

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK PROGRAM

Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission

Christian F. Sussdorff House

Local Historic Landmark #59

448 Factory Row, Winston-Salem

(Original Salem Lot 89)

Construction Date: 1839

Landmark Designation Date: 12/06/82

Christian F. Sussdorff was born in Germany, was trained as a horticulturist in Europe, and came to America in 1833. He arrived in Salem in 1836; unfortunately, there was not high demand for a European-trained horticulturalist in Salem. Therefore, Sussdorff tried his hand at several occupations in addition to horticulture, including piano teaching and tuning, photography, and tobacco manufacturing. His musical talent became widely recognized in the Piedmont, and the well-known African-American cabinetmaker Thomas Day, sent his daughter to Sussdorff for musical instruction.

Sussdorff submitted the first plan of his proposed dwelling to the Salem governing body in 1838, but it was rejected as being too elaborate. It was felt that because his trade was new in Salem and his economic condition was uncertain, his proposal should be downgraded. The second plan was approved, and in 1839, Sussdorff built a 1½-story, four-room brick dwelling. In his memoir, Sussdorff states that he built the house for \$1,300, and that he “laid off a little garden.” In 1854, Sussdorff sold the house to Julius Kern and moved several blocks north into Winston. Julius Kern then sold the house to Israel Lash in 1857. In the 1870s, the house passed to Thomas Spough.

The Sussdorff House is a two-story brick structure; the front of the house is four bays wide and two deep, with the doorway located on the second bay from the right. On either gable end is an exterior end chimney. First story windows have nine-over-six lights; those on the second story have six-over-six. The brickwork around the front door suggests that originally



Louisa C. Hagen Sussdorff,
wife of Christian F. Sussdorff, c. 1880
Courtesy of Old Salem Museums and Gardens



the house may have had a small, one-bay porch, typical of several porches of that time period in Salem.

The house was originally a 1½-story structure; it was probably Kern or Lash who raised the house to a full two stories and added Greek Revival interior finish. The first floor reflects elements of Salem’s architecture seen from 1800-1850, such as chair rails, four-paneled doors, and corner fireplaces, and the second floor features c. 1860 details such as marbleized baseboards and stippling. In the 1870s, after the house passed to Thomas Spough, a kitchen ell was added to the northwest corner of the house.

Today the Christian F. Sussdorff House is privately occupied.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

The South Trade Street (Factory Row)
Houses National Register Nomination
<http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/nr/FY0582.pdf>



This information is also available
at the Forsyth County
Historic Resources Commission’s web site:
<http://www.ForsythCountyHRC.org>