

## The Baker

**Robert Rau Collection, Moravian Archives, Box "Papers on Trades and Industries," File folder #22 "Baker"**

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It was in the Single Brethren's house that the first bakery was instituted, for the benefit and behoof not only of the family of young men within its walls, but also for that of the Economy in general. Philip Anthony Rinck is on record as the baker and Francis Christian as his assistant. Upon the latter, moreover, devolved the entire charge of the business until 1769. In the fall of 1764 the bakery was removed into a house newly built on the south side of Market street on the corner of Main street, a part of the labyrinthine maze of buildings still standing in this sesquicentennial year [1892], but doomed to early destruction to make way for a spacious and massive edifice to be erected by Capt. James Wiley.

The quality of the baker's wares was a fruitful subject of discussion in the deliberations of the Committee of Overseers (the Aufseher Collegium), and complaints on the condition of the bread and the weight of the loaves gave rise, in the first place, to acrimonious disputes between the baker and the grist-miller, and finally to a lengthy correspondence with Samuel Garrigues, the Market Master of Philadelphia, --this during the year 1768. Ephriam Colver, Jr. was the baker from 1769 until 1780, when looking with longing eyes upon the fertile glades of the lately acquired Moravian purchase at Hope, N.J., he undertook the management of the farm at that place, and John Schmidt was given charge of the bakery under the tuition of the aged Andrew Weber. Although not filling his position to the absolute satisfaction of his customers, Schmidt remained the master-baker until Nov. 1797, when Jacob Luch, last from Gnadenthal, was duly installed as his successor. The bakery was removed into the stone building, still standing, on the upper corner of Main Street and Allentown Road, sometime after the beginning of [the 20<sup>th</sup>] century, and the management of it devolved upon his son Christian F. Luch in 1823. Soon after his marriage to the relict of the late John Richsecker he removed the establishment to the north east corner of Main and Market streets where he conducted a bakery and confectionery until his death.

In the way of opposition to the old original baker may be noted Daniel Oesterlim who, in his old days, armed with a special dispensation from the Aufseher Collegium essayed to establish himself in this business close by his dwelling on Rubel Alley; his efforts proved disastrous to him, however, the combined and sufficient reason being, want of courtesy, want of cleanliness and an inferior product of the oven --this too in spite of his having obtained the exclusive right and privilege to make and sell black taffy, known to the juvenile trade as blackey, otherwise "beli-guts"--(quaere, "Belles gouttes"?)

John George Irmer came to Bethlehem in 1805 and set up a bakery in the single brethren's house soon after his arrival, at first in the interest of the single men's economy and, in 1809, on his own account. In 1814 he removed the bakery into the

farmers' dwellings on Main Street, above the site of the confectionery of John Rauch. After his decease, David Kunkler took charge of the business, which, after his death, Aug. 5, 1839, was conducted by his surviving widow for several years. Ambrose H. Rauch, late from Lititz, Pa., purchased the buildings and established the thriving business still conducted on this spot by his son, John F. Rauch. Other establishments carrying on this industry sprang into existence in later years, but being of comparatively recent date, have no place in the history of old Bethlehem.