

## The Reynolds Family Connection with Salem: A History of the Arts, Education, and Civic Engagement

Philip Archer, Reynolda House Museum of American Art, with additional information by Dr. Rev. Nola Knouse, Moravian Music Archive

The Reynolds family connections with Salem began in the 1850s, when three of R.J. Reynolds's sisters attended the Salem Academy for Girls, along with several of his cousins. Katharine Reynolds's parents attended the boys' and girls' academies, but Katharine attended an academy in Mount Airy, NC, in its first year of co-educational admittance. The Reynoldses' elder son R.J. "Dick" Reynolds, Jr. attended Salem Academy for one year, but suffered from measles, diphtheria, and whooping cough.

To mark the tercentenary of Shakespeare's death in May 1916, a pageant was held at Salem College featuring a partial recreation of Stratford-Upon-Avon and a Shakespeare garden planted with all the flowers mentioned in his plays. The garden was contributed by Katharine Reynolds with flowers grown in Reynolda's greenhouses. Reynolda's English gardener, Frederick Martin, oversaw the garden, and the pageant received full-page coverage in the *New York Times*.

In 1941, Richard J. Reynolds Jr. purchased the Salem Tavern property and donated it to the Wachovia Historical Society to be restored. Meanwhile, his sister Mary Reynolds Babcock and her husband Charles H. Babcock took an interest in restoring Salem into "another Williamsburg." Charles Babcock commissioned an architectural survey to determine the importance of the Old Salem buildings. According to Old Salem's first president, James Gray, "If you had to select one man as being primarily responsible for Old Salem, it would be Charlie Babcock" (James A. Gray, President, Old Salem. Quoted in *W-S Journal*, 12/16/67). Charles Babcock was also one of the founding trustees of the Moravian Music Foundation (1956), a very generous benefactor, and an honorary trustee until his death.