

RESTORATION OF SQUARE PIANO c 1820 by CHRISTIAN GAISER.

HISTORY The label on the soundboard near the back reads:-  
Instrumentenmacher / Christian Gaiser / zu Rastatt/  
im Grossherzogthum Baden / gefertigt / alle  
Gattungen von Forte - Piano.

The compass of 6 octaves FF - f<sup>4</sup> suggests a date between 1810 and 1825. The style is closely similar to that of pianos made in Vienna.

When I bought it in February 1956, two identical labels nailed on the underside were fairly complete, though partly torn. They have now disappeared but formerly read approximately:-

The Olde Colonial Shoppe, Clocks, Antiques, Curios,  
Bric-a-brac . . . St. Louis Mo.

The piano has therefore been in America. It was sold about 1953 by John Sebastian Morley, Brompton Road, London, to C. F. Colt, Bethersden, Kent who sold it to me. Neither Morley nor Colt adjusted the action successfully and both had trouble with hammers hitting the wrong strings. The dampers above d''' were missing.

When bought it had the following strings (probably Morley):-

| <u>Morley (?)</u> |                 |         | <u>As replaced Oct. 1965</u> |                 |         |
|-------------------|-----------------|---------|------------------------------|-----------------|---------|
| 1 - 12            | covered strings |         | 1 - 11                       | covered strings |         |
| 13                | .82 mm          | } brass | 12 - 14                      | .61mm           | } brass |
| 14                | .61 "           |         | 15 - 16                      | .56 "           |         |
| 15 - 18           | .61 "           |         | 17 - 21                      | .51 "           |         |
| 19 - 22           | .55 "           | } steel | 22 - 31                      | .46 "           | } steel |
| 23 - 31           | .43 "           |         | 32 - 36                      | .49 "           |         |
| 32 - 49           | .37 "           |         | 37 - 48                      | .46 "           |         |
| 50 - 62           | .34 "           |         | 49 - 61                      | .40 "           |         |
| 63 - 73           | .27 "           |         | 62 - 73                      | .36 "           |         |

Tuning was very difficult owing to bridge pin friction with these thin strings but became easier when they were replaced with thicker ones in October 1965. At this time I removed the back pinning between f' and c''' to improve the movement of the strings across the bridge and reinstated one of the f# tuning pins. Previously all strings above this f# were wound one pin higher up, overflowing to a fourth pin in the top row. Below note G the tuning pins had been replaced with modern thicker ones, probably for the convenience of using holes for starting the coils.