

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK PROGRAM

Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission

Blum House

Local Historic Landmark #12
724 S. Main St., Winston-Salem
(Original Salem Lot 67)
Construction Date: 1815, circa 1854
Restoration Date: 1980s
Landmark Designation Date:
10/04/1976

John Christian Blum was born in 1784 in Bethabara and came to Salem as a child. In 1798, he moved into the Single Brothers' House and tried a number a trades. Blum eventually was successful as a printer and publisher, becoming Salem's first. He built this house in 1815, the same year that the Cape Fear Bank of Wilmington opened an office in Salem. Blum was the appointed agent for the bank, conducting its business out of a room in his house. In 1827, fire broke out in Blum's house and \$10,000 in currency was lost. To repay the funds, Blum deeded his assets to the Church, including his house, carriage, furniture, piano, printing equipment, paper, and 4,000 pounds of tobacco.

In 1854, shortly after Blum's death, his son Levi purchased the house. Almost immediately after he purchased the property, Levi added a second story to the house and a chimney to the north elevation. Levi and his brother, Edward, both bachelors, kept the printing business in operation until the late 19th century.



Blum House – Lot 67, c. 1890
Courtesy of Old Salem Museums and Gardens



John Christian Blum first opened his print shop in 1827 with a secondhand press that was made in 1810 in Philadelphia. In 1828, Blum published the first issue of *The Farmers' and Planters' Almanack*. Today known as *Blum's Almanac*, this publication remains in publication to the present. Additionally, beginning in 1829, Blum published Salem's first newspaper, *The Weekly Gleaner*; unfortunately, it only lasted one year. However, by 1832, he founded another newspaper, *The Farmers' Reporter*. This was followed by a succession of newspapers bearing various names; all were published in the Blum shop.

The Blum House is a 2½-story frame house that sits over a partially exposed stuccoed cellar. The two front doors are identical, with panels and four-light transoms.

Old Salem, Inc. purchased the Blum House in 1952, using it as a rental property until the 1980s. At that time, the house was restored and the façade's north entrance was reopened.

Today the Blum House is an exhibit building of Old Salem Museums and Gardens.



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