

# LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK PROGRAM

Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission

## Vierling House

**Local Historic Landmark #10**  
**463 S. Church St., Winston-Salem**  
**(Original Salem Lot 7)**  
**Construction Date: 1802**  
**Restoration Date: 1980**  
**Landmark Designation Date: 10/04/1976**

This property was the home of Dr. Samuel Benjamin Vierling, who was the most renowned of Salem's physicians. Vierling was born in Silesia and studied medicine in Berlin during the 1780s. While in medical school, Vierling joined the Moravian faith, and he was sent to Wachovia at the age of 24 to become a doctor in Salem. When he first arrived in Salem, Vierling lived in the First House (Local Historic Landmark #1), where Salem's earlier doctors had lived and worked.

In 1797, the Church approved his request for a new residence that would also house his apothecary. Vierling and his wife moved into their new home in 1802. Vierling proved to be a pioneer in the medical profession, and in this house, he conducted major operations such as mastectomies and skull/brain surgeries. He proved to be ahead of his time in diagnosing the dangers of excess salt in the diet. Vierling warned the Church that people in Salem were consuming too much salted meat. The house not only served as the Vierling's residence, but additionally was Salem's apothecary and hospital until 1817. Vierling was also a talented violinist and somehow found the time to be a member of the Church's music committee.

In 1852, Vierling became overworked due to assisting victims of a typhoid epidemic, became ill with the disease himself, and died



*The Vierling House, c. 1875-1880*  
Courtesy of Old Salem Museums and Gardens



from its complications. In later years, the Vierling House became the residence for Church administrators.

The Vierling House was the final work of Salem's master builder and mason, Johann Gottlob Krause, whose skill was still evident in his "signature" herringbone Flemish brickwork in the upper gable ends.

Interestingly, a small house that was occupied by an African-American slave, once stood to the rear of the Vierling House. The house was built for "Davey," the property's enslaved gardener. Davey was later christened as Christian David and the foundation of his house remains on the site.

In 1980, the Vierling House was restored by Old Salem, Inc.

Today, the Vierling House is leased from the Church by Old Salem Museums and Gardens, which features it as an exhibit building and site.



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