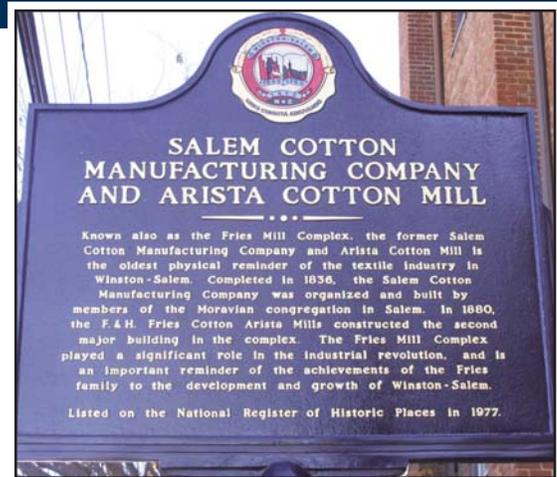


HISTORIC MARKER PROGRAM

Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission

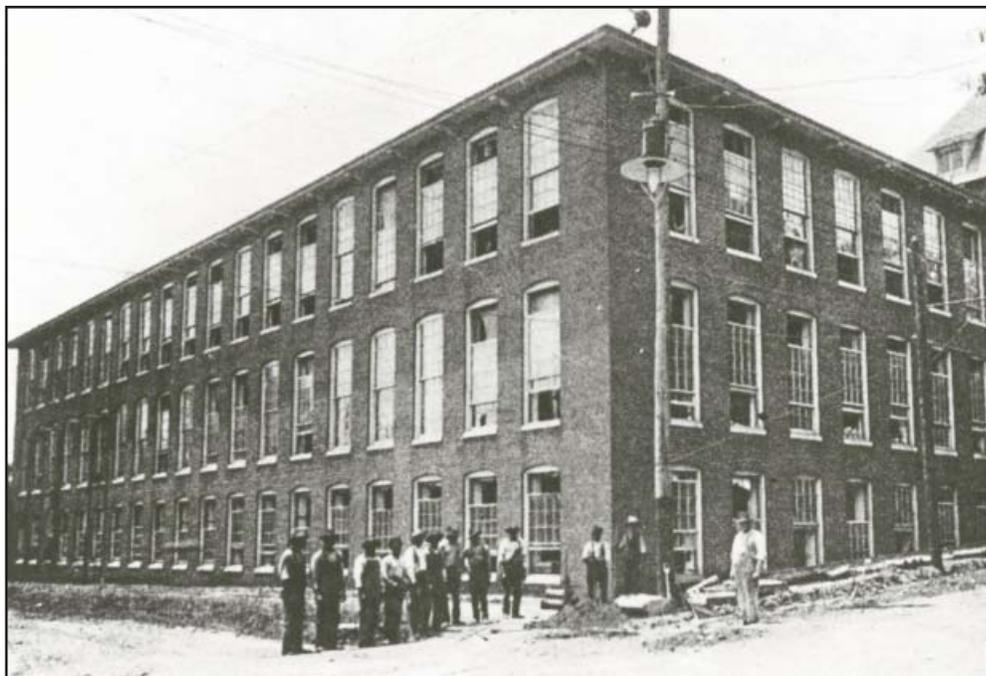
Salem Cotton Manufacturing Company and Arista Cotton Mill

The Arista Cotton Mill complex at the southwest corner of Brookstown Avenue and Factory Row (originally South Trade Street) consists of two principal buildings at the complex's east and west ends and a series of auxiliary buildings. The west building is the original home of the Salem Manufacturing Company, constructed in 1836 by members of the Moravian congregation of Salem. Salem Congregation operated the Salem Cotton Mill until 1854, when former governor John Morehead purchased the property and subsequently sold it to his son-in-law Rufus Patterson. Robert Gray and Peter Wilson were the next owners; they sold the mill to brothers Francis H. and Henry W. Fries (F. and H. Fries Company). The building was refitted to serve as Wachovia Flour Mills in 1856. A gas plant was constructed in 1858 to power a lighting system and a Corliss engine was installed in 1860. In 1880, the F. and H. Fries Company constructed the east building, Arista Mill, at a cost of about \$125,000 for the structure and equipment. The mill, which employed about 150 workers, was first equipped with 3312 spindles, but within five years the number of spindles doubled, and 180 looms



were added for the manufacture of chambray cloth for work clothing. Arista Mill was among the first in the South to use electric lights; the complex includes a two-story triangular brick transforming station constructed by the Fries Manufacturing and Power Company in 1898.

Arista Mill operated through the mid 1920s. By 1942, the Brown and Williamson Tobacco Corporation utilized the complex, and by the late 1970s, Lentz Transfer and Storage Company used the buildings as warehouse space. The complex was rehabilitated in 1980; the Brookstown Inn and the Winston-Salem Visitor Center currently occupy the space.



Arista Cotton Mill

Courtesy of Forsyth County Public Library Photograph Collection

The extant portion of the 1836 Salem Cotton Mill is a three-story brick building executed in five-to-one common bond with segmental-arched window and door openings. The original section is six bays long. In the late 19th century, a four-story façade was added to the north elevation and the west elevation was extended. Brick pilasters separate the seven-bay façade into three parts; a corbelled cornice, eave brackets, and segmental-arched window and door openings further characterize the addition. A hip-roofed tower rises from the northwest corner of the original mill building at its junction with the façade addition. The 1890 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps indicate that Wachovia Flour Mills used the façade addition for wheat and corn storage, and that the west elevation extension included a grain elevator and offices. The floors of the 1836 mill are wood, the walls are brick, and the exposed wood joists are upheld by chamfered, square wood posts. A shed-roofed dye house addition was constructed on the south elevation in 1912.

The main block of the 1880 Arista Mill is a three-story building with large, segmental-arched window and door openings and bracketed eaves. The slightly shorter first-story windows have twelve-over-twelve sash, while the

upper two stories have sixteen-over-sixteen sash. The 1890 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps indicate that the first floor was used for weaving, the second for carding, and the third for spinning. The stair tower on the façade features a pyramidal roof with an iron crest, a shed dormer, a corbelled cornice, and a recessed double-leaf entrance with a three-pane arched transom. The one-story brick building west of the stair tower originally housed the engine and boiler; a tall smokestack rises from the south end of this building. A long, one-story, brick weaving room addition with a low gable roof was added to the rear (south elevation) of the main block around 1900.

In 1977, the property was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and in 1981, the property was designated as a Forsyth County Local Historic Landmark.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

<http://www.brookstowninn.com/>

<http://www.historicmapworks.com/Buildings/index.php?state=NC&city=Winston-Salem&id=22028>



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

