

Potters in Bethabara

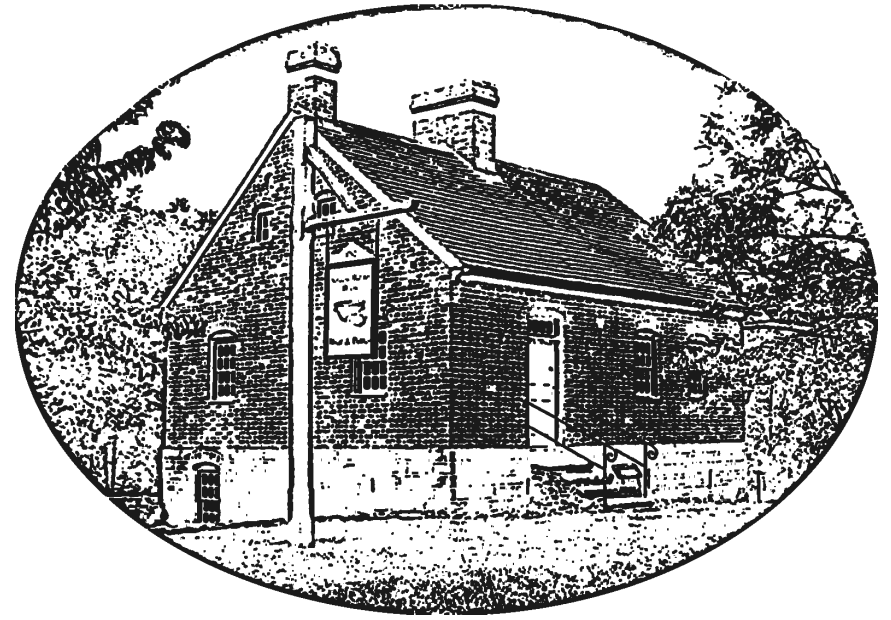
Gottfried Aust	Master Potter	1755–1771
• Michael Marr	journeyman	1762
• Peter Stotz	apprentice	ca. 1762–1767
• Joseph Müller (Miller)	apprentice	1766
• Rudolph Christ	apprentice	ca. 1766–1771
• Ludwig Möller	apprentice	ca. 1766–1771
• Heinrich Beroth	apprentice	ca. 1766–1771

Rudolph Christ	Master Potter	1786–1789
• Renatus Kaske	pottery worker	1788
• Peter Oliver	pottery worker	1788–1789
• David Baumgarten	pottery worker	1789

Johann Gottlob Krause	Master Potter	1789–1802
• Peter Oliver	pottery worker	1789–1795
• Johann Heinrich Feiser	apprentice?	1795
• Joseph Sturges	journeyman	1795

John Butner	Master Potter	1802?–1850?
• Thomas Krause	apprentice	1810?–1812?
• Henry Windol	apprentice	1805–1812?
• John Hine	apprentice	1815–1822?
• Joseph Butner	apprentice	?
• Johann Christian Butner	apprentice	?

Joseph Butner	Master Potter	1850?–1872?
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1782 Potter's House

Moravian Pottery In Bethabara

Historic Bethabara Park



A Short History of Pottery in Bethabara

The skies were gray and rain was threatening on November 4, 1755. As they approached the tiny settlement of Bethabara, deep in the backcountry of North Carolina, two Moravians, Brother Aust and Brother Opitz, rode ahead of a small band of single brothers and married couples traveling from Pennsylvania. To signal their arrival, the Brothers played on their trumpets the hymn "Peace and Health and Every Good Be with You." Some of the residents of Bethabara answered back with a welcoming trumpet tune while standing on their rooftops. The trumpet-playing Brother Aust was Master Potter Gottfried Aust, trained in Herrnhut, Germany, and coming to Bethabara by way of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

The arrival of Brother Aust brought the much-needed craft of pottery-making to Wachovia. Taking advantage of an abundant supply of clay in the Bethabara area, Gottfried Aust supplied lead-glazed earthenware pottery—not only to the households of the Moravians in Bethabara—but also to many of the settlers in a fifty to sixty mile radius. According to archaeological excavations, thirty-five different pottery forms were being made in Bethabara by Aust and his associates from 1756 to 1771. Because of the threat of attack during the French and Indian War, Aust's pottery shop was situated inside the walls of the Palisade fort during its first 7 years. After the fort was torn down, the pottery building was expanded. When Aust moved to Salem in 1771, the pottery was dismantled and transferred with him. For fifteen years thereafter, there was no pottery in Bethabara.

In 1786, Aust's apprentice, Rudolph Christ, persuaded the Collegium in Salem to allow him to establish, once

again, a pottery in Bethabara. Christ was interested in making Queensware, also known as "fine pottery." Aust and Christ had learned how to produce this English-style pottery in Salem in 1773–74 from a traveling potter named William Ellis. From 1786 to 1789, Brother Christ ran a pottery in the old smithy in Bethabara. After the death of Aust in 1789, Christ moved back to Salem to direct the pottery there.

Gottlob Krause, a former apprentice of Aust in Salem, then became the master potter in Bethabara. While master, Krause made the same kind of earthenware pieces that Aust had produced. It is believed that Krause was dissatisfied with the pottery building where Christ had worked and asked permission to purchase the house of Johannes Schaub, Jr., the dyer, which had been built in 1782. Krause was probably in the house, known now as the 1782 Potter's House, from 1789 until he died in 1802.

John Butner, a former apprentice of Christ's in Salem, took over the pottery in 1802. After the demise in 1801 of the *Oeconomie*—Bethabara's economic system in its early days—records are less substantial, but it is believed that John Butner, and later his son Joseph, ran a pottery out of the 1782 building between 1802 and 1872.

The 1782 Potter's House was purchased by L. I. Hine in 1872 and was inherited by his son, Luther C. Hine. Upon his death in 1924 his wife, Ada Hine, inherited the property. The estate of Ada Hine sold the property to B. Clyde Shore in 1956. The Provincial Elders' Conference of the Moravian Church, Southern Province, purchased the Potter's House from Clyde Shore in 1957. The house was restored to its current state in the mid 1970's.

