The Legacy of Henry Gast and an Examination of the Impact of Industrialization on

Nineteenth Century Pottery in Lancaster

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my father, Donald W. Hagadorn, who passed away August 10, 2006. His continued support of every aspect of my life has inspired me to do well and succeed, and I would not be here without his constant motivation.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In 2002-2003 archaeological excavations at the Stevens and Smith site in downtown Lancaster yielded a variety of nineteenth century assemblages that have the potential to shed considerable light on the transitions to industrialization. In particular some of the artifacts recovered are associated with the pottery works of Henry Gast and Son that neighbored Thaddeus Stevens’ home and office. After examining the artifacts, it was clear that they were mostly typical of early nineteenth century pottery, mostly consisting of utilitarian redware. What was especially noteworthy was kiln furniture, bisque, and ceramic wasters that are not typical of domestic assemblages but likely point to a nearby pottery works. Stoneware and decorative pieces were also uncovered. It was evident that there were other forces driving the need to make nontraditional wares. The focus on this thesis then is to describe what these forces were, and why the Henry Gast and Son’s pottery works was able to withstand these pressures.

During the mid-nineteenth century, some families in Lancaster formed potting dynasties. These families included: the Klughs, Reynolds, Weidles, Sturgises, Gasts, and five generations of Swopes (Lasansky 1982: 540). The family that will be the focus of this research is the Gast family. There were three main potteries that were established in the same neighborhood: Henry Gast, Henry Ganse, and Daniel Swope. The three formed themselves a little “Bennington”\(^1\) in Lancaster. While they did continue to produce common wares for the majority of their time, they were also able to produce wares that were equal to those artisans who use a Staffordshire and Bennington type who became famous for their intricate designs and the purity and beauty of the clay used for the wares. These styles were categorized by intricately painted delicate ceramics from Staffordshire, England (Figures 47 & 48) and Rockingham glaze from

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\(^1\) Bennington is a location in Vermont that became famous for their Rockingham style of wares, which originated in England.
Bennington, Vermont (Figures 45 & 46). Being of similar caliber to this style of potters was important because of the growing demand in America for these wares. According to Cornelius Weygandt, an author and antiquarian, those pieces marked with Gast or Ganse symbolize the last efforts of “Lancaster County potters to be up to date and compete with the cheap china and whiteware and tin that were so surely driving the old redware out of the market” (Heisey 1946: 120). Not only did Henry Gast excel at making pottery in all forms and styles, but he was able to compete with the much desired English style of pottery that was driving other businesses out of operation. Surviving advertisements, documents, and archaeological collections demonstrate Gast’s ability to do this, and reveal his transition to new forms and styles of ceramics.

Redware and stoneware are examined throughout the paper, but first a setting will be given. The second chapter of this paper is an historic overview of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The setting of both Lancaster County and Lancaster City provides a broader view of the people and places that were affected by the transition to industrialization and contextualizes the experience of Henry Gast. Also discussed in chapter two is the immigration of Germans to Pennsylvania in the early 1800s. This is done to contextualize the Gast family history presented in chapter three. That chapter discusses the background of each member of the first generation of Gasts that came to America in the early 1810s and their immediate kin. This will be done to give a broader look at what this family was doing in Lancaster and show how the influence of industrialization affected them. Chapter four provides an overview of stoneware and redware production to show the importance of the potter knowing the different properties of the clay. This chapter will also give a brief description of the Bennington and Staffordshire styles of which American potters had to compete. Chapter five provides an overview of the types of wares that the Gast family produced in Lancaster County during the 1800s. Chapter six discusses the history of ceramic
production in Lancaster and an analysis of the Gast family pottery’s transition into a new type of ware. I also review case studies from Philadelphia, Connecticut, and Sourland Mountain, New Jersey to demonstrate the effect that industrialization had on similar small, family-run potteries. The conclusion wraps up the story of the Gast family’s struggle against industrialized production and their continued success in making wares, despite the growing demand for imported fine earthenware. By examining these topics, an overall picture of the Gast family emerges demonstrating that Henry Gast and his family, and Conrad Gast and his family, had to change their style of pottery in order to keep up with demand. I will analyze pottery production as an attempt by Lancaster to keep up with other cities in the growing industrialization of America. One family in particular, the Gast family, excelled in their craft during the entire 1800s and into the 1900s because they were willing to keep up with the changes in pottery industry and the shifting demand for wares.
Chapter 2: Lancaster County and City in the Nineteenth Century

Although famous for agriculture, Lancaster County contains the city of Lancaster, the oldest inland city in the United States. Since the colonial era, people have emigrated from their native land to Pennsylvania. Many who immigrated to Pennsylvania in the late 1700s were of German descent. One family, the Gasts, traveled from Germany through the port of Baltimore, arriving in Lancaster, Pennsylvania in 1818. The Gast family lived in various places in Lancaster City in the nineteenth century. Henry Gast, an immigrant potter, lived on South Queen Street in 1850 and operated a pottery works from this location. Other family members entered into various crafts to establish themselves as part of the American community while settling in a predominantly German area. The Mid-Atlantic region in the mid-nineteenth century was:

“a time of transition from a small-scale rural and commercial economy to a large-scale industrial one. Modernizing forces such as migration to urban centers or long-distance moves overseas, social mobility and dislocations, cultural heterogeneity, and other facets of rapid economic change, created a social environment primed for religious conflict and schism.” (Swierenga 1980: 114).

A history of Lancaster County and the City of Lancaster as well as a brief record of German immigration to Pennsylvania and the German Reformed Church, will demonstrate a cultural aspect of the Gast family’s lifestyle, hardships, and both involvement in the German community and the Lancaster community.

Lancaster County Overview

Before mass immigrations of settlers, Lancaster County was home to a number of different Native American groups. French and English white men came to the area to trade with the Native people but did not settle permanently until 1710. The first groups that came to Lancaster were Mennonites, Huguenots, Scotch-Irish, Welsh, Quakers, Germans, and English
and by 1729 when Lancaster County was formed, there were over 3000 settlers (Klein 1964: 17). A variety of national and religious groups settlers; most were able to preserve their culture. The Quakers from England, Holland, and Germany were able to keep their religious views free from state control.

Lancaster County originated from part of Chester County when it was formed in 1729. As its own county, the land included all the land in Pennsylvania west of the three original counties of Philadelphia, Chester, and Bucks, but later as western migration occurred, parts of Lancaster County were made into York, Cumberland, Berks, Northumberland, Dauphin, and Lebanon counties. Since 1813, there have been no changes to the Lancaster boundaries (Klein 1964: 29).

The County of Lancaster served as the nation’s capital for one day in 1777, but before that Lancaster was the home of many governing acts including treaties with the Six Nations. The most notable of these was the Treaty of Lancaster in 1744 where the Six Nation’s speaker Canasetego met with the Governors of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia to settle disputes between the English and the Six Nations pertaining to the French and Indian War. This treaty allied the English and the Six Nations and protected Pennsylvania from French Indian raids.

The nineteenth century brought more changes to the county. Development of trade and transportation in the early to middle third of the 1800s brought more people into the county. The 1840s were a time of vitality and ingenious invention, and expansion and rapid development. More importantly, it was an age of materialism and plans for great economic and industrial expansion for the nation (Klein 1941: 1-2). Farming was a key component in this development. During the 1840s, Lancaster experienced changes and advancements in agricultural methods. Earlier in the century, horses were used for wagons and plows, but all other farming was done by
hand. The introduction of horse-drawn machinery to carry on tasks that were formerly done by hand allowed rapid farming tasks to take place. This changed in the 1850s in through more mechanized through newly invented tools, organized through agricultural societies, and by the introduction of specialized tobacco culture, producing 62.9% of all tobacco grown in Pennsylvania (Klein 1941: 20). By 1860, over a million and a half dollars worth of farm machinery was in use in the county, a fifty percent increase over the previous decade. Agriculture continued to advance, even through the Civil War era. Thaddeus Stevens, an attorney on South Queen Street, distributed from his office the agricultural portion of the Report of the Commissioner of Patents that described the latest inventions in farm machinery. The value of farmland increased by 20 million dollars and led every other county in Pennsylvania. Farm sizes ranged from twenty to 150 acres, with the average being 80 acres. Agricultural growth in the 1880s was estimated at 9,200 farms and 150,000 people whose worth was valued at $95,927,999 (Klein 1941: 51-53).

Other industries besides farming flourished in the 1850s. Textile factories, paper mills, and cotton mills all gained new technologies and produced many goods. Boots and shoemakers produced over $100,000 per year. Christian Gast and Philip Deichler both were boot and shoemakers who operated out of North Queen Street. In the county there were 336 licensed retail establishments, 106 of them were in Lancaster city. There was a high turnover among these retailers; businesses opened, moved or failed with a high frequency. The firms that did not change location could be counted on both hands (Klein 1941: 26, 32). To complicate matters, no national paper currency existed. Certificates were issued by stores and private companies. Gold and silver money disappeared in the 1860s and national currency inflation affected everyone in the country. By 1870, Lancaster County operated 1,616 manufacturing establishments, second
among the counties in the commonwealth. Those businesses employed a total of 8,166 hands; 6,479 were men, 1,089 women, and 598 youths sixteen year-old and younger (Everts and Stewart 1875: 7). The total value of manufactured products in 1870 was fourteen million dollars, almost double from the previous decade. In manufacturing, the county saw a 100 percent increase. By 1894, the United States passed from fourth place to the leading manufacturing nation (Klein 1941: 58, 99).

In addition to retailers in the city and county, there were thirty-six attorneys that practiced at the Lancaster County Bar including James Buchanan, Thaddeus Stevens, John K. Findlay, and Amos Ellmaker. Judges made a salary of $1600 per year. Elections were held at the courthouse for city officers and were held annually. There were five banks in the county, the oldest being the Farmer’s Bank of Lancaster, founded in 1810. Twenty-two public schools taught about 1,500 students. The five male teachers made an average salary of $38.18 per month while the seventeen female teachers made only $16.50 per month and each teacher taught approximately 70 students each (Klein 1941: 8).

Franklin College was the only higher institution of learning in the 1840s in the city. It was a small college with only three teachers on the faculty, concentrating in mathematics, English, and the classics (Klein 1941: 9). In the 1850s, five institutes of higher learning were founded, two of them that were the largest institutions in the county, which were Franklin and Marshall College, built west of downtown, and the Lancaster County Normal Institute at Millersville, the first Normal School in the commonwealth (Klein 1941: 39). Public education efforts were of importance to the community and governing body in the 1890s. A new law required compulsory school attendance up to age 16 for unemployed, and 13 for employed
children. There were 414 children at the high school, 624 in grammar school, and the total attendance throughout the city was 5,472 (Klein 1941: 109).

Between 1841 and 1851 Lancaster’s population rapidly increased. The population in the city in 1840 was 8,417, an increase of 713 people from the previous decade. By 1851, the population jumped to 12,369, a 50 percent increase over the previous decade. Most likely this increase was attributed to the introduction of new business enterprises including cotton mills, farm machinery, soap manufacturing, lock making, and various other manufacturing industries (Klein 1941: 9). An 1860 census shows the county population at 116,314 consisting of 112,854 whites, 3,459 “colored,” and 1 Indian [probably meaning Native American]. The population in the city was 17,603 (Mombert 1869: 445). Between 1860 and 1870, the city’s population grew from 17,000 to 20,000 and the county’s from 116,000 to 121,000 (Klein 1941: 67). It was clear that the war affected growth. By the 1880s the population of the county grew to 159,241 and the city had 32,090 occupants. There were about 6,000 dwelling-houses in the city limits alone (Klein 1941: 88, 95).

It was not until the fall of 1862 that the population of Lancaster County was affected by the war. The Confederates marched through Hanover and threatened Harrisburg, coming not to occupy the land, but to “pillage, burn, and desolate” (Klein 1941: 41). Failure to get enough volunteers enabled the government to create a draft law, the first draft in Lancaster’s history. Women and children created volunteer organizations. The Dorcas Society for local poverty relief donated supplies to soldiers; The Patriot Daughters of Lancaster organized and gathered thousands of dollars’ worth of commodities and a female high school in the city collected almost $300 for wounded soldiers (Klein 1941: 42). Because of the war, the government taxes raised prices on some commodities including tea, coffee, sugar, and molasses.
The County experienced considerable change throughout the century. It was a time where businesses either thrived or were only in operation for a few years. It was also a time of change and development. The same could be said for the City of Lancaster.

Lancaster City Overview

The City of Lancaster was set upon a hill overlooking the Conestoga River. The borough of Lancaster, later known as Lancaster city, was the home to a number of Native Americans before colonization of western Pennsylvania. One clash between the native peoples and the settlers occurred in 1763. Scotch-Irish men from Paxtang Pennsylvania raided a Conestoga Indian camp and brutally murdered the six natives found there. The remaining Conestogas who lived in that camp were placed under protection of the government at the old jail on Water Street.² The “Paxtang,” or “Paxton Boys” entered the jail and massacred the rest of the group (Klein 1964: 40). As the white immigrants came and settled in the western parts of Pennsylvania, the Native Americans were displaced.

In 1818, the borough of Lancaster was chartered a city with the population of 8,000. During the 1820s to 1840s, trade and transportation grew. Businesses were established on the main streets of Lancaster, with the new courthouse the focus of the city. A railroad was brought into the city in 1834 which ran its line through the center of the city at North Queen and Chestnut Streets (Klein 1964: 97). Red brick houses painted the landscape. The court house stood in the center of the square in the downtown area with buildings extending on King and Queen Streets and along the principle highways. The buildings gave way to pastures, farms, open fields, woodlands, and farmhouses, land that would soon be developed into the city. Shops and stores lined the city streets on King and South Queen around the central square, while other businesses

² The plaque is found on Water Street behind the Fulton Opera House.
laid on North Queen Street and Chestnut by the railroad station. Beyond these blocks were residential areas.

Taverns were numerous and spread throughout the city. With wagoners, travelers, soldiers, farmers, and businessmen coming through the city, the taverns were lively and full. Travelers could stay at the Sign of the Swan on the southeast corner of Penn Square and stop at a number of shops. In the square there was a tinsmith, coppersmith, tailor, several saddlers, six general merchants, watchmakers, bakers, lawyers, a bank, and the mayor’s office whose occupation was paid $300 per year (Klein 1941: 4). Continuing on North Queen Street were printers, bookstores, druggists, gunsmiths, coachmakers, cabinetmakers, confectioners, physicians, watchmakers, oystermen, taverns, tobacconists, and merchants. Bookstores carried both English and German dictionaries. Also printed in German were two newspapers that appeared weekly called *Der Volksfreund* and *Whare Demokrat*.

Near the railroad at North Queen and Chestnut Streets were a manufacturing business of machines, a bookstore, an umbrella and parasol factory, and the businesses of gunsmith, brushmaker, butcher, musician, and printer (Klein 1941: 5). East on King Street from Penn Square was the office of Senator James Buchanan and State Senator Champneys, a drug and dental establishment, drug store, grocery and dry goods store, numerous taverns including the Swope’s Tavern, and Emanuel Demuth’s tobacco store, the oldest in the United States and remaining in the same location through this day (Klein 1941: 5-6). West on King Street to Water Street were dry goods stores, hardware stores, printers, gunsmiths, carpenters, brewers, tailors, and rope makers which led past the old jail. From the Square on South Queen Street were the professional offices of attorneys and physicians including Thaddeus Stevens, John Montgomery, A. Herr Smith, Reah Frazer, and William Whiteside.
In the 1840s, artists, ropemakers, jackscrew makers, coppersmiths, coachmakers, oystermen, brewers, brickmakers, saddlers, shoemakers, chandlers, machinists, watchmakers, millers, carpenters, tailors, and potters were all professions represented in the city (Klein 1941: 7). The industries within the city were rapidly developing. New scientific inventions added to the comfort and ease of living and working in the city. In the early 1880s, two electric light plants and a gas plant supplied power and light for the city, horse cars gave way to electric street railways which spread, three electric lines were established, which traveled through the city, and newspapers and factories used electric motors for power (Klein 1941: 100-101).

Pottery manufacturing was also a viable industry. In 1860 there were seven pottery establishments. The only hands that were employed were men, and averaged seven males per pottery works with no evidence of women taking part in the business. The amount of capital invested totaled $3,200, the cost of raw materials was $2,130, and the annual value of products was $6,400. The seven men accrued an annual cost of labor valued at $1,668 for each establishment (Mombert 1869: 487).

Because of the growing population in the city, efforts were made to increase the police department and improve its efficiency in the 1870s. Policemen were paid $45 per month to make arrests. The largest percentage of arrests in the city was for drunkenness, which accounted for about one-third of the fifteen hundred annual arrests. Twenty-one policemen constituted the police force, one of whom was the Chief. The Chief received a salary of $70 per month and the officer $60 per month (Klein 1941: 71, 96-97).

One thing that was steadily growing was religious worship to keep up with the growing population of the city and county. In 1860 there were fifteen German Reformed Churches (Figure 5) out of 220 churches in the county (Mombert 1869: 450). By the 1880s there were
almost fifty separate church organizations in the city alone consisting of Lutheran, Reformed, Episcopalian, Catholic, Methodist, and Presbyterian denominations. Churches owned property valued at more than $1,000,000. Lancaster was often referred to as “a city of churches” (Klein 1941: 96). These churches also had a great deal of conflict because of their varying religious views.

Overall, the city experienced significant transformation as it became increasingly industrialized. On South Queen Street lived important figures in the history of Lancaster, including Thaddeus Stevens and Lydia Hamilton Smith, two influential people during the Civil War and Reconstruction Era. Thaddeus Stevens’ home and office was next door to Henry Gast while he operated his Eagle Porcelain Works out of his home on South Queen Street. Due to the proposed construction of a hotel and convention center in the lots once owned by Stevens and Smith, an archaeological excavation was carried out at their homes that would reveal evidence of Henry Gast and Son’s pottery works. Gast and his family came from Germany and carried with them a German tradition of pottery. Henry Gast’s German Calvanistic values were a main component in his continuing prosperity as a potter.

**German Immigration and the Reformed Church**

War, religious persecution, and economic decline were three contributing factors for Germans to emigrate in the late seventeenth century. This would bring about a 300 year mass-emigration to Pennsylvania. Battles were fought over the Rhineland. Peace treaties enacted did not remove hostilities. Cities, villages, and farmlands were all burned to the ground. Crop failures and famine devastated a large part of the population. Poverty was the result of this destruction. These conditions resulted in thousands of Germans leaving their homes and
migrating to the Philadelphia area, and an area known as Germantown (Curran 1986: 14). The thriving community led other Germans to settle in the area.

Between 1830 and 1845, another wave of German immigrants came to Pennsylvania to secure a new start. They had to rely upon their skills and resources to start their own business ventures or establish craft production in America. These people left Germany for reasons similar to those two hundred years earlier. They wanted to escape political turmoil, military conscription, tax reforms, crop failures, and many other social and economic pressures (Curran 1986: 15). However, those in extreme poverty did not have the resources to emigrate. In the second half of the eighteenth century, approximately twenty to twenty-five ships filled with German immigrants would arrive in Philadelphia each fall. Once in America, immigrants had to face the pressure of finding jobs and assimilating to the American lifestyle.

In the 1800s, Philadelphia was a booming city and a center of trade and commerce. The community of Germantown that was formed in upper Philadelphia County was an enclave of Lutherans and Reformed that created an ethnic solidarity and made the new immigrants feel at home. The Germans who settled in this area “practiced a form of ‘ideal communism’ under Christian rule” and had established “an ‘ideal society’ with common houses” that centered around the church (Curran 1986: 27).

When the Germans emigrated, they were expected to adjust to their new culture; however, they wanted to preserve their ethnic identity. With the large wave of Germans coming to Pennsylvania at a steady rate, there was little pressure to assimilate. There was also a divide in Pennsylvania between the “nativists” and non-English speaking immigrants. The Germans were viewed as a being in a lower class. The language barrier was one component of the classist ideals. Very few Germans were bilingual during the first wave of immigration. Large German
newspapers tried to close the divide between the German immigrants and the natives by Anglicizing German names with English cognates such as Miller, Smith, and Brown instead of Mueller, Schmidt, and Braun (Curran 1986: 44). In 1828 there was a bill introduced in the Pennsylvania state legislature to have German declared the official language of the Commonwealth. This bill was defeated by a one vote margin because English was the language of the courts and the some of the Germans were proficient enough to engage in political debates in English. The introduction of public schools in 1830 helped dissolve at least a part of the negative sentiment and by 1834, an elementary education was available to most children. The number of religious schools also increased; the Reformed Church had 160 schools (Curran 1986: 45).

The German Reformed Church’s contribution to education in Pennsylvania was scanty in the early years of the Commonwealth. The only institution of higher learning that was supported by the Reformed Church was Franklin College, founded in 1787 and also incorporated with the Lutheran Church. However, this college did not embody the ideals of the Reformed Church from which it was founded: “to have our youth instructed in such languages and sciences as to qualify them to fill public offices in the Republic, and … to prepare young men for the ministry” (Weaver 1953: 307). Franklin and Marshall College and the Lancaster Theological Seminary were two other institutions founded with the Reformed beliefs. The denomination also planned to cooperate with the Lutheran and Reformed Dutch Churches to establish a theological school. With an increasing number of Germans in Western Pennsylvania, it was important for the Church to make provisions for theological education.

The Reformed movement was different from other denominations in both structure and beliefs. Each country that had a Reformed movement had a church with its own governing body.
While in the German Reformed Church in the nineteenth century, the German language was universally used. This helped create a divide between the German and English Reformed denominations. Before the mid 1800s, the German Reformed Church was culturally isolated in sections of Pennsylvania. By the mid-nineteenth century, the church became more inter-denominational, allowing activity with other American evangelical groups, particularly the Reformed Dutch Church and branches of the Presbyterian Church that together formed the United Domestic Missionary Society (Weaver 1953: 303).

The Home Missionary Movement of which the Reformed Church was a member along with other opposing denominations, prevented the Church from taking a more active role. It was more of a concern for the Church to extended Christianity and their Reformed brand of Protestantism. By 1864 the denomination had 107,394 members, 460 pastors, and 1,134 congregations in the United States (Weaver 1953: 311). With growing numbers across the country and their disagreement in views with other denominations, the Reformed Church members isolated themselves from the community. Their traditional habits and customs remained strong and they resisted assimilation to certain aspects of American culture.

Aside from the Church conflict with the English who had a different view of Protestant belief, economic status played a part of this nativist, classist mentality. Those who came over to America as paupers were viewed as severely handicapped. While most immigrants arrived at a “productive” period of life (between the ages of 18 and 48); relatively few were able to adjust to the American labor market despite the number of opportunities of skilled and unskilled jobs (Curran 1986: 38-39). A large portion of German immigrants were craftsmen and professionals, many of whom were masters of their trade and accustomed to working independently (Curran 1986: 64). The German Reformed Church was a Christian Protestant denomination that
followed a Calvanist doctrine that believes in predestination. Since each person does not know whether s/he is a “chosen” one, it was important to work like one was “chosen.” Prosperity in the craft would be an indication that the person was “chosen.” This type of work ethic likely shaped craftsmen like Henry Gast who attempted to achieve excellence in their crafts.
Chapter 3: History of the Gast Family Potters

The Gast family did not come to America through Philadelphia like so many other German immigrants. Instead they came through the port of Baltimore, settled in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and assimilated into the community while still maintaining their German heritage. Frederick Gast was an immigrant from Wurttemberg, Germany. He was born in August of 1770. In 1777, Susanna C., Frederick’s future wife, was born in the same city. While in Germany, they conceived six children: Margaret, Elizabeth, Henry, Christian, Conrad, and Philip, who became a tailor (LCD 1857). In 1818 when Henry Gast was twelve years old, his family came to America from Baltimore, and settled in Lancaster, Pennsylvania (Heisey 1946: 120). They purchased a lot on James and Prince Streets for $500 and built a small log cabin on the property (Edwards 1882: 143). Frederick passed away in August, 1860, and Susanna died in the same year (Figure 8).

Most of the Gast family chose occupations that required specialization in a craft. Many of the family members established pottery businesses, while others chose different occupations such as shoe making. The Gast family is examined, with special interest to Henry Gast, Sr., a potter who had influence over the pottery craft in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Christian, Conrad, and Henry’s family lines are discussed, as well as the influence they had in their craft and community.

Christian Gast (1808-1897)

Christian Gast was born in Giessen, Germany on December 2, 1808 and came to America when he was ten. He married Maria Eckert, a native of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, who was born
January 18, 1812. They had ten children together: Emanuel H., Catherine A., Frederick A., Albert C., who was a confectioner (LCD 1888), William, Mary E., Anna, Samuel D., Charles E., an attorney-at-law in 1870 (Ellis and Evans 1883: 246), and Margie.

By 1843, Christian, a shoemaker, owned his own shop. He operated his business on the first square of North Queen Street, located between J. Michael’s Hotel and J. & P. Long’s store. In this year, he advertised for his store where he sold ladies’ and gentlemen’s shoes of every description according to order, and also kept a variety of shoes on-hand (Lancaster City Directory 1843, 32). By 1857, he retired from this business, most likely to devote his time to the Church, and lived at the corner of West Chestnut and Prince Street. Christian then reopened his boots and shoes shop some years later in 1873, located on 7 North Queen Street, and continued to reside at 224 West Chestnut (LCD 1873-1874, 48).

He served in the Brethren for the First Reformed Church of Lancaster in January, 1850. A large portion of the congregation was German, but the majority was English. In an election for church officers, the German portion of the church elected their candidates by a three vote majority over the English portion. The English pastor threatened to leave the church, and a divide widened among the congregation. The Classis, an elected governing body of pastors and elders, sought to interfere and restore peace in the church (Ellis and Evans 1883: 459). This dispute was settled by Christian, and others who were among the Classis, in a debate where both sides presented their argument and the Classis made the final decision. He also served as the church’s Secretary and Treasurer in 1873, as he most likely had done in previous years (Ellis and Evans 1883: 524). On January 12, 1879, Christian was appointed onto an executive committee of elders that combined leadership with several churches (Ellis and Evans 1883: 486). In July,

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3 The Lancaster City Directory of 1857 describes Christian as the late shoemaker.
1883, there were 270 members of the Reformed Church, and he remained an officer in the Classis (Ellis and Evans 1883: 461).

Christian also was an incorporator for the Lancaster Home Mutual Fire Insurance Company that integrated on May 1, 1861, located on East King Street (Ellis and Evans 1883: 518).

In 1897, Christian passed away and Maria, his wife, died just four years later. They are buried together at the Lancaster Cemetery (Figure 6).

Christian’s son Emanuel H. Gast was born in 1831 and passed away in 1875 (Figure 7). He resided at 139 East King Street and was also a shoemaker (LCD 1873-1874). He operated a boot and shoe store on 13 North Queen Street (LCD 1857). He served as a sergeant in the Civil War for two different companies; one company he served in was where he was in charge of Amos Gast and in the other he was the sergeant in John Gast’s company. In 1860, Emanuel was an incorporator where he passed legislation to make the Home for Friendless Children, founded one year earlier, a long-lasting institution (Ellis and Evans 190, 194, 487). He, with his wife, Anna C., had a son, Herbert J. Gast who was a printer who resided at 139 East King Street (LCD 1890). Before 1894, Herbert J. became a clerk and changed his residence to 338 North Lime Street (LCD 1894-1895).

Christian’s son, Frederick Augustus Gast, married to Adaline Gast, also a first-generation German immigrant, served as a chaplain in the military for five months in 1865 and was discharged with his regiment. He held the position of Reverend from 1859 to 1865 (Ellis and Evans 1883: 358, 100, 814). Simultaneously, he headed the Heller’s Reformed Church as an elected assistant pastor and served there from 1860 to 1865 (Ellis and Evans 1883: 934). He also worked at the Theological Seminary which was at the time a part of Franklin and Marshall
College, where he also served as a Reverend. In 1871, he was appointed tutor of Church History and Exegesis. The following year, Dr. Rev. Gast was elected Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament Theology (Ellis and Evans 1883: 427).

Christian’s son William H. Gast, was a maker of boots and shoes since 1835. He operated his shop out of 105 North Queen Street. In 1888, he placed an advertisement in the business directory that advertised a full line of ready-made boots, shoes and rubbers that “were constantly on hand;” he also would make any style of boot or shoe made to order and placed “special attention to deformities of the feet” (LCD 1888). He lived at 146 North Mulberry in 1888 (LCD 1888). He most likely was Christian’s apprentice and later took over the family business. He had a son, Harry C. Gast who was a clerk (LCD 1888).

Conrad Gast (1813-1884)

Another of Frederick Gast’s sons, Conrad, was born in 1813. He came to Lancaster, Pennsylvania when he was five years-old. He married Catharine S., who was born in 1819; his second wife Harriett was born in 1809. Following Conrad’s death, Harriett resided at 19 West James Street (LCD 1888). Conrad had four children with Catharine: Amos C., Catharine, Mary, and Conrad, and another daughter Sarah R. Gast who was born in 1844 and passed away just six months later (Figure 10). Conrad was a potter, but also participated actively in the community. In 1858, he was on a building committee for the Washington Fire Company, which purchased lots on North Queen Street (Ellis and Evans 1883: 389). He was also on the board of directors for building an almshouse (Ellis and Evans 1883: 212). He passed away December 10, 1884 in Lancaster at the age of 72.
Conrad’s career as a potter began in 1842 when he established a pottery at the corner of Prince and James Streets (Figures 1 & 2). This establishment was equipped with appliances for carrying out the pottery business. The average stock of wares carried was about $4000 and annual sales ranged from $4000 to $6000. Conrad’s son Amos C. Gast was admitted as a partner in 1877, but having apprenticed in the business on James Street since early in its establishment. In addition to Conrad and Amos, six other hands were hired to make on average 600 pots per day. Their kiln held about 2,000 vessels (Edwards 1882: 143).

In 1843, Conrad lived on the third square of North Queen Street, while he operated his business just a few blocks away on the corner of Water and James Streets (also listed as North Prince and James Streets). This property later became known as 114 W James and 458 North Prince Street. In the 1888 Business Directory of Lancaster, the property is listed as being owned by Amos C. Gast. The pottery works closed in 1892, but the family lived at the same location on James Street until the 1930s (Heisey 1946: 120). The pottery works on James Street under the headship of Amos C. Gast did endure some misfortune when, in the 1890s, a two-horse runaway team crashed into the pottery and destroyed work from several days (Heisey 1946: 121).

In the early 1880s, Conrad began using a “new and beautiful style of ornamental glazing for the outside of flower pots for house plants, rendering them very attractive specimens of the ceramic art” (Edwards 1882: 143).

Conrad’s son Amos C. followed in his footsteps as a potter. Amidst the pottery business, Amos C. served as a private in the military from June 26, 1863 to January 7, 1864 (Ellis and Evans 1883: 186). In 1892, Amos operated the pottery kiln out of 114 West James Street (LCD 1892).
Another son of Frederick, Henry Gast, Sr. was born August 25, 1806 in Germany. He married Sophia Kuntz in Lancaster, Pennsylvania (Figure 11). They had five children, Levi, John, Henry Jr., William Henry, and Jacob (Figure 12); Levi, Henry, and John were all potters. In a second marriage, Emma L. Gast became his wife (Figure 11). After she was widowed, she continued to reside at 418 Manor Street, one of the pottery kiln locations (LCD 1890). In 1895, she moved to North Queen Street where she possibly operated a boarding house.\(^4\) He was a potter who, like his brother Christian, he also had an affiliation with the First Reformed Church in Lancaster. He became a consistory of the church in 1878 (Ellis and Evans 1883: 458). When he died on May 30, 1889, he was buried in the Lancaster Cemetery (Figure 9) and his funeral services were held at the First Reformed Church (LCHS archives).

Unlike Conrad’s business, whose location remained consisted, Henry Sr.’s pottery shifted locations a number of times. The longest running pottery was operated out of 7 Manor Street (Figure 4) (later numbered 416 and 418 Manor) which was established in 1838 (Heisey 1946: 120). Shortly after, in August 1844, a frame building attached to his pottery collapsed, breaking $400 worth of ware, destroying every piece (Heisey 1946: 121).

In 1857, Henry & Son ran the pottery on Manor as well as South Queen and Vine Streets (Figure 3), near Centre square and Market square, while he resided by Centre Market square (LCD 1857). The South Queen Street location is of particular importance because it is the lot that is next door to the home and law office of Thaddeus Stevens. Archaeological excavation behind the house of Thaddeus Stevens yielded a large ceramic assemblage including artifacts associated that clearly is associated Henry Gast’s pottery works. An 1850 deed shows that Henry Gast purchased this property on South Queen Street for $2500. During the Manor and

\(^4\) The listing in the 1894-1895 City Directory is Gast Ella M., boarding 317 N Queen, h do
South Queen Street operations, Henry’s son John helped run the business. A mechanic’s lien taken out against Henry Gast was uncovered from January 12, 1855. The lien was for $350.12 against Gast’s “three story frame, shop, warehouse or building, with a shed roof, six feet in length and twenty two feet in width situate on a lot of ground belonging to the said Henry Gast” (LCHS archives). This could possibly be an addition to the shop where Gast stored his finished pottery in an outbuilding behind his house. This lien shows that Gast was unable to pay his bills at this location.

In 1868, Henry had his pottery works at both 7 Manor and 159 West King Street. He no longer had the South Queen Street operation. To help with business, Henry, Sr. placed an advertisement for the Manor Street operation (Figure 49) that boasted about manufacturing and dealing earthen, stone, and Rockingham ware of every description, highlighting their manufacture of garden vases, stove lining, fire bricks, drainage, and water pipes, constantly on hand or manufactured to order (LCD 1869-1870). In 1873, Henry operated both the Manor Street business and one at 660 Columbia Avenue, where his son Henry, Jr. headed the company. John and Levi helped at Manor Street (LCD 1873-1874). Deeds from the Lancaster County Courthouse show that the Manor Street location was sold in four separate transactions. The first was a small one to Henry’s father Frederick for $755 in 1842. Another transaction was in 1875, and both Henry and Emma sold the property. The final two were both in 1877 (Lancaster County Courthouse Deeds). None of the transactions made in later dates appear to involve kin to the Gasts.

Henry Sr. ran another pottery business at West Orange Street. This shop was purchased by Henry and Sophia Gast in 1829 and it is unclear when the business was no longer operating. In an 1834 business directory, Henry placed an advertisement announcing the commencement of
stoneware manufacturing (Figure 50). The advertisement has a list of an assortment of ware in both red and stoneware, and the prices of each type of item and size. In 1842, Gast sold part of the property and then in 1877 he sold the rest to two different people. In 1888, he operated his pottery at 660 Columbia Avenue and 416/418 Manor (Figure 4), and resided at 317 Coral Street (LCD 1888). By 1890, he lived and worked at 660 Columbia Avenue. In 1894, Annie, Bertha, Catharine, Henry, and Jacob were all living at 660 Columbia, with Henry, Jr. running the business.

Henry Gast Sr. owned many properties, but a number of mechanic’s liens were taken out against him. In 1841, Henry and Sophia purchased a property on W. King and Charlotte Street, however just one year later, Gast was unable to pay a bill for $12.90 and a lien was taken out against the one story brick dwelling house twenty six feet square (LCHS archives). Another property was bought on South Duke Street in 1845 by Sophia and Henry. A few years later in 1848, Gast purchased a two-story brick dwelling house and two lots or pieces of ground on South Duke Street. Two mechanic’s liens were taken out against Gast in the amounts of $245.98 and $115.17. It is unclear what year the property was purchased at West Walnut and Water Street, but it was sold in two parts to different people; one in 1850 and another in 1851. This lot had three liens taken out against it; two were from 1847 and one from 1848. One was for $108.23, another for $102.20, and the last for $111.13. In 1865, Gast bought a property on North Mulberry and sold it two years later. Meanwhile in 1866, Gast purchased another lot at 423 Lafayette. He sold this lot in three transactions. One was to his son, William Gast for $310 in 1877 and the other two were in 1878 (Lancaster County Courthouse Deeds).

Henry, Jr. was born November 18, 1836 and passed away February 23, 1924. Henry, Jr. was the man who took over the family business when his father (his senior) passed away; he also
helped run the kiln when their business grew. In addition to being a potter, Henry was a Sergeant in Company K. in the military from June 22, 1863 until December 6, 1865 (Ellis and Evans 1883: 110). He had seven children: John, Annie, Harry W. who was also a potter, Margaret, Katie, Bertha, and Jacob K. who was a laborer.

Another of Henry Gast Sr.’s sons was William Henry Gast who was born August 11, 1842 and passed away November 22, 1907. It is unclear if William H. Gast in the family cemetery is Henry Gast, Sr.’s son or if he is the son of perhaps Philip. If he is the same William H., then there is evidence of William H. Gast having two different marriages. On their tombstone, William is together with Susan R. who was born in 1844 and passed in 1922 (Figure 13). However, in a family portrait, William is pictured with Sarah Jane Mullen Gast, born March 27, 1845. William and Sarah had six children together: Ida, Franklin who was a tobacco packer, Charles F., Mary Ella, George W., and William Arthur (Figure 14). He was a tobacco packer who lived at 423 Lafayette Street. In 1890 he became a salesman (LCD 1890).

**Gast Women**

A number of the Gast women had assembly line type jobs in the late 1800s. William H’s daughter, Henry Sr.’s granddaughter, Ida J. Gast was a saleslady in 1888 and a forewoman in 1890. She lived at 423 Lafayette Street in 1890 (LCD 1888, 1890). She was born November 3, 1866. William’s other daughter Ella Gast, also known as Mary Ella Gast Stradtman, served as a millhand and resided at 423 Lafayette Street in 1890 (LCD 1890). She was born June 29, 1874. Henry Jr.’s daughters Kate P. and Margaret Gast were cigar makers and resided at 660 Columbia Avenue in 1890. Another daughter, Annie E. was a tobacco stripper and resided at the same
residence (LCD 1890). Mary C. Gast was the daughter of Conrad and Catharine. She was a
dressmaker who lived and worked at 29 Penn Square (LCD 1890).

Summary of the Gast Family

The three main first generation Gast brothers discussed were Christian, Conrad, and
Henry Sr. These brothers demonstrate a typical family who had their businesses or trade, their
family life, and then their social lives. Christian and Henry were active members in the
community, participating in church events and being active members on committees for the
curch. They both were members of the same church, the First Reformed, which had a large
German congregation, so this shows that they were not only close as a family, but they also held
religious services with their family and other members of the German community in Lancaster.
Despite emigrating from their homeland, the Germans maintained a close atmosphere with each
other. Their religious influence over their families led Christian’s son to become a pastor of the
same Reformed denomination.

Many members of the Gast family also served in the Civil War as sergeants, which shows
their dedication to their new country as well as their ability to lead. Henry Gast, Jr. was a
Sergeant for two years in the military (Ellis and Evans 1883: 524, 186), which most definitely
had to have affected the family pottery business and the amount of output and capital that was
made between 1863 and 1865. Other Gast family members were drafted into the military as
privates.

Little is known about the women in Frederick Gast’s family who came over from
Germany. It is likely that they helped out in one of the family businesses, whether it was pottery,
tailoring, or shoe making. There is no evidence to support that they were directly involved with
the manufacturing or painting of pottery. There were seven potteries in Lancaster and each of them employed an average of seven hands, none of which were women (Mombert 1869: 487). Out of the men in the family, two became potters, one became a tailor, and the other a shoe maker. Pottery was a likely choice for many people who wanted to start a business because the advantage of pottery over other trades was the minimal amount of capital needed to start the business. In the nineteenth century, some potters reported “having invested less than $25 in their tools and equipment. Provided a good run of potter’s clay was available virtually anyone could set up a pot house anywhere. Coal and wood sufficed for fuel to fire the clay” (Whisker 1993: 1). Because of the relative ease in starting the business, it was a good investment that could potentially be a reliable source of income if the potter kept up with the demand of the community and advertised well. With the number of advertisements that have been uncovered thus far from the Gast family, it is evident that they advertised their businesses and their assortment of wares well and once they produced a new type of ware, they were certain to make it known to the public.
Chapter 4: What Are Stoneware, Redware, Bennington, and Staffordshire?

Stoneware, redware, Bennington style, and Staffordshire styles of ware were all being produced simultaneously. In Staffordshire, England, earthenwares were produced in a style that became popular and desired by Americans (Figures 47 & 48). Likewise, Bennington, Vermont became noted for their styles of ware and was in high demand in America (Figures 45 & 46). These two styles competed against the stoneware and redware that was created by numerous potteries throughout the county.

Two main types of ware were produced by the Gast family and also manufactured in mass quantities in the 1800s: redware and stoneware. Their production styles will be discussed because it is important to understand the difference between the two styles of manufacturing techniques and the quality of wares to realize the importance of simultaneously producing both.

Redware Production

Redware ranges in color from pinkish to red-brown to true brown. It is generally covered by a soft lead glaze (Ramsay 1947: 128). Salt glazes could not be used with redware because they needed a higher firing temperature to work (Warner 1985: 184). Redware rarely shows a maker’s mark, but when it does have one, it is usually found on the base of the vessel inscribed freehand in the soft clay before firing it in the kiln (examples of maker’s marks are shown in Figures 36-40, 44). Since redware is not that durable, there are usually a greater number of redware pieces sold in the first part of the 1800s and prior to then than other types of wares because they continually needed to be replaced.
Stoneware Production

Stoneware is made from finer, denser clays than redware, and must be burned at a much higher temperature than redware. The glaze is usually a salt glaze that is done by throwing salt into the kiln when it is at its highest heat. The salt is vaporized and deposited on the surface and what is left is a very thin film of glassy silicate or glaze. This type of glaze is rarely smooth or bright; it usually has a stony luster and shows irregularities of surface (Ramsay 1947: 138-139). Lead glazes could not be used for stoneware because it would burn off at the high temperature that is needed for firing (Warner 1985: 184). Unlike redware, stoneware frequently bears a maker’s mark, generally the potter’s name that was applied with a stamp to the clay (examples of maker’s marks are seen in Figures 36-40, 44). The firing of stoneware is more complicated than the procedure in firing redware. The ceramics should be heated to a point where the surface, and only the surface, melts. This process is called sintering and is what makes the vessel watertight. The potter has to be careful because once the body of the piece begins to melt, or vitrify, it will become distorted or possibly collapse from the heat. Most potters tend not to fire their vessels to the sintering point to prevent their vessels from vitrifying, so they need to use a glaze in order to make the wares waterproof. To reach this point, the vessels must be fired at temperatures 200 degrees Celsius higher than those used for redware (Warner 1985: 175). This temperature difference is important because there either needs to be two kilns, one for redware and one for stoneware, or the kiln that is used for both needs to withstand the temperature for stoneware as well as redware.

Stoneware and redware were the most common types of ware found in collections and assemblages. These styles of ware produced by Henry Gast were able to compete with the Bennington and Staffordshire styles which are discussed to give a comparison.
**Bennington, Vermont and Rockingham Style**

Bennington, Vermont was the home and establishment to many potters. Two main families established dynasties in pottery: the Nortons and the Fentons. Some of the artisans in Bennington were originally from Staffordshire, England (Spargo 1926: 237). The first pottery was established in 1793 by the Norton family. At one point, the Nortons and Fentons created a partnership in 1831, but dissolved in 1847. While they were partners, they manufactured “every description of stone ware” in 1846-1847 (Spargo 1926: 81). They also made vessels from whiteware, yellow ware, and Rockingham ware, with porcelain as a smaller business venture (Spargo 1926: 112). Bennington prospered well into the twentieth century.

During the nineteenth century, Bennington potters manufactured four main types of ware: scroddled, flint enamel ware, Rockingham, and Parian. Although they made such high standard ware, slip covered redware, common to Pennsylvania potters, was also manufactured (Spargo 1926: 167).

Rockingham ware, also produced by Henry Gast, was a specialty of Bennington potters. This type of ware is categorized by the yellow body with mottled or splotched brown glaze, often of different tones. The style began in the latter half of the eighteenth century at a pottery established under the guidance of the Marquis of Rockingham. It originally was manufactured as a soft paste porcelain. These wares were costly, so a cheaper product was created. English and American potters alike began producing a lower quality line of goods made from yellow clay and decorated with brown glaze; the product was nicknamed “Rock’s pots” and later called “Rockingham.” Almost every pottery in the Eastern United States made this style of Rockingham ware from 1835 to 1885 (Spargo 1926: 169-171). Bennington potteries made a variety of items with the Rockingham style including mugs, door knobs, soap dishes, bedpans,
pitchers, and jelly moulds, while most American potters only made pitchers, crocks, or other utilitarian wares.

**Staffordshire and English Styles**

The main threat to American business was not other American potteries; it was the wares produced by English potters, and in particular, those from Staffordshire England. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, Britain was the world leader in ceramic production, and “revolutionized the manner in which industrial pottery was made, distributed and sold” (Clark 1995: 26). This included active labor unions for potters, shortened work days, and health charters.

Manufacturing techniques were adopted from other countries which included salt glazed stoneware originally made by the Germans in the fifteenth century. The rise of Staffordshire popularized the German creation in the mid eighteenth century. The Elers Brothers were two prominent figures that put Staffordshire on the map for ceramics. They introduced several innovations including brass moulds applied as decoration to red stoneware teapots. White stoneware, made from a white Devonshire clay with calcined flint, grew enormously popular and took the place of red stoneware in the 1740s. Staffordshire potters were constantly experimenting with new clays and glazes. Transfer printing on china and teapots became a preferred decoration (Clark 1995: 40-41).

By the mid nineteenth century, there were nearly 150 potteries, which was an increase from 25 potteries in 1660. The innovations with technique, clay, and glazes proved enormously important for these potters. Aside from innovation, a key to Staffordshire’s success was “the export market of the potter industry” which had an “aggressive and strictly controlled trading
policy, known as mercantilism;” “marketing methods were primitive and driven by the vagaries of demand. Pricing methods were often cut-throat and self-defeating” (Clark 1995: 42). Britain established itself the most dominant and most innovative ceramics manufacturer in the world by 1825. In 1837 there were an estimated 30,000 workers and in 1852 that number doubled to 60,000 workers at 133 potteries (Clark 1995: 86).

Staffordshire and Bennington proved to be competition in the nineteenth century. With growing businesses and innovative technologies, Pennsylvania potters needed to be pioneering as well. Henry Gast and other potters experimented with glazes and combinations of redware and stoneware to be able to compete with the large Staffordshire and Bennington markets. This was done by Gast and is evidenced by collections and assemblages found throughout Lancaster.
Chapter 5: Types of Ware in Lancaster County

There were nearly 200 craftsmen working in Lancaster County between 1720 and 1931. Nearly all of them were men, and many of them were German immigrants or from Pennsylvania-German descent. Potteries were found in six boroughs and twelve townships, and most were two-man operations; this type most likely was a father-son or brother-brother shop (Lasansky 1982: 538).

There were four main potteries in Lancaster County that marked their wares; the Gast family had at least three different stamps. Conrad Gast simply marked his wares with “C. Gast” (Figure 40) between the years 1841 and 1892. Henry Gast used the stamp “H. Gast” (Figures 37 & 38) from 1838 to 1913, H. Gast/West Orange (Figure 39) while at that location, and “Eagle Porcelain Works/ Lancaster City PA/Henry Gast S Q ST” (Figure 36) from 1860 to 1913 (Lasansky 1982: 542). The latter date in both of Gast’s stamps implies that his son Henry Gast, Jr., used the same marking until 1913. Henry Gast did not run the pottery on South Queen Street (S Q ST) until 1913, so this stamp suggests that Eagles Porcelain Works was the family, company name from the time Henry Gast opened his pottery on South Queen Street in 1860 until his son discontinued his wares with this company in 1913. Since the potteries made similar looking pieces, without the markings on the base, the wares would be indistinguishable (Figures 41-44).

While most potteries by the 1860s had reached the peak of their sales and production and steadily declined thereafter, only a few large shops in Lancaster continued to operate profitably past the turn of the century. A census for the 1860s gives the figure that there were seven potteries in Lancaster County that invested a total of $3600 worth of capital; the cost of raw
materials was $2762; the number of hands employed was 21; the annual cost of labor was $5076 (this means that the average wages paid were less than $5 per week); and the annual cost of products was $11,293 (Heisey 1946: 123). Conrad Gast, along with his four potters (including his son Amos) threw or molded, fired, and sold nearly 53,000 pieces of pottery in 1870 alone, clearly making a profitable endeavor (Lasansky 1982: 540). Levi Gast, Henry Sr.’s son was an expert in modeling clay. When he worked for Fred Hardy, Sr. (most likely after his father passed away), “he made a beautiful piece of statuary, two and a half feet in height and two feet wide, of a boy and a girl seated on a log, the former holding a book” (Heisey 1946: 123). Not only was Levi a craftsmen with utilitarian wares, he was able to make decorative pieces that were desirable.

Artifacts recovered by local collectors from the Manor Street pottery, as well as marked pieces from public and private collections, show the diversity and transition of Henry Gast’s work. Like much of the pottery from the nineteenth century in Pennsylvania, Gast’s work served a utilitarian function. He was, however, not limited to just crocks or pitchers. As time progressed, Gast’s wares were modified, as indicated through a variety of sources. Gast family wares are known from two main datasets, collections that are now housed in historic preservation societies and excavated finds.

**Artifacts in Collections**

To date I have identified three repositories (the Lancaster County Historical Society, Lancaster Heritage Center, and Landis Valley Museum) that curate stamped pieces of work by the Gast family. The Landis Valley Museum houses two redware mugs produced by Amos C. Gast, Conrad Gast’s son and Henry Gast’s nephew.
The Lancaster County Historical Society has one spittoon that is stamped with “Eagle Porcelain Works/ Lancaster City PA/Henry Gast S Q ST” on the base (Figure 29). The spittoon shows signs of wear near the base on the side with the hole. It is painted in a Rockingham style, where the base clay is much lighter than the brown glaze on top.

The Lancaster Heritage Center houses a spittoon, a crock with handles, two pitchers, and two jars with George Washington figures on the sides. All are glazed pieces, but they are not made from the same material. The spittoon is identical to the one at the Historical Society (Figure 30). It is painted in the Rockingham style and contains the same maker’s mark on the base. This spittoon does show less signs of ware than the other. The crock that is at the Heritage Center is stoneware and has blue dye and a stamp with “H. Gast./ West Orange/ Lancaster” (Figure 33). One of the two redware pitchers has “C. Gast” (Figure 35) marked on the bottom while the other is marked faintly with “H Gast” in the center of an oval (Figure 34). The one made by Conrad has a more orange glaze and the other made by Henry has a darker brown, but they are both identical in form. The jars are both made from redware and only the larger one has “H Gast” marked on the base (Figures 31 & 32). The larger of the jars has George Washington or Diana the Huntress that alternate on the four panels, while the smaller jar has the same figure of George Washington on all four sides.

One other Gast jar to make mention is rumored to have belonged to the Lancaster Heritage Center or the Landis Valley Museum, although neither house the artifact. The vessel is a jar that is made in the similar fashion to the other two jars that are housed that the Heritage Center. It is molded redware inscribed on the front and back with “Washington” with a figure of Washington above it on two panels and on the other two sides is Diana the Huntress. The jar is made from a clear speckled manganese lead glaze on the interior, exterior, and bottom. On the
base is the “H. Gast LA” maker’s mark. The date for this jar is between 1850 and 1880 (Garvan 1982: 170).

The pottery that is housed at these three locations shows the uniformity and similarity between both the function and the style of the ceramics. The two spittoons were identical in size, color, and style. They were made from the same material, had the same dimensions, and were painted with the same color glaze. This shows the precision of Henry Gast & Son in making the wares. Also uniform were the wares that were made by all of the Gasts. It is not definite whether Henry Gast Sr., or Henry Gast Jr. made the wares from the Eagle Porcelain Works, but it is clear that Amos C. Gast and Conrad Gast were producing wares of similar style, size, material, and color. The redware pitchers looked identical from the profile, and it was not until they were turned to reveal the maker’s mark on the base that one could see which potter was making the ware. This fact shows the similarity in the style of wares that were being produced at the time. Not only was the Gast family manufacturing these products, but other potters including Swopes and Ganse were making the same types of redware pitchers and stoneware crocks.5

*Manor Street*

As noted earlier, 7 Manor Street (later numbered as 416 and 418) was the home and pottery works of Henry Gast from 1838 to 1890. At the Manor Street pottery works, Henry Gast produced common red and yellow wares as well as a limited selection of white ware. Fancy figurines, fountains, and statuettes were also manufactured occasionally, in addition to utilitarian wares made from red clay. In its later days, the pottery works produced a significant amount of cinerary urns for crematories. White clay tobacco pipers and a few fancy glazed umbrella and cane handles were made from white clay. Floor tiles were also made from yellow clay in the

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5 See Appendix C
later years of the business (Heisey 1946: 120-121). The artifacts collected and sold from 416 and 418 Manor Street show that Gast’s pottery had a variety of forms, glazes, and uses. In the 1869-1870 Lancaster Business Directory, Gast took out an advertisement that showed manufacturing and dealing in earthen, stone and Rockingham ware of every description (Figure 49). At the bottom of the page, the advertisement states that “Constantly on hand or manufactured to order, garden vases, stone lining and fire bricks; Also drainage and water pipes.”

From May 1 to June 30, 1997, Stephen W. Gulon and associates who are local artifact hunters, removed artifacts from the Manor Street location. The artifacts produced from the site were attributed to Henry Gast. Of the pieces uncovered, the finer, intact pieces were sent to be auctioned (Figures 15-22). The artifacts discussed below are those that were placed in the auction.

There were 95 artifacts placed into the auction for bidding by private buyers. Most of the artifacts were unmarked and served a utilitarian function. There were twenty crocks, 17 mugs, 10 either egg or cheese cups, redware kiln furniture, stoneware kiln furniture, and 6 decorative pieces. The majority of artifacts were redware, with only 5 pieces of stoneware, 2 pieces of earthenware, 1 piece of yellow ware, and 2 were not labeled. The following artifacts listed (by auction catalogue number) are the descriptions of the decorative items:

170. Extremely rare and possibly unique Gast molded lead and manganese glazed redware bust of the English poet Robert Burns. [The] front of bust is glazed and has a dark brown almost black ground, back is unglazed, bust of “Burns” wearing a waistcoat, vest and neck scarf, titled Burns across front at base, back is hollow with finger marks of the potter clearly visible in the unglazed clay. (Figure 21)
175. Extremely rare and possibly unique Gast unglazed redware reclining spaniel, dog’s body is curved slightly with head resting on front paws and long floppy ears extending down over paws, back left leg is exposed with tail lying flat and curving around the front of the dog’s body, overall incising creates facial features and simulates the dog’s fur, underside of body is hollow with finger marks of the pottery clearly visible. (Figure 21)

201. Unusual Gast unglazed earthenware molded novelty figurine of boy seated on tree stump playing a mandolin and wearing a large hat, 4”H, crudely formed with lines in making around base and sides, chip on brim of hat.

202. Extremely fine and rare Gast lead and manganese glazed earthenware bird and whistle, overall glazing resulting in a brown ground, crudely fashioned seated bird with head raised, tail is mouthpiece, small hole on bottom and on bird’s breast.

470. Rare Gast lead and manganese glazed redware miniature seated dog figurine. [O]verall glazed resulting in an orangish-brown ground with manganese splotches on body and head.

480. Rare and unusual Gast hanging wall pocket, glazed front resulting in a dark brown, almost black, ground, trumpet-shaped with oval opening on top, front edge of top is scalloped, arched scalloped top with round hole for hanging, bottom of pocket with vertical ribbing having a diamond-like design below, back is open and unglazed.

The two types of kiln furniture found at the site were for stoneware and redware.

206. 3 Gast unglazed redware kiln stilts: 2 Tripod stilts, 1 cone-shaped stilt

207. 2 Gast salt glaze stoneware kiln pieces (used to separate pottery pieces being fired), round collar-shaped with “U”-shaped cutout on front and round opening on bottom.
The most common type of glaze for the assemblage was lead and manganese; 63 pieces were made in this style and it was only used for redware and one piece of earthenware. The stoneware pieces were either glazed in salt and cobalt, lead and copper, salt, or left unglazed. Eight of the pieces from the assemblage were left unglazed.

Another interesting feature to note from the artifacts revealed at Manor Street is that many of the pieces were misshapen (Figures 16 & 19). Eleven of the artifacts were somehow misshaped; most of them did not have a rim that was symmetrical. Most of the misshaped pieces were crocks.

West Orange Street

In 1834, Gast commenced his production of stoneware. An advertisement from July 26, 1834 from a source in Lancaster was placed for the West Orange Street location. To draw the reader’s attention, he first line in the advertisement in large bold letters simply states “Stone Ware Manufactory.” and under this line is (in even larger, bold letters) “HENRY GAST.” The advertisement dictates that Gast made high pots, butter pots with covers, pickle jars with covers, snuff jars, fountain jars and kegs, preserve jars with covers, churns, jugs and pitchers, all in various sizes, as well as milk pots, chambers, beer bottles, and inkstands that “He is at all times prepared to supply orders to any extent” (Figure 50) He also claims that this ware will not be surpassed by anyone in the country and will always be sold as low as that of any of the potteries in the city of Philadelphia.
South Queen Street

An excavation from the Thaddeus Stevens and Lydia Hamilton Smith Site in Lancaster uncovered material undoubtedly associated with Henry Gast pottery works on South Queen Street. The excavation came about because in 1999, a group of investors purchased a downtown block of the city and proposed the development of a hotel and convention center complex. Now, the Lancaster County Convention Center Authority (LCCCA) has eminent domain over the main city square. An area that is of particular importance is Lot 134, the southernmost lot on the block and the property that had once been owned by Thaddeus Stevens. Although a large-scale CRM (Cultural Resource Management) project was not permitted because of the lack of federal funding, the Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster sponsored investigations of the Thaddeus Stevens lot (Delle & Levine 2004: 132), to recover any cultural or historical artifacts. The Thaddeus Stevens and Lydia Hamilton Smith Site excavation (referred to from here on as Stevens and Smith Site), began in the fall of 2002 and ended in the summer of 2003. What was found at the site has contributed information about the Underground Railroad as well as shed light on significant pottery findings that have been attributed to Henry Gast and his pottery works. The collection specifically yielded kiln furniture, bisque, and ceramic wasters that signify the nearby manufacture of pottery. Locus 1, Locus 3, and the Backend of Locus 3 are the three areas that yielded Gast pottery during the excavation.

Locus 1 Redware

The pottery found in this locus was mostly plain and utilitarian. There are 11 units in Locus 1, yielding 2,434 sherds (Table 1). The vessels found in this locus are utilitarian. There were 58 total vessels that could be identified from the sherds and reconstructed. These vessels
consisted of 24 butter pots or crocks, 8 milkpans, 4 plates, 2 pitchers, 4 chamber pots, 1 galley pot, 1 miniature tea cup, and 12 pieces of kiln furniture that were found across five of the units (Murray 2005). The function of these vessels served for food storage, food preparation, food service, and hygiene. Of particular significance is the presence of kiln furniture.

The pots and pans found in this locus were wheel-thrown. Four plates were drape-molded with coggled edges. The vessels were either lead-glazed clear or brown/black on one or both sides, or they were left unglazed. One hundred eighty-seven of these sherds (8%) were slip decorated (Murray 2005). Both German and colonial decorations were found on the slipware sherds. This type of style characterized the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Evidence that there was a kiln on the site is found in the 12 pieces of kiln furniture that were found as well as the waste lump of unfired clay that did not have a shape and also had fingerprints in the clay. This was found alongside finished pots, so there would not be finished and unfinished pieces if there were no kiln on the site. This locus revealed all redware kiln furniture that was used to fire redware vessels (Figures 23 & 24).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Sherd Count</th>
<th>Minimum Vessels</th>
<th>Vessel type Represented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit 117 level 3</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1 jelly mold, 1 bowl, 1 plate, 1 cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 117 level 4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 bowl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 117 level 5</td>
<td>1,037</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>4 jelly molds, 2 plates, 6 decorated bowls, 1 plain bowl, 8 butter pots, 5 milkpans, 1 pitcher, kiln furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 211 level 1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1 milkpan, 1 chamber pot, kiln furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 213 level 1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 215 level 1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 216 level 1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 216 level 2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 216 level 3</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1 pitcher, 6 pots, 1 cup, 1 chamber pot, 1 galley pot, 4 decorated bowls, 1 plate, 2 jelly molds, kiln furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 216 level 4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 216 level 5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1 pitcher, kiln furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 216 level 6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1 plate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 216 wall clean</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1 pitcher, 1 jelly mold, 1 pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 217 level 1</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 218 level 3</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>8 butter pots, 2 milkpans, 1 pitcher, 3 jelly molds, 2 plates, 2 decorated bowls, kiln furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 218 level 6</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1 pitcher, 1 decorated bowl, 1 chamber pot, 2 jelly molds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 219 level 1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 219 level 2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 316 level 1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 318 level 1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 318 level 3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 butter pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 320 level 1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. The level, sherd count, minimum vessel count, and vessel type of redware that is found from Locus 1.
Locus 3 Redware

A total of 2,591 redware sherds were unearthed from Locus 3 (Table 2). The vessels from Locus 3 were used for food storage, food preparation, food serving, hygiene, decoration, recreation, or kiln furniture. Once again, most of the vessels were utilitarian in nature, but this locus did yield some other functions for the wares. The majority of the vessels were used for storage; this type included large pots, a large crock, and jugs. Fifty-nine percent of the redware, 69 vessels were used for this purpose. Thirteen vessels, which constituted 11% of the total redware, made up the food serving category. Food preparation wares including bowls, cake pans, and cake molds, constituted 8 vessels and 7% of the assemblage. Hygiene included 7 chamber pots. Decorations consisted of two flowerpots and the plaque. Recreation included 2 modified gaming pieces. There were also 14 pieces of kiln furniture found in this locus (Murray 2005).

The majority of pottery from Locus 3 was wheel-thrown. There was also a drape-molded plate and a molded plaque. The wares were either glazed clear, brown, or black, or they were left unglazed. Vessels were decorated with slip trailing, Rockingham type glaze, or sgraffito designs (Murray 2005). The slip trailing technique was a popular among traditional German potters in Pennsylvania.

Of greatest significance from this Locus are the kiln furniture, bisque, and plaque. The plaque is the only purely decorative piece from the assemblage. Of the 14 pieces of kiln furniture found, two of them were stoneware instead of redware (Figures 23-25). Since they were found in the same area, this indicates that both redware and stoneware were both being produced and fired. Separate kiln furniture needed to be used for redware and stoneware because
these two materials fire at different temperatures, so the clay used in the vessel would need to
match the clay used for the kiln furniture.

Also of significance are the 34 pieces of unfired bisque and the two waste pieces of clay
(Murray 2005). Some of the bisque pieces were misshapen and probably discarded before firing.
Four of the sherds had fingerprints in them that were not smoothed before being fired. These
bisque pieces indicate mistakes that were kept at the kiln site (Figure 26).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Sherd Count</th>
<th>Minimum Vessels</th>
<th>Vessel Type Represented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit 1 level 2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 3 level 2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 4 level 2</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>6 pots, 1 chamber pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 4 level 3</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>5 pots, 1 bowl, kiln furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 5 level 1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 5 level 2</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>5 pots, 1 miniature tea cup, 2 kiln furniture, bisque, 1 decorated bowl, 1 mug, 1 lid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 6 level 2</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1 plate, 4 pots, decorated bowl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 6 cleaning</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2 kiln furniture, bisque, 1 plate, 3 pots, decorated bowl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 7 fill</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 7 level 1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 7 level 2</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>5 pots, 1 plate, 1 pipe stem, bisque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 7 level 3</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1 pot, 1 jug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 7 level 4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 7 feature 8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 7 ?</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 8 west of wall</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2 pots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 8 level 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 jug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 8 level 2</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>1 decorated bowl, 1 plaque, 1 kiln furniture, 1 chamber pot, 1 flower pot, 1 large crock 1 pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 9 level 1</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1 flower pot, 2 kiln furniture, 1 bean pot, bisque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 9 level 2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1 pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 9 level 3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1 kiln furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 9 level 4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 10 level 2</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1 pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 10 level 3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 10 level 4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 11 level 1</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2 pots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 12 level 1</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Bisque, 1 pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 12 level 2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Bisque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 12 level 4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 12 level 5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 13 fill</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 14 level 1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 14 level 2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bisque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 3 level 1</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>5 pots, 1 milk pan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 3 level 2</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2 pots, kiln furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 3 level 3</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 3 level 4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 3 level 5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 3 catalog #147</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1 miniature teacup, 2 pots, 1 small pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 4 level 1</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 5 level 3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1 gaming piece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 5 level 4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 5 level 5</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1 pot, bisque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 5 level 7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1 gaming piece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 5 ?</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>1 pot, piece of cake mold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Units 8 + 10</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>2 chamber pots, 1 cake mold, 1 pitcher, kiln furniture, bisque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 6 Rock wall/fill</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 7 fill</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1 chamber pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 7 level 2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 12 level 1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 12 level 2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 13 fill</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 13 level 1</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 13 wall cleanup</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1 miniature teacup, 1 chamber pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 13 level 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 13 level 9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. The level, sherd count, minimum vessel count, and vessel type of redware that is found from Locus 3.

Backend of Locus 3 Redware

A total of 396 redware sherds were uncovered from the backend of Locus 3 (Table 3).

The redware found in this locus was similar to that of Locus 1 and Locus 3. The vessels were
again used for utilitarian purposes. Thirteen vessels were identified from the sherds which consisted of food storing, preparing, and serving. There were 10 pots, 1 bowl, 1 slipware bowl, and 1 plate (Murray 2005). Three pieces of kiln furniture were also found. Of the greatest significance from this locus is the bisque and redware kiln furniture (Figures 23 & 24).

The style the vessels were made was also similar to that of Loci 1 and 3. They were either left unglazed or glazed in brown or black. A small percentage (5%) of vessels was slip decorated. Rockingham type glaze was also used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Sherd Count</th>
<th>Minimum Vessels</th>
<th>Vessel Type Represented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit 37 level 1</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2 pots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 39 level 1</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3 pots, 1 slipped bowl, 1 kiln furniture, bisque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 39 level 2</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>4 pots, 1 bowl, 1 slipped bowl, 1 plate, 2 kiln furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 39 level 3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Bisque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 137 level 1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 138 level 1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 139 level 1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 139 level 2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 140 level 1</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1 pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 140 level 2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. The level, sherd count, minimum vessel count, and vessel type of redware that is found from the backend of Locus 3.

Stoneware

There were 179 stoneware sherds found at the Stevens and Smith Site (Table 4). Locus 1 accounted for 79 sherds. Like with the redware from the site, the stoneware consisted of utilitarian items. One crock, two crock lids, a pipe bowl, and kiln furniture were identified from this locus. Locus 3 yielded 100 sherds that consisted of 4 dishes, two small bowls, 1 crock, 1 cup, and kiln furniture (Murray 2005).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Catalog #</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Sherd Count</th>
<th>Vessels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>139.6, 139.10</td>
<td>Test pit 5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2, 2 dishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141.9, 141.15</td>
<td>Wall cleanup</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2, small bowl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>143.17</td>
<td>Trench 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>144.3, 144.29</td>
<td>Fill</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2, 1 kiln furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>146.3, 146.14, 146.34</td>
<td>Ft. 13 N. wall</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>147.3, 147.38</td>
<td>Ft. 3, Scatter Pt. Prov.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>149.5</td>
<td>Ft. 3 level 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>158.5</td>
<td>Ft. 3 level 3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>165.2</td>
<td>Ft. 3 level 5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>166.4</td>
<td>Ft. 4 level 1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>171.18</td>
<td>Ft. 5 level 5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>178.2</td>
<td>Unit 8 + 10 outside Ft. 5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>181.7</td>
<td>Unit 10 Ft. 5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>187.7, 187.13</td>
<td>Unit 39 level 1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>188.9, 188.12, 188.13, 188.21</td>
<td>Unit 39 level 2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5, kiln furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>189.5</td>
<td>Unit 39 level 3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>192.3</td>
<td>Ft. 12 level 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>195.2, 195.3, 195.10</td>
<td>Ft. 13 level 1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3, 1 crock, 1 dish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>208.5, 208.18</td>
<td>Unit 4 level 3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>211.5</td>
<td>Unit 5 level 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>213.27</td>
<td>Unit 5 level 2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>214.4, 214.16, 214.28</td>
<td>Unit 6 cleaning</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3, 1 dish, kiln furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>216.9</td>
<td>Unit 6 level 2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4, 1 small bowl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220.3</td>
<td>Unit 7 level 2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2, 1 cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>235.6, 239.7, 239.11</td>
<td>Unit 8 level 2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3, 1 small bowl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>241.4</td>
<td>Unit 9 level 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>244.2</td>
<td>Unit 9 level 3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1, kiln furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>246.6, 247.9</td>
<td>Unit 9 level 1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>252.4</td>
<td>Unit 10 level 2</td>
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<td>Unit 138 level 1</td>
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<td>285.11</td>
<td>Unit 140 level 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>287.3</td>
<td>Unit 7/9 level 1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>289.15</td>
<td>Unit 12/14 level 1</td>
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Table 4. The level, sherd count, minimum vessel count, and vessel type of stoneware that is from Locus 1 and 3.
The stoneware was glazed in two different techniques. One was a salt glaze where salt was thrown into the kiln during firing. This type of glaze gives the vessels a pebbly texture on the exterior. Fifteen sherds from the collection were glazed using this technique. Another technique was painting flowers or leaf designs with cobalt blue glaze. This style was popular after 1840. About 20% of the assemblage and 33 sherds used this method. Some of the stoneware was also painted in a Rockingham glaze. This technique is where brown glaze is dripped over the vessel to create a mottled look. It is often found on yellow ware, but can also be used on other clay. This style was most popular between 1850 and 1870. At the Stevens and Smith Site, there were 19 sherds that used the Rockingham style glaze.

One interesting sherd found at the site was red-bodied, but fired at a very high temperature so that it is not porous. This sherd (Figure 27) is salt glazed and painted with cobalt blue; this style of glaze is mostly used for stoneware. Eight sherds were red-bodied but fired until the clay was almost black, and then glazed black. Because of the clay’s hardness, it is considered stoneware, but the original clay may have been redware.

The South Queen Street location shows the transition from redware to stoneware. It is at this location that it is certain Henry Gast was experimenting with different techniques for manufacturing. Redware and stoneware kiln furniture is the most significant factor in determining what types of wares were being produced at a site. Another important discovery from the site was the presence of wasters. This combined with the kiln furniture is indisputable evidence of a nearby kiln. The wasters also show experimentation.

One other piece of ceramic found at the site that shows experimentation is the plaque (Figure 28). It is the only artifact discovered that is purely decorative and serves no sort of function. This shows Gast’s willingness to present the public with something different and
original. He was able to produce many types of wares and fulfill a growing demand for objects that are decorative. The bisque may be an early example of the decorative ceramics seen in the museum collections and what was uncovered by artifact collectors at Manor Street.

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**Summary of Wares**

The overall assemblage of Henry Gast’s work that have been discovered demonstrate the diversity of the products that he produced, but it also shows a striking similarity. His precision in style and type enabled him to compete with the growing pottery industry and machine production. He was able to manufacture pottery at a rapid speed with such precision that pieces look identical to each other.

He was also able to produce a wide assortment of products in both redware and stoneware, and he was willing to make purely decorative items, as demonstrated by the Manor
Street assemblage and the South Queen Street excavation. It was because of his ability to generate many different types of items with precision and cater to the public that he was able to stay in business and compete in a growing market.
Chapter 6: Case Studies of Ceramic Production in the Nineteenth Century

Early in the nineteenth century, the most numerous types of clay manufacture were common, everyday, utilitarian ware. These sorts of wares include apple butter crocks, flower pots, milk crocks, jugs, bowls, and plates (Heisey 1946: 118). The bulk of what was produced served needs in the home such as food preparation, cooking, serving, and storing. Also, many of the wares were made for hygiene and lighting. Although the types of ware did not change drastically, the manufacturing style did change. In the first half of the nineteenth century, America’s urban manufacturing underwent a transformation. Small family-run businesses were overtaken by factories and more mechanized forms of production (Myers 1980: 1). Henry Gast, Sr. and Conrad Gast were examples of the family run-business who had to change their manufacturing techniques in order to compete with the larger industry. This chapter will outline the changes that took place and the reasons behind them.

There are three main categories of development in the history of ceramic production in the United States. One type of production is the handcraft tradition where sturdy pottery was made for the kitchen, dairy, or tavern, and was made using hand processes, usually in small family operated businesses. This type of manufacture was performed by the early colonists and continued into the nineteenth century, and for some pottery works, even the twentieth century (Myers 1980: 1).

A second type of production is industrial manufacture of table and decorative wares. This type of production, which started mid nineteenth century, used a mold technique and mechanized processes. Industrial manufacture was performed by large industry and not the small family business.
The third category of ceramic production is the wares that are strictly utilitarian and nondecorative. Examples of this type are roof tiles and drain pipes, which were made by traditional potteries.

Also in the 1800s was a decline in the desire for redware vessels. This was because redware is fragile; they were almost invariably soft bodied with brittle surfaces that could be chipped or broken. Also, lead-glazed redware vessels are not suitable storage containers for anything containing vinegar, wine, or any acidic substance that would attack the glaze. The final, and most important, reason for a desire for vessels other than redware was competition from English products being imported to America in mass quantities. With the development of hard-bodied whitewares, English potters were supplying America with pottery at low prices that most American potters could not compete with. The English clays were better, more durable, the workmanship was superior, and the Staffordshire pottery district production methods were superior to anything in America at the time (Warner 1985: 186-187). Potters had to make the transition to meet with demand or their businesses would fail.

To make a clear analysis of Henry Gast’s transition from redware to stoneware with the influence of industrialization, certain comparisons will be drawn from similar cities that were faced with the same demand for products because of the growing impact of industrialization on the United States. Three Northeastern case studies will be examined to shed light on the Gast situation, one from a large city, one from a state that includes large and small cities, and another from a small town. These studies are used because they were from the same time period from the early to mid 1800s and they show that the pottery industry was affected across the country and not just in Lancaster. The three case studies give clear evidence of the effect that
industrialization has on a pottery works if the potter does not change technologies and make advances in his craft.

*Philadelphia*

The effects of the transformation were seen first in the larger cities, such as Philadelphia, where there was more competition with industry and there was a large port for outside trade. Small cities, like Lancaster, were also significantly affected, but the results were seen slightly later. Pennsylvania, since very early on, was the nation’s leader in pottery production. In 1810 there were 194 potteries in the nation and 164 of those were in Pennsylvania (Whisker 1993: 1). It is plausible to assume that Pennsylvania thrived in potteries because of the large amount of clay that was found in the earth. Traditional Philadelphia potters in the early nineteenth century were producing household earthenwares that included bowls, dishes, plates, milk pans, platters, jugs, butter pots, tankards, pipkins, and skillets made in the English styles of the seventeenth and eighteenth century styles. They used a potter’s wheel to throw these aforementioned items, while shallow bowls, plates, and dishes were often made using a mold. The type of glaze most commonly used was lead-based, and since red clay was abundant, it was frequently used in ceramic production (Myers 1980: 3).

Since earthenware is porous, it must be covered with a glaze to make it watertight. Traditionally the glaze was clear lead or one with oxides such as copper, iron, or manganese. After the vessel was covered in glaze, a decoration was often applied. Sgraffito is a type of design that is traditionally a Germanic style, where the slip contrasted with the clay body underneath, and then a design was incised before adding the clear glaze. This type of decoration was often associated with Pennsylvania potters because of the German heritage.
In 1810, the number of ceramic manufactures in Philadelphia was fifteen, and their total output amounted to $85,450. The next year showed an even higher output of $93,950. By 1840, the numbers dropped significantly to only nine potteries yielding a production of $52,800. Ten years later, at mid-century, there was a large increase with fourteen potteries and an output to $122,550 (Myers 1980: 5-6). Local potteries began to fill a demand for finer earthenware. Clay and flint were processed and mixed to form a white body, a drastic change from the red clay wares that were previously produced in large quantities.

Following the War of 1812, there was the Tariff Act of 1816 that established a duty of twenty percent on “china ware,” earthenware and stoneware, and porcelain. The tax did not have a large effect, except on stoneware production. In the 1820s and early 1830s, potteries began to advertise their extensive assortment of stoneware. The manufacturing of stoneware was a simple process and became well established; however, a drawback to the widespread production was that the accessibility of material had diminished. It became evident that traditional potteries could no longer operate alongside the expanding ceramic industry, so they were forced to adapt to survive.

In the 1840s, the types and styles of ceramics changed significantly. What used to be simple black-glazed tableware gave way to new and decorative molded ware. They were also glazed in various styles and labeled “white ware,” “yellow ware,” and “Rockingham ware,” and reflected the current English styles and forms (Myers 1980: 31).

Another factor that helped in the expansion of the small ceramic businesses was the use of molding as a new technique. It allowed for rapid, uniform wares to be elaborated on with decoration, something that was in high demand and greatly missing from previous wares.
Between 1850 and 1860, the ceramic industry grew at a moderate pace with the establishment of fire-brick manufactories. Potteries still placed emphasis on utilitarian wares, but large profits were made by those who specialized in fire brick (Myers 1980: 44). Technological developments were also made during this time with improvements in fuel and power sources. In 1850, potters only used horse and hand power, but in 1860, more potteries used steam power to run the machinery and coal was also used instead of the less efficient wood, for firing in the kilns.

Connecticut

In Connecticut, there was also a pressure to change the types of wares being produced. The Goodwin pottery works is an example of a business that was adaptable and eclectic, and changed its production technologies and ceramic inventory over the years to stay economically viable during a time of changing tastes and demand in America (Warner 1985: 171). The Goodwin pottery was a one or two-man business that opened in the 1790s and stayed in operation through the transition to market demands. From 1796 to 1820, Seth Goodwin only produced redware vessels. Most likely, these were utilitarian wares including milkpans, pudding pans, jugs, jars, and pots. Shortly after this, he began producing more elaborate forms including a number of sherds discovered evidencing combined slipware, slip-trailed pans, and pie plates, notched-edge plates, and molded or colored pieces (Warner 1985: 174).

Seth’s son, Thomas O’Hara Goodwin, began producing redware and stoneware simultaneously at the pottery works. In Connecticut it was particularly difficult to develop stoneware because the materials had to be transported from out-of-state areas, most commonly New Jersey, while it was easy for redware because the clay was found right at the location and
could be transported by horse and wagon. Since it was expensive to produce stoneware, potters would often mix the stoneware and redware clays. This was an experiment with the Goodwin pottery works; many of the sherds discovered with the mixture of clays looked like hard-fired redware, while others showed the very clear gray, typical style of pure stoneware (Warner 1985: 174-175). The Goodwins had to construct a new kiln to allow for the changeover from redware to stoneware because of the different firing temperatures that are required for each. There is evidence that the same kiln was used for both stoneware and redware in the mid 1820s when Seth’s son Thomas took over the family pottery business.

Evidence from the site shows a significant decrease in the number of decorated redware sherds over time but an increase in the number of undecorated and unglazed redware sherds from items such as flowerpots and flat dishes. Meanwhile, there was a steady increase in the number of stoneware sherds from crocks and jugs (Warner 1985: 176-177). This evidence shows that a transition was being made from making redware crocks and jugs to making those items out of stoneware. There was a great deal of experimentation with these items, probably because stoneware is much more difficult to produce than redware. The increase of redware sherds for flowerpots and flat dishes shows that the potter was experimenting with items that were not solely used for utilitarian function. These sherds were found unglazed and undecorated because they were wasters; usually the flowerpots and dishes are more decorated than other pieces of ware.

Also found at the site were a number of pieces of stoneware kiln furniture that consisted mostly of flat bars, which were reusable, and small hand-fashioned lumps, that were often discarded. There were also doughnut-shaped pieces that were reused. The redware kiln furniture was quite different from the stoneware. Spurs, or stilts, were used to separate pieces in a stack.
Other pieces of furniture found were various sized wedges or flat U-shaped lengths, as well as a few massive hollowed-out triangles which were stacked to support unglazed rims of plates or shallow dishes (Warner 1985: 178). Redware kiln furniture could not be used to withstand the 1200 degree Celsius temperature to fire stoneware, but stoneware kiln furniture could be used on redware vessels. This is more support that there were two kilns used- one for redware and one for stoneware. If there was one kiln, there would only be one set of stoneware kiln furniture needed to fire both types of vessels, however since there were two sets of furniture, it is likely that there were two kilns fired simultaneously, so two sets of furniture would be needed to accommodate for the two different temperatures and two sets of pottery that were produced.

Once again, the consumer was demanding a higher quality of ware, and not settling for the breakable redware products. They wanted and were exposed to high-quality stoneware and British style ceramics. To stay in business, potters experimented by mixing redware and stoneware clays to make stoneware production more affordable.

*Sourland Mountain, New Jersey*

Unlike the case in Philadelphia and Connecticut, Sourland Mountain, New Jersey failed to make the transition during the same period and the businesses were unable to survive. The first potteries probably came about in this part of central New Jersey in the 1800s after timber resources were exploited and agriculture on the plateau exposed workable clay. During the 1840s through the early 1860s, the pottery industry flourished and peaked during the late 1850s when there were three potteries and a tile works (Hunter 1985: 229). After the Civil War, there was a decline in the smaller industries and only the older, larger ones were able to stay in business for a few more decades. One reason for the decline in potteries was the reduced
demand for red earthenware and the increased demand for the superior white earthenware and stoneware products. The potters continued to produce their utilitarian earthenware and tile, which was not in high demand (Hunter 1985: 235-242). By 1870, two of the three potteries in the area were out of business. The Sourland Mountain potteries were unable to complete the transition to this new style of ware. The potteries in the area produced relatively poor-quality products and the industry fell short of the mass production of high quality earthenware in the large-scale and innovative urban potteries in nearby Trenton, New Jersey (Hunter 1985: 230).

Interestingly, the redware production at the site “occupies a transitional position in the development of the regional ceramics industry, showing signs of incipient urban-style industrialization within the context of a distinctly rural and imitative potting tradition” (Hunter 1985: 230). This means that the Sourland Mountain potteries had made an attempt to keep up with the newer urban styles, but failed, probably because of their lack of resources and their poor-quality wares. At one of the potteries, an abundant amount of waste material was found that shows a wide range of redware items that were being produced including lead-glazed, manganese glazed, slip-trailed, and unglazed vessels for the farm, garden, and home; also roofing tile, drainpipe, and stovepipe collars as well as numerous pieces of kiln furniture used for stacking vessels in the kiln (saggars, setting tiles and bars, trivets, and pips) were found at the site (Hunter 1985: 232).

Sourland Mountain, New Jersey had just as much demand for the finer white earthenware and stoneware as Philadelphia, however the demand came at a much later date. Most of the businesses peaked mid-century, while in Philadelphia at the same time, most businesses would have failed if they continued to produce clunky redware. It was not until circa 1870 when the potteries lost their clientele and their business went under. The potteries here not only had to
compete with the British wares, but they had to compete with larger cities like Bennington, Vermont, Trenton, New Jersey, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, which would produce a greater amount of wares for a lower price than a small-town potter who had to import his clay from elsewhere.

These three examples demonstrate the necessity to experiment with clay production and manufacturing to overcome competition. Innovation and persistence were important factors in Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and New Jersey potters to thrive. Pennsylvania and Connecticut show a positive example of this, while New Jersey was negatively affected by the Industrial Revolution. For Henry Gast, his ability to innovate and persist was the key to his longevity as a potter. This is most likely due to his religious Calvanist background. The liens show that Gast constantly was updating, renovating, and investing in his business. His hard work paid off as he was able to persist through the changing manufacturing styles.
Unlike the numerous potters whose businesses collapsed because of the growing American demand for English wares, Henry Gast persisted. This is evidenced by documents, advertisements, and collections that show the assortment of his wares and when he began producing and promoting those styles. His transition began on West Orange Street with the commencement of stoneware. Then there is evidence of experimentation with glazes and wares while he operated his business out of South Queen Street. Finally at Manor Street there were a number of decorative pieces that show innovation. These three locations indicate that Gast’s pottery manufacturing endured throughout his life even in the demand for English wares.

Henry Gast and His Transition

The redware found at the Stevens and Smith site behind the home and law office of Thaddeus Stevens embodied the characteristics of redware. None of the pieces had a maker’s mark to clearly identify them as from Henry Gast. Despite this fact, there is clear evidence that align these wares with the Eagle Porcelain Works, run by Henry Gast and Son. The pottery found at this particular site, as well as pottery from collections housed in Lancaster, show the wide array of products created by Gast and his family.

The artifacts found at the Stevens and Smith site as well as the advertisement for the West Orange Street pottery location and the auction catalogue are the best examples of Gast’s ability to transition from an everyday useful redware vessel to a highly decorated stoneware flowerpot or crock, to purely decorative pieces like a plaque or figurine. Much like other potters who lived in Lancaster and elsewhere during the dawn of the Industrial Revolution, there was a
great deal of experimentation with the clay itself that was used for the vessels and with various forms.

The West Orange Street pottery works’ advertisement taken out in a Lancaster newspaper on July 26, 1834 shows the beginning of the transition to stoneware production. Henry Gast announced “that he has commenced the manufacture of STONE WARE, in West Orange street, in the city of Lancaster; where he keeps constantly on hand an extensive assortment of Ware…”; he also claims at the bottom of the same advertisement that “The Ware is not surpassed by any in the country, and will always be sold as low as that of any of the Potteries in the city of Philadelphia” (Figure 50). Potters in Lancaster had to compete with Philadelphia as well as imported wares from England. This advertisement had a list of items that could be made in either redware or stoneware and anything could be made to order. This announcement shows Gast’s willingness to compete with a larger market and keep up with the demand from his clientele.

South Queen Street is a good example of Gast’s pottery in transition. Found at the site were various pieces of kiln furniture, but both for redware and stoneware. As previously discussed, stoneware must fire at a temperature 200 degrees Celsius higher than that of redware so many potters had sets for firing both. This kiln furniture shows that Gast continued to produce two types of vessels types, which kept up with the demand of the time. In 1850, Gast should have been well accustomed to producing fine stoneware products, but it does not appear to be that way. One interesting sherd that best describes Gast’s experimentation with stoneware and redware is a red-bodied sherd that was fired at a very high temperature so that it would not be porous. This sherd (Figure 27) is salt glazed and painted with cobalt blue; this style of glaze is mostly used for stoneware. Salt glaze only works when the temperature is very high, 200
degrees Celsius higher than for firing redware. This means that stoneware furniture had to be used to fire this piece. It also means that Gast was experimenting with glaze styles. Also at the site were eight sherds that were red-bodied but fired until the clay was almost black, and then glazed black. Redware comes in various colors when fired, but these sherds were considered stoneware for the hardness of the final product. It is likely to produce these sherds, redware and stoneware clay were mixed together and then fired at a very high temperature. The black glaze that was applied was also very popular as an imitation “china.”

Other experimentations with redware and stoneware were found at the site with the various styles of glaze that were used. Salt glaze, sgraffito, Rockingham style, brown, black, clear, or unglazed were all techniques that Gast used at South Queen Street. The Rockingham style was particularly impressive in the 1850s and 60s. Not all types of glaze could be used for every vessel. The Rockingham glaze was most commonly used with yellow ware because the coloration of the brown glaze dripped over the yellow ware looked decorative. The spittoons from the Lancaster Historical Society and the Lancaster Heritage Center were both decorated in the Rockingham style glaze. Since the bottoms of those two pieces were inscribed with the Eagle Porcelain Works maker’s mark and they were decorated with the Rockingham style, it is almost certain that these pieces were made at the South Queen Street location. The various glazes show experimentation in redware and stoneware production because there was an abundance of vessel forms being produced and not all the forms had the same glaze style. For example, some crocks were glazed while others were left unglazed. Glaze colors show the diversity in decorating something such as a utilitarian ware.

Some of the sherds actually had decoration. One sherd had a leaf pattern painted on it. Other sherds, such as the stoneware sherds, had a cobalt blue decoration over the salt glaze; this
was actually quite common for flowerpots and crocks to be decorated in cobalt blue flowers or leaves. The decoration of utilitarian wares shows Gast’s ability to keep up with the demand of the growing desire for decorated vessels and finer looking items.

The catalogues from the Manor Street dig display a wide assortment of glazes, forms, and styles of ware. Like at the South Queen Street location, this site shows experimentation with redware and stoneware. There were actually pieces of earthenware and yellow ware uncovered. The biggest discovery was the items that were purely decorative.

The decorative pieces were the “extremely rare and possibly unique Gast molded lead and manganese glazed redware bust of the English poet Robert Burns,” the “extremely rare and possibly unique Gast unglazed redware reclining spaniel,” “unusual Gast unglazed earthenware molded novelty figurine of boy seated on tree stump playing a mandolin and wearing a large hat, “extremely fine and rare Gast lead and manganese glazed earthenware bird and whistle,” “rare Gast lead and manganese glazed redware miniature seated dog figurine,” and “rare and unusual Gast hanging wall pocket, glazed front resulting in a dark brown, almost black, ground” (Horst Auction catalogue). The decorative pieces consisted of a wide array of glazes, materials, and styles. The pieces could possibly be unique or rare, since they were different from the regular utilitarian ware that was more commonly produced. Some were glazed with the common lead and manganese, some glazed dark brown, and some were unglazed. Two of the pieces were earthenware, one was unknown, and the other three were redware. The earthenware was not further described and did not tell which type it was. Either redware or stoneware kiln furniture would need to be used to manufacture such an item.

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6 I use the phrase “possibly be unique and rare” because they are descriptions given in an auction magazine and they could be described as such to sell for a higher price at auction.
The two types of kiln furniture found at the site were for stoneware and redware. These items consisted of three unglazed redware kiln stilts: 2 Tripod stilts, 1 cone-shaped stilt and two salt glazed stoneware kiln pieces (used to separate pottery pieces being fired), round collar-shaped with “U”-shaped cutout on front and round opening on bottom. This indicates that at Manor Street, both stoneware and redware were being produced. The redware was still common because of the inexpensive manufacturing of the product, but the stoneware was also common because of the high demand. It is obvious that both sets of kiln furniture were used at Manor Street because of what has been found.

The fact that Gast continued to experiment with redware and stoneware and kept his pottery works open for so long proves that he was able to compete with the fine earthenware from England and the inexpensive, mass-produced wares from large industries in cities. Industrialization had an impact on the lives of Henry Gast and his family. He either had to change his manufacturing style or suffer the consequence that so many other potters had; for example, Sourland Mountain, New Jersey could not compete with business and failed. For Henry Gast, although skilled as a potter, did not have a smooth transition into the new style of making pottery. He was able to keep up with the style through innovation and experimentation with form, style, and decoration. He also was able to make some purely decorative pieces of ware that far surpassed the works of other potters in Lancaster.

Discussion

Henry Gast and his family are examples of immigrants who came to America, probably had little money, and started their own businesses. Since pottery was a relatively inexpensive business to start because there was little capital invested in tools, and could be done out of the
home with clay found from local sources, it was a good business for Henry and his brother Conrad to develop. The family was busy with various committees and church meetings, as well as their professions. Most of the family chose to enter into trades, with a number of them joining the pottery business and working for either Henry or Conrad.

Henry in particular had some difficult times financially, as demonstrated through the various mechanic’s liens taken out against him. He probably had to move so frequently in order to pay for his past-due bills. He often purchased a property and then moved a few years later, or he simply invested in this property, fixed it up, and sold it as a side job to his pottery business. This investment in homes and businesses was a result of his Calvanist beliefs. To prove that Gast was a part of the elect, or chosen ones, he had to work hard and continue to invest in his pottery business because success in wealth was an indication that God wanted him to succeed.

Despite his disparities, Henry was able to thrive in his pottery business. It was said that he made wares comparable to those from England (Heisey 1946: 120), which was where a majority of the imported products were coming from to meet the demand of his clientele. To be able to make this transition from redware to finer stoneware and whiteware, he had to learn how to make these products through trial and error. The West Orange Street advertisement, South Queen Street excavation, and Manor Street dig uncovered important information as to what products were being produced by Gast during this transition. These three classes of data were vital in showing the experimentation with stoneware techniques as well as the wide range of products and decorative pieces that he produced in order to keep up with demand. Overall, Henry Gast and his pottery succeeded in keeping up with business and creating new and innovative pieces.
In the dawn of the Industrial Revolution, many businesses in Lancaster failed, but Gast continued to prevail. The wares that he produced were able to compete with those of Staffordshire, England because they were cheap while still maintaining a level of skill and quality. He was also producing a different type of ware from Staffordshire because of the manufacturing technique. Staffordshire was operating on mechanized processes while Gast promoted quality handcraftsmanship. Because of Gast’s ability to produce, advertise, and sell his products, his pottery works was in business long after many others failed. His Calvanist beliefs along with his skills as a potter helped maintain this business for two-thirds of a century.

The competition between England and Germany in both pottery and their religious Calvanist doctrine spawned another type of war in Lancaster, Pennsylvania between the English “nativists” and the German immigrants. Lancaster was a center of religious denominations that caused friction in the community. German and English Calvanists settled in the same area and tried to displace the other’s Church and spread their brand of doctrine. This religious battle was shown in other arenas. With pottery, the English were more advanced in production techniques, but the Germans in Lancaster viewed this as more than just a pottery competition. Potters like Gast persevered through the nineteenth century to contend with the English and hold to their religious beliefs.
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*Standing (left to right)*: George W. Gast, b. 5/28/1876; Mary Ella Gast Stradtman, b. 6/29/1874; Franklin Gast, b. Dec. 1868; Ida Sarah Gast Gumpf, b. 11/3/1866.
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