.<sup>27</sup> David's work as a piano maker officially emerges in Branson's 1869 and 1872 North Carolina Business Directories, which listed him and his son, John Clinton Prichard, as being in the "piano forte business." Additionally, Prichard's 1884 will speaks to his work as a craftsman of pianos, leaving tools necessary for the production of keyboard instruments, such as "wire" and a workbench, and "mechanic tools" to his second wife.<sup>28</sup> David Prichard appears to have produced additional pianos after Sophia's,

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<sup>26</sup> "Sixth Census of the United States Census, 1840, population schedule, Iredell County, North Carolina, David Prichard," database with images, *Ancestry.com* ([https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/8057/4409693\\_01129/3315114](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/8057/4409693_01129/3315114): accessed 2017) NARA microfilm publication M707, rolls 360-363. Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>27</sup> The 1820 Federal Census for Iredell County, North Carolina, lists Prichard as "engaged in manufactures." His woodwork is not mentioned again until the 1870 Federal Census of Alexander County, North Carolina, which lists him as a "Cabinet Workman."

"Fourth Census of the United States, 1820, population schedule, Iredell County, North Carolina, David Pritchett [David Prichard]," database with images, *Ancestry.com*. ([https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/7734/4433378\\_00216](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/7734/4433378_00216): accessed 2017) NARA microfilm publication M33, roll 80. Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.; "Ninth Census of the United States Census, 1870, population schedule, Alexander County, North Carolina, David Pritchard [David Prichard]," database with images," *Ancestry.com*, ([https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/7163/4277185\\_00473](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/7163/4277185_00473): accessed 2017) NARA microfilm publication M593, roll 1121. Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>28</sup> "North Carolina, Wills and Probate Records, 1665-1998: Alexander County, David Prichard, 1884" database with images, *Ancestry.com* ([https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/9061/004852502\\_01002](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/9061/004852502_01002): accessed 2017)

After the 1868 death of Rachel Correll, David Prichard remarried Tirzah (Thirsa), who is mentioned as the beneficiary on his probate.

Additionally, Prichard's grandson, Jacob Prichard, was listed at his death in the early twentieth century as being a "house carpenter and a teacher of singing." Perhaps the musical interests of his family transferred between generations.

listing a remaining piano for ten dollars in his 1884 probate inventory. As the only known surviving example of his work, it remains to be seen how Sophia's piano compares to other musical instruments or cabinetmaking pieces attributed to David Prichard.

As a young lady of a middling Backcountry family, Sophia Correll likely enjoyed the burgeoning consumerism of Piedmont North Carolina, bringing business to local craftsmen like David Prichard. The comfortable financial status of her family was due in part to her father's well-established roots in China Grove as the recipient of swaths of Correll property. Son of early Rowan County settler and Revolutionary War soldier Phillip Correll, Sophia's father John Alexander possessed hundreds of acres of land divided between three tracts on Cold Water Creek and Dutch Buffalow Creek, one of which included a mill.<sup>29</sup>

Like the majority of residents in Rowan County, John Alexander profited from the land. Although the Piedmont did not possess the large-scale plantation economy found in regions to the South and East, enslaved labor still played an unmistakable role in the County's economy.<sup>30</sup> Beyond indirect ties to enslavement that were inextricably entangled with the American marketplace and economy, John Correll also relied directly upon enslaved labor. While the 1830 United States Census revealed that most of the 5,358 white residents in 2,470 households did not own any enslaved people, nine hundred households (36%) did.<sup>31</sup> Out of the nine hundred households, most owned five people or less. However, fifty-six people owned between ten and

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See "North Carolina, Death Certificates, 1909-1976, Jacob Nelson Fernando Prichard, 1920" database with images, *Ancestry.com*, ([https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/1121/S123\\_107-2482](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/1121/S123_107-2482): accessed January 2018).

<sup>29</sup> "Rowan County Will Books, Vol. 1 (1837-1845) John Alexander Correll, November 1843," database with images, *Ancestry.com*, ([https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/9061/004778862\\_00761](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/9061/004778862_00761): accessed November 2017)

<sup>30</sup> Samuel J. Ervin, *A Colonial History of Rowan County, North Carolina*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1917), 52; Rosser Howard Taylor, *Slaveholding in North Carolina: An Economic View* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1926), 80-98.

<sup>31</sup> "Fifth Census of the United States, 1830, population schedule, Rowan County, North Carolina," database with images, *Ancestry.com*, ([https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/8058/4410633\\_00721](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/8058/4410633_00721): accessed 2017) NARA microfilm publication M19, roll 124. Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

twenty-four enslaved, and twenty people owned between twenty-five and fifty. Thirteen people owned more than fifty enslaved people, edging closer to the size of smaller-scale plantations seen in other parts of the state (*fig. 3*). At the time of his death in 1843, John Alexander Correll owned nine enslaved people, placing him in the upper echelon of Rowan county slaveholders. This level of ownership allowed him to maintain three tracts and relegate many tasks to his enslaved labor. It also enabled John to pay for the instrument, sheet music, lessons, and maintenance. For Sophia, this ownership permitted her the leisure time to learn how to play the piano, and bear witness to parental examples in preparing for her future as a slave-owning adult.<sup>32</sup>

Despite being over two hundred miles from the North Carolina coast, Rowan County was a bustling outpost by the early nineteenth century, emerging as a critical Westward link to Tennessee and Kentucky. Connected via a well-established road infrastructure that merged in Salisbury, the county participated in trade networks that extended to Wilmington, Raleigh, and Charleston.<sup>33</sup> Through the Great Wagon Road, Rowan County was also tied to people, ideas, and objects coming from the North and commingling in the crossroads of Salisbury (*fig. 4*). While parts of the North Carolina Piedmont were certainly rural in comparison to Charleston or Philadelphia, the area was not ignorant of trends in such urban centers. Consumers like Sophia Correll understood and shared many elements of antebellum refinement. Salisbury and Statesville-based newspapers such as the *Western Carolinian* and *Carolina Watchman* reflected the Piedmont's strong connections to a cosmopolitan world, publishing international news and advertising the sales of fine imported goods through frequent trade with Charleston and New York. It is this urban connection that underscores the unusual source and construction of the Correll family piano.

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Sophia's ownership only represents one facet of the instrument's story. Because of the piano's duality within this narrative, the instrument will be referred to as the Prichard-Correll piano. Before it sat in the Correll parlor, the piano was boards of cherry and pine, shards of bone, and rolls of iron wire. It was a vehicle for the transmission of western art music, bringing soundscapes from the concert halls of

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<sup>32</sup> Stephanie E. Jones-Rogers, *They were her Property: White Women as Slave Owners in the American South* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), 1-11. Jones describes how learning household management and discipline was a critical part of the education for young white women whose families owned the enslaved.

<sup>33</sup> Johanna Miller Lewis, *Artisans in the North Carolina Backcountry* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1995), 60-61. The Yadkin Road linked Rowan County to Fayetteville and Charleston, and the Great Wagon Road provided a connection to the North.

Europe into the parlors of rural North Carolina.<sup>34</sup> The piano had certainly come a long way from the workshop of its Italian inventor, Bartholomeo Cristofori.

Unlike trades that worked principally with a single material, the raw materials of piano making were complex and varied—including wood, metals, textiles, and organic materials. Building one required the cultivated knowledge of a craftsman who could combine a diverse body of materials into an object that not only looked nice, but also produced the particular timbre of sound unique to the piano.<sup>35</sup> By the 1830s, the skills of such specialized craftsmen were flourishing within the rapidly expanding keyboard instrument industry in European and American cities, expanding the market for middle and upper class consumers of keyboard instruments.<sup>36</sup> European firms often jobbed out specific parts of the piano to specialists, benefitting from the efficiency of workers who exclusively made parts like soundboards and mechanisms. Initially, the smaller number of craftspeople involved in the production of musical instruments within the United States required artisans to craft all parts of the piano—imposing a degree of self-sufficiency in the general practice of American piano making.<sup>37</sup>

While rural ownership of keyboard instruments was certainly not as widespread as in urban centers, the presence of a square piano in the Correll's Rowan

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<sup>34</sup> The work of popular European composers was widely disseminated in America. This included selections of opera, lied, chamber music, or symphonies in pared-down arrangements for various instrumentations. As music copyright law did not exist, music was often re-written and prepared in new arrangements by publishers, both internationally and within the United States. See Candace Bailey, *Music and the Southern Belle: From Accomplished Lady to Confederate Composer*, (Carbondale & Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 2010), 96-97; Mark Slobin, James Kimball, Katherine Preston and Deane Root. *Emily's Songbook: Music in 1850's Albany*. (Middleton, Wisconsin: A-R Editions, 2011), 15-20.

<sup>35</sup> Mann, Walter Edward, "Piano Making in Philadelphia before 1825," (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1977), 76-77.

<sup>36</sup> Arthur Loesser, *Men, Women, and Pianos: A Social History* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954), 469. A late nineteenth century estimate regarding American piano production postulates that around 2,500 pianos were made in the year 1829. Lower end instruments could cost around \$200, middle range around 400-500, and upper levels could surpass 700\$. By 1850, 9,000 instruments are estimated to have been built in the United States, and some were gaining the attention of European composers as superior to European instruments.

<sup>37</sup> Mann, "Piano Making in Philadelphia," 9-10.

County parlor and a general knowledge of European musical traditions was more common than many historians have realized.<sup>38</sup> By the first few decades of the nineteenth century, the rapid growth of piano making firms throughout the Western world shifted the status of keyboard instruments as objects limited to elites. Although still a luxury item, abundant quantities of the instruments were being made on American soil by the 1830s, making it no longer necessary to import the delicate instruments from Europe.<sup>39</sup> In conjunction with prolific amounts of sheet music being published within the United States, pianos and parlor music began to shape a distinct American musical culture based on amateurism.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> In his 1827 Will, John Stirewalt of Rowan County bequeaths a “forte piano” to his son Jacob. Like the Corrells, the Stirewalt Family came down the Great Wagon Road to the Piedmont in the eighteenth century, with some members of the family gaining strong reputations as housewrights, carpenters, and cabinetmakers. A second version of his November 1827 Will appears in the Rowan County Will Book, Volume H (1819-1838) 436-440. This version mentions “house organs.” “Rowan County Will Books, Vol 21-23, John Stirewalt, November 1827,” database with images, *Ancestry.com*, ([https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/9061/004772392\\_00239](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/9061/004772392_00239): accessed November 2017)

John Stirewalt’s father, Johannes Stirewalt, constructed the pipe organ in the Organ Lutheran Church in 1774 – the first pipe organ in the state of North Carolina. John Stirewalt’s Brother, Jacob, built a pipe organ inside of his home, Mill Hill. See Harry Sifford, *Organ Lutheran Church, Rowan County, North Carolina, Founded 1745: A Brief History* (Rowan County, North Carolina: 1993), 4-5; “Mill Hill, NRHP Reference No. 74001330,” National Register for Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1974).

<sup>39</sup> Loesser, *Men, Women, and Pianos*, 469. Loesser explains a “key upswing” in American piano making between 1820 and 1830, discussing how the market for imported European instruments waned as domestic firms from Philadelphia, Boston, New York, and Baltimore grew rapidly. Significant early American piano makers included Charles Trute (Philadelphia, 1760-1794), Charles Taws (Philadelphia, 1787-1836), Charles Albrecht (Philadelphia, 1791-1848), Benjamin Crehore (Boston, 1788-1831), Alpheus Babcock (Boston, learned from B. Crehore, 1809-1842), Jonas Chickering (Boston, learned from A. Babcock, 1823-1853), Robert & William Nunns (New York, 1823-1860), and William Knabe (Baltimore, 1839-1864).

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 453.

## The Prichard-Correll Piano

While there is no evidence of David Prichard serving apprenticeships or receiving any training in piano making, the unusual choices visible within the instrument speak to Prichard's endeavors as a self-taught maker. Clearly, he understood the basic principles behind a piano's design. Prichard likely saw an instrument (possibly one he was hired to repair), studied it, and attempted to recreate something similar without an apprenticeship.<sup>41</sup> The result represents the convergence of three separate design sources—Piedmont cabinetmaking aesthetics, English and American square piano patterns, and personal ingenuity. The Prichard-Correll piano reflects a concerted effort to make an instrument that looked and sounded like a typical square piano of the time, executed through creative alternatives to standardized mechanisms.

### Case Construction

Upon outward examination, the piano appears representative of professional instruments produced within antebellum America. It possesses the usual rectangular alignment of a square piano, with the keyboard situated towards the left, and the tuning pin block on the right. With a case primarily made of cherry and yellow pine, the instrument featured local materials. The workmanship speaks to Prichard's training as a cabinetmaker (*fig. 5*). Structurally, the case of the piano is conceptually similar to contemporaneous instruments. Essentially an oversized box, the cherry case-sides are blind dovetailed, with the exception of the cheeks, which are half-blind. The yellow pine bottom board is nailed into the shoulder of a surrounding rabbet. Each leg is fully tenoned through the corners of the case and secured by wooden pins—almost functioning as corner support blocks. A fifth leg, somewhat unusual for square pianos of this time which often had six, stands near the center next to the foot-operated pedal. This method of securing and attaching legs is more common to pianos made in the early nineteenth century, which may imply that Prichard studied a slightly older piano for inspiration.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> While piano-specific parts were sometimes crafted by specialized artisans of and purchased by larger firms, this instrument was made in rural North Carolina with local materials, so it is probable that David Prichard made the entire instrument. The only exceptions to this are the iron wire strings and tuning pins (which were likely still imported from Europe), textiles on the damper and key wells, and leather keypads. For more on this, see Mann, "Piano Making in Philadelphia," 10-11.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 34-35. Mann explores the various methods of attaching legs to pianos over time, including the trestle stand in the second half of the eighteenth, the mortise, tenon and pin method of the neoclassical period, and the legs with threaded tops after 1820. The number of legs seems to have increased for both purposes of support and fashion.

On the interior, the spruce or white pine soundboard spans the entirety of the piano—much less common than the soundboards seen on most conventionally made instruments that cover the right-hand side.<sup>43</sup> While a soundboard is meant to amplify the sound produced by the hammers, the soundboard on the Prichard-Correll piano likely hindered the instrument’s resonance because of its size and lack of open spaces for the projection of sound.<sup>44</sup>

### **Ornament**

Prichard’s training reflects the aesthetic sensibilities, materials, and decorative motifs seen in neighboring Piedmont furniture, including that of the Stirewalt family, who were neighbors and kin to the Corrells (*fig. 6, fig. 7*).<sup>45</sup> While the nameboard of the instrument does not actually possess a name, nor any decoration, the cheeks feature inlaid fylfots (*fig. 8*).<sup>46</sup> This motif is common throughout Piedmont material culture and appears on a wide variety of mediums (*fig. 9, fig. 10, fig. 11*). The stained ebonized molding surrounding the apron of the instrument provides another connection to local cabinetmaking, creating a similar aesthetic seen on a Montgomery County cupboard that featured dark green accents surrounding the paneled doors and case perimeters (*fig. 12*).

As piano technology developed through the first decades of the nineteenth century, the thin, tapered legs of early instruments gave way to more physically substantial legs that better supported larger cases and longer keyboards. The more contemporary legs were often heavily carved or turned, increasing in quantity from

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 36-38.

<sup>44</sup> For another early American piano with a full-length soundboard, see Piano No. 20: “George Garcka,” in John Watson, *Changing Keys: Keyboard Instruments for America 1700-1830*, (Williamsburg: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and Scarecrow Press, 2013), 55.

<sup>45</sup> Sophia’s eldest brother, Levi, married Mary Elizabeth Stirewalt in 1838. “North Carolina, Marriage Index, Levi Correll, June 12 1838.” database with images, *Ancestry.com* ([https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=8909&h=2096895&tid=&pid=&usePUB=true&\\_phsrc=aXX94&\\_phstart=successSource](https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=8909&h=2096895&tid=&pid=&usePUB=true&_phsrc=aXX94&_phstart=successSource); accessed January 2018).

<sup>46</sup> For further discussion of fylfots from Piedmont, North Carolina, see: Lucas, “Paint Decorated Furniture from Piedmont North Carolina,” and June Lucas, “Piedmont North Carolina’s Swisegood School of Cabinetmaking: Expanding the Narrative, 1770–1858.” *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts*, no. 37 (2016): <https://www.mesdajournal.org/2015/piedmont-north-carolinas-swisegood-school-cabinetmaking-expanding-narrative-1770-1857/>.

four to six or seven legs—an aesthetic choice, but also necessitated by the time heavy iron frames prevailed midcentury. Prichard’s piano embodies this contemporary approach to piano making with five heavily turned legs, yet each bear a series of stained ebonized rings, a detail that appears to be less common than plain turning on surviving contemporaneous instruments.<sup>47</sup>

While makers of fine instruments used ivory and ebony for the luxury market, many makers for the middling markets turned to less expensive and more readily available materials that provided the same high contrast between natural and accidental pitches on the keyboard. Prichard was no exception, using bone key covers for the naturals and stained fruitwood for the accidentals (*fig. 13*). Interestingly, Prichard took the time to decoratively carve the hollows surrounding the balance pin, a purely aesthetic choice that does not contribute anything to the function of the key (*fig. 14*).

### **Action and Interior**

The basic premise of the piano mechanism—a hammer hitting a tensioned string or wire—has not changed drastically from the invention of the instrument in 1700. This mechanism, known as an “action,” is the complex set of moving parts that produce sound when a player presses a key.<sup>48</sup> The Prichard-Correll piano possesses a five-octave compass spanning from FF to f3, or sixty-one keys - each of which possesses an individual action.<sup>49</sup> Coexistent with the harpsichord throughout the eighteenth century, the piano was revolutionary because it gave the player more control over the dynamics of the instrument through its hammer-based action.<sup>50</sup> The

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<sup>47</sup> The legs of the Prichard-Correll piano bear a resemblance to many early nineteenth century instruments with ebonized banding on turned legs. This was commonly seen on pianos by English-Italian maker and composer Muzio Clementi. For example, see Skinner’s Boston, *European Furniture and Decorative Arts*, 9 April 2011 (Skinner, Boston, 2011), 43, Lot 275. View online catalogue: <https://www.skinnerinc.com/auctions/2542B/lots/275>: accessed December 2017.

<sup>48</sup> In an individual early piano action, there are over twenty individual parts that function together to push up a hammer, hit the string, and dampen the sound before resetting.

<sup>49</sup> This compass is typical for pianos of the time. See Watson, *Changing Keys*, 101.

<sup>50</sup> The harpsichord action is based in a “plucking” mechanism, allow little to no dynamic expression for the player. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, complicated inventions like the Venetian swell attempted to give harpsichords a more dynamic range, but the quest to innovate for harpsichords came to an end as the piano fulfilled those musical needs with the most basic action. See Anthony Baines, *Oxford*

first standardized action in eighteenth century pianos was known as the English single action, formalized by Johann Zumpe in 1766 (*fig. 15*).<sup>51</sup> The action was simple and imbued direct contact of the pin and the hammer, resulting in a soft, stunted tone. Innovative makers attempted to improve upon piano technology, resulting in the English double action, patented by British-German maker John Geib in 1786 (*fig. 16*).<sup>52</sup> The double action added an escapement, which allowed the jack to drop away before the hammer hit the string and freed up the release of the hammer, giving the player further control over the sound.<sup>53</sup> By the final decade of the eighteenth century, the majority of English pianos possessed a form of the double action—a technology found in most American-made square pianos of the nineteenth century.<sup>54</sup> In his dissertation on Philadelphia piano making before 1825, Walter Mann points out that some early American makers, specifically those of German heritage, displayed independent and creative tendencies as trained keyboard instrument makers.<sup>55</sup> While possibly innovators, they were not amateurs, as their surviving instruments display regulated knowledge of piano technology. John Isaac Hawkins, who falls outside of this instrument-making sphere, will be addressed in the next chapter.

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*Companion to Music* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 1992), 154-159.

<sup>51</sup> Watson, *Changing Keys*, 41; Mann, “Piano Making in Philadelphia,” 65.

<sup>52</sup> The term “standard” is used loosely and references a baseline quality and design for how a professionally-made instrument is constructed. Technically, there was no true “standard” of action, as the hundreds of makers working across Europe and America in the nineteenth century accomplished the task slightly differently. However, they often follow similar plans of execution and show an understanding of the purpose of each part of the mechanism, within the context of any small differences. Professional makers were competing constantly to improve their sound through these actions over time, and frequently came up with slight alterations to the mechanisms inside of their instruments in hopes of gaining an edge in the market.

<sup>53</sup> Watson, *Changing Keys*, 41; 99.

<sup>54</sup> Mann, “Piano Making in Philadelphia,” 70-71.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 87-119. Many of these craftsmen were trained in organ making, but made other keyboard instruments (clavichords, harpsichords, and pianos). This includes makers such as Johann Klemm, Gustavus Hesselius, Philip Feyring, and James Juhan.

The action of the Prichard-Correll piano is unique, but resembles the more simple English single action (*fig. 17*).<sup>56</sup> Like the single action, Prichard's version contains a jack mounted on the back of the key poised to hit the hammer attached to a hammer rail. However, instead of a damper poised to automatically respond to the vibrating string as an inherent part of the mechanism, there are no individual dampers on Prichard's action. Instead, Prichard placed a triangular board lined with an edge of felt across the span of strings – functioning as a large, single damper. Instead of working as an inherent part of the action, the massive damper is attached to a single foot-controlled pedal, making it either simultaneously “on” or “off” all of the strings (*fig. 18*). In resting position, the damper is engaged with the strings. In order to play a note without being muffled by the damper, the player must push the pedal to disengage the damper.

This action is perhaps the most unusual aspect of the Prichard-Correll piano. While a seemingly small shift from the conventional technology, the lack of individual dampers and the introduction of a single large damper fundamentally shifts the sound and operation of the instrument. The interaction of the player and the piano is altered, because the basic control of sound is no longer tied to only hands upon the keyboard, but to a quickly moving foot. This required an entirely different type of interaction with the object than a typical piano, making the muscle memory acquired with a normal piano useless on this instrument. If she approached this piano with previous experience on a keyboard, Sophia would likely have struggled to coax the same type of sound from her gift.

Without the precise control of pitch and note length supplied by the conventional single action, the sound on this piano was undoubtedly chaotic. Sympathetic resonance from the sixty iron strings strung across the soundboard would fill each pitch with overtones (harmonics) when the damper was disengaged.<sup>57</sup> Although relatively simple, parlor music was comprised of melodic lines and base lines split between the right and left hands, resulting two or three pitches being played simultaneously. While this technique poses no issue on a conventionally-made instrument, intervals and chords on the Prichard-Correll piano would potentially produce dissonant overtones without the protection levied by individual dampers.

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<sup>56</sup> As the Piedmont is the home to many residents of the German diaspora, possible German influence on the action was considered during field study. However, Prichard's creation bears even less resemblance to what was known as the “Viennese action.”

<sup>57</sup> Overtones, also known as harmonics, are the sympathetic resonance over a fundamental pitch. The overtones will be comprised of pitches in a major chord above the fundamental, e.g. a fundamental of “C” will result in overtones of C, G, E, G.

Although many instrument makers tried to advance piano technology, Prichard's innovation was not an improvement. He removed a major element of control the piano mechanism had revolutionized a century earlier. Without the automated damper, dynamics would be much more difficult to play effectively, limiting the possibilities for personal and musical expression.

Despite additional difficulties for a player interacting with the instrument, Prichard's choices did make a piano easier to maintain and keep in tune. The piano is a unichord, a term that refers to an instrument that has only one string per note. Most professionally made instruments at this time typically had two strings per note, which strengthened the projected sound. However, two strings per note doubled the amount of strings that had to be tuned and increased the possibility of dissonance. The New York firm of Robert Nunns & Co considered this difficulty, and began to offer a "Unichord, or One-stringed piano forte."<sup>58</sup> The unichord piano was particularly beneficial for Southern consumers.<sup>59</sup> With only one string to tune, it would stay in an acceptable playing condition longer than a standard double-strung instrument. Perhaps Prichard saw a Nunns instrument and used the unichord model as a guide.

While no additional surviving instruments crafted by David Prichard have been identified, his work history and Will from later in the nineteenth century imply that other instruments made by Prichard exist. At this time, no comparisons can be made between Prichard's later square pianos and this object. Additionally, it is impossible to know if Prichard delved into different models of the piano, as by his death in 1884, the square piano had been replaced by the upright piano as the domestic instrument of choice. Regardless, it is apparent that Prichard of the 1830s was skilled enough to tackle the complexity of a piano and his craftsmanship of the instrument probably improved over time.

### **Western Art Music in the Antebellum Piedmont**

Regardless of personal piano ownership, the awareness of Western art music was widespread in the North Carolina Piedmont by the first decades of the nineteenth century. With objects, information, and people travelling into Rowan and Iredell counties from both Northern and Southern urban centers, the prevalence of instrument sales, music lessons, and itinerant performers should come as no surprise. Both David Prichard and Sophia Correll had ample opportunity for exposure to pianos, music

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<sup>58</sup> *Report of the Third Annual Fair of the American Institute of the City of New York*, (New York, J. Seymour, 1830), 19.

<sup>59</sup> Thomas Strange and Patrick Hawkins, *Facing South: Keyboard Instruments in the Early American South*. (Clemson, South Carolina: Clemson University Press, 2018), 88-89.

education, sheet music, and the occasional concert. Rowan County residents were not ignorant of the musical culture; their female seminaries taught it, their newspapers joked about it, and their stores sold it.

One of the earliest references to a piano in a Rowan County newspaper comes in the form of a poem, submitted to the *Western Carolinian* and published in the November 28<sup>th</sup>, 1820 issue. Entitled “To my Piano Forte,” the sentimental poetry speaks to the passionate connection forged between humans and their instruments.<sup>60</sup> Portraying the keyboard instrument as a critical conduit of feeling, the prose underlines the technical responsiveness enabled by the piano mechanism, which brings human emotion to life through sound:

*If throbs with joy my heart elate,  
Or pensive droops, with adverse fate,  
Responsive still thy chords vibrate  
In sympathy;  
Thy strains do ever emulate  
Most feelingly!*

The author describes a blurring of the lines between personhood and object, as the musical instrument fulfills a role unlike most inanimate objects through its ability to physically respond to the action of its user. For the author, the piano was a vehicle for the broadcast of emotion, affirming the legitimacy of feeling through patterns of pitches— an embodiment of the power of music. The author’s intimate ode almost reaches to a point of romantic love:

*Dear partner of my hours of leisure  
Those never-failing source of pleasure  
How oft has thou, in sweetest measure,  
My care beguiled;  
Whilst, cheer’d by thee, my heart’s lost treasure  
Has fondly smiled.*

A note at the bottom of the article describes a curious observation: “Those Piano Fortes which the writer saw in New-York, and elsewhere, about two years since, were constructed, externally, very differently from what they were twelve or fifteen years ago.” This comment by a local subscriber speaks to familiarity with the development of the piano and underlines a cultural and physical connection between Piedmont North Carolina and cosmopolitan cities of the North. Perhaps more impressive, the publication of this poem by a Rowan County resident reveals a cultivated

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<sup>60</sup> “To my Piano Forte,” *Western Carolinian*. November 28<sup>th</sup>, 1820, 3.

understanding of how the instrument is played in order to properly coax emotions from within.<sup>61</sup>

While certainly not a weekly occurrence, pianos often appeared for sale in local newspaper advertisements by the third decade of the nineteenth century. Exchanged through auction, direct sale, and occasionally by rental, the instruments advertised represent a wide range of second-hand pianos. The presence of second-hand sales in the Piedmont, especially of what are most likely conventionally produced pianos, emphasizes the wide availability of the instrument by the 1830s, even in more rural areas like Rowan and Iredell counties. With advertisements offering “first-rate second hand piano[s],” the scope of piano ownership could grow readily in the rural Piedmont.<sup>62</sup> In an 1835 advertisement of an estate auction, Rowan County resident Benjamin Cottrell headlines the advertisement with the sale of two pianos, one of which is described as being of “the best tone and workmanship.”<sup>63</sup>

The calculated appraisal of the instruments in question speaks to a discerning knowledge of piano quality, especially as an evaluation of the instrument as not just a finely made piece of cabinetwork but as a judgement of sound and musical expression. The tone of a piano, a complex product of the action, the case and soundboard, and the strings, is a direct result of carefully honed piano craftsmanship. This advertisement further underlines the high societal demands of the piano as an object that is not only required to appear as a fine piece of parlor furniture, but also perform as an instrument.

However, not all pianos in the region were bought and sold second-hand. By the late 1830s, exceptional new instruments were being advertised in the Piedmont papers.<sup>64</sup> Boasting fine case materials such as rosewood, zebrawood, and mahogany, the instruments were almost certainly coming from piano manufactories in urban centers that had access to such wood.<sup>65</sup> In addition to the advertisement of fine

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> “Piano Forte for Sale.” *Western Carolinian*. May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1824, 4.

<sup>63</sup> “Auction Sales.” *Carolina Watchman*. September 19<sup>th</sup>, 1835, 4.

<sup>64</sup> “FOR SALE: An Elegant New Piano Forte,” *Carolina Watchman*, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1833; “An Excellent Piano for Sale!” *Western Carolinian*, December 27<sup>th</sup>, 1824.

<sup>65</sup> “Splendid Assortment of Piano Fortes.” *Carolina Watchman*, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 1840, 4. Advertisement references previous supplies of pianos offered by the subscriber, Joshua Boner, who promises “His assortment is as full and complete as any in North Carolina, and he hesitates not to say, that the Pianos are equal, if not superior, to any offered for sale in this section of the country.”

casework, instruments were touted for their tone and range of pedals—a promotion of their musical capabilities to sophisticated amateurs. It is local opportunities for the purchase of instruments such as these that raise questions about the Prichard-Correll piano. Even if John Alexander Correll was unable to afford a new low-end instrument, he certainly had the opportunity to source a conventionally made piano for Sophia through second-hand sale.

Sheet music was the key to bringing a piano to life. It was readily available from local merchants, one of whom boasted “NO MISTAKE: 13,524 Pages of Music.”<sup>66</sup> Easy to import from major music publishers in the North, sheet music printed in the first few decades was relatively affordable in comparison to the steep cost of music lessons and instruments at an average price of 25 cents for a standard two-page piece – but a large collection of music could add up quickly.<sup>67</sup> American-made sheet music intended for an amateur’s parlor were often reprints of English publications: simplified arias from Italian, French, or English comedic operas, arrangements of traditional Irish and Scottish folk hymns, and popular song – sometimes political or martial in nature, but often sentimental and romantic.<sup>68</sup> It was intended that a single musician play this type of music, with the young women singing a vocal line and accompanying themselves with a relatively simple keyboard arrangement. If a young woman had amassed enough music and could afford the work of the specialized work of a bookbinder or music publisher, she had the option to have her collection bound together as a binder’s volume, allowing easy and concise access to her range of music and personalizing her curated collection.<sup>69</sup> Advertisements for urban publications, like *The New York Mirror*, offered readers ways to educate

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<sup>66</sup> “NO MISTAKE.” *Carolina Watchman*, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 1837. 4. The advertisement boasts “a choice collection of Airs, Songs, Glees, Rondeaux, Duets, Waltzes, Marches...for the Piano Forte, as can be found at any Establishment in this country.”

<sup>67</sup> Loesser, *Men, Women, and Pianos*, 453, and Tova Karissa Brandt, “Penned and Printed: The Sheet Music Collection of Eliza Rigdely, 1803-1867” (M.A. Thesis, University of Delaware, 2001), 9-10; 22-23. Loesser cites the prices of late eighteenth century music to be between 20 and 25 cents for a two-page folio. By the time Eliza Ridgely was starting to build her collection in the early nineteenth century Baltimore, music prices have continued between 10-12 cents per page, and multi-page pieces could end up costing upwards of 40-50 cents.

<sup>68</sup> Loesser, *Men, Women, and Pianos*, 453-454.

<sup>69</sup> Petra Meyer Frazier, “American Women’s Roles in Domestic Music-making as Revealed in Parlor Song.” (Ph.D. diss., University of Colorado, 1999), 9-11.

themselves in the latest musical taste from cosmopolitan centers like New York City without the assistance of a music teacher.<sup>70</sup>

By the second decade of the nineteenth century, the advent of the public concert was rapidly expanding throughout the United States. With music societies in most major cities offering frequent concerts and oratorios that programmed famed European composers, the Piedmont also began to enjoy a range of both secular and religious performances throughout the early nineteenth century.<sup>71</sup> Curiously, one of the earliest advertised concerts in the area was for an evening of vocal music by Mr. Myers—noted to be a Jewish Rabbi who recently converted to Christianity and possessed talent “uncommon and excellent.”<sup>72</sup> Concert groups varied from solo instruments, such as Signor Pucci and his pedal harp in 1825, to mixed choral and instrumental ensembles—apparent in an 1832 evening performance of Mr. Ramsey’s Singing School at Buffaloe Church meeting house, accompanied by flutes and violins.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> “New York Mirror.” *Carolina Watchman*. August 31<sup>st</sup>, 1833, 4.

<sup>71</sup> Significant American musical societies include the St. Cecilia Society (Charleston, founded 1766), the Psallonian Society (Providence, founded 1810), the Handel and Haydn Society (Boston, founded 1815), the Musical Fund Society (Philadelphia, founded 1820), the Beethoven Society (Portland, founded 1820), and the Philharmonic Society of New York (New York, founded 1842). For more on early public concerts, see Oscar George Sonneck, *Early Concert Life in America (1731-1800)*, (Leipzig, Breitkopf & Härtel, 1969); Nicholas Butler, *Votaries of Apollo: The St. Cecilia Society and the Patronage of Concert Music in Charleston, South Carolina, 1766-1820* (Columbia, University of South Carolina Press, 2011); Michael Broyles, *Beethoven in America*, (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2011); and Katherine K. Preston, *Opera on the Road: Traveling Opera Troupes in the United States, 1825-60* (Champaign, University of Illinois Press, 1993).

<sup>72</sup> “CONCERT,” *Western Carolinian*. September 12<sup>th</sup>, 1820. 4.

<sup>73</sup> “Pedal Harp, Signor Pucci,” *Western Carolinian*, May 24<sup>th</sup>, 1825, 4, and “CONCERT.” *Western Carolinian*, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 1832, 4. Like the square piano, pedal harps in the United States were almost exclusively associated with women rather than men. It is likely that Mr. Pucci was a teacher of the harp, a more common occurrence according to Kristin Lynn Wetzel, “Susan Jane Gaston Donaldson and the Pedal Harp in the Early Republic” (M.A. thesis, University of Delaware, 2003), 19-20.

Square pianos were not often featured in advertised concerts, functioning better in parlors for intimate domestic gatherings rather than larger halls due to their softer volume and inferior ability to project sound. Additionally, an association with female propriety and education in America may have limited the public perception of the instrument to the domestic sphere of a proper lady's accomplishments. Musical expertise employed an interesting dichotomy; advanced accomplishment on the instrument, even on par with male professionals at the time, was desirable as long as it remained amateur. Female professional musicianship was undesirable and was accompanied by a negative social stigma, despite the enjoyment by an audience.<sup>74</sup> It was a fine line between praised accomplishment and social impropriety, but a skilled amateur at the keyboard of a piano was a coveted position.<sup>75</sup>

### **Music Education and the Rural Piano**

Perhaps the most ubiquitous use of the piano occurred in the classrooms of local Female Seminaries. In an 1824 advertisement in the *Western Carolinian*, the Andrews and Jones' North Carolina Female Academy in Oxford boasted "three excellent pianofortes employed in the music department," which cost thirty dollars per academic session for instruction in instrumental and vocal music.<sup>76</sup> In advertisements, seminaries often highlighted their musical resources, assuring families of the quality

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<sup>74</sup> Female professional musicians did exist and occasionally found success. Sophia Hewitt Ostinelli (1799-1846), was born into a family of music merchants and publishers in early nineteenth century Boston. She excelled on the piano from an early age and made a professional debut at age 20 in 1819 performing Beethoven's A-flat piano sonata with Boston's Philharmonic Society. She worked as the organist for the Handel and Haydn Society and ultimately married the concertmaster of the ensemble, Italian Louis Ostinelli. Sophia's situation was unique, but does represent the small history of women serving as church organists. For more, see Sondra Wieland Howe, *Women Music Educators in the United States: A History*. (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2013). 31-34.

<sup>75</sup> For more on the social stigma between accomplishments and professionalism, see Meyer Frazier, "American Women's Roles in Domestic Music-making," 88, and Robert Leppert, *Music and Image: Domesticity, ideology, and socio-cultural formation in eighteenth-century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) 147-176.

<sup>76</sup> "Andrew and Jones' North Carolina Female Academy." *Western Carolinian*, January 6<sup>th</sup>, 1824, 4. Average costs of semester-long lessons usually fell between twenty and thirty dollars.

of their educational investments and drawing the attention of young women who may not have had an instrument available at home.

Though more formal education geared towards young women had already developed by the end of the eighteenth century, early schools primarily instructed females in genteel accomplishments and refined behaviors, such as needlework, painting, and music.<sup>77</sup> The early nineteenth century brought forth a rapidly shifting approach towards female education, with an increasingly diverse set of topics being offered to young women. Suddenly boasting “radical” subjects like astronomy, chemistry, and physics, the days of educating young women only in polite accomplishments were no more. This new coursework correlated with a broader social change resulting in shifting expectations for women in the early nineteenth century. The new expectations provided women with more readily acknowledged agency than ever before, recognizing the direct role women had in shaping the next generation. Americans were probed to ask, “is not the character of the future men of our republic, to depend on the mothers we are now educating?”<sup>78</sup>

While seminary curriculums slowly began to emulate educational material offered to young men, education in art and music still played a critical role for women. At a time when critics of female education began questioning the importance of the piano in formal education, most seminaries continued to offer music and art, striking a balance between science and the humanities.<sup>79</sup> Ultimately, the well-rounded education offered by antebellum Southern seminaries contributed greater intellectual independence to a generation of middling and elite women, despite the social and moral expectations of antebellum America.

As the daughter of a well-known China Grove family, Sophia would have been held to certain societal expectations demanded of young middle-class ladies, including music. Although it is unknown where and from whom Sophia learned the skills for her

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<sup>77</sup> Mary Kelly, *Learning to Stand and Speak: Women, Education and Public Life in America's Republic*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 69.

<sup>78</sup> “Remarks on the Education of Girl,” *Godey's Lady's Book*, June 1839.

<sup>79</sup> Leah Giles, “Entertaining a New Republic: Music and the women of Washington, 1800-1825,” (M.A. Thesis, University of Delaware, 2011), 73-74 And Wetzel, “Susan Jane Gaston Donaldson and the Pedal Harp,” 7-10. Both Giles and Wetzel emphasize the varying opinions on the importance of musical accomplishments within both female seminary curriculum and effects of musical education on adulthood. While both studies emphasize this dichotomy in the context of more coastal urban centers, similar sentiments were no doubt applicable to residents of the Piedmont.

musical accomplishments, she may have attended a female seminary for her formal education. While some young ladies received an education locally, others were directed to seminaries in distant states. However, Piedmont North Carolina boasted an abundance of female academies for John Alexander Correll to send daughters.

One of the most notable institutions in the region and less than twenty-five miles from Sophia's home in China Grove, the Salisbury Academy began operation in 1807 and offered education for both young men and young ladies, who were received similar instruction in grammar, reading, catechism, and writing composition.<sup>80</sup> Over the next decade, the instruction for each gender separated and by late December 1817, the school hired two female instructors to specifically "teach the various literary and ornamental branches of female education."<sup>81</sup> By 1820, the gendered departments of the Academy had split into two entirely different schools, and the Salisbury Female Seminary prevailed as the more popular of the two.<sup>82</sup> There were many other academies within a relatively close distance to Rowan County, including the Lincolnton Female Seminary, Female School of Statesville and the Mrs. Edward Jones School of Pittsborough—all of which offered instruction in the piano.<sup>83</sup>

Critical to the operation of the instruments themselves, an abundance of music teachers offered opportunities for instruction throughout the 1830s. Unlike the instrument, parents could not buy competency in playing. In order for a young lady to become proficient, her family had to invest significant sums per year for the transfer of knowledge. Having a competent teacher was just as critical as having a working instrument, and seminaries were keenly aware that they needed to offer both in order to remain competitive, even going to the extent of publishing announcements regarding the hiring of a music teacher, or assuring the public that a music teacher was being actively searched for.<sup>84</sup> Many generic advertisements for piano lessons were standard parts of promoting a seminary school, but some school promoted the

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<sup>80</sup> Charles Lee Coon, *North Carolina Schools and Academies, 1790-1840: A Documentary History* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton Printing Company, 1915), 346.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 349.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 356-360. The Salisbury Female Academy had a significantly larger amount of students than the male-only Salisbury Academy during the 1820s.

<sup>83</sup> "Female School of Statesville." *Western Carolinian*, June 18<sup>th</sup> 1832, 4.; "Lincolnton Female School," *Western Carolinian*. March 14<sup>th</sup> 1835, 4; "Mrs. Edward Jones's School," *Western Carolinian*, February 20<sup>th</sup> 1836, 4.

<sup>84</sup> "Female Academy," *Western Carolinian*, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 1836, 4.

reputations of their faculty. At the Salisbury Female Academy, music teacher Emma J. Baker appeared in the late 1830s. Hailing from Columbia, Baker offered instruction in both the piano and the guitar. In addition to teaching at the Seminary, Baker offered private instruction beginning in 1837, charging \$15.00 per quarter, or \$1.25 per week.<sup>85</sup>

Not all music teachers were based in a female seminary. Occasionally, itinerant musicians came through Salisbury—staying for a few months to years at a time before making stops at various cities throughout the country. A man who claimed to be a Swedish professor of violin came to the city of Salisbury in the summer of 1832. The *Carolina Watchman* briefly reviewed his concerts observing “he cannot make the trees bend down as did old Orpheus—nor make the Dolphins come up from the deep to listen as Arion is said to have done. But he can tickle our ears as effectually as anyone.”<sup>86</sup> For the usually complementary Piedmont paper that seldom reviewed violin recitals, these comments may point to the Professor’s modest musical training and accomplishments. It remained difficult to make a living as a musician and rural Piedmont residents had to be wary of itinerant performers who appeared and embellished their credentials for personal gain.

However, true itinerant virtuosity did occasionally appear in the Piedmont. In late 1835, German Émigré and Professor of music F. W. Meerbach made an appearance in Salisbury, coming directly from New York City to the rural Piedmont to teach piano, guitar, and singing. His introductory advertisement in the *Carolina Watchman* emphasized his European training and a lofty body of references.<sup>87</sup> Perhaps in an attempt to gain students quickly, or perhaps as an honest observation in comparison to his highbrow musical expectations, Meerbach published a pleading statement for Rowan County:

He intends no reflection on others, when he says that he finds the state of music in this part of the Country very imperfect. This he believes is not owing to want of musical talents in the youth of the Country, but rather to defects in the systems of instruction.

F. W. Meerbach<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> “Private Tuition in Music,” *Carolina Watchman*. August 20<sup>th</sup>, 1837, 4.

<sup>86</sup> “Mr. Gronland,” *Carolina Watchman*. July 28<sup>th</sup>, 1832, 4.

<sup>87</sup> Jean L. Cooper, “F.W. Meerbach (17 Jan. 1814 - ca. 1893), in Students of the University of Virginia, 1825-1874,” last modified April 16, 2014, <https://uvastudents.wordpress.com/2014/04/16/frederick-w-meerbach-17-jan-1814-ca-1893/>.

<sup>88</sup> “MUSIC SCHOOL.” *Carolina Watchman*, June 25<sup>th</sup>, 1836, 4.

The timeline of Meerbach's plea is curious, as it continued for months following his arrival in the county, after he spent time supposedly improving the "state of music." Shortly before he took his leave, Meerbach became briefly involved with Ms. Hutchinson's Female School. Unlike the Swedish professor who preceded him, the Piedmont papers sang his praises as they described his "masterly performances on the piano," at the academy during the summer examination period.<sup>89</sup>

After his time in Salisbury, Meerbach went to North to Charlottesville to teach music, where he simultaneously began courses at the University of Virginia. Meerbach never stayed in one location for more than five or six years, ultimately continuing on to Richmond, Boston, Nyack, and Baltimore. His time in Richmond revealed yet another facet of his storied career; Meerbach was a composer. Writing music inspired by his students, Meerbach ultimately published at least four pieces between 1849 and 1852, including "Julia Grand Polka" (1849), "Souvenir de Castle Hill (1849), "Impromptu Waltz" (1852), and "Elfin Polka" (1852).<sup>90</sup>

Meerbach's advertisements certainly present a commanding persona, but his sudden presence in the North Carolina Piedmont begs a variety of questions surrounding his arrival. Was he unable to find rewarding work in a city where the competition for a competency and the costs of living were high? Was he looking for a stable situation in an environment where he had time to compose? Or, was Meerbach following an altruistic quest to spread his musical knowledge to rural America? His true motives remain unknown, but the quality of Meerbach's legacy suggests that he likely left an impression on the musical environment of the Piedmont, that had little previous experience with competently performed or composed European art music.

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The Prichard-Correll piano embodies a particularly unique relationship between consumer and craftsman, both amateurs. Perhaps Sophia's talents, in conjunction with her parents' desires to provide their daughters with the best chance of advancement, resulted in their quest for musical training with a piano. Perhaps for reasons of cost and convenience, Mr. Correll made the decision to turn to a familial local amateur maker rather than purchase a second-hand instrument at auction or source a new one from a coastal center. While a true motive for the construction of the Prichard-Correll piano is impossible to discern, the survival of the instrument speaks to the regard with which it was held within the Correll family. Despite peculiarities in craftsmanship that affected the instrument's playability, Prichard was triumphant in

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<sup>89</sup> "FOR THE WATCHMAN: Salisbury Female School" *Carolina Watchman*, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 1836, 4.

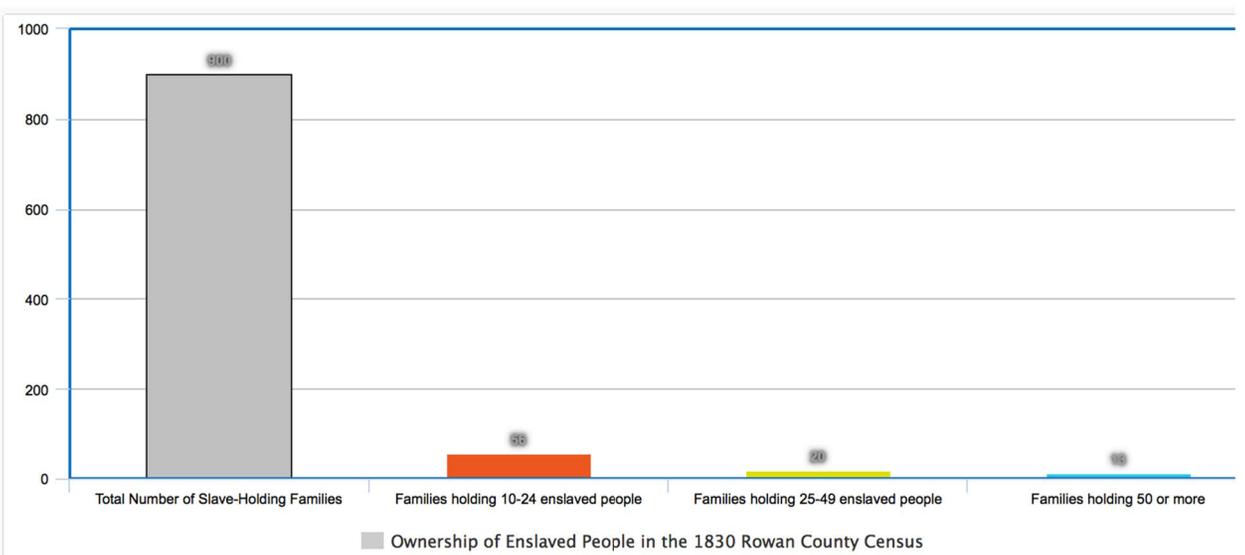
<sup>90</sup> Jean L. Cooper, "Adam Empie (1 Jul. 1821-10 Jul. 1877) in Students of the University of Virginia, 1825-1874, last modified November 11, 2011, <https://uvastudents.wordpress.com/2011/11/11/adam-empie-1-jul-1821-10-jul-1877/>.

making an object that functioned well enough as a square piano and likely provided an outlet for entertainment and independence through Sophia's rural parlor. Yet the unusual construction of Prichard's action begs the question—was Sophia Correll happy with her piano?

Regardless, the piano is a testament to inventive, do-it-yourself exuberance. It challenges the significance of trained piano craftsmanship, and cautions scholars to resist the labels or stereotypes too often bestowed upon residents of the rural Piedmont. The rich musical sphere of Rowan and Iredell counties served as inspiration for Sophia's piano, and the music education through the female seminary system potentially catalyzed the creation of the instrument. For both craftsman and consumer, the piano represents a departure from the norm. David Prichard pushed the limits of his craftsmanship to create a remarkable object, giving Sophia Correll the power to enrich the scope of her own life as a young antebellum woman.



**Figure 2** Square Piano, attributed to Thomas Prichard, Alexander (was Iredell County), North Carolina, 1835-1840. OH. 32 5/8, OW. 64. Courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, acc. no. 5763.



**Figure 3**

Graph of ownership of enslaved individuals compiled from data found in the 1830 United States Census, Rowan County, North Carolina. Out of the 2,470 white households listed in the Census, 900 households were slave-holding. Most had nine enslaved or less. Graph produced by author.



**Figure 4** Detail of map showing convergence of roads in Salisbury, Rowan County, North Carolina. There were two different sections of the Great Wagon Road, labeled as “Trading Path” on this map, that converged in Salisbury. *An accurate map of North and South Carolina, with their Indian frontier, shewing in a distinct manner all the mountains, rivers, swamps, marshes, bays, creeks, harbours, sandbanks and soundings on the coasts; with the roads and Indian paths; as well as the boundary or provincial lines, the several townships, and other divisions of the land in both the provinces by Henry Mouzon, Robert Sayer, and John Bennett, London, 1775. Hand colored. OH. 101 cm, OW. 141 cm, Courtesy Library of Congress Geography and Map Division, Washington, D.C., cat. no. G3900 1775 .M6*



**Figure 5** Detail of case construction on the Prichard-Correll piano. Courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts. Photo by the author.



**Figure 6** Desk and Bookcase, Iredell County, North Carolina, 1790-1800. OH. 97, OW. 49 ½ . Courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, acc. no. 2015.



**Figure 7** Tall Case Clock, Ludwig Eberhard (Clockworks), Stirewalt Family (Case), Rowan County, North Carolina, 1800-1810. OH. 95, OW. 20. Courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, acc. no. 3415.



**Figure 8**

Detail of the inlaid tyffot on the Prichard-Correll piano cheek. Square Piano, attributed to Thomas Prichard, Alexander (was Iredell County), North Carolina, 1835-1840. OH. 32 5/8, OW. 64. Courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, acc. no. 5763.



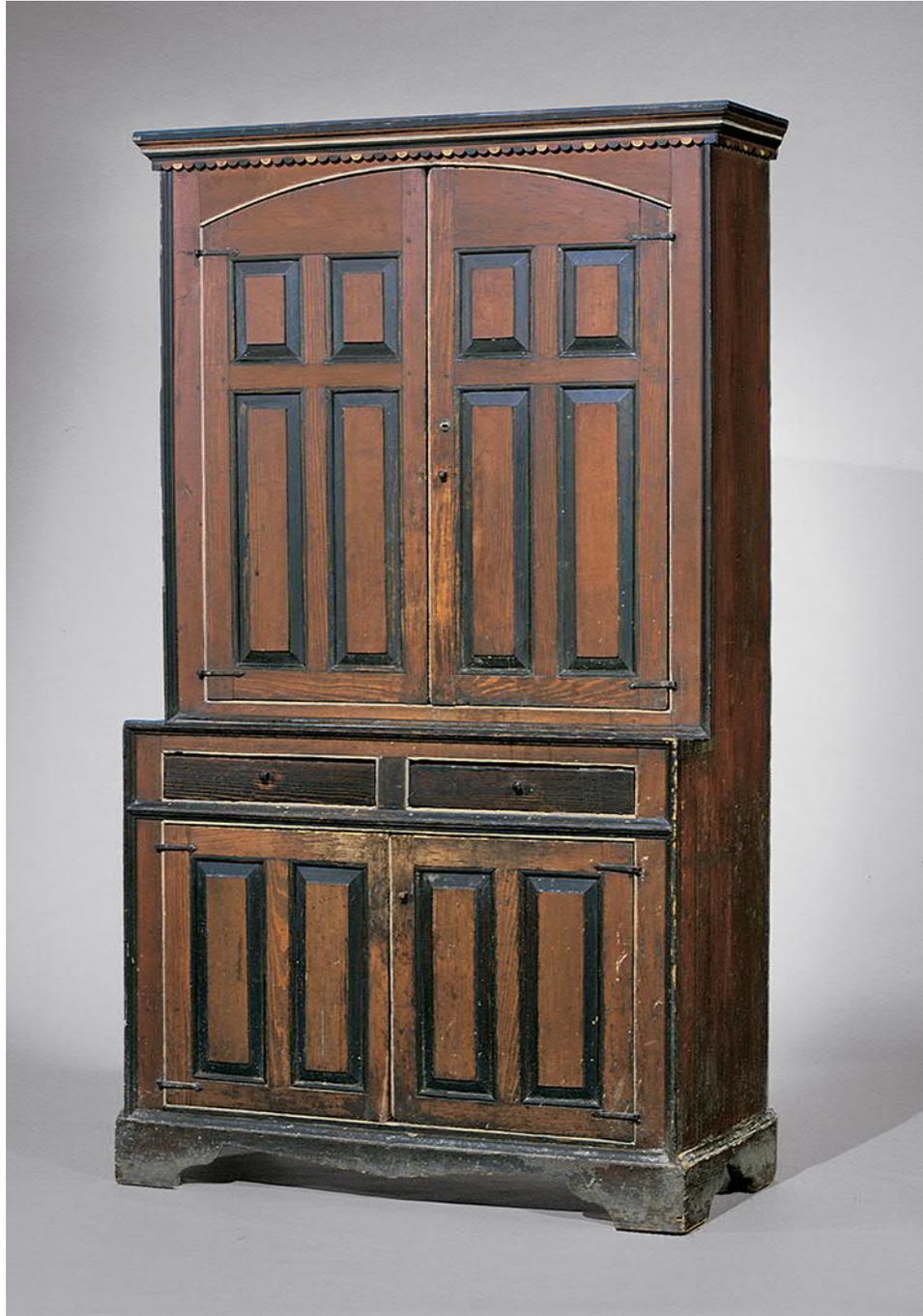
**Figure 9** Cabinet, attributed to the Central Piedmont, North Carolina, 1790-1810. OH. 15, OW. 12. Courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, acc. no. 1071.1.



**Figure 10** Sugar Jar, attributed to Albright/Loy Pottery, Alamance County, North Carolina, 1785-1810. OH: 9 5/8. Courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, acc. no. 2708.



**Figure 11** Whitework coverlet, attributed to Elizabeth Perkins Stockton. Forsyth County, North Carolina, 1800-1820. OH. 83, OW. 84. Courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, acc. no. 3116.2.



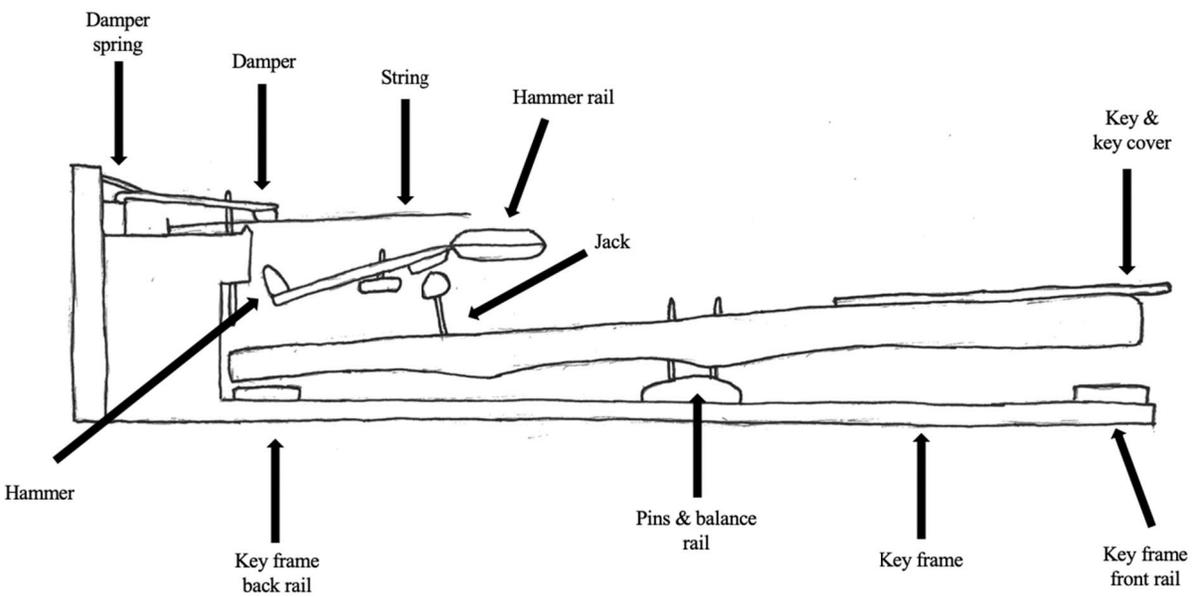
**Figure 12** Cupboard, attributed to Jacob Sanders, Montgomery County, North Carolina, 1790-1820. OH. 84 ¼, OW. 50 ¼. Courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, acc. no. 2073.22.



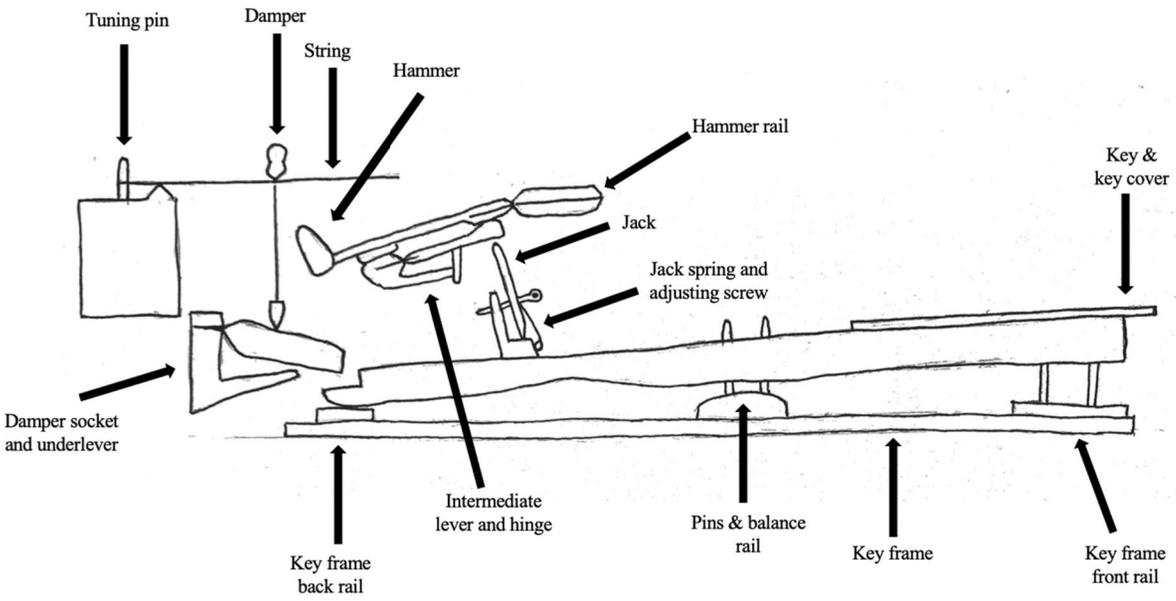
**Figure 13** Details of the Prichard-Correll piano's bone and fruitwood key covers.  
Courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Photo by the author.



**Figure 14** Detail of the Prichard-Correll piano keys, highlighting the decorative molding on the underside. Courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Photo by the author.



**Figure 15** Diagram drawing of the English single action created by Johannes Zumppe, 1766. Drawing by the author.



**Figure 16** Diagram drawing of the English double action based on the GB Patent #1571 by John Geib, 1786. Drawing by the author.





**Figure 18** Detail of the surviving green textile on the large damper within the Prichard-Correll Piano. Strings would have covered this entire area, but without them the hammers are well-visible. Courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Photo by the author.

**Chapter 2**  
**THE FOREGOING IS SUFFICIENT FOR ANY PERSON TO MAKE AN  
INSTRUMENT: INNOVATIVE AMATEUR PIANOMAKERS OF  
SHENANDOAH AND APPALACHIA**

Celebrated cartoonist James Gillray's 1809 satirical etching, *Farmer Giles & his wife shewing off their daughter Betty to their neighbours, on her return from school*, depicts members of an English farming family in their country parlor surrounded by the fruits of their burgeoning financial success (fig. 19). The incongruencies between dress, deportment, and surroundings satirize the family's failed attempts to appear genteel.<sup>91</sup> Functioning as a caricature of the socially ambitious nouveau riche, *Farmer Giles* embodies a popular trope of eighteenth-century non-political satire by ridiculing those attempting to scale the rigid hierarchy of British society. To situate this dichotomy, the material culture of the Giles's parlor is rife with the kinds of objects expected in an aspirational middling home. Gillray depicts the range of female accomplishments acquired by Betty Giles's schooling, but a key marker of the Giles's aspirational gentility is tied to the presence of a square piano. Likely the most expensive object in their country parlor, the piano was still a relatively new addition to the homes of the growing middle class in the early nineteenth century. Despite the scene of incompetency surrounding the Giles's piano and other parlor amusements, the inclusion of the instrument speaks to the era's widespread understanding of the piano as an object of measured refinement.

Across the Atlantic, the rural North Carolina parlor of Sophia Correll likely possessed an array of objects similar to what encircles Gillray's satirized Giles Family. Yet unlike the fictional Betty Giles, Sophia existed within a milieu that not only tolerated self-improvement—but encouraged chasing it through industrious work. While this aspirational approach did not realistically apply to those who were not white or male, the Backcountry family of European descent still stood to benefit from the notion and could find success in a society that was not legally and socially tied to ancestral aristocracy. With their square piano in place, the Corrells were chasing the crux of American Democratic idealism through ingenuity, enlightenment, and persistence. The Prichard-Correll piano embodied the astute use of kinship networks among white Backcountry residents to collectively shape an improved environment of opportunity and education for their children, while strengthening their ties to the Atlantic World at large through the employment of Western Art Music.

When Sophia Correll played her instrument, it came into conversation with the full cultural context of the parlor and contributed to a carefully crafted set of social

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<sup>91</sup> Hoyle Richard, *The Farmer in England, 1650-1980* (Farnham, United Kingdom: Ashgate Publishing, 2013) 24-27.

expectations.<sup>92</sup> Defined by its “sphere of sociability,” the parlor had a long history as an arena for cultural refinement, making it a natural location for an instrument.<sup>93</sup> As a space of social and musical performance, the parlor not only housed the fruits of musical accomplishment, but also displayed financial status, hospitality, moral probity, and cultural capital.<sup>94</sup> The close association of the piano and the parlor was further reflected in the “parlor song,” the genre of music developed around a partnership between musical instrument, female, and room. As an object entangled with craftsmanship, education, wealth, and display, the piano and the parlor went hand in hand.

The conventional antebellum piano primarily occupied two separate locations during its existence: the workshop of a piano maker, and the family parlor of one or more daughters. In transitioning from one space to another, the piano underwent fundamental relational shifts from maker to consumer, teacher to pupil, and performer to audience. These transitions established a constellation of interdependent exchanges involving markets, maintenance, training, space, musical literacy, and social support during extended periods of practice. In that sense, the expressive and performative goals of music always rested on chains of support from multiple actors rather than fixed social links between pianos, parlors, and politeness.

Just as some piano players had no parlor at home to play or practice in, so too a few instrument makers experimented with alternatives to conventional, square-piano designs, determined to reap the benefits of music. Some amateur piano makers, many of them innovators at heart, challenged the conventional meanings and societal expectations imposed upon the popular instrument and carved out new, uncharted territories and soundscapes for the piano to occupy. This chapter explores the unconventional side of amateur piano making and culture through two case studies. The first, William A. Baker, straddles the line between traditional and untraditional

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<sup>92</sup> Bailey, *Music and the Southern Belle*, 15-18. The linking of the woman at the piano to the parlor underlines a historical expectation, which is further supported by historiographical interpretations romanticizing antebellum America.

<sup>93</sup> Bernard Herman, *Town House: Architecture and Material Life in the Early American City, 1780-1830* (Williamsburg, Virginia: Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture and the University of North Carolina Press) 70-71, 184. Herman references examples of parlors throughout eighteenth century America as curated spaces of social display. At the time Herman is evaluating, access to keyboard instruments was more limited to those who were in the upper echelons of society. If a house had an instrument, it was likely a spinet or harpsichord. However, similar

<sup>94</sup> Meyer Frazier, “American Women’s Roles in Domestic Music-making,” 19-20; 65-72.

practice, falling in the middle of the spectrum. The second, Thomas D. Davis, pushes the conventional definitions of piano craft, use, and purpose. Examining the unconventional contributions of these two craftsmen challenge our understanding of music in the American Backcountry and inspire a variety of questions: What happens to the piano when it is *not* in the parlor? Does the meaning of the piano change when expressed by unconventional mechanisms in different locations? And lastly, what does it mean to *be* a piano? Is there anything to say about American ingenuity so far as it pertains to piano design and manufacture?

### **Among the Fireworks: The William A. Baker Piano Recipe Book**

Around August 27<sup>th</sup>, 1806, eighteen-year-old William Alexander Baker of Winchester, Virginia, purchased a small leather-bound blank book and proceeded to fill it with “Receipts of a Number of Different Kinds Collected by Him from Time to Time.”<sup>95</sup> (*fig. 20*). William was the son of Henry William Baker, a prominent Winchester merchant who built the family fortune through extensive trade with Tennessee.<sup>96</sup> H. W. Baker used this fortune to buy substantial shares in the first legitimate bank in the area, the Winchester Branch of the Farmer’s Bank of Virginia.<sup>97</sup> His distinguished standing in Winchester society led to an appointment to the board of directors for the Winchester and Potomac Railroad, which aimed to build a connection from Winchester to Harper’s Ferry, and from there, a more direct line to Baltimore.<sup>98</sup> With connections and business ventures to pass down, Baker arranged a life of opportunity for his children. Despite his auspicious patrimony as H. W.’s eldest son, William developed an independent identity outside of his father’s extensive reach, leaving his

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<sup>95</sup> William A. Baker, *Recipe book*, 1806-1815, Swem Special Collections Research Center, College of William and Mary, Mss. MsV R1.

<sup>96</sup> J. E. Norris, *History of the Lower Shenandoah Valley: Counties of Frederick, Berkeley, Jefferson, and Clarke, Vol. 1.*, (Chicago: A. Warner & Co, 1890), 622-623.

<sup>97</sup> Frederic Morton, *The Story of Winchester in Virginia: The Oldest Town in the Shenandoah Valley* (Strasburg, Virginia: Shenandoah Publishing House, 1925), 113. Chartered in 1817, this bank was also known as the Bank of the Valley. Possessing 126 shares, Henry W. Baker was the largest shareholder at the outset.

<sup>98</sup> Morton, *The Story of Winchester in Virginia*, 128-130. The Baltimore & Ohio Railroad terminated at Harper’s Ferry by 1834, and one could continue on to Winchester by coach. Trains were running between Winchester and Harper’s Ferry by 1836. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Baltimore & Ohio absorbed the Winchester & Potomac.

younger brothers, Jacob and George, to follow their father's path in business.<sup>99</sup>

William married in 1809. Until his death in 1847, he became involved in a wide range of businesses. He ran a mercantile shop on Main Street, owned a lime kiln, and maintained a large farm.<sup>100</sup> Building a career independent of his father and brothers did not hinder William's success; his 1847 Will reveals a sizeable estate with stock in the Winchester & Potomac Railroad, shares in the Bank of the Valley, and multiple properties in and around Winchester.<sup>101</sup> Perhaps it was this inherent curiosity and industriousness, that prompted Baker to diligently accumulate helpful recipes and directions in his small leather book.

Spanning 1806 through 1824, William Baker's "recipe book" holds eighty entries (*fig. 21*). His initial statement about the nature of his recipes explained that they were "of a number of different kinds." They included *peach brandy* (9); *eye water* (10); *a choice varnish* (18); and *to cure deafness* (90). The most unusual entry, both within Baker's volume and a spectrum of contemporaneous recipe books, is his "Description of a Piano forte (126)" that immediately preceded his final entry on "how

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<sup>99</sup> Jacob Baker (1789-1874), second son of Henry William and only one year younger than William Alexander, ultimately followed in their father's footsteps. He joined Henry William as a partner at the family mercantile business on Main Street after returning from serving as a clerk during the War of 1812, and ultimately became President of the Winchester & Potomac Railroad. For more on the Jacob Baker line of the family, see Norris, *History of the Lower Shenandoah Valley*, 223-224. While their relationship after the War is unknown, Jacob and William were close as young men—a relationship evident by letters sent from William to Jacob during the summer of 1813, expressing concern for Jacob's safety and keeping him up to date with life in Winchester, including the tragic death of William's young child. Letters are part of the Henry Baker Family Papers, 1458 WFCHS, Stewart Bell Jr. Archives, Handley Regional Library, Winchester, VA, USA. Information found within: "Dissolution of Partnership," *Winchester Gazette*, 29 March 1823. George Baker (1800-1865), third son of Henry William, continued the mercantile partnership with his father after Jacob Baker reestablished himself as an independent businessman.

<sup>100</sup> Will of William Alexander Baker, July, 1847, Frederick County Will Book, Vol. 22, 1845-1850, 214-216.

<sup>101</sup> "History of the Land on Berryville Avenue." Henry Baker Family Papers, 1458 WFCHS, Stewart Bell Jr. Archives, Handley Regional Library, Winchester, VA, USA. This document gives the property history of William A. Baker's two hundred-acre farm, Smithfield. In addition to Smithfield, Baker's Will reveals that he owned residential and commercial property on Loudon (Main) street and a lot in Shawnee Springs. William Baker also held ninety-four shares of stock in Bank of the Valley.

to make stars for fireworks (145).”

Baker’s twenty-one-page piano “recipe” is the longest in the book.<sup>102</sup> Using dark ink, he composed it in a style resembling a stream-of-consciousness that was devoid of strong organization. Contrary to the complex sequences of work he refers to, his entry has few distinct sections that help readers sort out the priorities of work. The fragmentary nature of the recipe was reflected on the final page with its abrupt ending, suggesting that it remained unfinished. Baker grounded the set of directions to three hand-drawn detailed images in which many parts are numbered. He tied the written recipe to corresponding numbers on each plate (*fig. 22, fig. 23, fig. 24*). His images were accurately scaled and “mathematically laid down 1 inch to a foot.”<sup>103</sup> When compared to a conventionally produced instrument, it is clear where Baker gathered inspiration for the layout of his case (*fig. 25*). He did not specify every material to be used, but he did advise on critical ones, claiming that, “the best wood for the sound Bord & Braces is Spruce Pine it being more Springy tha [than] other Pine.”<sup>104</sup> Presumably, Baker’s use of the descriptor “Springy” correctly refers to the resonant qualities of thinly sawn, straight-grain spruce.<sup>105</sup>

The majority of Baker’s directions described the bracing and structural elements of the case. He did not describe the production of a piano action or the creation of the keyboard. The implications of this omission are varied. He may have planned to include descriptions of the keyboard and action later, or perhaps he intended to buy and install these specialized parts, rather than make them himself.<sup>106</sup>

Although he did not discuss the mechanisms, Baker did include the critical measurements of stringing over a standard FF-f3 keyboard:

letter I is the upper F wire 4 ¼ Inches long  
from Bridge to Bridge  
letter I C is the upper 5 5/8 Inches do

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<sup>102</sup> A full transcription of William A. Baker’s recipe can be found in Appendix II.

<sup>103</sup> Baker, *Recipe Book*, 131.

<sup>104</sup> Baker, *Recipe Book*, 141.

<sup>105</sup> The soundboard is a critical part of a piano, running below the strings on the right-hand side of the instrument and amplifying the sound. Soundboards are extremely thin and made from a straight-grained conifer to provide the best conveyance of vibrations from the strings.

<sup>106</sup> As discussed in the previous chapter, mechanisms could sometimes be purchased separately even in early America. This practice is often seen in European keyboard instrument making.

do 2f is the second F wire 8  $\frac{3}{4}$  Inches do  
do 2c is the second C wire 11  $\frac{3}{4}$  Inches long  
do 3f is the third F wire 16  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches long  
do 3C is the third C wire 21  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches long  
do 4F is the fourth F wire 27  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches long  
do 4C is the fourth C wire 33 inches long  
do 5F is the fifth F wire 40 inches long  
do 5C is the fifth C wire 46  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches long  
do 6f is the sixth F wire 56 inches long<sup>107</sup>

When compared to the scaling of contemporary English square pianos, Baker's measurements represent a smaller side of the normal range, despite slightly shorter stringing between f1 and F.<sup>108</sup> Given Baker's earlier prescription that the case was to be made 5 and  $\frac{1}{2}$  feet long, the subsequent piano directions appear to be based on earlier forms of the square piano that tend to be smaller. Baker also included a scaled sketch of the curve of the bridge, which, in conjunction with the critical measurements of scale, determines the layout of the interior (*fig. 26*). His directions for stringing culminate with the specific types of wire to be used in particular octaves, exhibiting a specialized knowledge of tone tied to variance of metal:

fig 1 below is as far as the steel wire No. 2 goes downwards 1 Octave &  $\frac{7}{8}$

fig 2 is the steel wire No 1 – 1 Octave

fig 3 the Brass wire 1 Octave

fig 4 the Rapped Bass Wire<sup>109</sup>

Unlike strings created in specific pitches for instruments within the violin family, piano wire was sold in varying diameters and materials. Each diameter of wire could be used for over an entire octave, and simply tuned in half-steps under progressively higher tension until it was necessary to move on to the next diameter. Further, different materials of wire were preferred for different octaves within the instrument to create the best tone. Iron (steel) wire is often used in the treble, and brass in the middle octaves and upper bass. Wound (wrapped) brass wire can be used in the lowest

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<sup>107</sup> Baker, *Recipe Book*, 136.

<sup>108</sup> See Appendix E, which places the measurements of Baker's piano in comparison to instruments and measurements found in by Malcom Rose and David Law, *A Handbook of Historical Stringing Practice for Keyboard Instruments, 1671-1856*. Lewes, United Kingdom, 1991.

<sup>109</sup> Baker, *Recipe Book*, 137.

octaves, which increases the diameter of the string and helps accommodate for the harmonic discrepancies that accompany the physics of the piano. The exact layout and points of transition between the octaves vary by instrument, dictated by individual tone and preference of the player or piano technician.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of Baker's recipe is his curious claim that, "the foregoing is sufficient for any Person to be regulated by to make an Instrument." Was Baker planning on sharing these instructions? What made him confident that they would work? Based on what he wrote down, it remains unclear how Baker learned the complex process of making a piano; advertisements and census records reveal that he was a merchant in Winchester rather than an artisan.<sup>110</sup> Given the nature of the step-by-step directions, it seems possible that he became familiar with the process from someone who had crafted an instrument, instead of determining each step by himself.

William Baker's recipe for a square piano is not his only documented connection to pianos. In late 1821, he began advertising in the *Winchester Gazette* that his firm carried an "assortment of MERCHANDIZE" and patent medicines—stock that aligned with the medicinal formulas in his recipe book. At the bottom of the advertisement, Baker added "Piano Fortes tuned and repaired at the shortest notice."<sup>111</sup> Baker's piano recipe and advertisement not only spoke to his extensive personal knowledge of the instrument, but revealed a local population that bought conventionally-made pianos, sheet music, and music education.

### **Forging New Musical Traditions in the Valley of Virginia**

Like other locations along the Great Wagon Road, Winchester was closely connected to major urban centers through people, objects, and ideas. With a heavy influx of Pennsylvania German, Scots-Irish, and Anglo-Virginian settlers by the end of the eighteenth century, Winchester grew rapidly, reaching 24,000 by 1820.<sup>112</sup> As one of the largest towns in the backcountry and situated within the commercial networks of mid-Atlantic urban centers, Winchester had cosmopolitan connections earlier than settlements in the North Carolina Piedmont. Residents quickly became conspicuous

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<sup>110</sup> Kenneth E. Koons and Warren R. Hofstra, ed., *After the Backcountry: Rural life in the Great Valley of Virginia, 1800-1900*. (Knoxville, Tennessee: University of Tennessee Press, 2000), 38. By 1800, Winchester was the home of a burgeoning merchant community, which developed close trade with Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Alexandria.

<sup>111</sup> "WM. A. BAKER," *Winchester Gazette*, November 24, 1821, 4.

<sup>112</sup> Koons and Hofstra, *After the Backcountry*, 39.

consumers.<sup>113</sup>

The concentration of urban and rural exchanges and settlers with diverse ethnic and musical traditions shaped a dynamic musical environment. Like other fashionable goods, keyboard instruments were being advertised in Winchester by 1786.<sup>114</sup> As discussed in the previous chapter in the context of Piedmont North Carolina, instruments of western art music correlated with a number of female seminaries in the Valley of Virginia that flaunted their offerings in music education.<sup>115</sup> The instruments, seminaries, and sheet music benchmark the spread of refinement in the Backcountry. The promise of a piano was even used to lure residents of Winchester out of town and into the early mountain resort town of Bath (Berkeley Springs), Virginia.<sup>116</sup>

Like Frederic Meerbach's visit to Salisbury, Winchester occasionally attracted the itinerant professional musician. Announcing himself as an Italian Professor and Composer of Music, a Mr. Muscarelli advertised his presence in Winchester where he would teach "Fashionable singing, in Italian style; Piano forte, accompanied with singing; Violin; Guitar; Harp, &c." during the summers of 1822 and 1823.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Koons and Hofstra, *After the Backcountry*, xviii-xx; Nicholas A. Powers, "Business along the Blue Ridge: Cabinetmaking in Winchester and Frederick County, Virginia, 1750-1825" (M.A. Thesis, University of Delaware, 2014), 38-41. Catalyzed by the requirements of regional wheat production, communities of artisans, merchants, and farmers formed a multifaceted town life that depended on the trade networks with urban centers throughout the mid-Atlantic.

<sup>114</sup> "Philip Dalby," *Virginia Journal and Alexandria Advertiser*. November 9, 1796, 4. Based in Alexandria, Philip Dalby offered "spinets, guitars, piano fortes, violins, and flutes."

<sup>115</sup> "FEMALE ACADEMY," *Winchester Gazette*, February 16, 1822, 4. Mrs. Conrad's Female Academy offered instruction on the piano at either the homes of the students, or at the school itself. This implies enough students with personal pianos for private home lessons; "Staunton Female Academy," *Winchester Gazette*, March 29, 1823, 4.

<sup>116</sup> "Bath Berkeley Springs," *Winchester Gazette*, June 26, 1813, 4. Brave tourists to the Springs could enjoy "A drawing room furnished for the ladies and a Piano Forte." Advertisements for the Springs speaks to the rising presence of a true middle class in Winchester, like the Bakers, who could afford to invest in occasional leisure time.

<sup>117</sup> "VOCAL and Instrumental Music," *Winchester Gazette*, May 31, 1823, 4. In addition to lessons in music, Muscarelli offered to tune and repair piano fortes, and advertised the sale of a beginner instrument.

Concerts, while not common, brought Winchester residents more varied musical experiences outside of the parlor.<sup>118</sup>

Music in early nineteenth century Winchester was not limited to the instrumental sounds of female accomplishments or Western Art music. The white settlers of the backcountry cultivated a new tradition of folk hymns—sacred texts paired with folk melodies—often written by rural composers and arrangers (*fig. 27*).<sup>119</sup> However, the new tunebooks were extremely varied and included a range of styles and genres.<sup>120</sup> Notated in four distinct shape-notes that represented four distinct syllables, the nature of the aptly named “shape note” music was grounded in widespread amateur participation, inclusivity, and fellowship (*fig. 28*). The term *shape note* refers to the tradition, repertoire, and literal notation of the choral practice. Shape-note singing was an inclusive activity. Not entirely secular, but not congregational, sings occurred both inside and outside of Church services. Harmonies were typically split into four parts, with the tenor line serving as melody. The singers performed the music with the four voice groups facing inwards, first singing the melody in solfege, on the name of the shape note (fa-so-la-mi), and then repeating the melody with the text of the song. Often referred to as *Sacred Harp Singing* today, the contemporary iteration of the tradition comes from the title one particular hymnal printed in 1844.<sup>121</sup>

Although the form of this choral tradition has a distant connection to early New England psalmody, the practice had travelled down the Great Wagon road and

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<sup>118</sup> “Concert and Musical Glass.” *Winchester Gazette*, May 25, 1822, 4. The Richardson family of Winchester offered a series of concert and entertainment at the local *Xaupi’s dancing room*. In the same advertisement, Mr. Richardson offered to tune, repair, and regulate piano fortes.

<sup>119</sup> David W. Music, *A Selection of Shape-Note Folk Hymns From Southern United States Tune Books, 1816-1861*. (Middletown, Wisconsin: A-R Editions, 2005), ix-xii.

<sup>120</sup> David Warren Steel, *The Makers of the Sacred Harp* (Champaign: The University of Illinois Press, 2010), 39.

<sup>121</sup> *The Sacred Harp*, compiled by B.F. White and Elisha J. King, was compiled in Hamilton, Georgia, in 1844. Originally hailing from Spartanburg, South Carolina, B.F. White married the sister of the wife of William Walker, another Spartanburg-area musician who compiled *The Southern Harmony*, a wildly popular shape note volume that rivaled *The Sacred Harp*.

See Richard Crawford, *America’s Musical Life*, (New York, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001) 165-168; Steel, *The Makers of the Sacred Harp*, 21.

was reestablished in a zone of cultural convergence, further extended by white Europeans heading further west.<sup>122</sup> Beginning in the early nineteenth century, printers in the inland South published prolific quantities of tunebooks, some of them specifically targeting cultural groups by language and faith.<sup>123</sup> Tunebooks often included basic elements of music theory and instruction in singing. These music manuals contributed to a culture of self-taught, participatory music and the development of specialized printing in the upper Shenandoah Valley.<sup>124</sup>

William Baker's connection to Winchester's shape note tradition is apparent with the appearance of his name in an 1817 tunebook, compiled by Wheeler Gillet (fig. 29).<sup>125</sup> Originally from Baltimore where he worked as a music publisher and compiler, Gillet moved to Winchester and brought a European rather than folk-inspired interpretation of the shape note tradition. Following earlier publications in Baltimore, he published *The Virginia Sacred Minstrel*, a closer analog to European art music than other examples found in the Valley.

At the end of Gillet's 1817 publication, he included the recommendations and reviews of his tunebook by local Winchesterians involved in music. The publication listed William A. Baker as a reference and referred to him as a "piano forte maker" of Winchester (fig. 30). As a form of music, tunebooks were unattached to instrumental music, but those who were involved in early American music played many roles. It is unsurprising that Gillet would seek support from a professed maker of European musical instruments, given the realities of marketing musical publications in the

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<sup>122</sup> Steel, *The Makers of the Sacred Harp*, 11; 20-21. Many compilers of tunebooks were not educated in singing schools and were taught at home.

<sup>123</sup> In Virginia, most tunebooks were printed in Harrisonburg and Winchester. Outside of the state, antebellum hymnals were printed in Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio and North Carolina. For a selection of antebellum southern hymnals with examples of sheet music, see Music, *A Selection of Shape-Note Folk Hymns*, xv-xvii.

<sup>124</sup> Folk hymnals printed in antebellum Winchester include: Wheeler Gillet, *The Virginia Sacred Minstrel* (1817); James M. Boyd, *The Virginia Sacred Music Repository* (1818); Joseph Funk, *A compilation of genuine church music* (1832); David L. Clayton and James P. Carrell. *The Virginia harmony*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (1836).

<sup>125</sup> I am deeply indebted to Nicholas A. Powers for bringing this source to my attention and sharing it with me.

Valley.<sup>126</sup> Whether Gillet hoped to distinguish his tunebook from Valley compositions deemed more “folk” or “primitive” remains unclear, but, as David Warren Steel reminds scholars, a hallmark of many early American musicians was a willingness to be flexible, enterprising, and assertive.<sup>127</sup>

### **Building the Music: Accessibility through Text**

Although Baker evidently tuned and repaired fine urban-made instruments in Winchester, his recipe book reveals an interest in making pianos rather than just maintaining them. But unlike other amateur makers such as David Prichard, Baker identified himself as a merchant, not a cabinetmaker or woodworker.<sup>128</sup> It is unclear whether Baker ever created the square piano as no examples seem to survive, but the carefully recorded concept of one exists within his recipe book. Like notes on a piece of sheet music, the piano recipe could be translated from the page, interpreted, and assembled into a complex object. His piano occupies a liminal space; not fully realized, but nearly complete in strategy. Baker’s recipes converted the square piano from a body of specialized knowledge learned from years of experience with materials and craft processes into words and diagrams. While the book was likely never intended to be publicly disseminated, Baker wrote the instructions as if he were addressing an audience. Through his direct language, he implied that any reasonably skilled worker could follow the rules to implement a stabilized set of designs that would produce musical sounds. By contextualizing piano design in the form of a personal recipe book, Baker shifted the control of an instrument’s production from an elusive group of trained craftsmen to “anyone” if they could follow his directions. Even if the pages were only intended for Baker’s personal use, they recorded and made knowledge obtainable that was normally monopolized by elite tradespeople.

With entries of household tasks, food, and medicine, William Baker’s recipe book shares similar domestic content with other waste and miscellaneous books of nineteenth century America.<sup>129</sup> However, his piano “recipe” stands alone as an

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<sup>126</sup> Outside of Gillet’s reference to Baker as a piano-forte maker, no similar reference exists. While this could be taken at face value, it may be an exaggeration by Wheeler Gillet in order to further legitimize his work.

<sup>127</sup> Steel, *The Makers of the Sacred Harp*, 32.

<sup>128</sup> Winchester had a rich cabinetmaking tradition, none of which resulted in pianos. For more on eighteenth and nineteenth century cabinetmaking in Winchester and surrounding areas, see Powers, “Business along the Blue Ridge,” 3.

<sup>129</sup> Similar recipes for finishes, adhesives, waxes, beverages, and medicinal remedies were common in domestic journals, waste, and recipe books. See for example: Isaac

instructional guide on building a complex object.<sup>130</sup> While early publications like Joseph Moxon's *Mechanick Exercises* (1703) described the use of tools, detailed manuals of traditional woodworking crafts for amateurs did not begin to appear on a wider and accessible scale until the late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries.<sup>131</sup> Historically, there was little hope in learning a complicated woodworking craft by reading a text, as sharing intimate details of the trade could translate to increased competition for people in the trades. While widely circulated pattern books like Thomas Chippendale's *Cabinetmaker's Director* (1754) possessed detailed drawings and clear ratios, they did not disseminate the difficult process of making—sharing just enough to entice the amateur and provide stimulating ideas for the consumer and professional.

Regardless, printed directions for building furniture are simple compared to the scope of instructions for the making of a keyboard instrument. Occasionally, such information was transferred through privately disseminated correspondence, such as a set of directions for a fretted clavichord sent by Pennsylvania German instrument

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Byington, "Journal," 1786-1799, Doc. 531, The Winterthur Library: Joseph P. Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera; "Recipe Book," ca. 1790s, Doc. 320, The Winterthur Library: Joseph P. Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera.

<sup>130</sup> The 1833 inventory of Lebanon County, Pennsylvania resident Samuel Ache included "1 lott piano patens." In conjunction with other items in his inventory, he is thought to have been a cabinetmaker and instrument maker. A zither currently housed in the Colonial Williamsburg collection has been reattributed to him. For more, see Lisa Minardi, "From Millbach to Mahatango: Fraktur and Furniture of Pennsylvania Germans," in *American Furniture*, ed. Luke Beckerdite (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: The Chipstone Foundation, 2011), <http://www.chipstone.org/article.php/619/American-Furniture-2011/From-Millbach-to-Mahantongo:-Fraktur-and-Furniture-of-the-Pennsylvania-Germans> (accessed November 2017).

<sup>131</sup> For early twentieth century printed cabinetmaking manuals aimed for the amateur, see Frederick Thomas Hodgson, *The Practical Cabinetmaker and Furniture Designer's Assistant*. (Chicago: J.F. Drake & Co, 1910); Paul Otter, *Furniture for the Craftsman: A Manual for the Student and Mechanic*, (New York: Davis Williams Company, 1914); Percy Wells and John Hooper, *Modern Cabinet Work: Furniture & Fitments*, (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1922).

maker David Tannenberg to the Moravian Community in Salem, North Carolina.<sup>132</sup> For published works, *The Piano-Forte: Its Origin, Progress, and Construction* written by Edward Rimbault in 1860 stands as one of the earliest detailed descriptions of the construction of a piano in the Western world, but it still does not describe the fabrication process—making Baker’s *Description of a Piano Forte* the earliest known documented manual for the construction of a piano in the English language.<sup>133</sup> By contrast, amateur musicians had a choice of texts on the rudiments of music theory and instrumental education. While manuals were published in the as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the subsequent rise of amateur musicianship led to an abundance of published instructional manuals in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Specifically marketed to the education of those who could afford the leisure time to learn an instrument, the books were meaningful to amateur teachers. With works like the 1756 *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule (A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing)* by Leopold Mozart, or acclaimed Italian music teacher Fedele Fenaroli’s 1775 treatise *Regole musicali per i principianti di cembalo (The Rules of Music for Harpsichord Beginners)*, the pedagogy of European art music was gaining accessibility. In the nineteenth century, publishers created manuals specific to the piano such as Muzio Clementi’s *Introduction to Playing the Piano Forte* (1801), or Benjamin Carr’s *The Analytical Instructor for the Piano Forte* (1826) in Europe and the United States.<sup>134</sup> These books did not replace trained instruction, but gave amateur musicians basic knowledge of the instrument.

The number of instruction manuals for playing the piano versus treatises on making the instrument speaks to the nature of the amateur market; users far outnumbered instrument makers. For those like Baker who felt compelled to acquire the knowledge of instrument making, the concept of a recipe and faith that “anyone can be regulated to make a piano” was a remarkable assertion of self-confidence. With his inclusive concept of simply following a recipe, perhaps Baker was considering his

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<sup>132</sup> Bernard Brauchali, *The Clavichord*. (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 189-192.

<sup>133</sup> Edward Rimbault, *The Piano-Forte: Its Origin, Progress, and Construction*, (London: R. Cocks, 1860), 162-222. For additional keyboard instrument-making manuals, see Mark Wicks, *Organ Building for Amateurs* (London: Ward & Lock, 1887). This manual, like William A. Baker’s, contains step-by-step instructions and precise measurements for the production of the instrument.

<sup>134</sup> For further information on publications for amateur instrumental musicianship in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, see David J. Golby, *Instrumental Teaching in Nineteenth Century Britain*, (Farnham, United Kingdom: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), 41-66.

own contribution to the small body of craft manuals in antebellum America.

### A Curious Case: Thomas D. Davis's Chest of Drawers Piano

While the paper-bound instrument of William A. Baker straddled the line between conventional and unconventional, the piano attributed to Thomas D. Davis followed an entirely different path. Simultaneously a piece of functional furniture and a musical instrument, the composite object played a dual role within the home. As such, Davis did not set out to produce an iteration of the standard American square piano, and his work can be contextualized in two ways. First, it was an example of the expanding array of mid-nineteenth century parlor keyboard instruments such as the melodeon or reed organ. Second, it was part of an alternative group of craftsmen who made individualized and unique creations rather than perfecting and marketing goods already in demand. This group generated hybrid objects and the surviving examples are difficult to compare to conventional instruments.<sup>135</sup> Cases of professionally made pianos are often studied for their similarities to furniture, yet the creations of the innovative amateur instrument maker are often found *within* furniture, as truly composite objects. The surviving work of Thomas D. Davis—a piano hidden inside a chest of drawers—speaks to this unusual iteration of American experimentation (*fig. 31*).

Thomas Dean Davis was born in the Virginia-Maryland border town of Piedmont in 1818.<sup>136</sup> Davis moved northwards to the town of Cumberland, Maryland, where he worked as a merchant and married Susan Matilda Hook in 1841.<sup>137</sup> While

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<sup>135</sup> Other surviving hybrid furniture-musical instruments made in the American backcountry include a chest of drawers organ housed at the Berks County Historical Society, a zither sideboard, and a zither secretary made by John C. Burgner of Greene County, Tennessee. For further information on John C. Burgner and his surviving pieces, see Daniel Kurt Ackermann, “Cabinetmaking in the Southern Backcountry: The Ledger Book of John C. Burgner,” *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts* no. 36 (2015): <https://www.mesdajournal.org/2015/cabinetmaking-southern-backcountry-ledger-book-john-c-burgner-1818-1844/>

<sup>136</sup> Piedmont, in Hampshire County, was part of Virginia until the Civil War. West Virginia was admitted to the Union in 1863. “Missouri, Death Records, 1850-1921, Thomas D. Davis, 1897,” database with images, *Ancestry.com* ([https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/1172/vrmmo1833\\_c10479-1512](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/1172/vrmmo1833_c10479-1512): accessed November 2017).

<sup>137</sup> Davis married Susan Matilda Hook on September 14<sup>th</sup>, 1841. In addition to the 1850 Census, Davis is listed as a “General dealer in Dry Goods, Groceries, Hardware,

not situated directly on the Great Wagon Road, the town of Cumberland sat on the equally significant National (Cumberland) Road, which stretched overland from Baltimore to Vandalia, Illinois (*fig. 32*).<sup>138</sup> The two roads intersected in Hagerstown, Maryland, seventy miles east of Cumberland. As the first publicly funded interstate highway in the United States, the National Road was a critical route to the American interior before the advent of Westward train travel, linking communities on either side of the Appalachians.<sup>139</sup>

Much of the history of Davis's world remains unclear. On land originally

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&c" of Cumberland in the Allegany County section of *Thomson's Mercantile and Professional Directory*.

"Maryland Compiled Marriages, 1655-1850, Thomas D. Davis and Matilda Hook," database, *Ancestry.com* ([https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=7846&h=55984&tid=&pid=&usePUB=true&\\_phsrc=aXX73&\\_phstart=succesSource](https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=7846&h=55984&tid=&pid=&usePUB=true&_phsrc=aXX73&_phstart=succesSource): accessed December 2017), 65; William Thomson, *Thomson's Mercantile and Professional Directory*, (Baltimore, Maryland: William Thomson, 1851), 71.; "Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, population schedule, Allegany County, Maryland, House 3039, Thomas D. Davis," database with images, *Ancestry.com*, (<https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/8054/4193973-00432>: accessed 2017) NARA microfilm publication M432, roll 277. Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>138</sup> The initial objective was for the National/Cumberland road to reach St. Louis, but ultimately the convenience of the railroads took over. For a closer analysis of the construction and economics surrounding the National/Cumberland road, see Billy Joe Peyton, "To Make the Crooked Ways Straight and the Rough Ways Smooth: The Federal Government's Role in in Laying out and Building the Cumberland Road," (PhD diss., West Virginia University, 1999.)

<sup>139</sup> Peyton, "To Make the Crooked Ways Straight," 1-5; John Sherwood Lewis, "Becoming Appalachia: The Emergence of an American Subculture, 1840-1860," (Phd Diss., University of Kentucky, 2000), 74-77. Sherwood discusses the state of road infrastructure both in Appalachia and the rest of early America, emphasizing how the National Road was one of the best maintained in the entire nation, despite traversing mountainous terrain. However, the developing railway networks did not favor much of Appalachia due to the required preparation of mountain terrain to accommodate railcars – the B&O route from Cumberland to Parkersburg was especially tedious. This resulted in other regions building stronger networks to the West through rail travel, and incited stereotypical notions of Appalachia as the "backcountry."

occupied by the Shawnee and later Pennsylvania Germans, Western Maryland remained rural in the Antebellum era despite the people, objects, and ideas travelling the National Road.<sup>140</sup> Unlike more favorably situated towns along the Southern branch of the Great Wagon Road, such as Winchester, those along the National Road were seen as waypoints for people passing through and heading further West.<sup>141</sup> Yet like communities on the Great Wagon road, Cumberland still benefitted from the cultural exchanges brought by improved infrastructure, especially as the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad advanced through Cumberland en route to Parkersburg.

The Davis family likely remained in Cumberland until just after the Civil War, when they joined the post-war migration heading west. By 1868, Thomas Davis and his family of seven settled hundreds of miles away from Cumberland in St. Louis, Missouri – a move made much more convenient by the rapidly expanding railway lines between Baltimore, Cumberland, Cincinnati, and St. Louis.<sup>142</sup> In St. Louis, Davis

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<sup>140</sup> Sumpter Priddy and Joan K. Quinn, “Crossroads of Culture: Eighteenth Century Furniture from Western Maryland,” in *American Furniture*, ed. Luke Beckerdite (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: The Chipstone Foundation, 1997),

<http://www.chipstone.org/article.php/286/American-Furniture-1997/Crossroads-of-Culture:-Eighteenth-Century-Furniture-from-Western-Maryland> (accessed November 2017).

Priddy and Quinn emphasize the non-isolation of towns in Western Maryland due to the strong roadway infrastructure. For more on the growth of community and trade in Western Maryland, see James Rice, “Old Appalachia’s Path to Interdependency: Economic Development and the Creation of Community in Western Maryland, 1730-1850,” *Appalachian Journal*, vol. 22, no. 4 (1995), 348-374.

<sup>141</sup> Peyton, “To Make the Crooked Ways Straight,” 6-8.

<sup>142</sup> Richard Edwards, *Edwards’ Annual Director to the Inhabitants, Institutions, Incorporated Companies, Manufacturing Establishments, Business, Business Firms, etc., etc. in the City of St. Louis, For 1868*. (St. Louis, Missouri: Edwards, 1868), 254. Davis first appears in the 1868 Directory, along with his son, John E. Davis. Both are working as carpenters and builders, living at 1617 Christy Avenue. In the 1869 Directory, two additional sons of Thomas, Isaac H. and James R., joined the family carpentry business. See Richard Edwards, *Edwards’ Annual Director to the Inhabitants, Institutions, Incorporated Companies, Manufacturing Establishments, Business, Business Firms, etc., etc. in the City of St. Louis, For 1869*. (St. Louis, Missouri: Edwards, Greenough, and Deved, 1869), 262.

worked as a carpenter, along with all three of his sons.<sup>143</sup> He remained a carpenter until his death in 1897.<sup>144</sup> While it is not practical to compare Davis's chest of drawers piano to a more conventional instrument, it is important to note that by the second half of the nineteenth century, the popularity and accessibility of the piano had increased. There is little question regarding Davis's awareness of standardized forms of the instrument, as professionally-made pianos were widespread throughout the interior and St. Louis directories of the 1860s prominently advertised both imported and locally-made keyboard instruments, including the boudoir piano, melodeon, cabinet organ, and pianos.<sup>145</sup>

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To reach St. Louis from Cumberland by rail in 1868, the Davis family could have used the Baltimore & Ohio to reach Parkersburg, WV. From Parkersburg, the Marietta & Cincinnati to reach Cincinnati, and finally the Ohio & Mississippi to reach St. Louis from Cincinnati. All of these lines were absorbed by the Baltimore & Ohio at the end of the nineteenth century. For more on the westward expansion of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, see John F Stover, *History of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad*, (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1987). For a detailed map of the 1871 railroad network, see G.W. & C.B. Colton & Co. *Colton's railroad & commercial map of the United States and Canada; compiled, engraved and published by G.W. & C.B. Colton & Co.* New York, 1871.

<sup>143</sup> Members of the Davis family are consistently listed as carpenters in the surviving St. Louis directories of 1868-70. Towards the end of his life, the 1880 Federal Census shows Davis having moved in with his son and fellow carpenter, John E.

“Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, St. Louis City, Missouri, Thomas D. Davis,” database with images, *Ancestry.com*, (<https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/6742/4242055-00250>: accessed 2017) NARA microfilm publication M432, roll 277. Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>144</sup> “Missouri, Death Records, 1850-1921, Thomas D. Davis, 1897,” database with images, *Ancestry.com* ([https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/1172/vrmmo1833\\_c10479-1512](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/1172/vrmmo1833_c10479-1512): accessed November 2017).

<sup>145</sup> See for example: Richard Edwards, *Edwards' Annual Director to the Inhabitants, Institutions, Incorporated Companies, Manufacturing Establishments, Business, Business Firms, etc., etc. in the City of St. Louis, For 1866.* (St. Louis, Missouri: Edwards, Greenough, and Deved, 1866), 74, 124, 191-195.

The transient nature of objects and people passing through Cumberland likely provided some level of exposure and inspiration for Davis's Chest of Drawers-Piano. Housed within a utilitarian piece of furniture, the chest bears many similarities in construction and materials to Germanic furniture of Western Maryland.<sup>146</sup> Visually divided into an upper and lower case, the chest has nine rows of drawers. On the lower portion of the case, six rows of drawers graduate in size, becoming incrementally larger in both width and height in descending order. Four drawers span each upper row, two span each middle row, and a single large drawer spans the two rows closest to the floor, providing ample options for storage of a wide array of objects. See *fig. 31* for clarity regarding the layout of drawers in the lower case.

The top case features three large single drawers, each of which are equal in height. Visually, the lack of graduation in the upper portion of the chest appears imbalanced and stunts the case's proportional rhythms. However, the drawer arrangement within the upper case plays a critical role in concealing the piano (*fig. 33*). Referring to the numbered drawers (*fig. 34*), the removal of the drawer 2 reveals a small keyboard instrument. The fronts of drawers 1 and 3 are false, hiding the action of the keyboard within. Comprised of thirty keys devoid of accidentals, the instrument itself is primitive and is a significant shift from a standard mid-century keyboard of five or more octaves. A small pine soundboard sits on the right side of the keyboard, with surviving iron pins but only remnants of wire string. Additionally, the instrument is devoid of a bridge or nut, which traditionally support the stringing on a piano.

The action of Davis's piano is unique. Though similar in concept to early piano action, the mechanism is idiosyncratic and distinct (*fig. 35*). Shaped like a bent finger, the walnut keys with white pine key covers are in direct contact with the hammer. Unlike the conventional guide rail system of balance pins, Davis's piano has angled wires that pass through each key from the hammer rail. The striking point of the hammer is devoid of padding, resulting in the hammer hitting the string directly. The lack of cushioning on this critical component creates a tone more similar to a hammered dulcimer or clavichord, rather than a piano.<sup>147</sup> Despite a range of creative solutions to the mechanisms seen on other amateur instruments, Davis's keyboard lacks a damper system and thus removes an element of sound control long-since stabilized in standard pianos. The evidence from the instrument suggests Davis was

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<sup>146</sup> Priddy and Quinn, "Crossroads of Culture."

<sup>147</sup> John Watson, "Early Keyboard Instruments Data Sheet: Chest of Drawers Piano" (unpublished manuscript, April 1991), 9. Watson compiled this information for a series of articles, entitled "A Catalogue of Antique Keyboard Instruments in the Southeast," in the *Early Keyboard Journal*. The information in this particular data sheet would ultimately be published as the fourth installment in the *Early Keyboard Journal* 9 (1991).

familiar with the concept but unfamiliar with the execution; he may not have had the opportunity to closely examine a conventional piano action when he created this mechanism, or perhaps did not have the tools to do so.

The playability of the instrument is closely affected by the height of the case, which determines how comfortably a user may play upon the keyboard.<sup>148</sup> Guided by measurements of the average human body in a sitting position, the keywell of a standard instrument of the time was typically situated at just under seventy centimeters above the ground. On the Davis piano, the player cannot reach the keyboard without standing, or without the assistance of a tall stool at the height of the second drawer, which is just under five feet tall (*fig. 36*). Conventional pianos include an open top above the keyboard to facilitate freedom of movement and a music desk on which to mount sheet music. The Davis piano has a closed top above the keyboard and is without a music stand. This arrangement requires a user to place their hands inside of the piano compartment in order to play the instrument.

The concealed miniature keyboard is not the only unusual aspect of the case. Every individual drawer has a lock, and the chest includes a range of secret drawers and slots, features often found within desks and other case furniture of the eighteenth century (*fig. 37*). Perhaps the most unusual compartments are found at the back of the piano itself, which include small openings of various shapes. These openings lead to a larger compartment underneath the piano mechanism that are only accessible after removing two boards.<sup>149</sup> The purpose of these secretive compartments remains unknown and would benefit from further research.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Watson, "Early Keyboard Instruments Data Sheet," 10. According to Watson, the piano was used enough to collect finger dirt on the keys, despite the unusual mechanisms and inconvenient height of the instrument.

<sup>149</sup> Watson, "Early Keyboard Instruments Data Sheet," 1-2.

<sup>150</sup> Both John Watson, Curator and Conservator of musical instruments at The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, and Jessica Johnston, M.A. graduate of the American Studies Program at William and Mary, have studied this piano and have posed questions for the hidden instrument and compartments, including the possibility of a tax evasion in regards to the piano. Johnston approached the cabinet piano for a class on material culture under the instruction of Dr. Robert St. George in 1994, and continued with the study for her M.A. Thesis, outlining the construction of the chest in great detail and determining extensive genealogy of the Hays-Hanline family of ownership. Jessica Williams Johnston, "A Distinctive Chest of Drawers: Using Material Culture to Interpret the Past and Present," (M.A. Thesis, The College of William and Mary, 1996).

## Decorative Features

Flanking the tops of the turned columns on the lower case are the initials “T. D.” in sulfur inlay, likely standing for the name of Thomas Davis (*fig. 38*). Both labeled initials and sulfur inlay were common features on Germanic furniture and are common on the types of regional cabinetmaking found in western Maryland. Eighteenth century artisans who used sulfur inlay, such as Caspar Renaker and Conrad Doll, lived and moved within the Maryland- Pennsylvania borderlands and helped transfer this decorative technique further westward towards Cumberland (*fig. 39*).<sup>151</sup> However, sulfur inlay is rarely seen after the beginning of the nineteenth century, making it even more unusual that Davis would chose to use it in his mid-nineteenth century casework.<sup>152</sup> The unusual appearance of sulfur inlay on a piece that already exhibited a variety of materials for decorative and musical effects, speaks to Davis’s creative spirit and prompts further aesthetic interest.

Surrounding the borders of the upper and lower cases are geometric and whimsical surface carvings (*fig. 40*). Alternating patterns of triangles, squares, and circles lightly incised into the cherry, the chest is reminiscent of decorative techniques found on seventeenth century cabinetry (*fig. 41, fig. 42*). The low-relief carving, especially with the repetitive and geometric designs, appears akin to mannerist strapwork. The surface carving and turned columns are not the only references to seventeenth century aesthetics, as the sides of the chest are built with a frame and panel construction typical of early casework.

Glass and brass drawer pulls adorn the front of the case (*fig. 43*). While many of these are replacements, some are likely original. As a more affordable alternative to brass furniture hardware, the knobs were formed by press molds, allowing them to be produced quickly and in large quantities. Early American versions primarily hailed from New England, where the New England Glass Company first patented a convenient process for the knobs in 1826—later improved upon by other glassworks in the Northeast, like the Sandwich Glass Company.<sup>153</sup> However, glass companies

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<sup>151</sup> Caspar Renaker is tied to the use of sulfur inlay on both furniture and gravestones.

See Lisa Minardi, “Sulfur Inlay in American German Furniture: New Discoveries,” in *American Furniture*, ed. Luke Beckerdite (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: The Chipstone Foundation, 2015), <http://www.chipstone.org/article.php/726/American-Furniture-2015/Sulfur-Inlay-in-Pennsylvania-German-Furniture:-New-Discoveries> (accessed November 2017). .

<sup>152</sup> Minardi, “Sulfur Inlay.”

<sup>153</sup> Brock Jobe, Gary Sullivan, and Jack O’Brien. *Harbor & Home: Furniture of Southeastern Massachusetts, 1710-1850*, (Lebanon, New Hampshire: University Press

also appeared in Cumberland and throughout Allegany County beginning in 1816, although the industry did not flourish until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>154</sup> The style of knob seen on the chest of drawers, known as a “swirled mushroom,” was one of hundreds of designs offered by firms in the mid nineteenth century. Like the square piano, glass knobs enjoyed a longer period of popularity in the United States than Europe, coming in various colors and opacities.<sup>155</sup> The presence of glass knobs in rural Maryland reflected the national distribution of manufactured goods and the expansion of industry inland.

Due to the unusual and vernacular nature of this chest-of-drawers piano, and the inlaid initials of “T.D.,” it is likely that Davis made this piece for himself. However, the object did not descend in the Davis family, but through the Hays-Hanline Family of Grant County, West Virginia (then Virginia).<sup>156</sup> On the back of a bottom drawer, the name “Kezia(h) Hays” is scribbled in red pencil, an interesting place for a mark of ownership. Married to farmer Electious Hays in 1789, Keziah Marquess Hays last appears in the 1850 Federal Census at age 86.<sup>157</sup> As a female

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of New England, 2009), 145-148. For more on 19<sup>th</sup> century glassmaking in America, see *The New England Glass Company, 1818-1888*, (Toledo: Toledo Museum of Art, 1963), 10. The Pittsburgh Glass Company was also known to make knobs, but Sandwich was the most prolific. After the Civil War, glassmaking spread into West Virginia, making pieces more accessible to those in Appalachia.

<sup>154</sup> James W. Bishop, *The Glass Industry of Allegany County, Maryland*, (Cumberland, Maryland: Commercial Press Printing, 1968) 17; “Maryland Glass Company, site, (Eastern Glass Company, Queen City Glass Company) Architectural Survey File AL-IV-A-085, Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties, 5-6.

<sup>155</sup> Thomas Hamilton Ormsbee, “Glass Knobs from Sandwich and Elsewhere,” *American Collector*, May 1939.

<sup>156</sup> This is based on an oral history documented by Colonial Williamsburg in 1991 when the object was purchased at an antiques store in Winchester, Virginia. The oral history is recounted in Johnston, “A Distinctive Chest of Drawers,” 18-20.

<sup>157</sup> As the first US census to include all names of family members in a household, the 1850 United States Federal Census reveals that Keziah was living with her son, Kidd, and his family. The 1840 Census only includes husband Electious by name, noting that he had one wife between the ages of 70 and 80.

“Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, population schedule, Hardy County, Virginia, House 1180, Kidd Hays,” database with images, *Ancestry.com*, ([https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/8054/4206373\\_00180](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/8054/4206373_00180): accessed 2017) NARA

living in antebellum rural Virginia, little survives about Keziah's life. How the ownership of the piano transferred from the Davis family to Hays is unknown; the relationship between the Hays-Hanline and Davis family remains a mystery. While there does not appear to be a familial connection, the Hays-Hanline family were farmers who likely traveled to the larger towns in their region for trade: Cumberland, Winchester, and Morgantown.<sup>158</sup> Perhaps Thomas Davis decided to sell the piano when his family chose to leave Cumberland before the Civil War and needed to eliminate possessions that were difficult to move. However, the possibility of Thomas Davis being commissioned to make the chest of drawers for Keziah cannot be discounted, with his sulfur-inlaid initials instead serving as a maker's mark.

Did Thomas D. Davis, or the Hays-Hanline family, consider this object to be a set of drawers bearing a unique surprise, or a musical instrument with ample storage? Ultimately, the object was practical for domestic organization, and also had the ability to alter the domestic soundscape. The production and various ownerships of the unusual chest of drawers piano deepens the significance of its role in the musical life of rural antebellum western Maryland.<sup>159</sup> Undoubtedly, this small keyboard provided

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microfilm publication M432, roll 950. Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

“Sixth Census of the United States, 1840, population schedule, Hardy County, Virginia, Electious Hays,” database with images, *Ancestry.com*, ([https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/8057/4410790\\_00912](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/8057/4410790_00912): accessed 2017) NARA microfilm publication M704, roll 560-563. Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>158</sup> Johnston, “A Distinctive Chest of Drawers,” 22.

<sup>159</sup> Little has been studied of musical life in early Western Maryland. Like Winchester and other areas in the backcountry, Western Maryland had a tradition of shape note singing. For more, see Joshua Barnett, “The Brandstetter Tunebook: Shape-Note Dissemination and the Germans of Western Maryland.” *American Music*, vol. 33, no. 2. (Summer 2015), 176-218.

In regards to instrumental music and piano instruction, the Hagerstown Female Seminary opened in 1853. A surviving catalogue from 1855-1856 outlines the course of studies, which features optional studies in piano, guitar, harp, and voice. To oversee music instruction, the Seminary had four different instructors – three of which taught the piano. One of the instructors, Frederic J. Halm, composed the Hagerstown Female Seminary March,” published by G. Willig in Baltimore in 1877. While Hagerstown was less rural than Cumberland with the convergence of the Great Wagon Road and

entertainment for those who interacted with the object, regardless of its deviation from a standard instrument. The unconventional configuration of the upper case implies that it was not used to play published sheet music, as the absence of a music stand gives the player no choice but to play from memory or improvise. This prompts further questions about what was played, how often it was played, and in what physical or social setting. Beholden to Davis's experimental piano mechanism, the Hays family interacted with an instrument that served a liminal function within the coded conduct of antebellum parlor culture.

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There is no evidence that Baker, or Davis, ever attempted to market or disseminate their creations as something that could compete with standardized piano forms on the ever-expanding nineteenth century market. The work of professional makers, though varying greatly, met a baseline standard of craftsmanship and fostered a level of expectations for sound in the increasingly sophisticated and musically diverse inland South. These rich and varied soundscapes shaped the minds of white backcountry residents as they engaged with Western art music, European folk music, hybrid forms of shape note singing, and the appropriation of music from enslaved and free black communities. As such, the merit of any musical instrument used within these traditions was defined by judgment of sound and playability. Yet when considering the piano, accompanied by the additional expectations of an object representing a venerable international tradition, perhaps judgment extended further.

The work of amateur makers like Baker or Davis prevailed within this musically complex backcountry society. While they employed basic elements of the piano, the capabilities of these keyboards, both real and conceptual, could not compare with the sounds generated by professionally made instruments. Any attempt to match this qualitative standard by an amateur without training or the ability to job out the complexities of a mechanism to a specialist, was nearly impossible. Instead, Davis's choice to expend the resources of time and material to make a singular object, or Baker's documentation of the difficult stepwise process of craftsmanship, emphasizes the ingenuity that powered amateur production. The legacy of Baker and Davis challenged the very definition of a piano, suggesting that innovation will persist regardless of sound and consumer demand. In the decades to come, the presence of similar musical instrument innovators across America would flourish—chasing the possibility that someday, something new would sound *better*.

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the National Road, the presence of a female seminary in Western Maryland speaks to the pervasive nature of social expectations for young women.

*Second Annual Catalogue of the Officers and Pupils of the Hagerstown Female Seminary: 1855-1856.* (Baltimore, Maryland: John W. Woods, 1856).





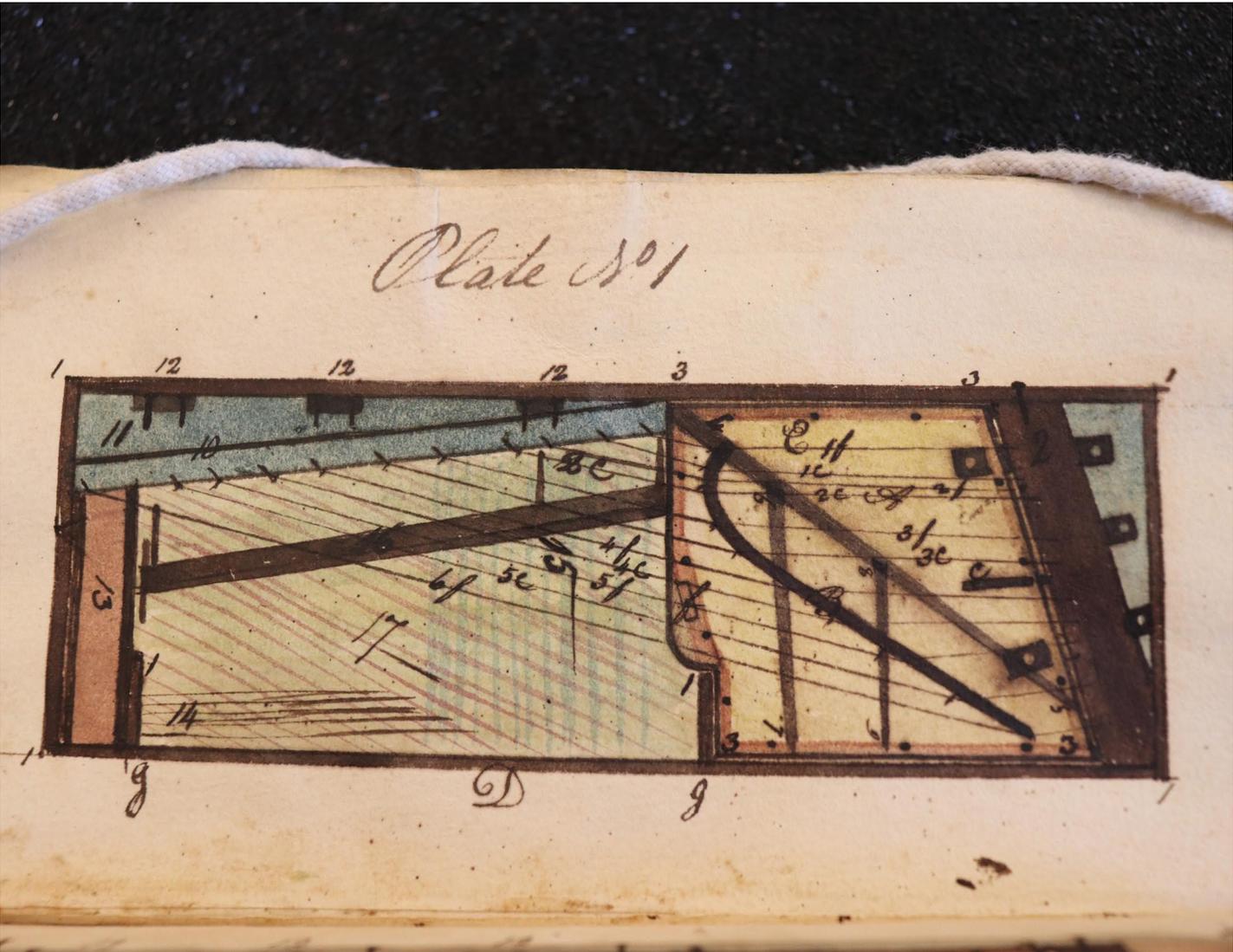
**Figure 19** *Farmer Giles & his wife shewing off their daughter Betty to their neighbours, on her return from school* by James Gillray, London, 1809. Engraving on paper. OH. 320 mm, OW. 470 mm, Courtesy British Museum, London, BM Saites 11444, acc. no. 1868,0808,77111 © The Trustees of the British Museum.



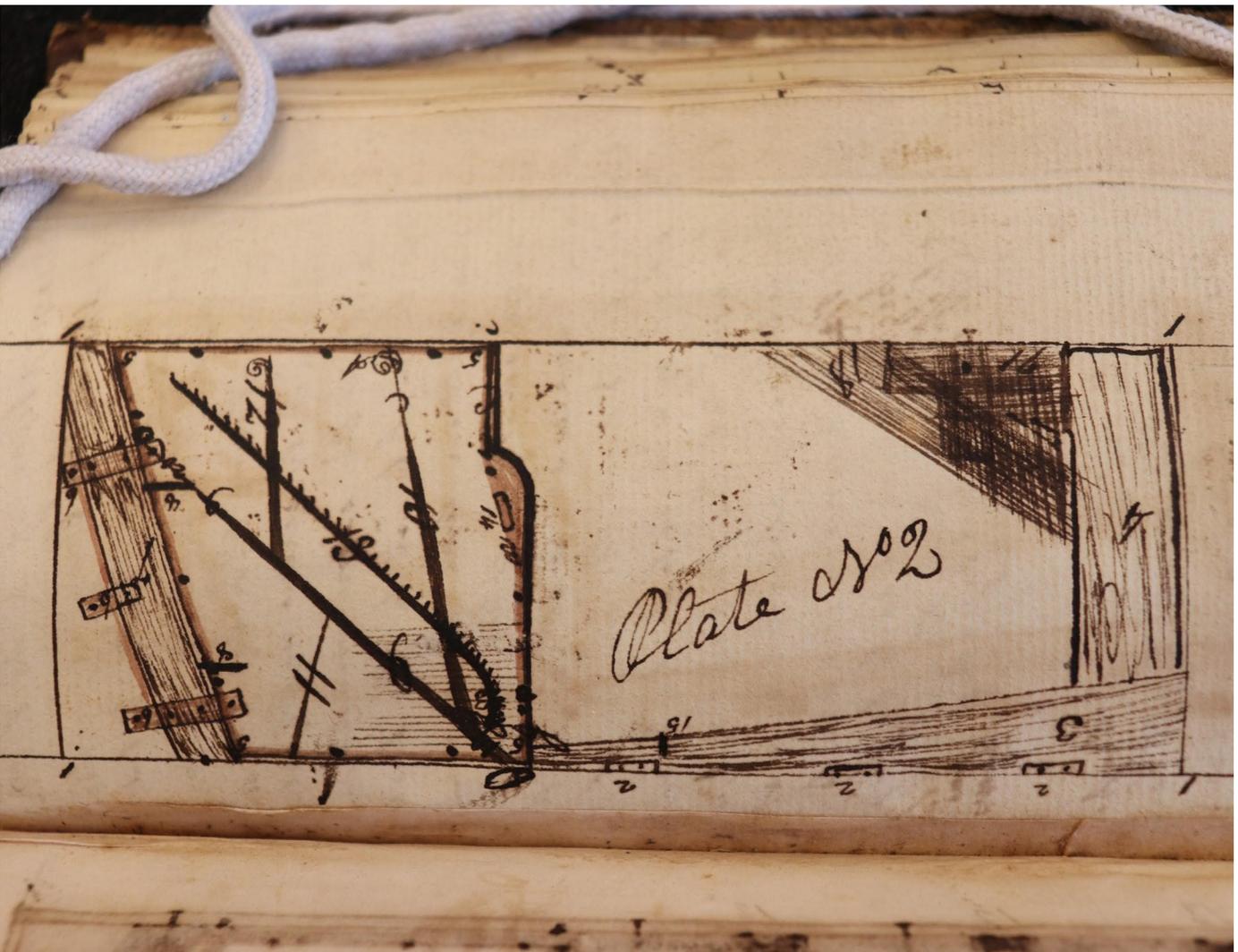
**Figure 20** Detail of the Cover Page of the Diary of William Alexander Baker. *Recipe book* by William A. Baker, Winchester, Virginia, 1806-1815. Courtesy Swem Special Collections Research Center, College of William and Mary, Mss. MsV R1. Used with permission. Photo by the author.

Directly - - -	1	Linon black = <sup>157</sup> 34
Red Brandy -	9	old mitted stuff for } 34
Whiskey to give	9	rosetts - } 34
keep eyes sweet	"	a fine water for } 36
eye water	10	the face } 36
To make red Ink	10	how to butify } 37
" " Black do	10	the skin } 37
" " wine of cyole	11	Another way 38
To " red Ink	13	do do 39
" " " " " " " "	14	a cloth to rub } 39
Blue Ink	16	the face } 39
To Burn Up Black	"	Oil of Roses 41
" Cast small shot	17	Ball foote } 42
" make Vinegar	17	take greese & } 42
" " Sower	18	Bee Bate 43
" " a fine cement	18	To colour liquor 44
A choice varnish	18	Shoe Black 45
To colour feathers	19	do do "
" make water rosetts	20	To make wood & 45
water brands &	20	Hard Seal Wax 46
Charge for War Poles	28	Coarser do 48
" " water crackers	29	best hard black 49
" " tumbling	30	coarser do "
" " water cats	30	hard Green "
a water for taking	31	Blue wax 50
out greese (cloth &c) }	31	Yellow do 50
To dye Wolen Black	32	To take greese off } 50
		of Ivory - } 50
		ununder way 60
		Red black &c 60
		Caper mache 62

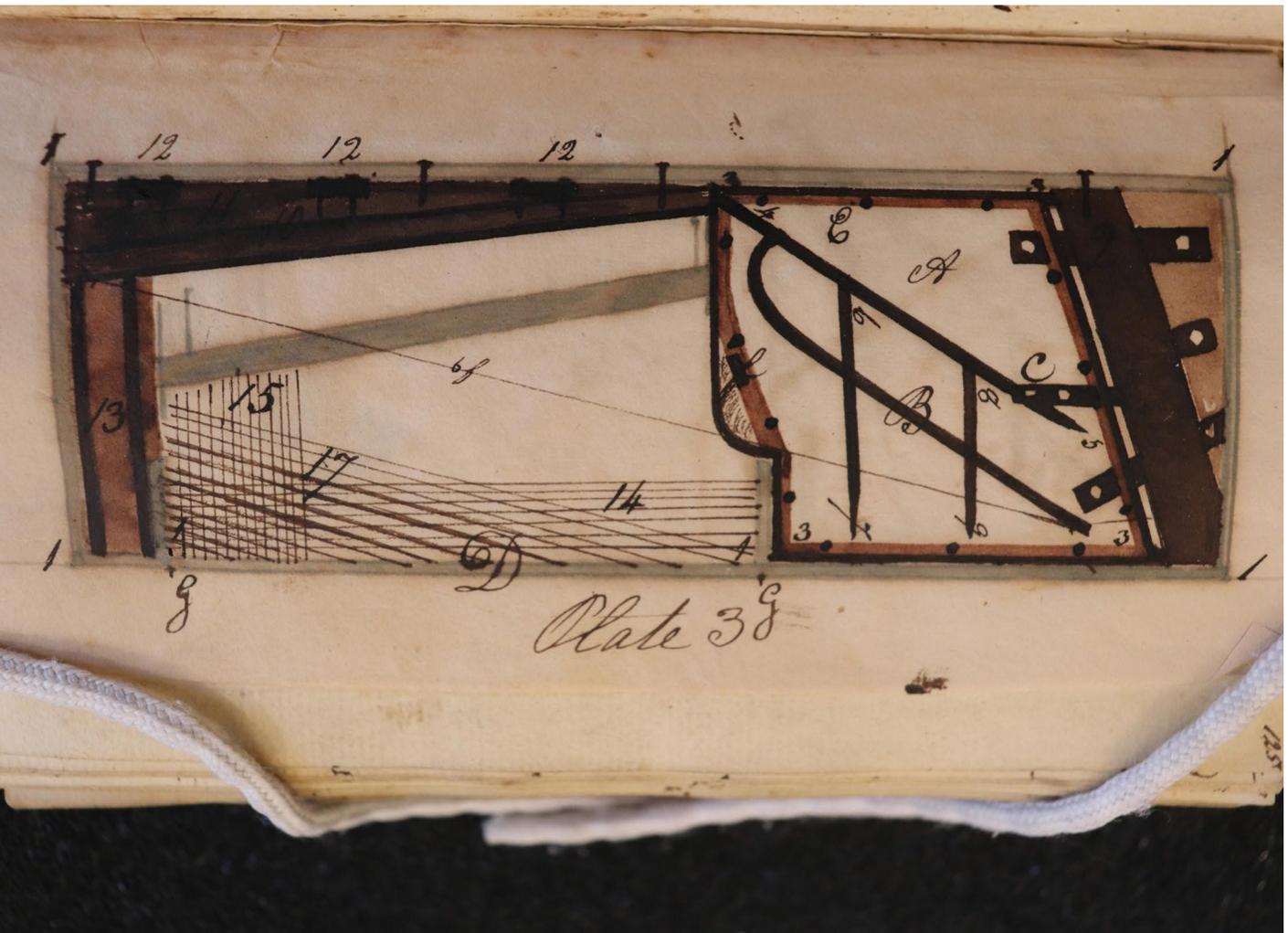
**Figure 21** Table of Contents in the Recipe Book of William A. Baker. Used with permission. Photo by the author. For full listing of index, see Appendix C.



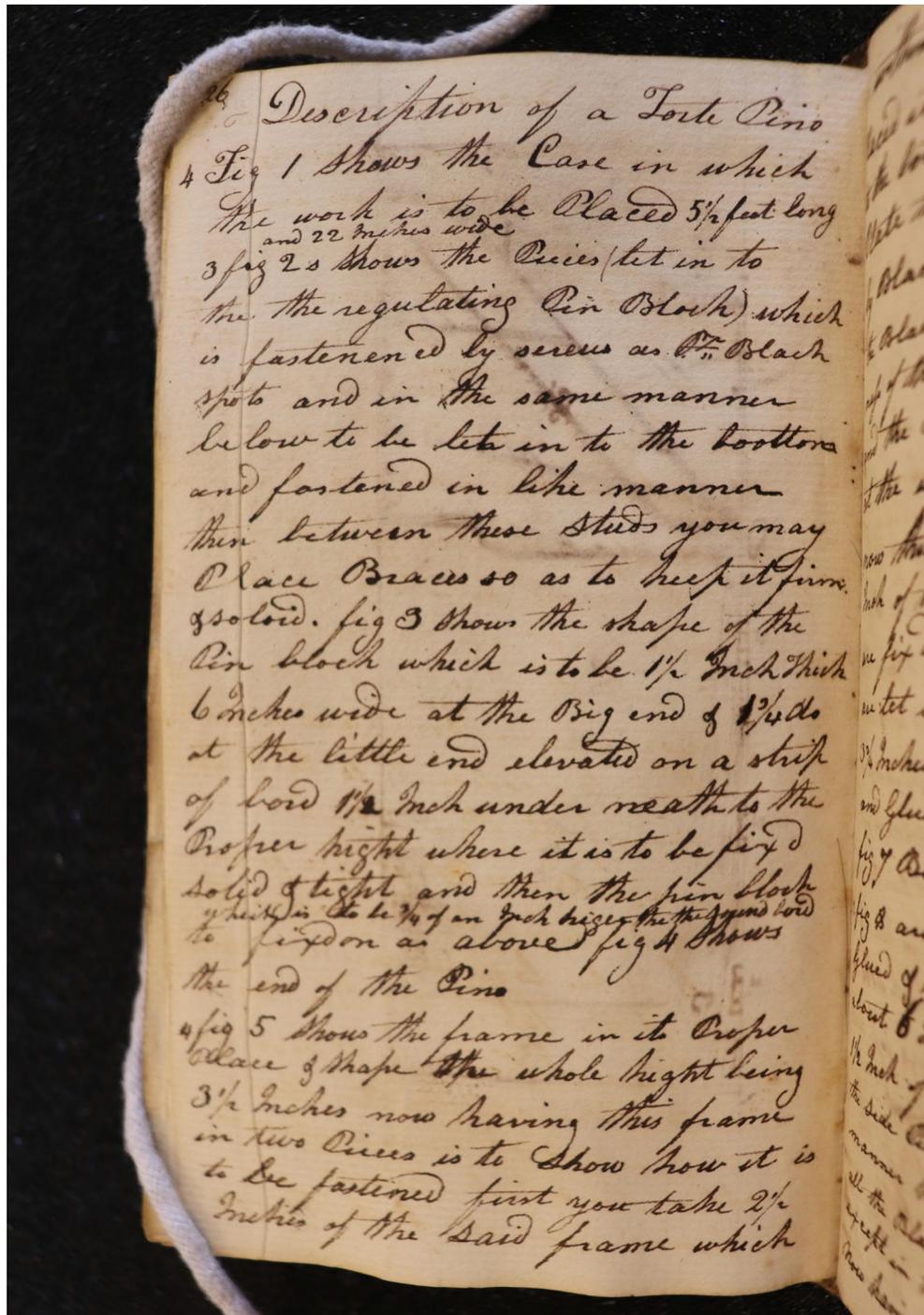
**Figure 22** Plate No. 1 in the Recipe Book of William A. Baker. Used with permission. Photo by the author.



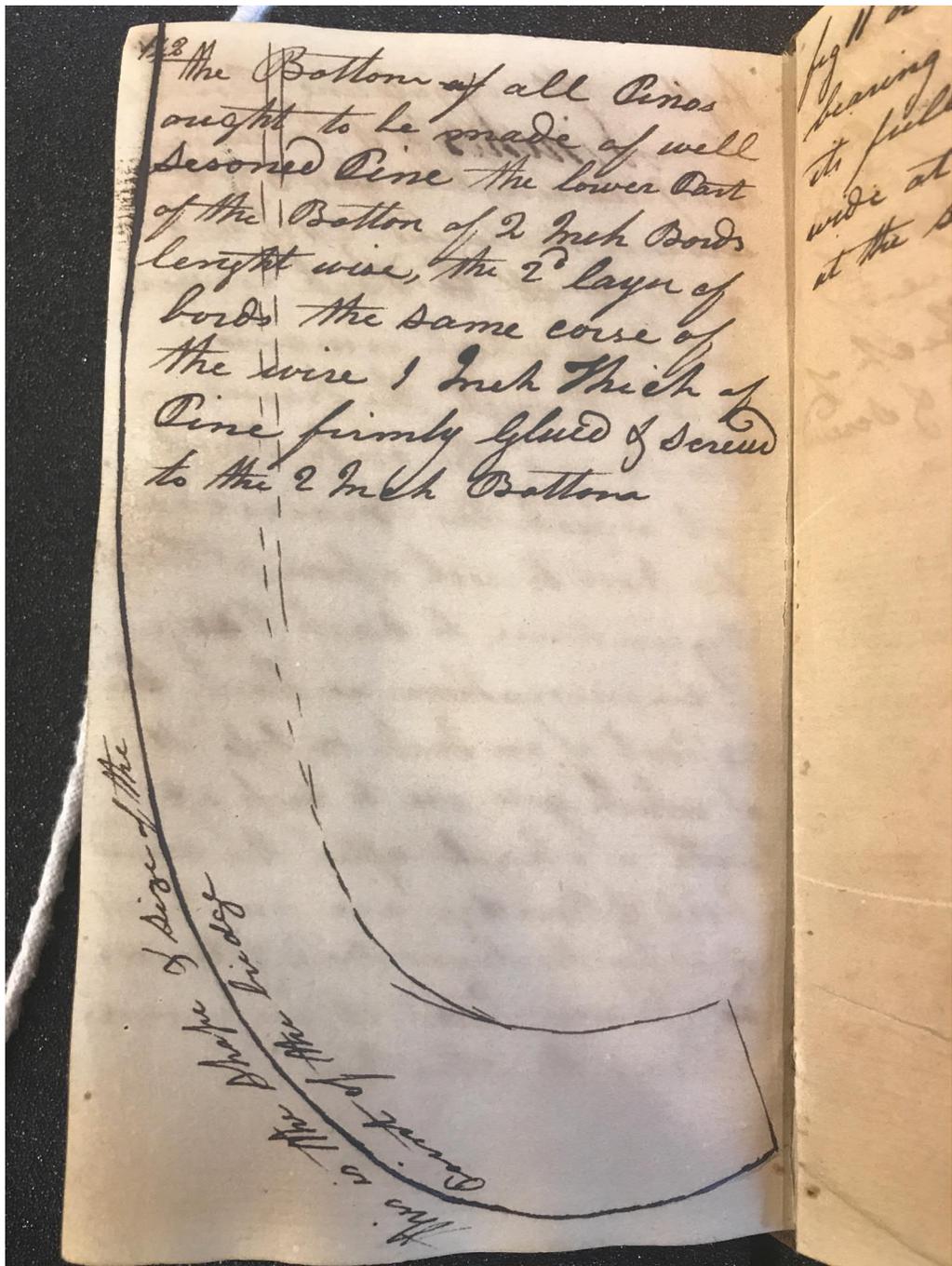
**Figure 23** Plate No. 2 in the Recipe Book of William A. Baker. Used with permission. Photo by the author.



**Figure 24** Plate No. 3 in the Recipe Book of William A. Baker. Used with permission. Photo by the author.



**Figure 25** Instructions for the process of laying out the dimension for a square piano case, in the Recipe Book of William A. Baker. Used with permission. Photo by the author.



**Figure 26** Sketch of the curvature of the square piano bridge, in the Recipe Book of William A. Baker. Used with permission. Photo by the author.

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I'M GOING HOME L. M.

"And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. Isa. 65:19. Leonard P. Breedlove. 1950. Alto by S. M. Denson 1911.  
Key of F Major.

Fare - well vain world! I'm go - ing home! My Sa - viour smiles and bids me come, And I don't care to stay here long!  
Sweet an - gels beck - on me a - way, To sing God's praise in end - less day, And I don't care to stay here long!

Fare - well vain world! I'm go - ing home! My Sa - viour smiles and bids me come, And I don't care to stay here long!  
Sweet an - gels beck - on me a - way, To sing God's praise in end - less day, And I don't care to stay here long!

Right up yon - der! Christ - ians a - way up yon - der; O, yes, my Lord, for I don't care to stay here long.

Right up yon - der, Christ - ians a - way up - yon - der; O, yes, my Lord, for I don't care to stay here long.

Breedlove was a music teacher in Georgia. He died about forty years ago in South Georgia. He was a member of the Southern Musical Convention from the time it was organized in 1844 up to the time of his death. Hewas secretary of the convention from 1845 to 1850. In the Sacred Harp, compiled by B. F. White, E. J. King he is credited with Arnold and ten other tunes. See further statement of him in James Brief History of the Sacred Harp, page 113. The hymn is in a number of tunes in this book. Alto has been added by S. M. Denson 1911. The words in the part of this tune have been used in connection with several tunes in the Sacred Harp page 274, as well as other tunes, each of the authors have changed the words to suit their tune.

1. There  
2. There  
3. Sweet  
4. Could  
The original  
author window, lo  
them from the pro  
the good in heaven

John Newton, 177  
Key of B, Flat Ma  
1. How swe  
2. It mak  
3. Dear n

Rev. Lewis F  
The hymn stands  
first music 1816.

**Figure 27** "I'm Going Home," printed sheet music in *The Sacred Harp*, compiled by B.F. White, Hamilton, Georgia, 1844. Private collection. Photo by the author.

Figure 28

Detail of the instructions for reading shape note music, in Wheeler Gillet's *The Virginia Sacred Minstrel*. Private collection. Photo by the author.

**Treble & Tenor.**

G sol This character, called the G cliff, is used in Treble and Tenor, and usually stands on the second line.

F faw

E law

D sol

C faw

B Mi

A law

G sol

F faw

E law

**Counter.**

G sol This character, called the counter cliff, is used in Counter, and stands on the middle line.

F faw

E law

D sol

C faw

B Mi

A law

G sol

F faw

**Bass.**

A law This character, called the Bass cliff, is used in Bass, and stands on the 4th line.

G sol

F faw

E law

D sol

C faw

B Mi

A law

G sol

The first column shews the names of the lines and spaces--the second the names and order of the notes.

**Sol** **Law** **Mi** **Faw**

Round Square Diamond Triangle

The semitones are between B and C, or Mi, Faw; and E and F, or Law Faw.

**Notes. Rests.**

Semibreve

Minim

Crotchet

Quaver

Semiquaver

Demisemiquaver

Accent is a certain force of sound which, when a bar consists of two or three equal parts, is on the first

When of four it is on the first and third.

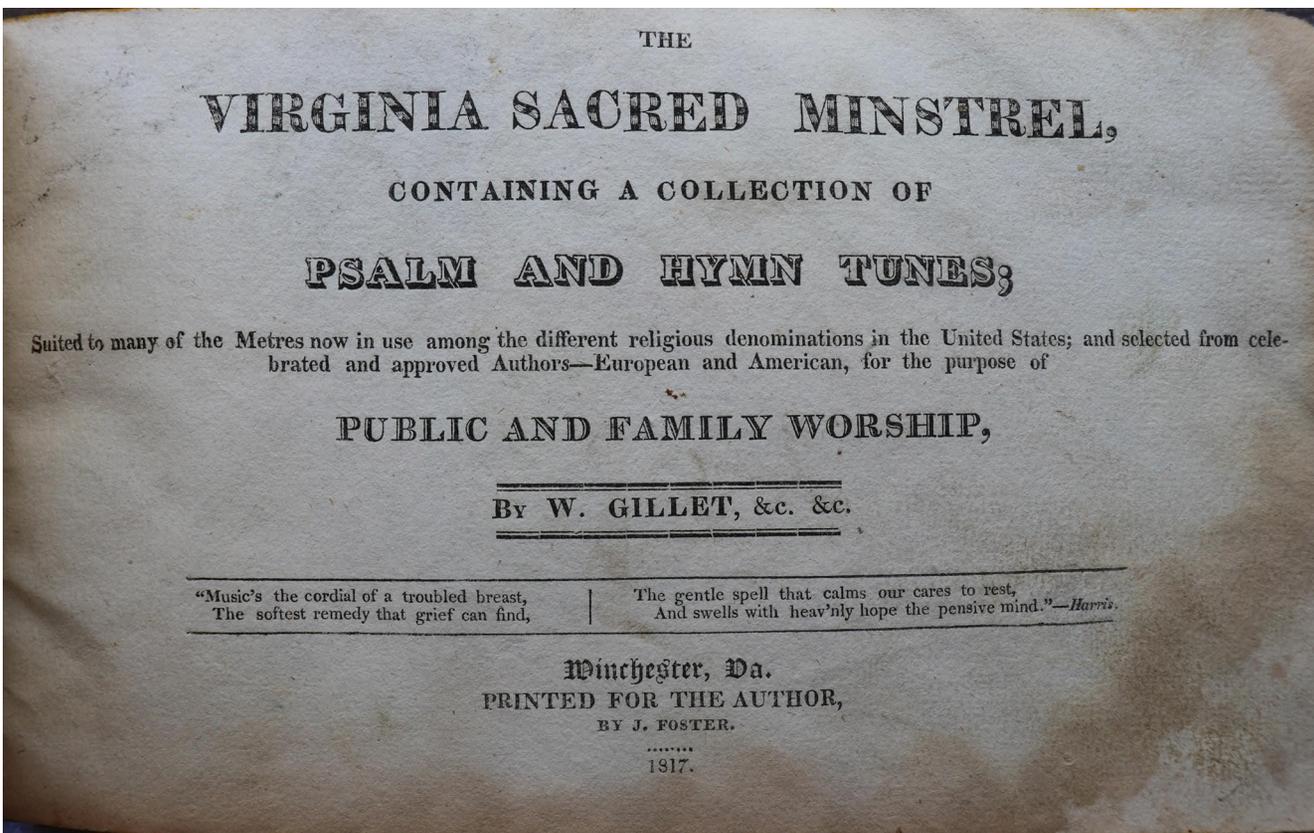
When of six it is on the first and fourth.

A semibreve rest fills a bar in all moods of time, the other rests are marks of silence, equal in time to the notes after which they are called.

The natural place for Mi is in B,

One	b	Mi is in	- - -	E	One	*	Mi is in	- - -	F
Two	b b	- - -	- - -	A	Two	*	*	- - -	C
Three	b b b	- - -	- - -	D	Three	*	*	*	G
Four	b b b b	- - -	- - -	G	Four	*	*	*	D

The order of the notes above and below the *Mi* is as follows, viz. above it are *faw, sol, law, faw, sol, law*; and below it are *law, sol, faw, law, sol, faw*; after which *Mi* returns, either ascending or descending.



**Figure 29** Title Page of Wheeler Gillet's *The Virginia Sacred Minstrel*. Private collection. Photo by the author.

RECOMMENDATIONS, &c.

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From the Rev. A Reck, Pastor of the German Lutheran Church in Winchester.

MR. GILLET,

Sir,

I have had but time to take a cursory view of your new publication entitled "*The Virginia Sacred Minstrel*," and can say that (according to my opinion) it has been made with much prudence and good judgment, being well adapted to the use of public worship, with all the different religious denominations; and make no doubt that it will meet the approbation of the public, wherever any due regard to that glorious part of divine service, (viz. singing) is had.

A. RECK.

Oct. 1st. 1817.

From Mr. Wm. A. Baker, Piano Forte maker, Winchester.

MR. GILLET,

Sir,

Having run through your collection of sacred music ("*The Virginia Sacred Minstrel*,") I pronounce it to contain, in my opinion, music for divine worship, of the first

quality; being acquainted with about one half the tunes, and having examined the remainder, I find them equally good and well calculated for the different denominations of Christians—your plan of setting a hymn to each tune I conceive of great advantage.

Yours respectfully,

W. A. BAKER.

Oct. 2nd. 1817.

From Mr. John Von Reisen, late teacher of instrumental music in Winchester.

MR. GILLET,

Sir,

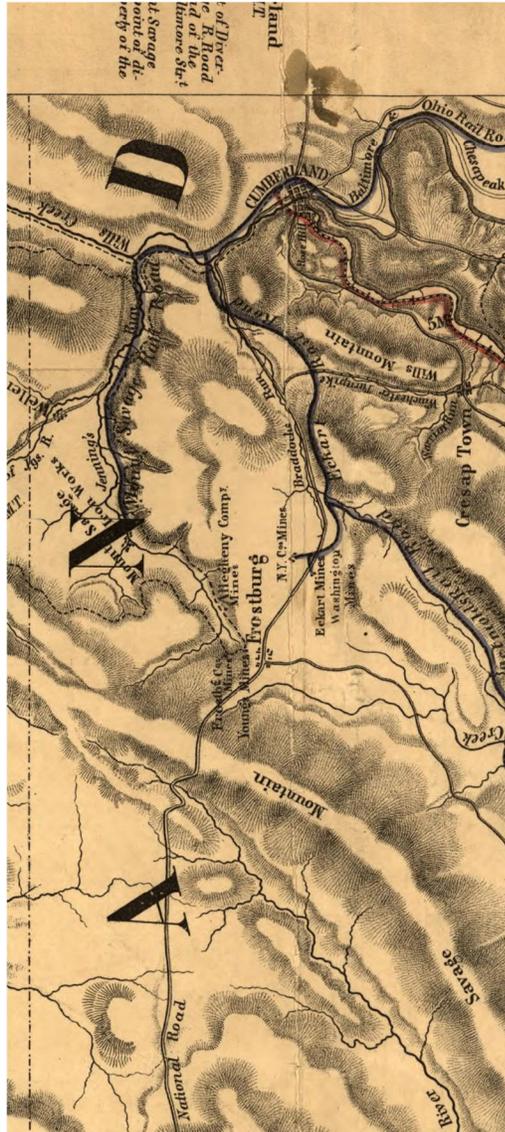
Having examined your music book, entitled "*The Virginia Sacred Minstrel*," I find it to contain a collection of music far superior to any I have ever seen published in Patent Notes, and ought, in my opinion, to be made use of generally by all denominations of Christians.

JOHN VON REISEN.

Figure 30 Image of recommendations, including one by William A. Baker, in Wheeler Gillet's *The Virginia Sacred Minstrel*. Private collection. Photo by the author.



**Figure 31** Piano in the form of a Chest of Drawers, attributed to Thomas D. Davis, Cumberland County, Maryland, ca. 1840. OH. 1580 mm, OW. 955 mm. Courtesy of John Watson, Colonial Williamsburg Museum Purchase 1991-438.



**Figure 32** Detail of map showing the National Road extending westward from Cumberland, Maryland. *Map & profile of the location of the Baltimore & Ohio Rail Road from Cumberland to Wheeling showing also the various routes surveyed from the 1836 to the final establishment in 1850 of the line upon which the road is being constructed; Benj. H. Latrobe, Chief Engineer; drawn by Albert Fink, by Albert Fink, Baltimore, 1850. Hand colored. OH. 85 cm, OW. 165 cm. Courtesy Library of Congress Geography and Map Division, Washington, D.C., cat. no. G3791.P3 1850 .F5*



**Figure 33** Detail of Keywell, Thomas D. Davis Chest of Drawers Piano. Courtesy of John Watson.

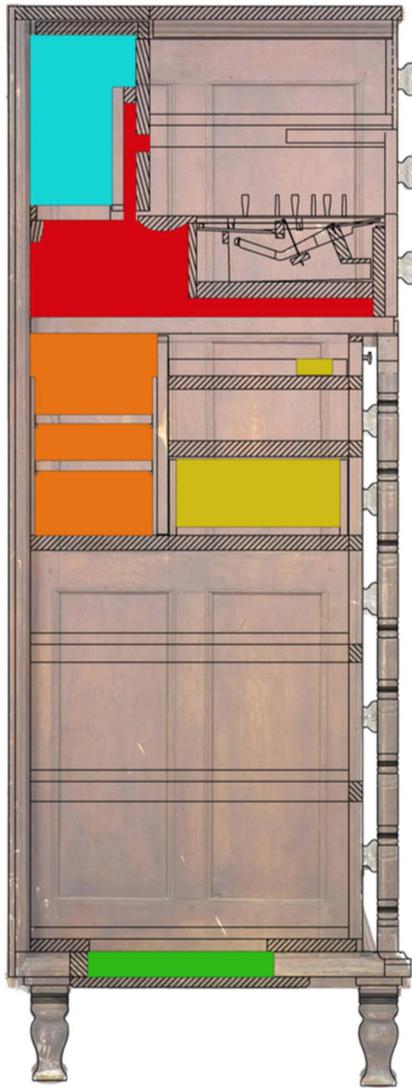


**Figure 34** Drawer layout in the upper case of the Thomas D. Davis Chest of Drawers Piano. Numbers inserted for reference. Courtesy of John Watson.





**Figure 36** Potential playing position for the Thomas D. Davis Chest of Drawers Piano. Courtesy of John Watson.



**Figure 37** Diagram of hidden and empty compartments within the Thomas D. Davis Chest of Drawers Piano. Courtesy of John Watson.



**Figure 38** Detail of “T” and “D” sulfur inlay seen on the front of the Thomas D. Davis Chest of Drawers Piano. Courtesy of John Watson.



**Figure 39** Detail of sulfur inlaid initials on Blanket Chest, attributed to Conrad Doll, Frederick, Maryland, 1785. OH. 24, OW. 51. Courtesy Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, acc. no. 5689.



**Figure 40** Detail of geometric surface carving on the Thomas D. Davis Chest of Drawers Piano, Courtesy of John Watson.



**Figure 41** Court cupboard, 1650-1700. Duxbury, Plymouth, Massachusetts. Red oak, white pine, maple, white cedar. OH. 59, OW, 49 ½. Courtesy, Winterthur Museum, gift of Henry Francis du Pont, 1956.10.1



**Figure 42** Box, 1676. New York, Mid-Atlantic. White pine. OH. 4 ¼, OW. 11 5/8. Courtesy, Winterthur Museum, gift of Henry Francis du Pont, 1958.0528 A,B.



**Figure 43** Detail of glass drawer knob on the Thomas D. Davis Chest of Drawers Piano, Courtesy of John Watson.

## CONCLUSION

Whether accomplished for profit or personal interest, the crux of American amateur musical instrument making embodies a freedom to transcend predetermined categories. For craftsman like David Prichard, it resulted in creative solutions for creating enjoyable sounds with a complex mechanism. Autodidact William A. Baker embodied his amateur interests in a fresh interpretation of a familiar object, worked out on paper. Thomas D. Davis created an experimental type of instrument all together. Fundamentally, all of these makers interpreted the methodologies and ideologies associated with professionally-made keyboard instruments in ways that remain unique to them.

The survival of their objects supports a more nuanced interpretation of music, education, and craftsmanship in the antebellum American Backcountry. In examining the construction of the instruments and the environments that they functioned within, our understanding of life in the early inland South is deepened and the myriad of soundscapes enriched by Prichard, Baker, and Davis are revealed. Residents of the Backcountry not only shared musical interests with elite coastal parlors, but also developed unique soundscapes that reflected a wide amalgamation of musicians, makers, and audiences. Their musical traditions, new and old, were often just as colorful and distinctive as the instruments self-taught individuals created. For their part, amateur craftsmen improvised solutions to instrument making and determined novel ways to achieve their objectives. As David Warren Steel noted about the music industry in early America, “those who succeeded...are distinguished as unusually enterprising, versatile, and flexible.”<sup>160</sup>

The self-taught makers of the Backcountry embodied this sentiment and represented a democratic approach to craftsmanship and music. Despite an increasingly robust industry of musical instrument making, sheet music production, and music education in both America and Europe, amateur craftsmen of the Backcountry carved out a place for their instruments and ideas. While innovation and invention certainly occurred in America’s cosmopolitan cities, working inland permitted craftsmen and entrepreneurs the freedom to explore the market for keyboard instruments without as much risk as those facing tough competition in urban centers. These self-taught piano makers, if attempting to work in larger metropolitan areas, would have quickly been engulfed by the work of professional firms.

Yet ultimately, the products of self-taught makers were meant to serve the same function as an instrument from London or New York. Musical instruments survive because they were expensive investments and central fixtures in the lives of those who owned them. They invite a deeper interpersonal connection than many other forms of material culture because they require a physical relationship to give them meaning. Unlike a tool, the instrument was not merely performing a task; it embodied

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<sup>160</sup> David Warren Steel, *The Makers of the Sacred Harp* (Champaign: The University of Illinois Press, 2010), 32.

and mirrored the human spirit in combining the social, emotional, and artistic agencies of a player with an audience. This sensory effect is what makes studying the material culture of music so evocative, and fruitful for gaining more complete perspectives on the past. Domestic life, gender roles, entertainment, education, and craftsmanship take on new meanings and invite new understandings when they are placed within a soundscape.

Along the Great Wagon Road, the soundscapes created by self-taught piano makers and amateur players contributed to a transformation of musical traditions in the region. While idiosyncratic instrument construction inherently altered compositions of Western art music, it also provided a platform for creating and interacting with new musical ideas. It is the musical instruments and soundscapes of these Backcountry regions, and of marginalized communities, that have shaped both contemporary and historical concepts of an authentic “American” sound.<sup>161</sup>

Amateurism drove the development of musical instruments, sheet music, and musical pedagogy in early America. With a limited number of professional musicians and a nation full of people seeking fulfilling entertainment, the industries of musical instruments and sheet music were inextricably tied to amateur musicianship. Yet the unique range of objects and documents created in the American Backcountry by Prichard, Baker, and Davis reveal that American amateurism can take a much more complex and extraordinary form. With a relaxed approach to the expectations of parlor culture etiquette and craftsmanship, Backcountry artisans helped liberate the keyboard instrument from the associations of class-based gentility and refinement, leaving both the piano and the player free to innovate.

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<sup>161</sup> Richard Crawford, *America's Musical Life*, (New York, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001) 377, 384-386. In the late nineteenth century, cultural nationalism was a significant movement within Western art music and often turned to folk traditions for inspirational fodder in European countries. For the United States, cultural nationalism in art music translated to the appropriation of Native American and African American musical traditions, apparent in works such as Suite No. 2, Op. 48 “Indian,” by Edward McDowell and Symphony No. 9 in E minor “From the New World,” by Antonín Dvořák. McDowell and Dvořák had differing opinions on what should constitute an “American” sound, but both used romanticized ideas surrounding marginalized American communities. Today, traditions of the inland south, such as bluegrass and Sacred Harp, bear an authentically “American” connotation.

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## Appendix A

### **IDENTIFIED AMERICAN SELF-TAUGHT KEYBOARD INSTRUMENT MAKERS, AND MAKERS WITH SELF-TAUGHT TENDENCIES, 1775-1875**

Note: Makers that have an entry in the Clinkscale Database will include the Clinkscale Early Piano (CEP) number of their associated instruments. Founded by Martha Novak Clinkscale and supported by the American Musical Instrument Society, the Clinkscale Database is the most comprehensive living document of keyboard instruments made before 1860. To view full entry for each maker visit [www.earlypianos.org](http://www.earlypianos.org).

<b>Name</b>	<b>Relevant Dates</b>	<b>Relevant Locations</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Westley Whitaker	b. 1788, d. 1858	Raleigh, North Carolina	Whitaker worked as a Windsor chair and carriage maker before beginning to advertise pianos in 1828. CEP 4033.

David Pritchard	b. 1798, d. 1884	Iredell & Alexander Counties, North Carolina	See Chapter 1.
William A. Baker	b. 1806, d. 1815	Winchester, Virginia	See Chapter 2.
John Huber	b. c. 1765, d. c. 1789	Allentown, Pennsylvania; Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; Northampton, Pennsylvania	Four surviving instruments, CEP 6682, 4270, 1750, 4271.
Joseph Small	Active early 19 <sup>th</sup> century	York, Pennsylvania	Very late-period harpsichord maker. Allegedly made for the Moravian Church. Surviving instrument sold by the Harpsichord clearinghouse in 2015.
Gerhardt Feldhar	b. c. 1800, d. 1881	Westphalia, Prussia; Wisconsin	Immigrated to Wisconsin from Westphalia around 1840. CEP 1210.
John Haberacker	b. 1780, d. 1846	Reading, Pennsylvania	Born near Reading, PA. Advertised building both organs and pianos. CEP 1615, 5705, 7082, 7157.
John Isaac Hawkins	b. 1772, d. 1854	London, England; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Hawkins was an inventor, creating one of the earliest upright pianos and also creating the mechanical pencil. Out of his four surviving upright pianos, two were crafted in Philadelphia, and two were crafted in London. CEP 5582, 1647, 1648, 5581.
Thomas D. Davis	b. 1818, d. 1897	Allegany County, Maryland; St. Louis, Missouri	See Chapter 2. CEP 1770.
Gottlieb Byham	b. c. 1777	Springplace Mission, Georgia; Salem, North Carolina	In 1806, Byham built one of the first pipe organs in rural Georgia while serving as a missionary of the Moravian Church at the Springplace

			Mission, which aimed to convert the local Cherokee Nation. In letters to the back to the Moravian community of Salem, Byham described how it was made “mostly of fence rails” and that he worked on it secretly in the evenings for three years.
Stirewalt Family, John and Jacob	Active late 18 <sup>th</sup> and early 19 <sup>th</sup> century	Rowan County, North Carolina	Built pipe organ inside of house, Mill Hill, built first pipe organ in state of Organ Lutheran Church (1774)

**Appendix B**  
**IDENTIFIED SURVIVING AMERICAN KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS**  
**CRAFTED BY SELF-TAUGHT MAKERS, AND MAKERS WITH SELF-**  
**TAUGHT TENDENCIES, 1740-1875**

Note: Instruments that have an entry in the Clinkscale Database will include their Clinkscale Early Piano (CEP) number. Founded by Martha Novak Clinkscale and supported by the American Musical Instrument Society, the Clinkscale Database is the most comprehensive living document of keyboard instruments made before 1860. To view full entry for each instrument, visit [www.earlypianos.org](http://www.earlypianos.org).

<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Maker</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Current Location</b>	<b>CEP</b>
Square Piano	Unknown	Early 19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Likely New England or New York	General Schuyler House, Schuylerville, New York	N/A

Square Piano	Westley Whitaker	ca. 1820-1830	Raleigh, North Carolina	Governor's Mansion, Raleigh, North Carolina	4033
Square Piano	Unknown; Labeled "Grandfather of Mr. O. C. Ramsey"	ca. 1825-1845	Winchester, Kentucky	Lexington, Kentucky; Private collection.	7125
Square Piano	David Prichard	ca. 1835-1840	Iredell County, North Carolina	Museum of Early South Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, North Carolina	N/A
Square Piano	John Haberacker	ca. 1820	Reading, Pennsylvania	Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.	1615
Square Piano	John Haberacker	Early 19 <sup>th</sup> century	Reading, Pennsylvania	Historic Rittenhouse Town, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	5705
Square Piano	John Haberacker	ca. 1805-1810	Reading, Pennsylvania	Berks County Historical Society, Reading, Pennsylvania	7082
Square Piano	John Haberacker	Early 19 <sup>th</sup> century	Reading, Pennsylvania	Sigal Museum, Easton, Pennsylvania	7157
Square Piano	John Huber	ca. 1805-1809	Harrisburg, Pennsylvania	Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Williamsburg, Virginia	6682
Square Piano	John Huber	ca. 1790-1795	Northampton, Pennsylvania	Northampton Historical Society, Easton, Pennsylvania	4270
Square Piano	John Huber	ca. 1796	Northampton, Pennsylvania	Wachovia Historical Society, Winston-Salem, North Carolina	1750
Square Piano	John Huber	ca. 1802-1809	Harrisburg, Pennsylvania	Tulsa, Oklahoma; Private collection	4271

Square Piano	Unknown	Early 19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Possibly Virginia	Lightfoot, Virginia; Private collection	N/A
Square Piano	Unknown	Early 19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Unknown	Unknown; Held in collection of the Atmore-Oliver House in New Bern, North Carolina until 2011	3538
Chest of Drawers Piano	Likely Thomas D. Davis	ca. 1840	Cumberland, Allegany County, Maryland	Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, Virginia	1770
Square Piano	Gerhardt Feldhar	ca. 1844	Wisconsin	Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.	1210
Square Piano	Unknown	Early 19 <sup>th</sup> Century	Unknown, poss. New England	Sigal Music Museum, Greenville, South Carolina	3341
Upright Piano	John Isaac Hawkins	1800	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Florida; Private collection.	5582
Upright Piano	John Isaac Hawkins	1801	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.	1647
Spinnet Harpsichord	Joseph Small	ca. 1827	York, Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania; Private collection.	N/A

**Appendix C**  
**INDEX – RECIPE BOOK OF WILLIAM A. BAKER**

Elictricity (Electricity)  
Peech (Peach) Brandy  
Whiskey to gin  
Keep Cyder Sweet  
Eye water  
To Make red Ink  
To make black Ink  
To make wine of cyder  
To make red Ink  
To make [illegible]  
Blue Ink  
To Burn Lye Black  
To Cart small shot  
To make Vineagar  
To make Sower  
To make a fine cement  
A choice Varnish  
To color feathers  
To make water rocks water hands  
Charges for War books  
Charges for water crackers  
Charges for tumblizing  
Charges for water oats  
A water for taking out greese (clothing)  
To dye Wolen black  
Linen black  
Cold melted stuff for rockets  
A fine water for the face  
How to butify the skin  
Another way (to butify the skin)  
Do do (another way to butify the skin)  
A clothe to rub the face  
Oil of Roses  
Ball forto take greese  
Bee Bathe  
To color Liquors  
Shoe Black  
Do do (shoe black)  
To make wood

Hard Seal Wax  
Coarser do (seal wax)  
Best hard black  
Coarser do (hard black)  
Hand qreem  
Blue Wax  
Yellow do (wax)  
To take greese off of Ivory  
Undeferred Wax  
Red black  
Paper mache  
The whole paper  
Varnishing of the Boxes  
Varnish for wood  
Hand varnish for [illegible]  
Sodder Guided  
Clean Boof  
Type Mettle  
To make prume  
Printing Ink  
Blacking  
Liniment  
To make Beer  
To make Salve  
To put Bead on Whiskey  
To Color Blue  
TO Cure Deafness  
Gilding  
To make Kisses  
Sugar Radishes  
Furnace to prepare coal to drip whiskey  
Cure for Dysentery  
Dunable Ink  
Glass or Ware Cement  
To Color feathers red  
To Make Epoulett  
Copal Varnish  
Description of Piano Forte  
To make stars for fire works

**Appendix D**  
**DESCRIPTION OF A PIANO FORTE – RECIPE BOOK OF WILLIAM A.**  
**BAKER**

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Description of a Forte Pino

Fig 1 shows the Case in which the work is to be Placed 5 ½ feet long fig 2s shoes the Pieces (let in to the the regulating Pin Block) which is fastened by screws as Black spots and in the same manner below to be let in to the bottom and fastened in like manner then between these studs you may Place Braces so as to keep it firm & soloid [solid?]. fig 3 shows the shape of the Pin block which is to be 1 ½ Inch thick 6 Inches wide at the Big end of 1 ¾ do at the little end elevated on a strip of bord 1 ½ Inch underneath to the Proper height where it is to be fixd solid of height and then the pin block which is to be ¾ of an Inch higer [higher] the the ground bord to be fixd on an above fig 4 shows the end of the Pins.

Fig 5 shows the frame in its Proper Place & shape the whole hight being 3 ½ Inches now having this frame in two Pieces is to show how it is to be fastened first you take 2 ½ Inches of the said frame which

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is without the Braces having it hight Placed in the Case & by screws fastened

to the bottom as you may see in the Plate the screws being represented by Black spots in the red line on edge the Black & red line shewing the thickness of the frame at ^bottom which is 1 Inch and the Black line the Thickness at the upper edge which is  $\frac{1}{2}$  an Inch now this slope is taken off of the upper Inch of the frame on which the Braces are fixd. Fig 6 are the Pieces that are let [Set?] into the Pin Block (which is  $3\frac{3}{4}$  Inches or 4 Inches square) and screwed and Glued to fasten it to the Bottom fig 7 Being the Pin Block fig 8 are 2 Braces that are firmly Glued & screwed to the Bottom about 6 Inches long sloping within  $1\frac{1}{2}$  Inch of the top of the Pin Block the side Pieces of frame fig 5 do in like manner hold against the Pin block all the Black spots shows for screws except in the 6 inch Braces Now having fixd all parts the next

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move is the Braces which are to be fixd on the remaining Inch of the frame of the Fig 5. First the main Brace which  $1\frac{1}{4}$  Inch deep & 1 Inch wide Is to slope off gradually to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of Inch und [under?] and  $\frac{1}{8}$  of an Inch Thick that is from No. 19 to 20 No 19 being the heavy Part The other Braces are made the same way only being  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an Inch lighter except No11 which is a very light only  $\frac{1}{4}$  Inch at the big en and Sloping off to a feather edge Fig 13 shows the Bridge which is to be glued & screwed to the ^underside of the sound board after the Pins are in the sound bord is to be made of White Pine that clear of [clean?] of turpentine

(as likewise the Braces which were to be fixed on the remaining [remaining?] Inch solid to the edge) the growths running up and down being  $\frac{5}{16}$  of an Inch Thick at No 19 & sloping of Gradually to the front to letter A  $\frac{3}{16}$  of an Inch by measure the board being as thick at one end as at the other all the difference being from side to side

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then after you have this board glued well on to the 1 Inch frame of Braces, and after Perfectly [dy?] shave off the Brace to a feather edge each to within 1 Inch of the side of the frame to the letter D. letting the main brace the ~~main~~ ~~brace~~ run very light to the frame then when you have the teeth in your bridge lay it on the sound [sound] board within  $2\frac{1}{2}$  Inches of the back Part of the sound board  $2\frac{1}{4}$  Inches from B to B running in such a direction across the sound board as to give each wire its length – The 2d large brace [brace] must be from the end of the sound board that is from C to C 6 Inches, from g to g – 4 Inches and the other brace half way between that and the other end of the sound board which will be 6 Inches from C to the feather edge of Brace No. 12 – the Brace II is hardly even necessary when the sound board is made strong enough From i to i being square ^across of 6 Inches where the slope of the frame commences as represented by the inner edge of the red line Projecting

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2 Inches in the slop of 6 Inches from L to m and then directly square to the back, the upper Inch frame having a Rounding Piece hollowed on the Inside to  $\frac{1}{2}$  an Inch at the upper edge whereas the whole when together on the Base measures 2 Inches this rounding Part is along above the sloping Part fig 14 is the sound hole just under the rounding Inch Thick This hole is 3 Inches long &  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an Inch wide – it would be better to fix on the Braces and Sound bord ^and bridge on the whole frame & then saw it apart for for the Purpose of screwing & gluing this way the 2 Parts will fit Better together. The main brace No 9 running from 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  Inch on the frame from big O to little o which is 6 Inches from the fronts and the other Braces let in to

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the main Brace as before directed Plate 1 & 3 ^are mathematically laid down 1 Inch to a foot – the 6 fig 1 shewing the size of the Case fig 14 the ^first Bottom lengthwise 2 Inches Thick fig 16 [illegible] fig 17 the 2 layers of bords 1 Inch do Biass the 2 Bottom sett being fitted into the frame or Case (which is 9 inches deep) they are to be screwed & glued together when you may take them off of the lower bottom and lett in your Pieces through the 2 Inches of the bottom as Per fig 12. which is to be glued & screwed as you see in the plate

when you may then Place in your Bottom & rail about 6 doz large screws ^glue & screws all the Bottom together firmly this done fig 2 is your Pin Block 4 Inches square fastened to the bottom by Pieces being let into the lower side of Block & screwed & then screwed to the Bottom with heavy screws & 1 screw from the Back Part letter C shows a brace 6 Inches long

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which rises 2 ½ Inches against the Pin block & screwed tight to the Bottom with 2-3 Inch screws, the 4 fig 3 shows frame of the sound board & 1 Inch Thick & 3 ½ Inches high (the side Pieces the end of which rest firm against the Pin Block so as to keep it in its Place) now this frame is to be in two Parts say saw off of the top Part 1 ¼ Inch after you have the Braces sound bord & bridge on the bridge to be screwed from the lower side of the sound bord through the Braces & in 4 or 5 other Places, then Place in the lower Part of your frame with glue on the lower edge and with screws as you see in the red line by black spots screwed tight to the Bottom, now the upper 1 ¼ Inch thick on which edge the sound bord is to be glued firm as likewise to the Brace the sound bord being made of spruce Pine that is clear of turpentine and the growths running up & down being at 5/16 of an Inch thick & of gradually falling of to the front side to 3/16 of an Inch slant

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Before you Put on your Sound bord on cut of the 1 ¼ Inch you will fit on your braces first the main brace fig 4 to 5 ¾ of an Inch square at fig 4 & sloping off to a feather edge at fig 5 being still ¾ of an Inch wide, the other 2 Braces 6-7 & 8-9 are the same only 1/8 of an Inch lighter sloping of to a feather edge at 7 & 9 now you must be very care full to have your sound bord well glued to ^the edge & Braces when you may saw off your 1 ¼ Inch & fasten the lower Part in as before directed Letter B shows the bridge which is to be finished with the Pins all in & then glued & screwed on to the sound board 2 ¾ Inches from the Back Part & 2 ¼ do from the Inside Edge at the nerest [nearest] bord, then after having the bridge on you will Glue & screw this Part to the lower Part at Ea[each?] side With 6 or 8 large screws neatly sunck into the wood so the stressing will hidge the head of the screws the above mode of Putting in a sound bord makes it wind proof except

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at the air hole at letter F just under the upper 1 ¼ Inch fig 10 Being a Piece of Inch [shelf?] 2 ½ or 2 ¾ of an inch high [coned?] to the Bottom fig 11 is the regulating Pin Block this is 1 ½ Inch Thick this and the above strip are both to be made part the one to the Bottom of the other to the Pieces let into let in as per fig 12 for the Purpose of holding this piece before it is fastened to the frist Bottom

when you may likewise put 2 or 3 screws in through the back Part of the Instrument, this regulating Pin Block is  $1\frac{3}{4}$  Inch wide next the sound bord & 6 Inches Wide at the other end and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  Inch Thick – these [stud?] ^fig 12 onto be  $3\frac{3}{4}$  Inches high so as to not come all the way through the upper Piece, fig 13 is 2 Pieces first 1 Inch Thick each Pin'd to the Bottom then a bord to Cover over these 2 Pieces  $1\frac{1}{4}$  Inch or 1 Inch Thick the lower & the upper together to come up within  $\frac{1}{2}$  an Inch of the Height of the Pin block which will be  $3\frac{1}{2}$  Inches both together

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fig 16 is hammer bord 3 Inches at upper end from the regulating Pin Block &  $4\frac{1}{4}$  do at the lower end the Hammers being 3 Inches at the upper end of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  Inches at the lower end fig 20 on letter D shewing the front of the Instrument & the opening for the keys being 2 feet 8 Inches long and the Carriage on Key bord riding in level on the Bottom the frame or ease being no higher the thickness of the Bottom which will be 3 Inches  
Short explanation of the whole plate

No 1 at 1 Inch for a foot

figs 1 the Case and 6 Inch bits Inside

fig 2 the Pin Block 4 Inches square

figs 3 the frame Braces & sound Bord and Bridge

fig 4 to 5 Main Brace  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an Inch

fig 6 to 7 – 2d Brace,  $\frac{5}{8}$  of an Inch square

fig 8 to 9 the 3d Brace do all Rounded at the lower edge

fig 10 Bord 3 Inches Wide under Pin block

fig 11 the Regulating pin Block

fig 12 pieces let in to hold the Pin Block

fig 13 the 3 end Pieces inside  
+ the above braces & all rounded on the lower side

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fig 14 the lower Bottom 2 Inches thick  
fig 15 the [illegible]  
fig 17 the 2d do [Bias?] 1 Inch Thick  
fig 16 the Hammer bord  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an Inch  
running the same slope of the wire  
thick the same height of the sound bord  
which is fastened to the Key Bord so  
carriage fig 15 the Keys  
letter A the sound Bord  
letter B the Bridge  
letter C the Brace against the Pin Block  
letter D the front of the Pino  
letter F the Air hole under the  $1\frac{1}{4}$   
hollowed inside edge  
letter I is the upper F wire  $4\frac{1}{4}$  Inches long  
from Bridge to Bridge  
letter I C is the upper  $5\frac{5}{8}$  Inches do  
do 2f is the second F wire  $8\frac{3}{4}$  Inches do  
do 2c is the second C wire  $11\frac{3}{4}$  Inches long  
do 3f is the third F wire  $16\frac{1}{2}$  inches long  
do 3C is the third C wire  $21\frac{1}{4}$  inches long  
do 4F is the fourth F wire  $27\frac{1}{2}$  inches long  
do 4C is the fourth C wire 33 inches long  
do 5F is the fifth F wire 40 inches long  
do 5C is the fifth C wire  $46\frac{1}{2}$  inches long  
do 6f is the sixth F wire 56 inches long  
do G to G is 2 feet  $8\frac{3}{4}$  Inches from the keys

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fig 1 Below is as far as the stall wire  
No 2 Goes downwards 1 Octave &  $\frac{7}{8}$   
fig 2 is the steel wire No 1 – 1 Octave  
fig 3 the Brass wire 1 Octave  
fig 4 the Rapped Bass Wire  
The foregoing is sufficient for

any Person to be regulated by to  
make an Instrument the sound  
Bord & Braces Being the most  
Particular Part as is necessary  
to have it tight in every Part  
these being some difficultly in  
Putting on the wire the most  
regular is to Part the upper F on  
first then 2d f and so on letting  
each wire at the bridge bear a  
Curve to back Part of 1 or 1 ¼ Inch  
Then when you have the 6 F wires  
on all you have then to do is  
to divide the spaces into 5 Equal  
Parts the wire getting shorter behind  
the bridge as you come done the  
curve of course must be less say  
½ an inch for the last of & so on  
throughout

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Bracing the sound bord being  
the [Preneful?] part the main  
Brace must run from the back  
corner next to the Keys Bials  
across to the Pin Block within  
7 or 7 ½ Inches of the front  
Tapping within the last  
6 Inches of said Brace next  
the Pin Block to a feather  
edge Being ¾ of an Inch square  
(under the high Tones) Rounded  
on the lower side this is the brace  
fig 4 to 5 in like manner the  
other two Braces must be sloping  
off to a feather edge at the front  
the feather edge commencing  
4 or 5 Inches Back of sloping  
off gradually all the Braces  
are let into the main Brace

& Glued f 6 to 7 Being the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Brace  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an Inch Broad and g  
 $\frac{5}{8}$  of an inch deep Running

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within 7 Inches of the Inside edge  
of the sound brod [board] directly square  
to front rounded on the lower  
edge and tapering of to a  
feather edge near the front  
tapering commencing within  
4 or 6 Inches of the front side  
fig 8-9 Being the 3d & last  
Brace is the same size  
of the above running in the  
same way the shape being  
the same only not so long  
now all the Braces the main  
in particular Running from fig  
4 to 5 & Resting on the frame  
solidly [solidly] at fig 4 & Partialy at  
fig 5 the other 2 Braces Resting  
on let in to the main Brace  
& Resting on the [out] on front  
edge of the frame for the better  
and easier method of Glue on  
the sound bord ^on then when  
you have on your Bridge

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you can with a Chizel give  
the Braces there Proper shape  
by slohing [sloughing] (4 or 5 Inches from  
the front of the Pin Block)  
them off to a feather edge to  
within  $\frac{3}{4}$  or 1 Inch of the frame

where the Braces have there termination, now the main Brace Resting firmly through the frame at fig 4 of the other 2 Braces in like manner on this Brace is what give the sound bord its proper Vibration the Braces through resting on the frame at 4 Points before you Put on your sound board & when the sound bord is Glued on & the Bridge on the sound bord & screwed fast you then take a chizel slope off your Braces which are to be made of SpurcePine to there Proper shape taking care

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#### ~~Winchester~~

to let them rest on part of the frame now within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an Inch except at the back corner at fig 4 which remains solid through the frame this Being the only Point at which the Braces can be said to rest upon although they continue to each Place of termination as which the  $\frac{1}{4}$  Part of an Inch or less all of which you are to deep off whith a chisel after the sound bord & Bridge are on the best wood for the sound Bord & Braces is Spruce Pine it being more Springy tha other Pine

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the Bottom of all Pinos  
ought to be made of well  
seasoned Pine the lower Part  
of the Bottom of 2 Inch Bords  
length wise, the 2d layer of  
bords the same case of  
the wire 2 Inch Thick of  
Pine firmly Glued & screwed  
to the 2 Inch bottom

this is the shape & size of the  
point of the bridge

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Fig 11 on the Regulating Pin block  
bearing a slope of 4 Inches in  
its full length say  $5 \frac{3}{4}$  Inches  
wide at the big end &  $1 \frac{3}{4}$  Inch  
at the small end

## Appendix E

### STRINGING MEASUREMENTS OF WILLIAM A. BAKER'S PIANO RECIPE IN COMPARISON WITH CONTEMPORANEOUS INSTRUMENTS

Comparative measurements found in Malcom Rose and David Law, *A Handbook of Historical Stringing Practice for Keyboard Instruments, 1671-1856*. Lewes, United Kingdom, 1991.

Note: All measurements are in millimeters. Baker's measurements, originally in inches, have been converted.

Pitch	Plan for Square Piano by William A. Baker, c. 1806-1824	Square Piano by Johannes Pohlman, c. 1778 MR No. 48	Square Piano by John Broadwood, c. 1800 MR No. 59	Square Piano by George Astor, 1801-1807 MR No. 60	Square Piano by Muzio Clementi, 1814 MR No. 66	Square Piano by John Broadwood, 1815 MR No. 67
f3	107.95	104	107	117	112	108
c3	142.87	147	146	152	146	143
f2	222.25	225	219	232	215	224
f2	298.45	297	298	303	293	305
f1	419.1	446	427	439	434	448
c1	539.75	561	543	555	560	580
f	698.5	722	721	723	741	785
c	838.2	837	870	845	873	928
F	1016	999	1059	1019	1073	1125
C	1181.1	1116	1211	1153	1223	1271
FF	1422.4	1307	1448	1360	1453	1445

**Appendix F**  
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<http://update.jrj1.com/mv/>

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