

In 1941 Mr. and Mrs. Max Luther purchased Oaklawn Plantation. It served as their residence and for training their show horses. Mr. Luther's widow, Mrs. Carl Lee, resided there until 1985 when the property was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Frank E. Machnick, Jr. The home served as the national corporate headquarters for their business. In 1987 Oaklawn was sold to Mr. John Fraser, IV. Extensive restoration with attention to original design and detail was commissioned and overseen

by Mr. Fraser and Mr. William O. Lawter. Meticulously and tastefully renovated, Oaklawn now has both the seclusion and elegance of a private estate.

In 1991, the home was purchased by new owners, again intent on preserving the historic tradition of Oaklawn. An outstanding example of Greek Revival architecture, it continues to impress visitors with its ageless grace and beauty.

The McCrary-Thomas Home



356 McVile Lane

A charming country place, the McCrary-Thomas home is nestled near the Mountain Fork of Flint River at the end of a private cedar-lined lane. The land on which it stands was purchased in 1809 by Thomas McCrary, an active and influential citizen of early Madison County. He bought the acreage when the United States Government opened its land office in Nashville. He later increased his land holdings to include thousands of acres in the area. The first Huntsville Directory, published in 1859, shows that he was also a member of the firm of McCrary, Patterson, and Sprague. They were grocers, rope manufacturers, and operators of a cotton factory.

Thomas McCrary's numerous slaves and their birthdates were listed in the large family Bible which is still in the possession of Miss Alice McCrary Thomas, one of his descendants. Each slave was taught a trade so that Mr. McCrary's son, bordering on old Winchester Road,

appeared to be a community in itself. Weavers, shot makers, tailors, blacksmith, and men trained in many other occupations lived and worked there.

The homestead, as it presently stands, is made up of three separate sections. The two-story central structure is part of the original home built by Thomas McCrary in 1824 for his second wife, Nancy. The single-story brick portion was built in 1870 by their son, William, who had married Alice Ellett in 1858. It is said that Alice longed for a one-story home. Twelve years later her wish finally came true when most of the older house was converted to a single level.

It was Miss Alice Thomas who added the frame keeping room in 1971. She is not only the present owner, but also a fourth-generation descendant of Thomas McCrary; thus her home has been in her family for almost 170 years. Among the oldest buildings is the farm commissary. Especially noteworthy are its nail-studded door

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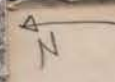
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c.1975, sketches by J&H, Arch, HJ & John Matz. —> Gr. Rav. remnant —> c.1869 replacement of orig. hse

AW

Smoker hse —>



Smokehouse



said to be 1824 but all int. doors & trim are Greek Revival

2 1/2 stories, said to be c. 1824 but is Old Rev. Rev. dining & parlors 1835 or later

cross for down front part of house (1869) & rebuilt in 1869 (1869)

c. 1869

McCloskey-Thomson Spks. of Flint



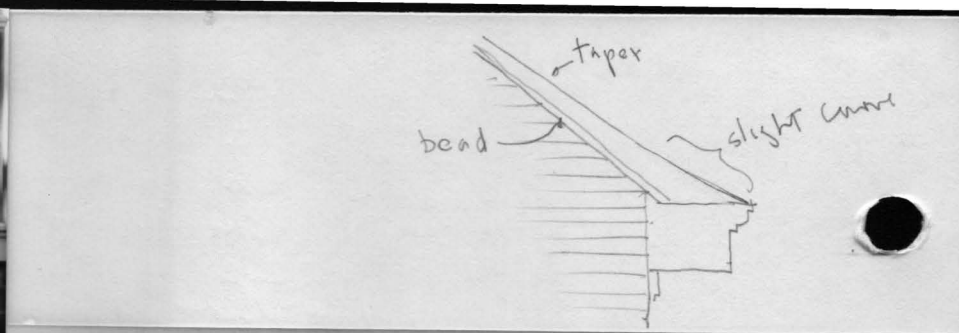
1869 built by W.H. Ford

Photos Oct. 1970
 Harris, PAID
 N.C. Mason Co.
 Also Thoms farm
 (McCloskey-Thomson)
 Nat. Regio. of Hist. Place

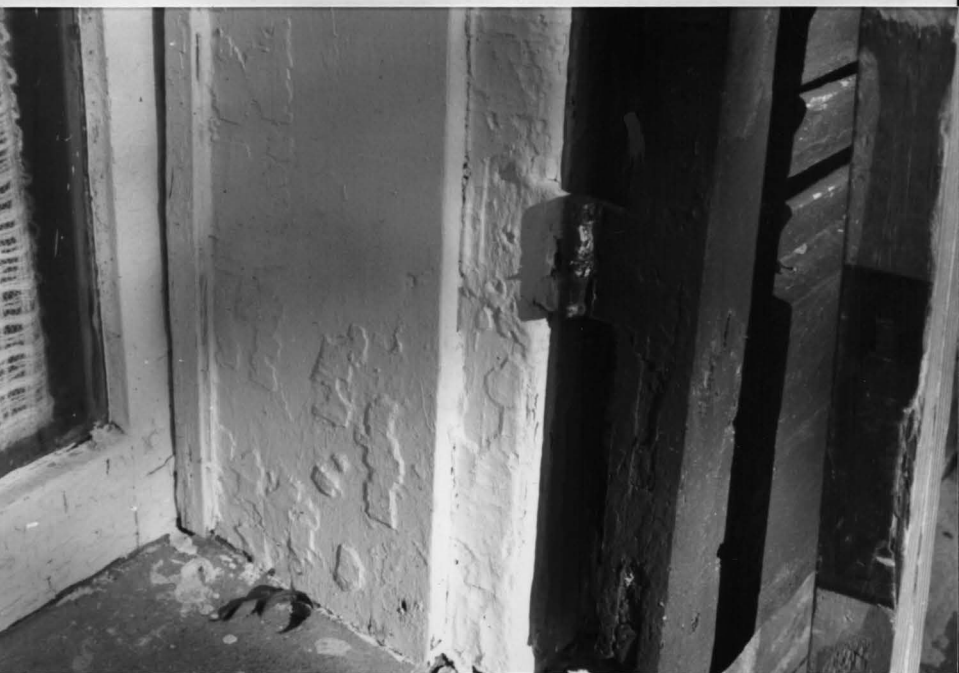




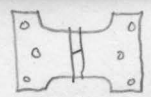
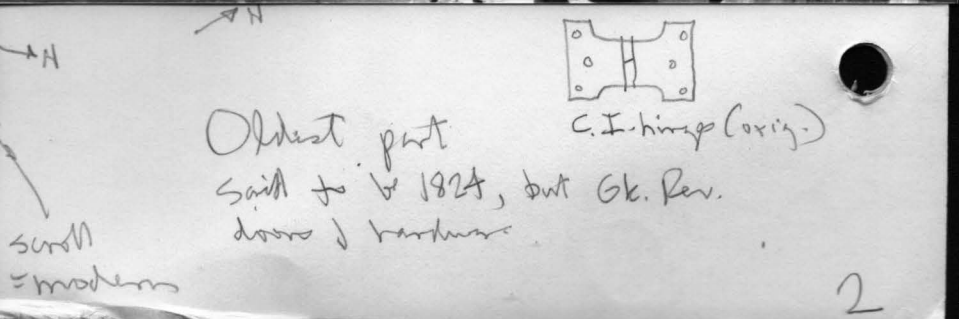
← N



← Z



← H



Oldest part
 said to be 1824, but Gk. Rev.
 doors & hardware

C.I. hinges (orig.)

← S
 = modern



N. Front

↖
N



↳ 2x4 balustrade is 1980's, incorrect



Note white paint "penciling" to emphasize brick jts. = typical of 19th c. (at Ekst Veranda)

→ N



iron footscraper in limestone mount at entry door - very beautiful in design

↖ W

S. W. 21



roof dark
bds are
20th c.
(narrow) →



NX

S.W. Corner
millstone used as pier
shed is 20th c. (Alice Thomas) →



N. Shed is 20th c. → SMOKEHOUSE (105) NX



-8'

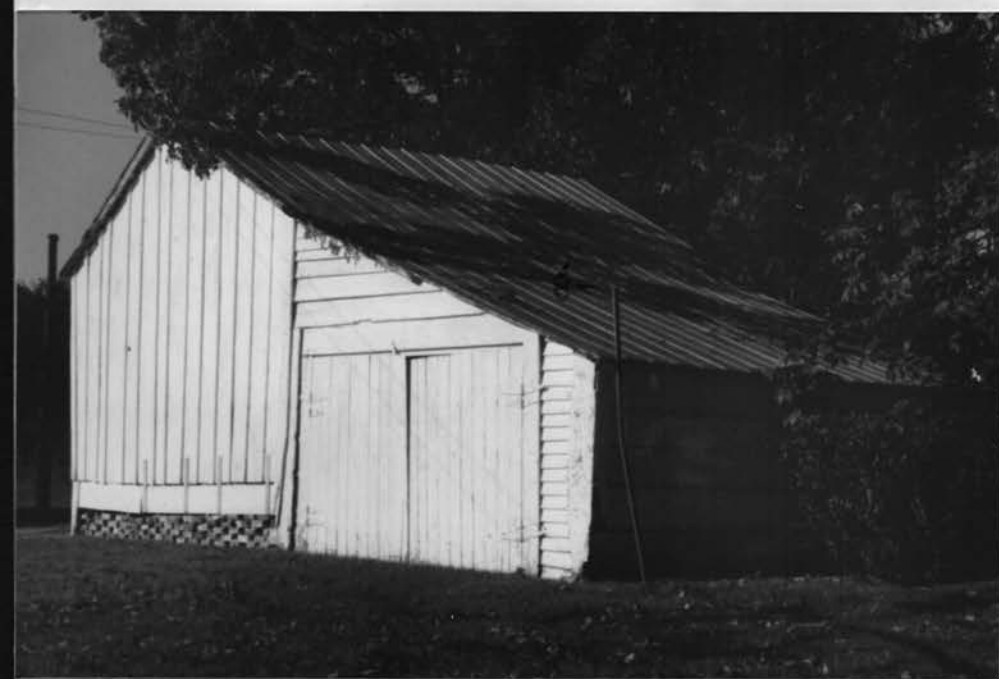




→ N

← N. shed = 20th c. (A. Thomas)

Smokehouse
(bd. f bottom over logs)



→ N

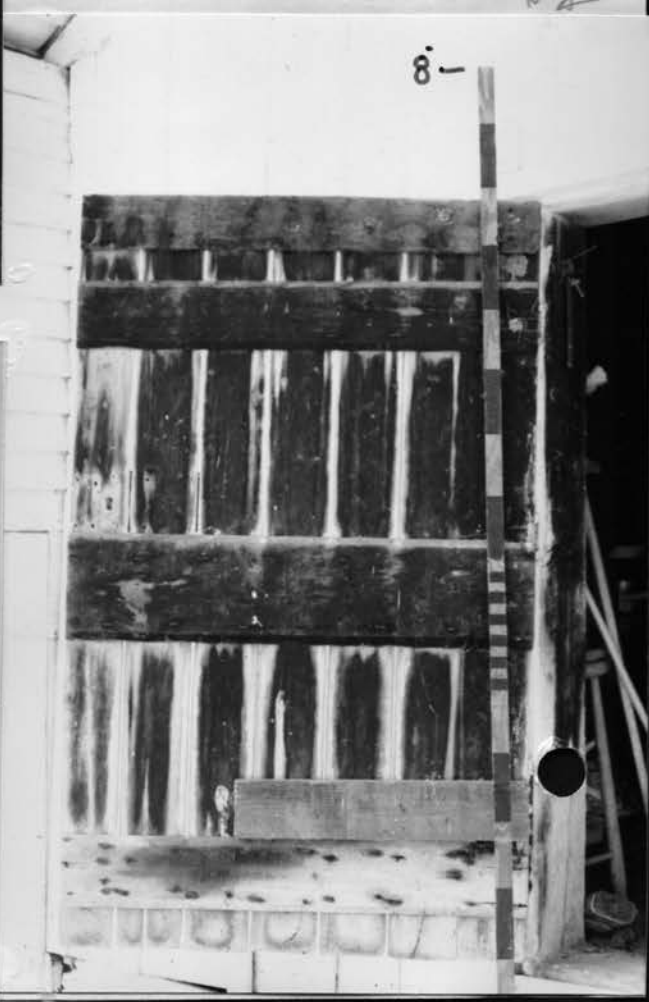


N →

← "stock lock" (wd) + iron hasp by blacksmith



-4'



8-

Note soot - blackened interior surfaces

Hewn joists +
nail to hang meat on joists



spots on wood are meat-droppers resting
firepit (wood fl.)



A large log hollowed for salting meat (two) +
+ hole in wood fl. for iron pot w/ fire in it
to "smoke" the meat

SMOKEHOUSE



Modern
galv. iron roof
+ rotary-sawn
deck-boards
↓

Spots = mud-dauber nest traces.
They got the soil from the clay
daubing. See holes in
daubing on photos, pg. 9



→ N

Note pegged to

DOOR
HEAD

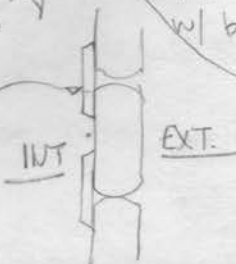
↖ N

Smokehouse



drunk barrel-stap
board st-covers
described in
"Al. Folk Arts" by
Eugene Wilson

heron roof joint
w/ bark on bottom



→ N

↖ N



N ←

hollowed logs for sitting seat
(Very large dia. ±30")

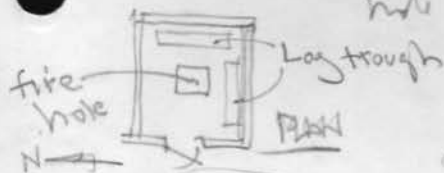


Chinking + mud-daubing
(between hoam logs)



N ←

hole in wood fl. for fire



Smoke rise

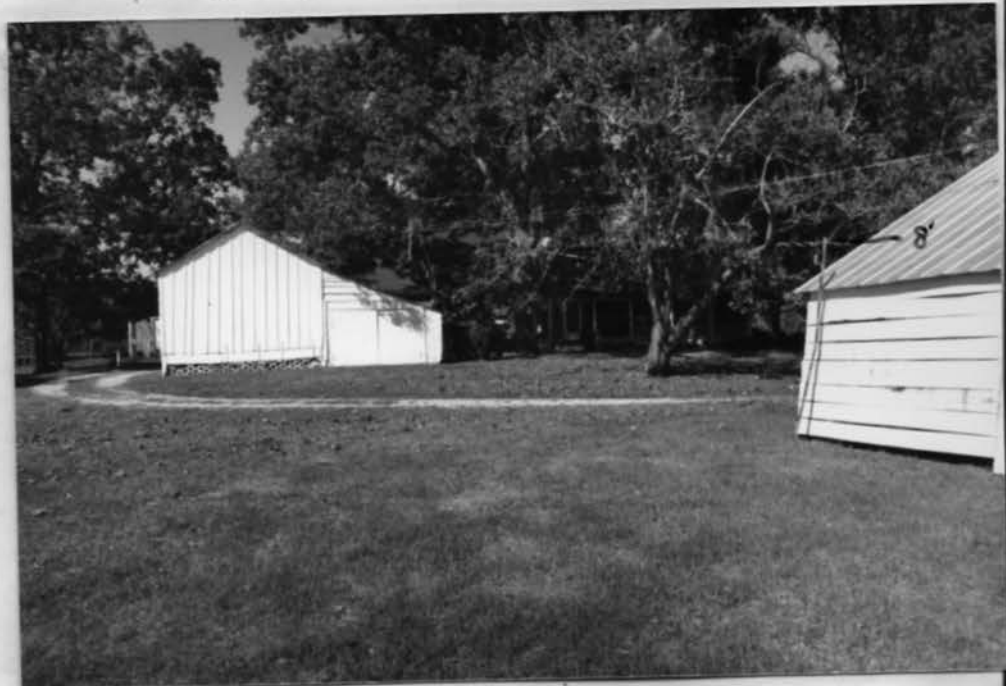
9 of 21



Smoke Hse
(log)

20th c
shed

Carrige
Hse

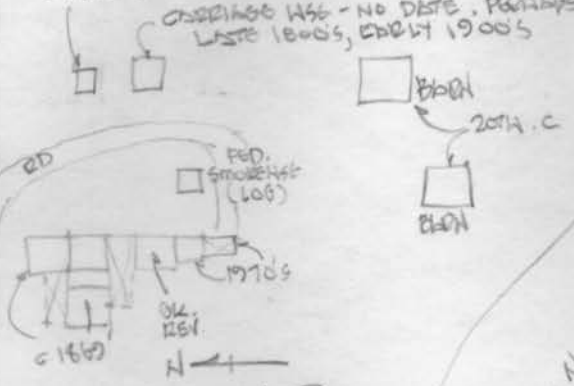


All the outbldgs are
white washed (not paint)

N

Commissioner - said moved here from
"DEPOSIT" AL. SHEDS AFTER
CIVIL WAR - LOOKS 1870'S ±

CARRIAGE HSE - NO DATE, PROBABLY
LATE 1800'S, EARLY 1900'S



SITE MAP

NO SCALE

N



Commissioner

Carrige Hse

Steve Thomas reports sheds were
erected in the 20th. c



Raised rafter ends appear to be cut for a 30° slope, the most common 1800-1835 roof slope

Rafters are pit-sawn of early 19th c. dim. (13" w. x 5" d) Perhaps reused from the demol. early 19th c. house in c. 1869.

← Commissary N ← ← Commissary 1261



N ← Central part of Com. 1261
 All machine - same lumber
 Perhaps latter part of 19th c.
 or early 20th c.
 Wood Fl. added in mid 20th c.,
 per Alice Thomas

N ←
 S.
 Shed

110621

enclosed in 20th c

doors
←



N ←

← N

N ←

Nails are primarily decoration. Also seen on
smokehouse door at Chapman Hse in 1860. f on Medieval churches in Europe



N ←

Commissary (Farm Store)
Moved here after the Civil War
from Deposit, Al. per Alice Thomas.
Appears c. 1870 or later (thin rotting
sawn joists etc.)



Cast Iron Shutter Hinge

N ←

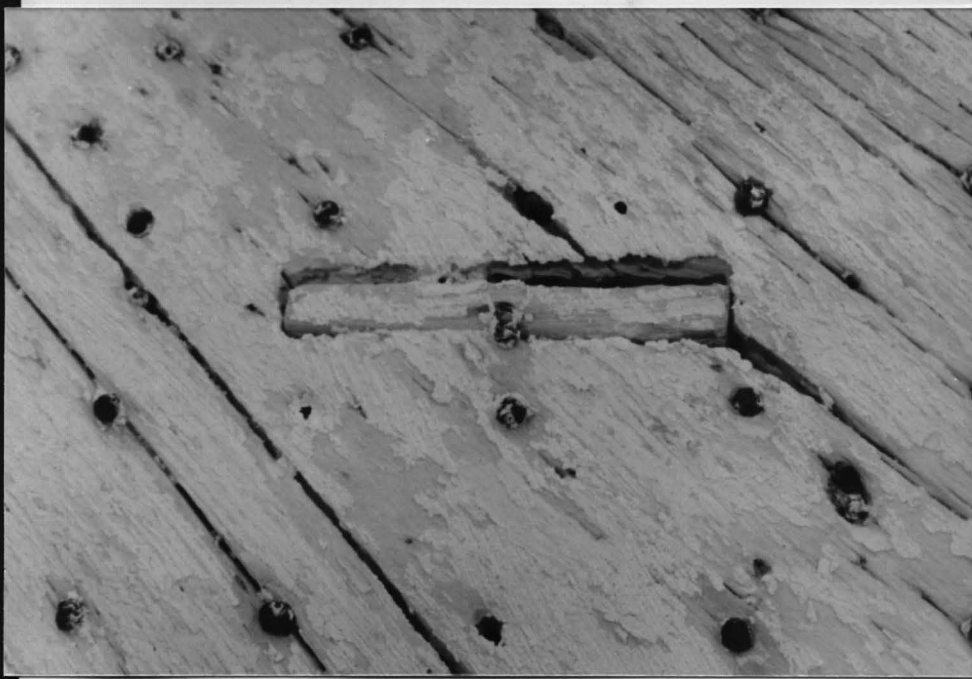


West shutter, S. window

N ←

COMMISSARY

N ←



Mail slot in west door
(see p. 12 & 15)

Stone
Pier
N.E. corner





HA

West door hinge
 Cast Iron
 "Baldwin Patent"
 made in one unit
 (most common hinge
 of 1800 - c.1880)
 This is no relation to
 the 20th. c. "Baldwin
 Hardware Co.", per 1990
 letter from them.



Secur. bar

iron bracket
 for Secur. bar

N

COMMISSARY
 WEST DBL. DOORS
 + SECUR. BAR

H

14



NAIL SLOT (West door)

COMMISSION

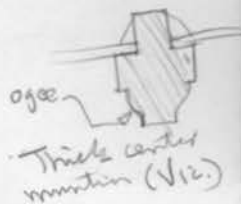


This type of window (thick center muntin) was most common c.1870-1900 (Victorian)



↑ door

↑ Iron
Screw Bar
Bracket





→ N



S.W.M



→ S

COMMISSARY

All rotary - sawn lumber,
± 2" wide joists
indicates AFTER Civil War
constr., perhaps 1870's - 80's

AUGER →



Items in
Commissary



"Froe" is used to
split wood shingles.
This is the only one
I've seen "live" - H. Jones



17021



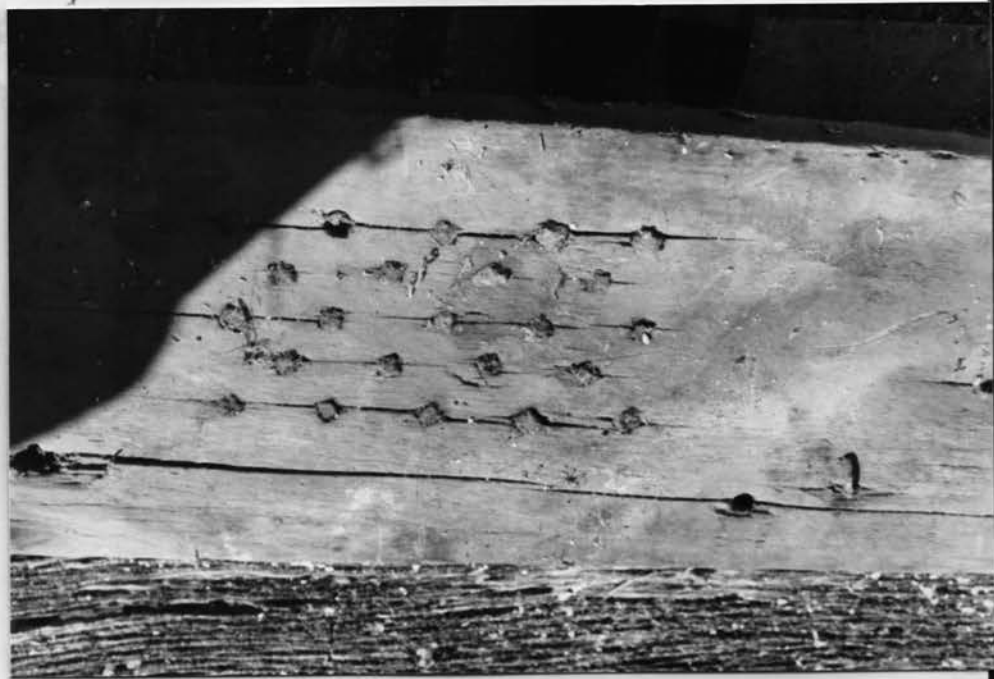
↑
?

↑
plane

↑
textile
shuttle
(handmade)

↑
Tool to "card" (comb) wool (Melinda Herzog)

TOP



BOTTOM



↙ N

↙ S.E. BARN
(sheds added)

↙ SW BARN

↙ N

All wood rotary saws & of
± 2" framing =
late 19th or early 20th c. construction



↙ N

Iron vessel for
"rendering" wool for lard,
over a fire



↙ N



19 1621



hand-chiseled limestone \nearrow AM
 steps from 1970's addition
 up into orig. hse. remnant rms.
 These steps were
 originally outdoors.

Alice Thomas says
 this part dates from
 c.1824, but all arch.
 clues indicate
 c.1835 or so. HD



2nd Fl. Rm.
 in original hse
 part (1830's?) \downarrow W



\downarrow N
 2-panel doors are Greek Revival style (1835-60)
 Lock stays to " " " "



steps up to 1970's rm.

21

Ground fl. in original has part (sunk ± 2' below grade)



"Walker Improved" locks
 These were generally made in 1830's - 1850's, NOT 1824

brass trademark
 style

