

# Moravian Americans and their Neighbors, 1772–1822

*Edited by*

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# Contents

Acknowledgements XI  
List of Illustrations XIII  
Notes on Contributors XVII

- 1 Introduction: Southern Moravians, Their Neighbors, and Processes of Americanization in the Early Republic 1  
*Grant Profant McAllister and Ulrike Wiethaus*

## PART 1

### *Foundations*

- 2 The American Plan of Zinzendorf and Spangenberg 35  
*Craig Atwood*
- 3 The Transformation of Wachovia: From Anglican Protectorate to Moravian Preserve 64  
*Larry E. Tise*
- 4 Black People, White God: Moravianism and the “Cultural Purification” of the Afro-Caribbean in Antigua and Tobago 90  
*Winelle Kirton-Roberts*
- 5 An Archives of Truth: Moravian Recordkeeping and Archival Selection 120  
*Paul Peucker*

## PART 2

### *Convergences*

- 6 Traugott Bagge as a Historian of the American Revolution 137  
*John A. Ruddiman*
- 7 Early Performances of Haydn's *Creation* in the American South: The Moravian Connection 151  
*Stewart Carter*

- 8 From Innovation to Imposition: Changing Understandings of the Single Sisters Choir in Salem from 1772 to 1822 166  
*Riddick Weber*
- 9 “The Spirit of Freedom in the Land”: From Immigrants to Americans in the Moravian Experience 192  
*Jon Sensbach*

### PART 3

#### *Innovations*

- 10 Moravians and the Celebration of American Figures and Holidays, 1776–1826 215  
*Thomas J. McCullough*
- 11 Moravian Architecture Becomes Southern 251  
*David Bergstone*
- 12 The Americanization of Moravian Music: An Examination of the Salem Manuscript Books 284  
*David Blum*
- 13 Becoming American in Salem’s Congregation Pottery 308  
*Geoffrey Hughes*

### PART 4

#### *Segregation*

- 14 The Changing Landscape of Slavery in Salem and Its Legacy 331  
*Martha Hartley*
- 15 Rejection of the Baptized: Moravians and Slavery 372  
*Charles D. Rodenbough*
- 16 The Moravian Easter Morning Services from 1772–1822: Easter and the Birth of American-Moravian Identity 393  
*Grant Profant McAllister*

- 17    Becoming American at the Moravian Missions in Springplace  
      and Oothcaloga    418  
          *Ulrike Wiethaus*
- Index    453

# The Changing Landscape of Slavery in Salem and Its Legacy

*Martha Hartley*

## 1 Wachovia

The Moravian Church began settlement of their Wachovia Tract in the back-country of Piedmont North Carolina in 1753.<sup>1</sup> Within twenty years' time, development within the 100,000-acre tract included the central congregation town of Salem surrounded by five outlying congregations or budding congregations: Bethabara, Bethania, Friedberg, Friedland, and Hope, and each with a unique origin story<sup>2</sup> (see Figure 14.1 Wachovia Tract in 1773). As Wachovia developed, so did the practice of slavery, with enslaved people often moved from one community to another. In the theocratic town of Salem, slave ownership was limited to the Church, with the hope of keeping the number of Black enslaved people low and the white Moravian work ethic high. There was particular concern that enslaved labor would supersede the white Moravian brethren in their trades—the economic base of the town—and promote laziness.<sup>3</sup> However, labor shortages encouraged an increasing reliance on the work of enslaved people. Renting slaves with Church approval, including within a household, was a resolution, but also a gateway to increased demand.<sup>4</sup> In time, residents increasingly pushed limits on individual slave ownership rules, and the presence of people of African descent became a normalized part of Salem's daily life. As

1 Wachovia (98,985-acre tract generally described as 100,000 acres) was in Rowan County in 1753 when the Moravians began their colony with Bethabara, and then Bethania was established in 1759. Building Salem started in February 1766, and during its early development, the Southern Country Congregations of Friedberg, Friedland, and Hope were established. Salem is within 6–9 miles of the outlying congregations.

2 Michael O. Hartley and Martha B. Hartley, “‘There is none like it’: The South Fork Settlements and the Development of Colonial Wachovia,” report on file, NC Division of Archives and History, Archaeology Section, Raleigh, NC and Old Salem, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC, 2003.

3 Jon F. Sensbach, *A Separate Canaan: The Making of an Afro-Moravian World in North Carolina, 1763–1840* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 64–65, 79–80.

4 Joanna Roberts, “Maids, Servants, and Slaves in Salem Households: Summary of quotes from Aufseher Collegium Minutes,” report on file, Old Salem, Inc., 2005. Labor demands and supply are described chronologically.

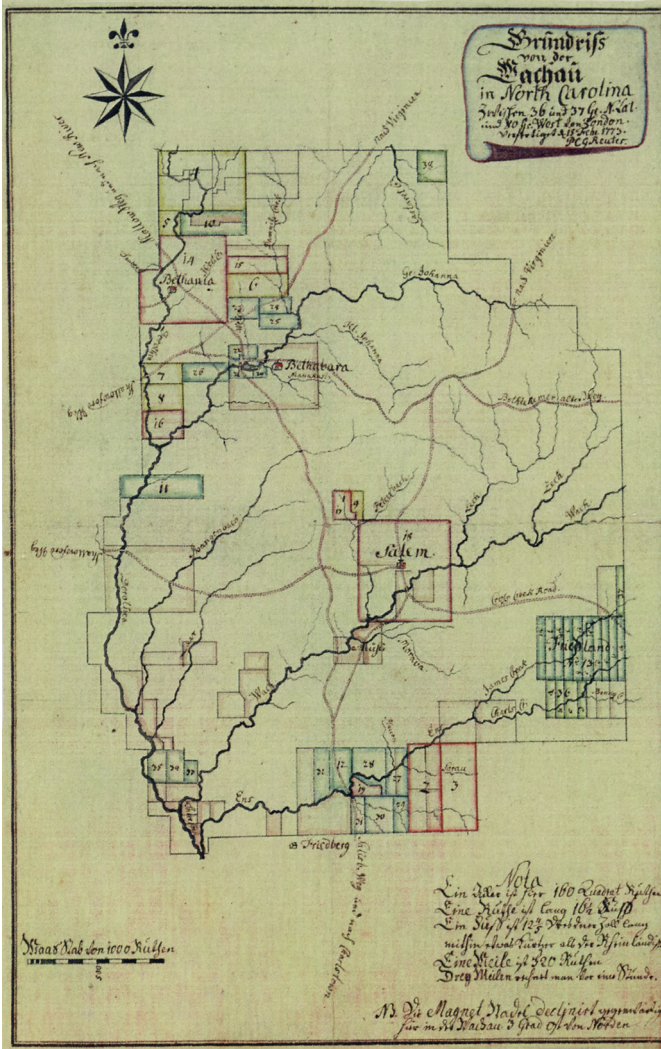


FIGURE 14.1 Wachovia Tract in 1773  
 Wachovia is unique in colonial America, and as Frederic William Marshall said in 1768, “There is none like it.” The structure of the 100,000-acre tract is the drainage basin of Muddy Creek, a tributary of the Yadkin River. Bishop Gottlieb Spangenberg selected the creek system, with its related resources, for the long-term sustaining qualities.

I will argue below, Salem’s landscape revealed these changes and to a certain extent codified them through geography, distribution, and spatial relationship. Salem and much of Wachovia evolved into the city of Winston-Salem, the

county seat of Forsyth County, with a population of a quarter million in 2020<sup>5</sup> (see Figure 14.2 Wachovia in Forsyth). The city is the product of European born and derived people *and* African born and derived people in a complicated relationship that transitioned and degraded over time. Historic Salem's structural framework remains in the city of Winston-Salem,<sup>6</sup> and, unfortunately, so does the durable impact of slavery.<sup>7</sup>

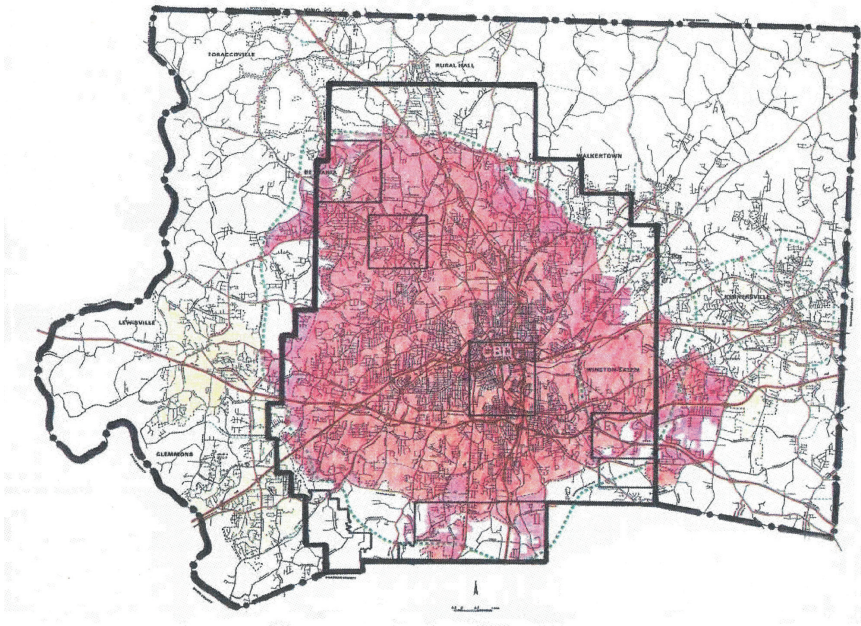


FIGURE 14.2 Wachovia in Forsyth

The Wachovia Tract is shown within Forsyth County, and the Moravian land is the core of the county structure established in 1849. Wachovia developed into the city of Winston-Salem, and the city limits (in pink) nearly fill the Wachovia Tract.

- 5 Winston-Salem population as of April 1, 2020, was 249,545, US Federal Census QuickFacts, accessed February 6, 2022, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/winstonsalemcitynorthcarolina/PST045219>.
- 6 Michael O. Hartley and Martha B. Boxley, "Salem Survey," report on file, NC Division of Archives and History, Survey and Planning Branch, Raleigh, NC and Old Salem, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC, 1997; Michael O. Hartley and Martha B. Hartley, "Town of Salem Survey," report on file, NC Division of Archives and History, Survey and Planning Branch, Raleigh, NC and Old Salem, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC, 1999.
- 7 Michael O. Hartley and Martha B. Hartley, "Hidden Town Narrative and Maps," report on file, Old Salem, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC, April 7, 2017.

## 2 Moravians as Enslavers

Ambitious plans for Wachovia were constrained by the extent of labor that a small Moravian population could provide. To rent Black and white labor was a solution that brought the Brethren into direct relationship with enslaved people. The beginning was made in 1763 in Bethabara, when “a negro [sic] woman” was hired from James Blackburn “to serve as maid in the tavern for three years.”<sup>8</sup> Blackburn was a neighbor in the Town Fork Settlement, where enslaved people were held. It was noted in 1756 that Town Fork neighbor Henry Banner “and his mulatto” had assisted during the construction of the palisade in Bethabara.<sup>9</sup> Banner lived six miles northeast of Bethabara on a lot adjoining the Wachovia Tract at the Great Philadelphia Wagon Road.<sup>10</sup>

By the time the Wachovia colony came into existence, the Moravian Church had already experienced twenty years of missionary outreach to enslaved Black people in the Caribbean. Their prevailing racist attitude toward people with black skin was tempered by their zeal to convert, which brought people of African descent a potential opportunity to be regarded as spiritual equals in Wachovia.<sup>11</sup> The first documented enslaved person purchased by the Wachovia Moravians was a skilled cattle handler rented by the Bethabara brethren in 1765, a teenager called “Sam,” who showed an inclination for conversion. Sam was offered for sale by his owner, who lived at the Uwharries, a mountain range about forty miles southeast.<sup>12</sup> The Lot approved the Church’s purchase of Sam in 1769, and thus began the Moravian role as enslaver in North Carolina.<sup>13</sup> In 1771, Sam was baptized with the name Johannes Samuel and became a Moravian Single Brother.<sup>14</sup> Proclaimed a spiritual equal in religious fellowship,

8 Bethabara Diary, Aug. 22, 1763, in Adelaide L. Fries, et al., eds. *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina* (Raleigh, NC, 1922–2006), 1:274; Sensbach, *A Separate Canaan*, 60.

9 Memorabilia, 1756, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 1:159.

10 Andreas Höger, *Wachovia*, 1754, map, Wachovia Historical Society. Henry Banner was living in the Town Fork Settlement when the first Single Brothers arrived to begin Wachovia in November 1753 and was an early friend.

11 For a detailed discussion of Moravian attitudes toward people of African descent and the Moravian mission experience, see Sensbach, *A Separate Canaan*; Jon F. Sensbach, *Rebecca’s Revival: Creating Black Christianity in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); and Daniel Thorp, “Chattel With a Soul: The Autobiography of a Moravian Slave,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 112 (1988), 433–451.

12 Sensbach, *A Separate Canaan*, 62.

13 A detailed history and thorough discussion of slavery in Wachovia are found in Sensbach, *A Separate Canaan* and C. Daniel Crews, *Neither Slave Nor Free: Moravians, Slavery, and a Church That Endures* (Winston-Salem: Moravian Archives), 1998.

14 Salem Diary, Nov. 13, 1771, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 1:446.



he still endured the oppression of enslavement by his white brothers and sisters, an unsustainable paradox.

### 3 Salem: The Central Town

Salem was the planned administrative, religious, professional, and trade center of Wachovia.<sup>15</sup> The construction of the town of began in 1766. High labor demands were in part met by non-Moravian workmen, which in time included rented Black people (enslaved and free) who cut wood, dug clay, broke stones, made bricks and roofing tiles, and assisted with construction.<sup>16</sup> Labor shortages were constant, however. Wachovia administrator Frederic William Marshall reported in June 1771 that “in Salem work has gone slowly for lack of men and teams...”<sup>17</sup> In the fall of 1771, the Salem Town Lot was designated with 3,159 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> acres for administration by the Salem theocratic leadership (including boards/councils composed of residents), which exercised oversight of the economy, land use, behavior, residence, and slavery. Land was owned by the Church, and lots were leased to residents who then owned improvements, such as a house, outbuildings, etc. The emerging town was situated at the center of the Salem Town Lot and was topographically cloistered on a ridge, which dropped to creek valleys below<sup>18</sup> (see Figure 14.3, Salem Town Lot, 1774). The pedestrian orientation of this eighteenth-century community regarded “town” as the immediate area around the central square, and beyond that was “out of town,” and further “in the neighborhood.” As we shall see, these are significant terms for

15 See Figure 14.3. Tributary streams flank the east and west sides of “town,” and the steep drop to the east hampered growth in that direction. *Petersbach* (Peters Creek) is prominent along the west side of the town lot. Present day dimensions of Salem Town Lot: north line is along 7th Street in Winston-Salem; east line goes through Winston-Salem State University; south line is just above I-40; west line is at the ridge to west of Peters Creek.

16 Bethabara Diary, Building the New Town, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 1:323–328; 3:1090. “Franck” was born in Guinea, and in October 1771, was purchased by the church from Broad River (Rutherford County) to work as a mason’s assistant in Salem, but was moved to Bethabara in 1772 and became part of the Tavern operation. For more information, see Sensbach, *A Separate Canaan*, 68; Elders Conference Minutes, Dec. 11, 1776 in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 2:1090; and Auf. Col., Mar. 18, 1778 in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 2:1258.

17 Marshall’s Report to the U.E.C., June 16, 1771 in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 2:620.

18 P.C.G. Reuter, “Wachovia or Dobbs Parish,” Nov. 1771, Unity Archives, Herrnhut, Germany; Adelaide L. Fries, “Salem Town Lot, Nov. 1771,” copied from A.F. Scrapbook D57C, Moravian Archives, Winston-Salem; Auf. Col., Apr. 16, 1772 in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 2:695; Hartley and Boxley, “Salem Survey.” Michael O. Hartley, Martha B. Hartley, and John C. Larson, “Old Salem Historic District, Winston-Salem, NC,” National Historic Landmark Nomination Form (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2016), 8:211.



FIGURE 14.3 Salem Town Lot, 1774

The Salem Town Lot land was assigned in Nov. 1771; it contained  $3,159 \frac{3}{4}$  acres and was about two miles across. “Town” was centered within the town lot on a south-sloping ridge above the *Wach* (Salem Creek), which diagonally bisects the town lot. Main Street is the north-south axis at Salem Square on which the town grid lays. Surrounding topography determined growth and use.

understanding the spatial distribution of people of African descent—where they lived, worked, worshipped, and where they were buried—as prescribed by rules and attitudes of the white Moravian population through time.

The richness of water resources had attracted the Moravians to select the Wachovia land in 1752, with the unique Muddy Creek watershed as the tract structure.<sup>19</sup> Wachovia was topographically defined by creek valleys and ridges

19 Spangenberg Diary, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 1:59–62.

(see Figure 14.1). In the Salem Town Lot, the *Wach* (Salem Creek) diagonally bisected the town lot, and this creek and its tributaries played a determining role in land use and community design<sup>20</sup> (see Figure 14.3). The town was sited on a south-sloping ridge over the broad Salem Creek bottom, and the town's street grid straddled a north-south axis, which was also the main thoroughfare, later named "Main Street."<sup>21</sup> This street was anchored to the west side of Salem Square, a public green space, which had been located with a gravity-fed waterworks system in mind. The square featured the important community buildings, including the *Gemein Haus* (with meeting-hall), choir houses, store, and schools. Single family residences were built within easy walking distance of church services. The parallel street at the east side of the square was later named "Church Street." God's Acre was laid out in 1766 at the north end of this street, and, in 1772, the Parish or Strangers' Graveyard was designated at the south end of the street.<sup>22</sup> Industrial activities and the tavern were removed to town's edges, "out of town." Meadows and fields stretched beyond to forests, and nearby lands were designated as farms to provide commodities. Roads led from Salem in all directions within Wachovia and to connect with regional links.<sup>23</sup> Topography dictated Salem's footprint, and while the precipitous drop into a creek valley at the east discouraged growth, gentle sloping land at the western creek valley accommodated expansion.

#### 4 Salem's First Generation of Black People

By 1771, Moravian-owned enslaved people were used as labor force in Salem at Church-operated enterprises, including the tannery and tavern. Both sites were located downhill and well beyond the Square. An African-born man was among the first. Called "Sambo," he was one of two men brought to Bethabara for sale by their Virginia enslaver and was purchased for the Salem tannery.<sup>24</sup>

20 Hartley and Hartley, "Town of Salem Survey."

21 P.C.G. Reuter, "Plan und Situation von dem Stadt Platz Salem zwischen der Petersbach und Lech unter dem Anna Berg oberhalb Wach River, 1765," Unity Archives, Herrnhut, Germany.

22 Hartley, Hartley, and Larson, "Old Salem Historic District," 6–21; Aeltesten Confernz Minutes, July 28, 1772 in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 2:717; Marshall's Report to the U.E.C., 1773 in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 2:771.

23 Hartley, Hartley, and Larson, "Old Salem Historic District," 7–8.

24 Jon Sensbach, "African-Americans in Salem: Brother Abraham: An African Moravian in Salem, Peter Oliver: Life of A Black Moravian Craftsman," (Old Salem, Inc., 1992), 8–11. The other man brought into Bethabara to sell was called "Jupiter." He was purchased by

The tannery was along the road to the Shallowford (Academy Street), where Sambo likely lived. He resisted by trying to escape twice, was punished and nearly sold, but, after several years, sought conversion. Sambo received the baptismal name Abraham.<sup>25</sup> He became a communicant Moravian in 1787.<sup>26</sup>

Formally occupied in 1772 when the move from Bethabara was completed, Salem began with a congregation of 120 people, as recorded in the *Memorabilia* for 1772.<sup>27</sup> It was a town of artisans, a university-trained doctor was in residence, and music and worship were central to this religious community. But while the Moravians were a cosmopolitan group with Church leadership from European nobility, a global footprint, and an education ethic, they sought separation from the world. However, commerce demanded interactions with non-Moravians and their customs, styles, and traditions, and the tavern constituted the interface with *Fremden*, or non-Moravians, also called “Strangers.” The tavern was operated with the use of enslaved Black labor, from its opening in 1772 until emancipation in 1865, as maids, field hands, hostlers, waiters, for kitchen work, and for housework.<sup>28</sup> Kathy was an enslaved girl of about ten when she was moved from Bethabara, where her parents were also enslaved, to labor at the Salem tavern. In 1773, she “begged to attend the Lovefeast” of the little girls but was not allowed. She may have appealed for inclusion in other ways because, four years later, in September 1777, Kathy received deathbed

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John Douthit of the Muddy Creek Settlement, near where the Hope congregation settled beginning in 1772, see Michael O. Hartley and Martha B. Hartley, “At the Confluence of the Three Fork of Muddy Creek: A Study List Application for a Rural Historic District, the Hope-Fraternity Area, Forsyth County, NC,” report on file, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Planning Board, Winston-Salem, NC, and Old Salem, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC, 2009.

- 25 Sensbach, “African-Americans in Salem: Brother Abraham,” 11–15. Sambo’s punishment was recorded in 1775: “July 22. Br. Bonn, as Justice, sentenced the “negro” [sic] Sambo to the punishment he deserved for running away, and it was administered by young Volp; he bore it patiently and meekly. Br. Bagge had his negress punished also; he has hitherto done it himself, but seemed to be tired,” Salem Diary, July 22, 1775, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 2:877. Memoir of Abraham, 1797 (trans. Erika Huber) in Tanya Thacker, “African American References, Wachovia/Salem, North Carolina,” report on file, Old Salem, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC, 1994.
- 26 Memoir of Abraham, 1797.
- 27 Wachovia Memorabilia, 1771, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 1:434; Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 2:657; Wachovia Memorabilia, 1772, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 2:663.
- 28 Salem Diary, Feb. 17, 1772, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 2:671; Roberts, “Maids, Servants, and Slaves,” Appendix. Research has identified approximately fifty different enslaved people who were owned by the church or the tavern keeper or rented for use in the tavern between 1772 and 1865, see Hidden Town Project Lot Files, Lot 68, on file, Old Salem, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC.

salvation and was the first person of African descent to be buried in God's Acre,<sup>29</sup> although a mysterious notation on Reuter's 1774 map indicated *Ein Neger Grab* just north of the graveyard<sup>30</sup> (see Figure 14.3). The place for the Parish Graveyard had been selected "on the hill, opposite the Tavern" and consecrated in 1775, but Kathy was not buried there.<sup>31</sup>

Interaction with enslaved people was not without incident. As in the case of Jacob, they were rented, bought, and sold, according to their behavioral compliance with the conditions of enslavement and Church needs.<sup>32</sup> Originally rented for his labor, Jacob, an enslaved tavern worker, had pleaded with Br. Marshall to be bought. Jacob was purchased by the Church, received baptism in July 1776, and may have lived in the Single Brothers House. His bargaining and trading with young Brethren brought him warnings. Jacob resisted in other ways, including theft, but in the aftermath of horse poisoning, he was sold to neighbor Robert Lanier in 1779.<sup>33</sup>

Salem hosted various *Fremden* at the tavern. An encounter in 1775 underscored the extensive outreach of the Moravian Church, when in June, the visiting James Parke Farley entourage included a servant, an enslaved woman, who had known Moravian missionaries on Antigua. Farley was visiting from his Dan River tobacco plantation, where he had recently moved one hundred enslaved people from his father Francis Farley's island sugar plantation on Antigua.<sup>34</sup> Enslaved people accompanied their travelling enslavers but did not lodge in the tavern. In 1780, "a family came in flight from Georgia, bringing about twenty negroes [sic]; like those who preceded them they camped in the woods opposite the Tavern, and the place looked like a negro [sic] village."<sup>35</sup> After the

29 Salem Diary, Aug. 17, 1773, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 2:759; "Kathe/Kathy/Cathy" in Thacker "African-American References"; Leland Ferguson, *God's Fields: Landscape, Religion, and Race in Moravian Wachovia* (Gainesville: The University Press of Florida, 2011), 85.

30 P.C.G. Reuter, "Daz ganze Territorium von Salem," 1774, Moravian Archives, Winston-Salem.

31 Aelt. Conf., July 28, 1772, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 2:717; Kathy's segregated placement in the burial sequence of the Single Sisters square is explored by Geoffrey Ryan Hughes, "Salem Asleep: A Discursive Archaeology of God's Acre, 1771–1815," MA thesis, University of South Carolina, 2005, 136–147.

32 Hidden Town Project Lot Files, Lot 68.

33 Auf. Col., Jan. 14, 1775; Dec. 31, 1776; Elders Conference Minutes, Jun. 29, 1776; Dec. 30, 1777 in Wachovia Subject File, "Negroes" [sic] (Old Salem, Inc.); Salem Diary, Aug. 3 and Sept. 15, 1779, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 3:311, 1313.

34 Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 2:876; Charles D. Rodenbough "The Sauratown Project," Feb. 3, 2018 lecture at 2018 Black History Month Genealogy Conference, Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society, NC Chapters, Greensboro, NC.

35 Salem Diary, Jun. 14, 1780 in Fries, et al, eds., *Records* 4:1546.

tavern fire in 1784, a shed was moved to this site to serve as storage space and lodging “for negroes [sic] and poor travelers”<sup>36</sup> as a suitable place, beyond town.

## 5 An Increasingly American Story: The Decades after the Revolutionary War

Slave holding among the Brethren increased with time. Wachovia Moravians travelled to Cross Creek for a “Negro [sic] Sale” in 1779. They returned via Salisbury with a fourteen-year-old boy.<sup>37</sup> In November 1782, special “Specie Certificates” were issued to purchase slaves or confiscated land. The suggestion was made to utilize the certificates to buy “negroes [sic] at the vendue” in Salisbury and that “some of these negroes [sic] can be used to advantage in our towns, the rest can be resold.”<sup>38</sup> While the trade in enslaved workers grew, Salem, Bethabara, and Hope conducted several baptisms and weddings of Moravian-owned slaves.

In the early 1780s, these economic, religious, and social transactions shaped a small community of Black Moravians in Wachovia who partook in religious fellowship with their white enslavers, and “spiritual equality” included worship and burial practices, as well as Moravian educational opportunities. Members of this early Black Moravian community included Iddy, who became Maria and eventually married Johannes Samuel. Frank was baptized Christian and married Patty, who received the name Anna upon baptism. Abraham married Sarah (she was not baptized). In the Hope settlement, Johannes Samuel and Abraham served as baptismal sponsors for Jupiter, who was renamed Paul.<sup>39</sup>

After the Revolutionary War, Salem’s construction backlog was aided by free people of African descent living on Unity land “in the neighborhood,” such as Sam, Champion, and Scott.<sup>40</sup> These men, plus rented enslaved laborers, were a

36 Hidden Town Project Lot Files, Lot 23; Auf. Col., Feb. 12, 1784, in Old Salem Research Files.

37 Salem Diary, Apr. 9 and May 9, 1779; Auf. Col., May 20, 1779, in Michael O. Hartley and Martha B. Hartley, “Diary Entries for Strangers Graveyard, Negro [sic] Graveyards, Colored Church, African Americans, Slavery,” Old Salem, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC, n.d., 11.

38 Aelt. Conf., Nov. 27, 1782, in Hartley and Hartley, “Diary Entries,” 17.

39 Salem Diary, Jun. 19, 1778 in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 3:1236; Wachovia Memorabilia 1780 and Dec. 2, 1783 in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 4:1515, 1844; Salem Diary Dec. 7, 1780 and June 25, 1781, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 4:1578, 1697; Hope Diary, May 9, 1782, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 4:1832; Sensbach, *A Separate Canaan*, 103–110, 132–133.

40 Auf. Col., Feb. 18, 1784, Apr. 5, 1785, Dec. 13, 1785, May 6, 1788, July 20, 1790, Aug. 24, 1790, July 12, 1791, May 31, 1796, Feb. 1, 1803, April 19, 1803, in Wachovia Subject File, “Negroes” [sic] (Old Salem, Inc.) and Old Salem Research Files. Living near Salem on Unity land were

vital and conspicuous part of daily life in the community, but like white Strangers, they were to be avoided by white Moravians. Indeed, in 1787, the Aeltesten Conferenz lamented, "...we wish that all the Negroes [sic] could be moved out of town."<sup>41</sup>

By the 1780s, enslaved women and girls were rented by Moravian households in Salem for domestic labor such as childcare, laundry, and cooking. By 1800, there had been about a dozen enslaved Black females approved for domestic situations.<sup>42</sup> They likely lived within the resident's home or in an outbuilding on the lot. Rented slaves and increasingly, white Moravian-owned enslaved people were present at places outside of town as well, including a farm leased on Single Brothers' land in 1782 at the southwest corner of the town lot.<sup>43</sup> By the 1790s, enslaved people worked at the fulling mill and the farm, both along the tavern lane (later named Walnut Street), and at Gottlieb Schober's paper mill on the *Petersbach* or Peters Creek<sup>44</sup> (see Figure 14.4, Activity "out of town"). By 1791, the Aufseher Collegium (Supervising Board) had created a clear distinction between owning and renting slaves. The Moravian socio-spatial distinctions of "in town" versus "out of town," their flexibility in making exceptions to buy slaves,<sup>45</sup> and for usual approval to rent slaves who were therefore easier to dismiss,<sup>46</sup> regulated a wide presence of enslaved people in the social and geographic fabric of Salem.

In 1790, the Church in Salem enslaved eight people and in Bethabara, ten.<sup>47</sup> Bethania Moravians owned the largest number at the time, seventeen. Approximately six enslaved people worked in Hope, and in Friedberg and Friedland, perhaps two to three each.<sup>48</sup> Only a small number of the Black enslaved community in Wachovia was baptized Moravian, thus the participation of Black

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Champion (free), a stonebreaker; Sam, who worked construction, and Scott (free), who may have owned land. These men lived east and southeast of the Salem Town Lot.

41 Aelt. Conf., Aug. 8, 1787, in Hartley and Hartley, "Diary Entries," 19.

42 Roberts, "Maids, Servants, and Slaves," 1–3, appendix. Auxiliary help for the house and garden in early Salem was typically the work of "serving Sisters" (Single Sisters) or white Moravian girls and women from beyond Salem. Martha Hartley, Hidden Town Project map, 1775–1800, on file, Old Salem, Inc. Winston-Salem, NC.

43 Auf Col., Sept. 13, 1781, and Elders Conference, Jun. 5, 1782, in Wachovia Residents Database for Gottfried Schultz, Old Salem Research Files.

44 Auf. Col. Dec. 21, 1803, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 6:2748; Hidden Town Project Lot Files, Lot 268; Auf. Col. Aug. 20, 1789 in Roberts, "Maids, Servants, and Slaves," 23, appendix.

45 Aelt. Conf., Mar. 2, 1785, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 5:2092. In this example, Gottlob Krause purchased an enslaved boy without permission, but was allowed to keep him.

46 Roberts, "Maids, Servants, and Slaves," 3, 20–23.

47 Sensbach, *A Separate Canaan*, 175.

48 *Federal Census for Stokes County, NC, 1790*, accessed July 2020, ancestry.com.

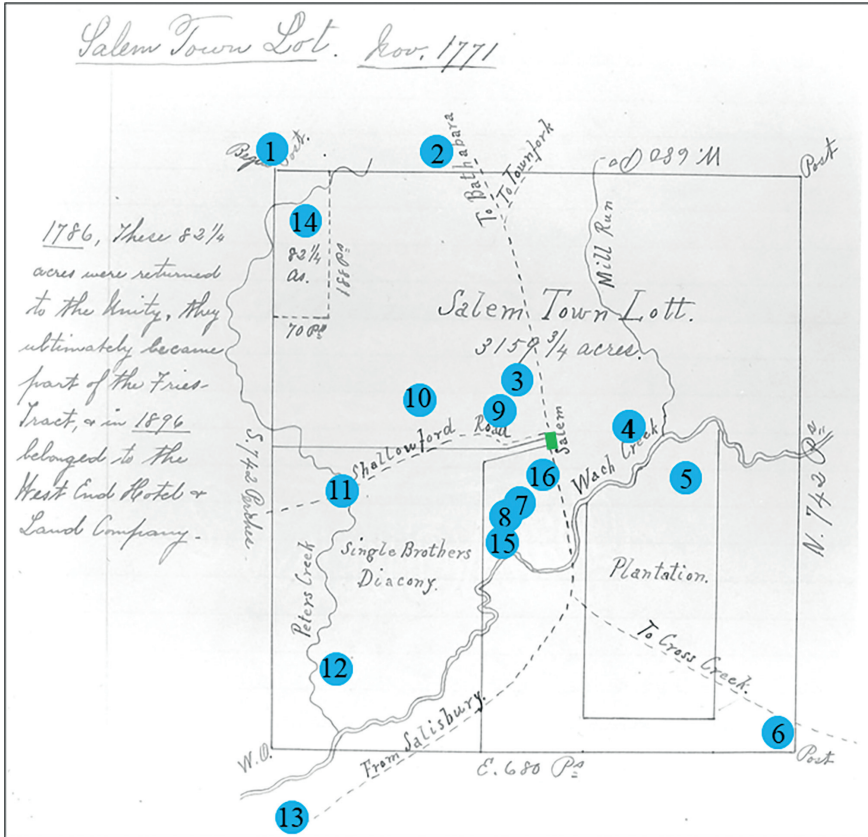


FIGURE 14.4 Activity “out of town”  
 Outlying places (with dates established) around Salem, where people of African descent were located at one time or another before 1822. 1. Adam Schumacher Farm, 1769; 2. Vaniman Zevely Farm & Mill, 1815; 3. Peter Oliver Farm, 1802; 4. Heinrich Blum Farm, 1789; 5. Dr. Henry Schumann Farm, 1815; 6. Negro Quarter/ Wachovia Administration Farm, ca. 1810; 7. Fulling Mill, 1789; 8. Stockburger Farm, 1782; 9. Tannery, 1769; 10. Conrad Kreuser Farm, 1816; 11. Schober’s Paper Mill, 1790; 12. Gottfried Schultz vicinity, 1782; 13. Salem Mill, 1772; 14. Wilhelm Fries Farm, ca. 1820; 15. Blum’s Mill, 1820; 16. Tavern, 1772. Locations by author.

Moravians in religious life as proclaimed spiritual equals was almost negligible. In Salem, with a 1790 population of about 220,<sup>49</sup> Abraham may have been the only Black Moravian. He and Sarah lived at the tannery, where they were

49 Estimate based on Salem populations for 1785 (205) and 1792 (230) in Fries, et al, eds., *Records* 5:2070, 2354.



both enslaved. Based on the principle of spiritual equality, at his death in 1797, the congregation buried Abraham in God's Acre.<sup>50</sup>

In the nascent Early Republic, a new generation of Moravians had new ideas about white individual freedom and choice.<sup>51</sup> As a consequence, the sacred communal place became segregated. In March 1789, the Congregation Council minutes recorded:

As on Easter morning a good many Negroes [sic] come and sit among the white people, which does not accord with the customary thought of people in this country, the *Saaldieners* [ushers] shall hold them at the door and then show them to the back bench if there is room.<sup>52</sup>

A response, of sorts, implored in 1792:

It was mentioned that we must not be ashamed of those negroes [sic] who belong to our community and, as has happened before, let them sit all by themselves in the congregational worshippings and even during Holy Communion. They are our Brothers and Sisters, and different treatment of them will degrade ourselves to the rank of ordinary people of this world, and will be a disgrace for the community.<sup>53</sup>

Tension was evident as the Moravian Church acculturated, and the original fellowship experiment yielded under its pressure.

Johann and Maria Samuel's first-born, Anna Maria, entered the Older Girls Choir in Salem in 1793, went to school, and lived in the Single Sisters House.<sup>54</sup> She is the only known Black Moravian to have experienced this. At the same time that Anna Maria enjoyed choir participation in Salem, an unnamed enslaved girl in Friedberg prepared for baptism in 1797. She was overtly shunned by the white girls of the Friedberg Older Girls' Choir and their parents. Minister Schneider admonished the ugly behavior, but the transgression was telling.<sup>55</sup>

50 Memoir of Abraham, 1797; Christian and Anna, as well as Peter Oliver, were living in Bethabara by 1790.

51 Sensbach, *A Separate Canaan*, 164–166.

52 Crews, *Neither Slave Nor Free*, 4.

53 Crews, *Neither Slave Nor Free*, 4.

54 Salem Diary, June 4, 1793, in Hartley and Hartley, "Diary Entries," 21. Anna Maria Samuel discussion in Grant McAllister, "A Study of the School's Education of Female Slaves and its Involvement with Slavery," Salem Academy and College, 2018, 2–4.

55 Sensbach, *A Separate Canaan*, 183–184.

In November 1800, a new Salem church was consecrated with an estimated attendance of 2,000.<sup>56</sup> Stylistically removed from the Central European tradition of the town's early *fachwerk* buildings, the church architecture spoke to changing styles and ideas.<sup>57</sup> The coming decades solidified the demise of white and Black spiritual equality and joint fellowship. The year 1800 was also noteworthy because the Church emancipated two longtime enslaved communicant Moravians, Johann Samuel and Peter Oliver. As Moravian slaveholding in Bethabara was being phased out,<sup>58</sup> a 1796 North Carolina manumission law provided opportunity to free Johann Samuel in 1800, whose family was already free.<sup>59</sup> Peter Oliver's emancipation involved a complicated strategy with the Moravians in 1800,<sup>60</sup> but even as a rented teenage laborer in 1784, and later as an enslaved Moravian Single Brother, Peter Oliver had charted the course of his life with tenacity and fortitude.<sup>61</sup> In 1802, Peter Oliver married the free "mulatto" Christina Bass,<sup>62</sup> and leased a four-acre farm four blocks north of Salem Square, called "the farm near Salem."<sup>63</sup> Peter Oliver is recognized as the only known Black Moravian householder in Salem<sup>64</sup> (see Figure 14.4 for Peter Oliver farm).

56 Dedication of the new church building in Salem, Nov. 9, 1800, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 6:2951–2952.

57 The new church was designed by Frederick William Marshall, oeconomus, and reflected emerging classicism in Salem's architecture. Marshall had designed the Single Brothers House thirty years earlier, in 1769, using *fachwerk* or half-timber. This traditional building method was well known to Moravians in Europe and was used for many of Salem's earliest buildings (family houses, Choir house, *Gemein Haus*).

58 Sensbach, *A Separate Canaan*, 173.

59 Sensbach, *A Separate Canaan*, 173; Salem Diary, June 19, 1778, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 3:1236; Bethabara Diary, Mar. 6, 1797, Jan. 14, 1801, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records* 5:2594, 2682; Aelt. Conf., Feb. 11, 1801, Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 6:2679.

60 Martha Tyzenhouse, "How Peter Oliver freed himself," Feb. 15, 2018, accessed July 24, 2019, [www.lancasterhistory.org](http://www.lancasterhistory.org). Old Salem staff member Mary Comer shared this new information that she had found about Peter Oliver in early 2019.

61 Peter Oliver lived in Bethania, in Salem's Single Brothers House, and in Bethabara. See Peter Oliver Biography in Sensbach, "African-Americans in Salem" 25–40; Peter Oliver Memoir, 1810 (trans. Frank Albright), in Thacker "African-American References."

62 Salem Diary, Feb. 16, 1802, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 6:2695.

63 Oliver Indenture/Lease in Thacker "African-American References"; Auf. Col., Feb. 2, 1802, in Roberts, "Maids, Servants, and Slaves," 37; Martha Hartley, "Location of Peter Oliver's Farm on Town Run, 1802–1810" (Old Salem, Inc., Feb. 28, 2017). Invisible under 200 years development, the Oliver farm site is in design 2022 by landscape architect Walter Hood for Creative Corridors Coalition as a park honoring Peter Oliver, his life and family.

64 Hidden Town Project Research, Old Salem, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC.

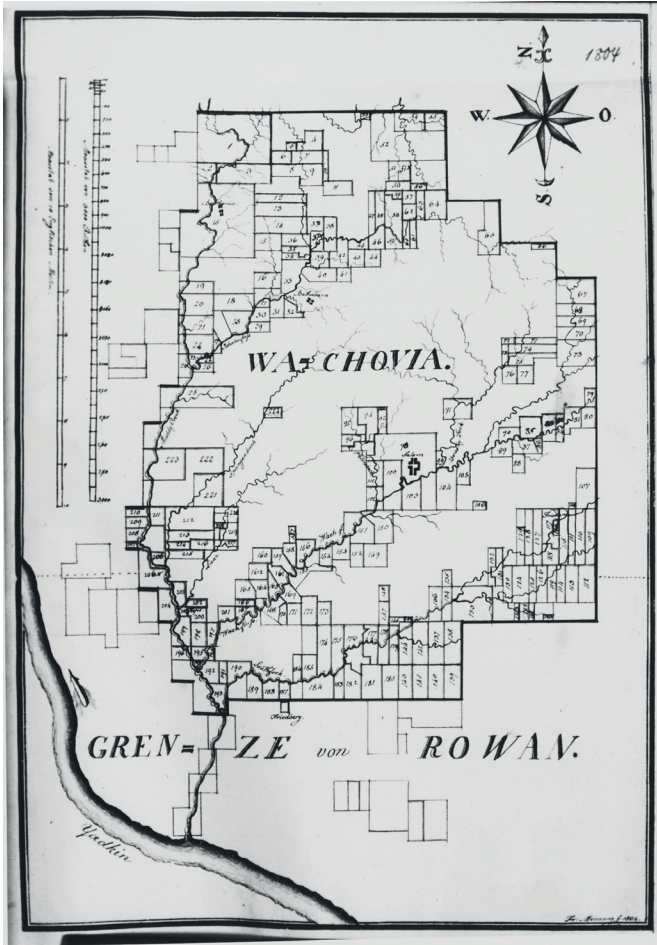


FIGURE 14.5 Wachovia growth by 1804  
 Wachovia developed along the creek system with house sites in proximity to fresh springs; land was sold and leased to Moravians and non-Moravians. Wachovia was in Stokes County by 1789. The 1800 *Federal Census* recorded a county population of 11,036, including 1,439 slaves. In Wachovia, 71 “Negroes,” [sic] including eight free, were counted (letter from Reichel to Loskiel, Nov. 25, 1802).

In 1800, Wachovia was part of Stokes County with a county population of 11,036, including 1,439 enslaved people<sup>65</sup> (see Figure 14.5, Wachovia Growth

65 *Federal Census for Stokes County, NC, 1790 and Federal Census for Stokes County, NC, 1800*, accessed August 20, 2020. <http://ancestry.com>.

by). An 1802 accounting enumerated seventy-one “Negroes” [sic] in Wachovia, including eight free Black people, with Br. Reichel observing the adjacent states’ populations. He concluded that the Wachovia Moravians had “an especially wide field of work for evangelization among the heathen, Indians and Negroes [sic].”<sup>66</sup> The mission to the Cherokee was founded in 1801 at Springplace, Georgia.<sup>67</sup> By 1802, regular segregated services were held in Hope, Friedberg, and Bethania.<sup>68</sup> Enslaved people were also sent to work at the Cherokee mission. In April 1805, the pregnant “Negress [sic] Pleasant” was purchased; *en route* to Springplace, Pleasant delivered a “mulatto infant” who was baptized with the name of Michael.<sup>69</sup>

In Salem, the social landscape was changing, too. In 1803, the rule prohibiting residents from keeping any enslaved people they owned in town, without approval, was re-adopted.<sup>70</sup> Then in 1810, the African-born Phoebe and Bodney, who were already communicant Moravians at Bethabara, were purchased by the Church with two of their children, and Phoebe expecting a baby, and brought to Salem.<sup>71</sup> They were housed well out of town at the Wachovia Administration Farm established for Church-owned enslaved people. Called the “Negro [sic] Quarter,” the farm was located at the southeast corner of the Salem Town Lot, where Bodney worked as a farm manager<sup>72</sup> (see

66 Letter Reichel to Loskiel, Nov. 25, 1802, BA3, ltr. 2, as translated by Erika Huber in Wachovia Subject File “Negroes” [sic] (Old Salem, Inc.).

67 C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck, eds., *Records of the Moravians Among the Cherokee: Early Contact and the Establishment of the First Mission* (Tahlequah, Oklahoma: Cherokee National Press, 2010).

68 Wachovia Memorabilia, 1801 and 1802, Friedberg Diary, Aug. 22, 1801, Bethania Diary, Sept. 12, 1801, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 6:2667, 2689, 6219, 2718, respectfully.

69 Helfer Conferenz fürs Ganz, April 10, 1805, Letter Benzien to U.E.C., Dec. 21, 1805, in Fries et al, eds., *Records*, 6: 2819, 2827; Mel White, “The Ten Stones,” (Old Salem, Inc., Sept. 6, 2002); Sale of Pleasant from Caspar Stoltz to Christian Lewis Benzien, April 2, 1805 in Slave Chattel Folder C, Moravian Archives, Winston-Salem. Is this the same “Pleasant” referenced in Sale of Pleasant from Richard Marr, Rockingham Co., to Nathaniel Markland, Oct. 3, 1803, in Slave Chattel Folder C, Moravian Archives, Winston-Salem.

70 Concerning Slave Holding in Salem, Aug. 22, 1814, Congregation Council, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 7:3544.

71 Auf. Col., Feb. 3, 1808, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 6:2926. Bodney, Phoebe with child, and two of their children Caty and Emanuel were purchased by Br. Benzien from George Hauser, Oct. 4, 1810, in Slave Chattel folder C, Moravian Archives, Winston-Salem. George Hauser was executor for John Puryear, see Mel White, “Spirit of the Past, Light to the Present,” *Tar Heel Junior Historian* (Raleigh: NC Museum of History, Spring 2009), 23.

72 C. Daniel Crews, *Neither Slave Nor Free*, 10. Inventory of Wachovia Plantation, May 31, 1817, (misidentified as “Salem Plantation”) in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 7:3557–3558. Additional Bodney children were purchased by Church, see Slave Chattels folders C and D, Moravian Archives, Winston-Salem.; Detail of Salem Town Lot map with surveys, 1826, A 7–12,

Figure 14.4 for Negro [sic] Quarter location). At the time, other Black communicants in the Salem Town Lot included the free Olivers on their farm north of town and the enslaved John Emmanuel at the tannery west of town. In the town itself lived Church-owned slaves, who were not Moravians, and rented enslaved laborers and domestics.<sup>73</sup>

Peter Oliver died in 1810 and was buried in God's Acre not far from Abraham.<sup>74</sup> A subsequent relationship judged to be illicit between his widow Christina Oliver and John Emanuel resulted in Christina's exclusion from the congregation.<sup>75</sup> John Emanuel was threatened with sale, but spared.<sup>76</sup> In 1813, another longtime Black Moravian family, the free Samuels in Bethabara, was excluded. Poverty and need had evidently forced them to take things, and they "were arrested, tried, and sent as prisoners to Germanton." Their land lease was cancelled, and they had to vacate their home.<sup>77</sup> Ties to these early communicant Black Moravian families were severed.

The founding of the Girls Boarding School in 1804 added new social dynamics to Salem.<sup>78</sup> At this location as well, labor shortages prompted the use of enslaved people. Inspector Abraham Steiner purchased Betsey, the ten-year old daughter of Phoebe and Bodney, for laundry services and other duties

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Moravian Archives, Winston-Salem, with thanks to Richard Starbuck, email correspondence November 20, 2018.

73 Roberts, "Maids, Servants, and Slaves," appendix; Auf Col., Jan. 23 and Oct 17, 1810, in Wachovia Subject File "Negroes" [sic] (Old Salem, Inc.).

74 Peter Oliver Memoir, 1810.

75 Auf Col., Oct. 10 and 30, 1810, Jan. 8, Jan. 23, Feb. 19, 1811, in Wachovia Subject File "Negroes" [sic] (Old Salem, Inc.). Christina Oliver's oldest children went to live with Salem families. Nancy Oliver to Br. Heinrich Blum, farm east of town (Wachovia Residents Database for Heinrich Blum, Jun. 25, 1811) and Israel to Br. Foltz at Tavern lane farm (Mel White research). It is speculated that Christina Oliver lived in the vicinity of Hope Moravian Church. The Salem Diary of Feb. 21, 1817 in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 7:3327, recorded interaction with a person who the author believes was Christina Oliver: "Br. Kramsch, in Hope, visited the free Mulatto woman in the neighborhood, who expressed a strong desire for a German Testament, so Br. Kramsch gave her one, with the wish that she would make good use of it. This she promised and could not say enough of how grateful she was." Under-scoring this speculation is that Oliver family members continue to live in the vicinity of Hope. The author and Michael O. Hartley met with Henry Thomas Oliver, born 2011 (descendant of Israel Oliver) and his daughter Elizabeth Oliver during survey work in Hope-Fraternity in 2008. They and other Oliver family members lived along Idols Road in Clemmons.

76 Auf Col., Feb. 19, 1811, in Wachovia Subject File "Negroes" [sic] (Old Salem, Inc.).

77 Bethabara Diary, Feb. 23, 1813 and *Helfer Conferenz fürs Ganz*, March 3, 1813, in Hartley and Hartley, "Diary Entries," 37.

78 Salem Dairy, Sept. 19, 1804, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 6:2772.

in 1810.<sup>79</sup> Single Sisters' curator Conrad Kreuser rented the enslaved man Sam in 1811 for the Sisters' household management.<sup>80</sup> Intense discussion ensued about Betsey's and Sam's proximity to one another and also about Dr. Schumann who refused to move from Bethania to Salem without his enslaved people. At issue was the potential for new births that increased the number of enslaved people in town,<sup>81</sup> as well as a perception of preferential treatment for white Moravian residents who were allowed to keep their enslaved people in town. The debate culminated in the removal of enslaved people from town, which in turn led to their sales to neighbors or to the Church administration for renting back.<sup>82</sup>

By August 1814, standing rules were reinforced after, once again, considering the pros and cons of keeping slaves in Salem:

[...] by comparing the seeming advantage and some profit and convenience in keeping Negro [sic] slaves, with the greater disadvantage to the outer and inner welfare of the congregation. It was pointed out that there was reason to fear that our congregation rules would be broken often, or there would be complaints about them. Attention was also drawn to the point that our residents should watch their servants from outside. It might easily follow that the young women in the congregation would become work-shy and ashamed of work; and there would be increasing difficulty in holding growing boys to learning of a profession, in restraining them from dangerous tendencies, and in leading them into outward morality and inward growth in good; and that this would affect the children as well as the growing youth.<sup>83</sup>

This presentation of the two sides, and the large preponderance in weight of the evil results to be feared if the lack of other help led to the more general holding of slaves, moved the Brethren present to adopt unanimously the resolution which was offered: "That in general the old rule should be retained, and

79 Auf. Col. Oct. 10 and 30, 1810, in Wachovia Subject File "Negroes" (Old Salem, Inc.).

80 Aelt. Conf., Aug. 7, 1811, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 7:3151; Auf. Col. Aug 6 and Aug. 28, 1811 in Roberts, "Maids, Servants, and Slaves," 58.

81 Auf. Col., Feb. 15, Mar. 29, Jul. 19, Aug. 2, 3, 10, 16, 1814, in Roberts, "Maids, Servants, and Slaves," 63–66.

82 Auf. Col., Aug. 16, 30, Sept. 27, Oct. 11, 18, 25, Nov. 22, Dec. 20, 1814, Jan. 17, Feb. 14, Mar. 5, 28, Apr. 11, 25, May 8, June 20, Jul. 3, 18, Nov. 20, Dec. 18, 1815 in Roberts, "Maids, Servants, and Slaves," 66–73.

83 See Minutes of a Meeting of the House-fathers, Masters, and Brethren of the Congregation Council, held in Salem on August 22, 1814, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 7:3544–3545.

that the keeping of owned slaves in the congregation town of Salem should not be permitted.”<sup>84</sup> There were exceptions to the rule, of course, and significant new language: “It was further agreed and determined that in the question of the holding of Negroes [sic] no difference shall be made between those who are members of the congregation and those who have no connection with it.”<sup>85</sup>

As the Black Moravian presence dwindled, so did their Moravian privileges. The 1813 burial of Phoebe’s deceased day-old infant was the last of a total of seven burials of people of African descent in God’s Acre.<sup>86</sup> Abraham’s wife Sarah did not convert,<sup>87</sup> and at her death in 1815, Sarah was buried in the Parish Graveyard.<sup>88</sup> In 1816, a decision to accommodate the relatives of Boarding School students in God’s Acre prompted the establishment of a separate “Negro [sic] God’s Acre” adjacent to the Parish Graveyard “as the burial place for Negroes. [sic]”<sup>89</sup> Moravian burials in Salem were segregated, white and Black, far apart, each with their own place.

## 6 Farms “Out of Town”

The development of farms “out of town” broadened the distribution of Moravian slave ownership in areas of the Salem Town Lot where the “town” slave regulations did not apply. The physician Henry Schumann was provided residency across Salem Creek on the former Salem Farm, and Kreuser moved the enslaved Sam and Betsey to his farm on the ridge just west of town. Both farms were separated from “town” by creek valleys (see Figure 14.4 for Kreuser and Schumann farm locations). Betsey and Sam were married at her parent’s cabin in the “Negro [sic] Quarter,” and their first child was born the next year.<sup>90</sup> Slavery in Salem was generational and although “the breeding of Negroes [sic]

84 Fries, et al, eds. *Records*, 3544–3545.

85 Fries, et al, eds. *Records*, 3544–3548.

86 Ferguson, *God’s Fields*, 85.

87 Memoir of Abraham; Salem Diary, Oct. 29, 1815, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 7:3262.

88 Salem Diary, Oct. 29, 1815, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 7:3262. Sarah’s grave location was determined using a clue from an 1894 photograph by Tom Hege, see Ferguson, *God’s Fields*, 128–129, 203.

89 Aelt. Conf. Oct. 16, 1816 and Auf. Col. Oct. 21, 1816 in Hartley and Hartley, “Diary Entries,” 46–47. For a thorough graveyard discussion, see Leland Ferguson, *God’s Fields: Landscape, Religion, and Race in Moravian Wachovia* (Gainesville: The University Press of Florida, 2011).

90 Hidden Town Project Biography Files for “Betsey” and “Sam”; Mel White Genealogy, Old Salem Research & Archaeology; Salem Diary, July 12, 1817, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 7:3329.

would be very injurious,” it was not so outside of town.<sup>91</sup> Moravian farms in the Town Lot accommodated a growing enslaved population, as did Vaniman Zevely’s 1815 farm and wool carding mill on Peters Creek, just north of the Salem Town Lot<sup>92</sup> (see Figure 14.4 for Zevely’s location).

The “Negro Quarter” inventory for 1817 included ten Wachovia Administration “Negroes” [sic] who were named and valued in the same language and manner as livestock. The valuation lists included communicant Moravians.<sup>93</sup> The aged widow of Christian, called Anna, and then known as Nancy was moved to the Quarter in 1818.<sup>94</sup> The ailing Pleasant was also “retired” to the Quarter, following her service at Springplace mission. By 1833, Pleasant and Phoebe were the only residents still living there,<sup>95</sup> and the “Negro [sic] Quarter” would be phased out.<sup>96</sup> Pleasant died in 1839 and was buried in the “Negro” [sic] God’s Acre.<sup>97</sup> Phoebe spent her late years with her enslaved daughter Betsey, who with husband Sam, was enslaved on a farm northeast of Salem.<sup>98</sup>

## 7 The Birth of a Black Congregation

Entrepreneurship drove industrialization in early nineteenth-century Salem. The 1815 banking agency established in town provided capital for emerging interests and evolved into Wachovia Bank by 1879.<sup>99</sup> A privately financed grist

91 “Concerning Slaveholding in Salem,” in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 7:3547.

92 Hartley and Hartley, “Town of Salem Survey”; Crews, *Neither Slave Nor Free*, 6; Hartley, Hartley, and Larson, “Old Salem Historic District,” 193–196; Wachovia Memorabilia, 1815, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 7:3254; Robert Neilson, “Plat of Van N Zevely Plantation” Jan. 26, 1973, Map on file, Old Salem Archaeology.

93 Inventory of Wachovia Plantation in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 7:3557–3558. Note: In this entry, the farm was misidentified as the “Salem Plantation,” an error in transcription years ago, according to Moravian Archivist Richard Starbuck. This has caused confusion with the Schumann plantation, on land which was established in 1768 as the Salem Farm, an outlying farm for providing commodities to town. See Michael O. Hartley, Martha B. Hartley, and John C. Larson, “Old Salem Historic District,” 193–196.

94 Aelt. Conf., June 22, 1818, Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 7:3375.

95 “Diary of the Small Negro [sic] Congregation in and around Salem,” Feb. 1833, trans. Elizabeth Marx (Moravian Archives, Winston-Salem, 1985).

96 The “Negro” [sic] Quarter disappeared and is under urban neighborhoods, industry, and US Highway 52. To date, there has been no archaeology survey of the 50-acre tract.

97 Ferguson, *God’s Fields*, 192–193.

98 Betsey and Sam were enslaved by John Byerly in 1860, farm location on EA Vogler, “Map of Forsyth County, North Carolina,” Nov. 1863, Moravian Archives, Winston-Salem.

99 Hartley, Hartley, and Larson, “Old Salem Historic District,” 129–131.



mill was in operation by 1821.<sup>100</sup> Although the slave rules were re-adopted in 1820 to re-emphasize the prohibition of slave labor in the trades, the transitioning economy increased pressures to use enslaved workers in industrial settings.<sup>101</sup> The changing economy hastened the closing of the Single Brothers House in 1823. It became re-purposed for widows and other uses.<sup>102</sup>

In 1822, Salem's population had grown to about 450 inhabitants. That January, the Salem Female Auxiliary Missionary Society was newly organized. By February, the society pressed Church leadership and offered support for "the beginning of a mission among the Negroes [sic] in this neighborhood."<sup>103</sup> The idea of a mission to enslaved people was consistent with Moravian efforts begun nearly a century earlier on St. Thomas plantations; however, unlike the West Indies or any other Moravian mission post, the Wachovia Moravians lived within the mission field.<sup>104</sup> Following Moravian Church tradition, record-keeping was begun. The "Diary of the Small Negro [sic] Congregation in and around Salem" noted at the outset the need for a separateness, stating that:

From time to time, some Negroes [sic] had indeed become members of the Brethren's Congregation (Moravian Church) in Salem, Bethabara,

100 John Larson, "A Mill for Salem," in Frances Griffin, ed., *The Three Forks of Muddy Creek*, vol. 9, (Winston-Salem: Old Salem, Inc., 1983), 12–16.

101 Congregation Council, Feb. 3 and 24, 1820, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 7:3446, 3447. In 1821, Wilhelm Fries received permission to purchase an enslaved girl for his household, which would be the beginning of major slaveholding by the Fries family, see Hidden Town Project Lot Files, Lot 52.

102 Hartley, Hartley, and Larson, "Old Salem Historic District," 137–141.

103 Wachovia Memorabilia, Salem Population, 1822, in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 7:3497; Crews, *Neither Slave nor Free*, 9. Salem women were excluded from participation in the Congregation Council by resolution at the 1818 General Synod, a new inequality. Not to be deterred, they organized themselves in an auxiliary capacity in Salem. Their support for the mission "among the Negroes [sic]" they initiated in 1822 was particularly tied to their role as teachers, beginning with Sunday School in 1827 and going well into the twentieth century. A new state law in 1831 prohibited teaching slaves to read or write, but arithmetic continued in the Sunday School.

104 As in Moravian Caribbean missions, the mission to Blacks in Wachovia denied Africanisms, such as exuberant worship, as recorded in the "Diary of the Negro [sic] Congregation." White Moravian oversight persistently deprived any autonomy and self-determination, see Crews, *Neither Slave Nor Free*, 44. The Rev. Dr. Winelle Kirton-Roberts, a Moravian minister born in Barbados, discussed the suppression of African ritual and culture in the Moravian mission on Antigua and Tobago. Drums were successfully introduced into worship in Tobago during the late twentieth century. The Rev. Dr. Winelle Kirton-Roberts' lecture "Black People-White God: Moravianism and the Cultural Purification of Afro-Caribbean in Antigua and Tobago," September 25, 2020 at the "Becoming American" Conference in Winston-Salem, NC.

Bethania and Hope, who were also communicants. But in the subsequent period it became more and more evident that the relationship between whites and blacks to belong together to one and the same church or congregation was subject to many a difficulty and unpleasantness.<sup>105</sup>

Abraham Steiner was appointed to lead the mission effort. His experience had already included time at Springplace and as Inspector of the Girls School. He held the first segregated service in Bodney's cabin at the "Negro [sic] Quarter" with fifty people in attendance. All subsequent services were held outside of town as well. At the May 5, 1822, service in the barn on Conrad Kreuser's farm west of town, a Christian Congregation for enslaved people was begun<sup>106</sup> (see Figure 14.6, Salem from the Southeast). Later that month, on May 19 in the *Gemein Haus*, Br. Steiner gave communion to the three founding communicants: Phoebe, Bodney, and John Immanuel.<sup>107</sup> Regular services continued and also included services at Dr. Schumann's barn and Schober's paper mill.<sup>108</sup> These places of worship "out of town" served the Black congregation until the consecration of the new log church on December 28, 1823, funded by the Female Missionary Society and built by enslaved people adjacent to the "Negro" [sic] God's Acre<sup>109</sup> (see Figure 14.7, Salem landscape in the 1830s).

The formation of the "Negro" [sic] Congregation confirmed the failure of an integrated Moravian fellowship in Salem. This failure was caused by several

105 "Diary of the Small Negro [sic] Congregation," 1822, 1.

106 See Figure 14.6. The painting looks northwesterly across the rolling landscape of Salem. At the center background, an opening on a hillside reveals the Conrad Kreuser house and farm, where the "Negro" [sic] Congregation was formally organized in a barn there. The farm no longer exists and developed with the West Salem neighborhood. The Salem Church (Home Moravian) is at the far right in the background. The Log Church is visible above the tree line at the center left. The artist's view is from the Dr. Henry Schuman farm, looking back toward Salem. The land on the Schuman side of Salem Creek (foreground) became the African American neighborhood of Liberia or Happy Hill in 1872. Artist Daniel Welfare was living in the former Schuman house in 1840, at right in foreground, when he painted this view. In 2019, a city of Winston-Salem historic marker was installed in Happy Hill at Liberia and Free Street (near where the horses stand in the painting) to commemorate the Salem and Liberia connection.

107 "Diary of the Small Negro [sic] Congregation, Mar. 24, Apr. 14, May 5, May 19, 1822, 2–6; Sensbach, *A Separate Canaan*, 229. May 5th is the observed anniversary of St. Philips Moravian Church. At their 200th anniversary in 2022, a city of Winston-Salem historic marker was placed to mark the vicinity of Kreuser's barn, on South Broad Street. The farm no longer exists.

108 "Diary of the Small Negro [sic] Congregation, Aug. 4, Oct. 6, 1822, 9–10.

109 "Diary of the Small Negro [sic] Congregation, Dec. 28, 1823, 17–19. For information about the Log Church, see S. Scott Rohrer, "The 1823 African-American Log Church: An Assessment," (Winston-Salem: Old Salem, Inc., 1995).



FIGURE 14.6 View to Kreuser's farm from Schumann's farm  
The panoramic landscape painting features two significant Salem farms: Dr. Henry Schumann's farm in the foreground (house at right) and Conrad Kreuser's farm in center background. Both farms were places "out of town" where the slave rules did not apply. The Negro [sic] Congregation was formally organized on May 5, 1822 in Kreuser's barn.

factors: a distancing from early ideals of spiritual equality, a miniscule Black Moravian presence in the white congregation, the advantages of maintaining enslaved labor practices, non-Moravian pressures and opportunities for economic growth, and a larger cultural, economic, and political context of a South powered by slavery. The topography and landscape of the town lot, with various authorized locations for Moravian-owned enslaved people, provided futile control, and the willingness to allow rented enslaved labor was a deceptive means of normalizing Black bondage in the town.

The church that grew out of the 1822 Salem initiative was named St. Philips Moravian Church in 1914. St. Philips is the only historic Black Moravian church in the United States. Efforts by Br. Hagen in Bethania organized a "Negro [sic] Society" with a graveyard in 1847. A log church was erected in 1850. Following emancipation, however, this originally Moravian congregation became Bethania AME Zion Church.<sup>110</sup>

110 Crews, *Neither Slave Nor Free*, 22–23, 29–31. For a discussion of Bethania, see Michael O. Hartley, "Choices on the Land: Identity, Influence, Power, and Choice in a Historic Place" (PhD diss., UNC Chapel Hill, 2009). Bethania's population of enslaved people was always



FIGURE 14.7 Salem Landscape in the 1830s  
The painter's view is southeasterly from Kreuser's farm along the Shallowford Road (now S. Broad Street). At far right in the curve of the tree trunk is the Log Church, built in 1823 for the "Negro" [sic] Congregation. At the center background is the Dr. Henry Schuman farm. In 2022, a city of Winston-Salem historic marker was installed to commemorate the founding of St. Philips Moravian Church at the Kreuser barn two hundred years earlier.

## 8 The Aftermath: Post-1822 to the Present

Slavery continued to grow in Salem, even as the limitation regulations were re-enforced. The pattern of holding enslaved people outside of town expanded in the 1820s and 1830s with the development of outlots owned or rented by Salem residents inside the boundaries of the Salem Town Lot.<sup>111</sup> In 1830, Salem's white population had grown to 494. The *Federal Census* recorded white Salem

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high within Wachovia. The author's Bethania ancestors were among slaveholders there (e.g. William Grabs, as recorded in 1790 *Federal Census*). A large descendant Black population, Bethania Freedmen's Community, continues to live around the core of Bethania, see Michael O. Hartley, "The Bethania Town Lot Archaeological Survey," report on file, NC Division of Archives and History, Archaeology Section, Raleigh, NC and Old Salem, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC, 1993.

111 Outlots became available following the purchase of Salem land by the congregation from the Unity Administration, confirmed in 1826, see Salem Memorabilia in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 8:3765; with thanks to David Bergstone for the 1826 information. Copies of maps from 1830s, showing outlots in the Salem Town Lot, on file at Old Salem Archaeology, undated, unattributed.

residents owning approximately eighty enslaved people,<sup>112</sup> and it is speculated that many of the enslaved workers were housed on those outlots within a two mile radius of Salem Square.<sup>113</sup>

A decline in the slave population in the 1840 *Federal Census* may be partly attributed to the emigration of manumitted people from Salem. By 1836, Dr. Schumann's ownership of enslaved people had increased on his successful farm across Salem Creek, but with the intention of moving into town, Schumann freed seventeen people and paid their passage, plus that of six others, from Salem to Liberia. Gottlieb Schober's will freed two people who were also sent to Liberia in 1839<sup>114</sup> (see Figure 14.6).

The growing textile industry in Salem profited from enslaved labor. By the time Francis Fries built his woolen mill in 1840 along the New Shallowford Road (Brookstown Avenue), the location was very much "in-town," as Salem's residential area had expanded north, west, and south.<sup>115</sup> An enslaved group of people housed on his father's farm in the northwest corner of the Salem Town Lot powered the successful enterprise<sup>116</sup> (see Figure 14.4 for Wilhelm Fries Farm). This situation overtly exposed the unenforceability of Moravian slave regulations, renewed in 1840 and 1845, but finally abolished in 1847.<sup>117</sup> Not all Moravians were slaveholders, but some were. The population of enslaved people grew in Salem.

Without restrictions in place, urban slavery in Salem intimately connected white and Black people across the townscape. Growing numbers of enslaved

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112 "Summary of Membership of the Congregations in Wachovia at the end of the Year 1831," in Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 8:3962. The tally for slave ownership was made by the author, as there was no Salem-specific enumeration in the *Federal Census*, see Forsyth County Genealogical Society, *Stokes County, NC, 1830 Federal Census*, 1987.

113 Potter John Holland is an example of a town resident who rented an outlot where he likely housed enslaved people he was enumerated with in the *Federal Census*. See Hidden Town Project Lot Files, Lot 49.

114 Hartley, Hartley, and Larson, "Old Salem Historic District," 291–220; Michael O. Hartley, "Reflections on History," Liberian Flag Presentation, St. Philips Moravian Church (Winston-Salem, Old Salem, Inc., March 21, 2010). Since 2009, Old Salem has engaged with the Liberian Organization of the Piedmont in elevating the historic connection. In 2019, a City of Winston-Salem Historic Marker "Salem and Liberia, Africa" was placed on the former Schumann Farm, now Happy Hill, to acknowledge the history.

115 Hartley and Hartley, "Town of Salem Survey"; "Salem about the Year 1840," unidentified mapmaker, ca. 1840, Old Salem, Inc.

116 Hidden Town Project Lot Files, Lot 52 and Lot 103. For a discussion of the Fries family slave-owning, see Ferguson, *God's Fields*, 177–187; for a discussion of ante-bellum economic and political dynamics, see Hartley, Hartley, and Larson, "Old Salem Historic District," 217–226.

117 Crews, *Neither Slave nor Free*, 24–27.

people were housed in town with domestic arrangements in the enslaver's house or an outbuilding on the enslaver's lot. Research indicates that these outbuildings had other primary uses such as kitchen, laundry, or shop, none of which survive.<sup>118</sup> An example of a specific building constructed for an enslaved person was the house built in 1835 for the Church-owned, communicant Moravian Christian David on the Administrator's lot, an archaeological component of today's Old Salem. Christian David's wife Rose lived elsewhere, as she was enslaved by another person.<sup>119</sup> Enslaved families did not typically live together in Salem.

In 1849, Forsyth County was carved out of Stokes County. The Salem Moravians sold fifty-one and a quarter acres in the northern part of the Salem Town Lot for the new county seat, to be named Winston.<sup>120</sup> By 1850, the population of Salem had increased to about 680, and the *Federal Census* recorded approximately 135 enslaved people.<sup>121</sup> Salem ended its theocratic government structure in 1856, and the town was incorporated as a nearly one square mile area governed by a white mayor and town council, who were elected in January 1857.<sup>122</sup> Within the year, a major change to the landscape occurred when E.A. Vogler's curvilinear design for Salem Cemetery was implemented on acreage located at the east side of God's Acre.<sup>123</sup> In April 1859, a new Negro [sic] Graveyard for the Negro [sic] Church was established adjacent to the northeast corner of Salem

118 Hidden Town Project Research, Old Salem, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC.

119 Jon Sensbach, "Christian David and the "Davy House," report on file, Old Salem, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC, 1992; Hidden Town Project Lot Files and Hidden Town Project Biography Files. Wachovia Administrator Theodore Schultz built a detached house for "Davy" on his residential lot 7. Prior to this, Davy had lived in the Administrator's house, first as a "servant" of Ludwig von Schweinitz, followed by Schultz. Davy was a Church-owned slave, who, at first, lived at the "Negro" [sic] Quarter. He was the fourth communicant of the "Negro" [sic] Congregation and baptized as Christian David. Hartley, Hartley, and Larson, "Old Salem Historic District," 46–49.

120 Hartley, Hartley, and Larson, "Old Salem Historic District," 222–226.

121 Salem population for 1850 was interpolated from the "Personalia" for 1848 and 1852, see Salem Memorabilia in Fries, *Records*, 10:5268 and 11:5744; the tally for slave ownership was made by the author, as there was no Salem-specific enumeration in the Slave Schedule, see Forsyth County Genealogical Society, *The 1850 Federal Census and Supplementary Schedule for Forsyth County, North Carolina*, 1984.

122 Hartley and Hartley, "Town of Salem Survey," 17; Hartley, Hartley, and Larson, "Old Salem Historic District," 37, 239–240.

123 Salem Cemetery Company organized soon after town of Salem's incorporation. Aufseher Collegium approved sale of land in April 1857, see Fries et al, eds., 12:6241; Hartley, Hartley, and Larson, "Old Salem Historic District," 36–38.

Cemetery.<sup>124</sup> In 1861, Phoebe died at ninety years of age and was buried there with a grave marker indicating that she was still counted as property of the Wachovia Administration.

By 1860, about fourteen percent of the Forsyth County population was enslaved. Within the diminished new town limits of Salem, residents were enumerated with approximately 135 enslaved people, including forty-seven for F&H Fries Co.<sup>125</sup> Approximately thirty enslaved people were also held on outlying farms beyond town limits. For the first time, the 1860 *Federal Census* enumerated “slave houses” by quantifying domestic arrangements for enslaved people. The census listed approximately thirty-five such dwellings in Salem: on residential lots, these are speculated to be outbuildings with other primary uses, and the Fries operation and tavern owner were each listed with five “slave houses.”<sup>126</sup> Other enslaved people likely lived within the enslaver’s house.

The mission to the “Negroes [sic] in and around Salem” continued under the leadership of a white Moravian minister. A new brick church was constructed for the “Negro” [sic] Congregation, adjacent to the Parish Graveyard, and consecrated December 15, 1861. It counts as a major architectural statement of Black religious life at the beginning of the Civil War. The log church was sold. Although the Black congregation remained small, special services, such as the Lovefeast, drew crowds. At the end of the Civil War, the sanctuary was filled with people of African descent to witness the Reading of “General Orders 32” on May 21, 1865, which announced freedom to the enslaved population<sup>127</sup> (see Figure 14.8, Salem landscape in the 1860s).

124 Fries, et al, eds., *Records*, 12:6324–6325; Hartley, Hartley, and Larson, “Old Salem Historic District,” 36.

125 Due to the *Federal Census* 1860 Slave Schedule’s undefined “Salem District,” which included enumeration for the towns of Salem and Winston and their environs, the precise slave population in the town of Salem is approximate; however, present calculations speculate a sixteen percent enslaved population of Salem in 1860.

126 “Schedule 2. Slave Inhabitants in Salem District” 1860 *US Federal Census*. Federal Census for Forsyth County Slave Schedule 1860 accessed July 2020, ancestry.com; Forsyth County Genealogical Society, *The 1860 Federal Census and Supplementary Schedule for Forsyth County, North Carolina*, 1988, “Schedule 2, Slave Inhabitants in Salem District,” 206–209. Note that the “Salem District” is, yet, not defined, and the tally for slave ownership was made by the author. Some town residents also had farm lots beyond the town lot where their enslaved people may have stayed.

127 Hartley, Hartley, and Larson, “Old Salem Historic District,” 242; “General Orders No. 32, HDQRS. Dept. of North Carolina, Army of the Ohio, Raleigh N.C., April 27, 1865” in United States War Dept., *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1895), vol. 47, chap. 59, part 3, 331, accessed February 10, 2022, collections.library.cornell.edu/moa\_new/waro.html.



FIGURE 14.8 Salem landscape in the 1860s

A panoramic photograph of the south end of Salem shows the new “Negro” [sic] Church prominent at center rear with nearby Log Church. In the immediate foreground is a small building with a chimney, a laundry, speculated to have been a “slave house.” The background landscape is the former Schumann farmland which developed as Happy Hill, the first African American neighborhood in Winston-Salem, beginning in 1872.

Salem’s landscape of slavery then became a landscape of freedom, and the former Schumann farm figured prominently as a significant place. The farm was outside of Salem town limits, separated by a creek valley and the physical boundary of Salem Creek.<sup>128</sup> When the Freedmen negotiated with Salem Trustees for land on which to build a school for their children in 1866,<sup>129</sup> land

128 Hartley, Hartley, and Larson, “Old Salem Historic District,” 193–196; Hartley and Hartley, “Town of Salem Survey.”

129 “Negro” [sic] Congregation leaders Alexander (Vogler) Gates and Lewis Hege, along with Robert Waugh, were selected by the Freedmen to lead the school land effort. For additional information on the “Negro” [sic] Congregation, see S. Scott Rohrer, “Freedman of the Lord: The Black Moravian Congregation of Salem, N.C., and its Struggle for Survival, 1856–1890,” and “A Mission Among the People: The World of St. Philip’s Church From 1890 to 1952,” Reports on file, Old Salem, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC, 1993. Crews, *Neither Slave Nor Free*, 37–38.





FIGURE 14.9 Freedmen's School

Freedmen prioritized education and built a school for their children in 1867 near the Brothers' Spring on former Schumann land provided rent-free by the Salem Trustees. Located east of the Waughtown Road, the school was used into the 1890s.

was provided at the farm's west end near the Brothers' Spring.<sup>130</sup> It was the first school for African American children in post-bellum Salem (see Figure 14.9, Freedmen's School). Additionally, following emancipation, some Salem residents had objected to Freedmen buying property in town. The Salem Trustees settled on a segregated solution "across the creek."<sup>131</sup> In an area surrounding

130 Hartley, Hartley, and Larson, "Old Salem Historic District," 194–195, 202; Michael O. Hartley and Martha B. Hartley, "Salem Creek Tour: History and Nature," Guidebook on file, Old Salem, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC, 2014. The Brothers' Spring was located in 2013 by MO Hartley and Martha Hartley, see summary report 4-17-2013, Old Salem Archaeology. In 2017, a City of Winston-Salem Historic Marker "The Brothers' Spring and the African School" was placed along Alder Street in Happy Hill to acknowledge the history.

131 "Across the Creek from Salem: The Story of Happy Hill 1816–1952" was a landmark exhibition in Old Salem in 1998 that resulted from Mel White's community engagement and collection of oral histories and photographs. Mr. White, Old Salem Director of African American Programming 1996–2005, has called Happy Hill "The Mother of all Black Neighborhoods." "Selections from Across the Creek: Happy Hill" was installed in 2022.

the former Schumann house, the Trustees approved the development of “a little town...Liberia” in 1872. Soon known as “Happy Hill,” it became the first African American neighborhood in Winston-Salem.<sup>132</sup> Ned Lemly and Richard Siewers, formerly enslaved in Salem, became the first property owners in Liberia<sup>133</sup> (see Figure 14.10, Liberia or Happy Hill across the creek from Salem, 1876; Figure 14.11, Happy Hill across the creek from the African Church in Salem, 1891).

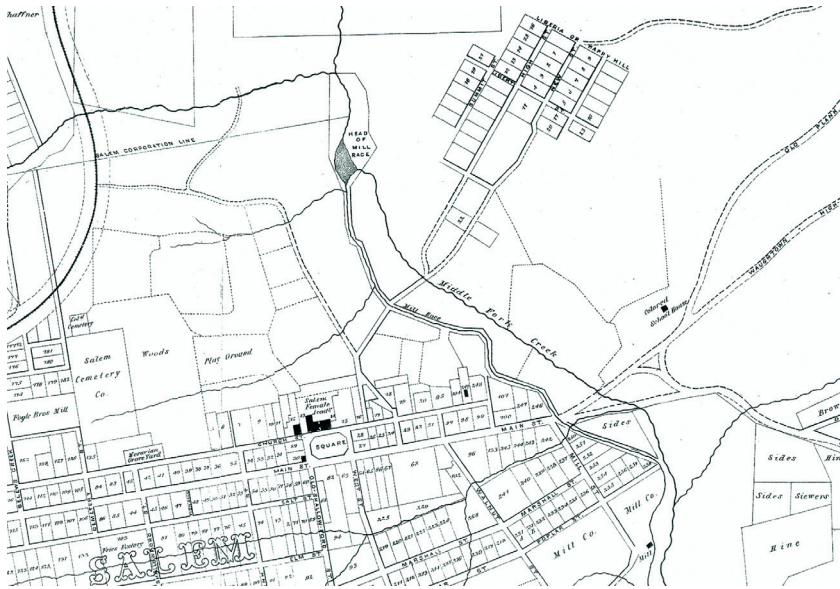


FIGURE 14.10 Liberia or Happy Hill across the creek from Salem in 1876  
Across Salem Creek (also called the Middle Fork), is the new Freedmen’s neighborhood labeled “Liberia or Happy Hill,” in the upper right. Note the “Colored School House” along Waughtown Road. Salem Square is at lower center of this map detail.

With the coming of the railroad in 1873 and RJ Reynolds Tobacco Company the next year, an energized economy and employment attracted African Americans. Black businesses and professions grew, and Slater Industrial Academy

132 Crews, *Neither Slave Not Free*, 40; Hartley, Hartley, and Larson, “Old Salem Historic District,” 193–197. Although Happy Hill is the commonly used name for the neighborhood, St. Philips Moravian Church member Dorothy Pettus recalled that as a young person in the 1950s, she heard older people in Happy Hill also use the name “Little Liberia.” Mrs. Pettus grew up in Walkertown, but her mother’s sister Margaret Lowrance lived in a house in Happy Hill, where they visited. Dorothy Pettus, personal communication to author, Feb. 1, 2018.

133 Mel White genealogy research, Old Salem, Inc. Hidden Town Research.

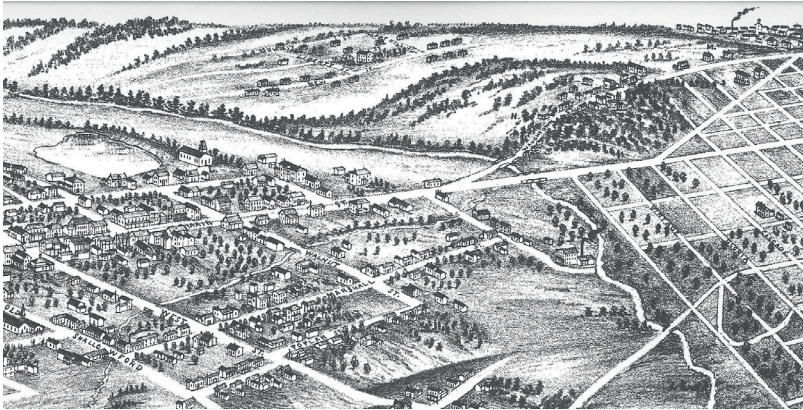


FIGURE 14.11 Happy Hill across the creek from the African Church (St. Philips) in Salem in 1891

The Bird's Eye View detail shows Happy Hill (center background) developing around the former Schumann house (the only two-story building) then owned by the Alexander family. The African Church (St. Philips) is at center left in Salem across Salem Creek from Happy Hill.

(Winston-Salem State University) was founded in 1892.<sup>134</sup> However, the 1898 Democratic Party victory in North Carolina solidified white supremacy, and Black people endured increasing racism and discrimination. Winston and Salem grew side by side until the 1913 consolidation, with a combined population of 26,000, including about forty percent African Americans.<sup>135</sup> It was also the year that the gravestones disappeared from the graveyards at the “Negro” [sic] Church during a “beautification project” that created a front lawn.<sup>136</sup> The

134 African American educator Simon Green Atkins founded Slater Industrial Academy on land that was originally part of the eastern Salem Town Lot. This HBCU grew into Winston-Salem State University. In conjunction with the school, he initiated development of a new neighborhood for the growing number of Black professionals in the city, named “Columbian Heights.” See Langdon Oppermann, “Winston-Salem’s African American Neighborhoods: 1870–1950,” report on file, Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission, Winston-Salem, NC, 1993, 24–27.

135 Langdon Oppermann, “Winston-Salem’s African American Neighborhoods,” 8–16.

136 Michael O. Hartley, “Explorations in a Church Yard: St. Philips African American Moravian Church, Salem, N.C.,” report on file, Old Salem, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC, 1995; Leland Ferguson and Michael O. Hartley, “Gravestones and Landscaping. Archaeology at the Stranger’s Graveyard, St. Philips Moravian Church in Old Salem” report on file, Old Salem, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC, 1997. Thirty-one gravestones were recovered during the restoration of St. Philips Moravian Church in the 1990s, under the church hall floor (1994) and behind the front steps (1995). Archaeology and research determined that they had been

following year, the “Negro” [sic] Church, also called the African Church, was named St. Philips Moravian Church by Moravian Bishop Edward Rondthaler.<sup>137</sup>

People of African descent had lived in Salem since the colonial period; however, Jim Crow laws made it a segregated white neighborhood within the first decades of the twentieth century.<sup>138</sup> In 1950, Old Salem, Inc. was established as a community effort to restore the town of Salem.<sup>139</sup> While the St. Philips congregation had expressed the desire to move “out of town” as far back as 1872,<sup>140</sup> their lack of self-determination under white oversight held them there until 1952. Dr. George Hall, a Moravian from Nicaragua, was the first leader of African descent for the congregation, beginning in 1946. Dr. Hall was a lay pastor (and professor at Winston-Salem State), who with his wife Charlotte moved the congregation across the creek to where the city’s first public housing project, named “Happy Hill Gardens,” was under construction. New people meant new possibilities<sup>141</sup>; unfortunately, the best-laid plans and a new church building were destroyed by US highway 52, which traversed part of Happy Hill and other Black neighborhoods in the 1960s and 1970s. The construction of Highway 52 came on the heels of 1950s trauma to the Belews Street Neighborhood<sup>142</sup> in East Winston, when I-40 (now Salem Parkway) was built through downtown. Public policies based on “redlining” targeted African American neighborhoods for highway corridors and urban renewal, and stable Black neighborhoods in Winston-Salem were heavily impacted, with some completely eradicated. Destruction included homes, businesses, churches, livelihoods, and social

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removed from the graveyards in 1913 for a beautification project. The graveyard had not been used for burial since 1859, and the landscaping event in 1913 created a front lawn.

137 Edward Rondthaler, *The Memorabilia of Fifty Years 1877–1927* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1928), 326.

138 Michael O. Hartley and Martha B. Hartley, “Hidden Town Narrative and Maps,” on file, Old Salem, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC, 2017. Although Salem became segregated by the early twentieth century, African Americans continued to live in the low lying area along Salem Creek near the former Blum’s Mill, a pocket neighborhood that had begun post-emanicipation. Property remains in Black ownership in 2022 in a vestige of this area at S. Broad St., S. Poplar St., and Salem Avenue. See Hartley and Hartley, *Town of Salem Survey*.

139 Hartley, Hartley and Larson, “Old Salem Historic District,” 266.

140 Crews, *Neither Slave Nor Free*, 43.

141 Crews, *Neither Slave Nor Free*, 50–55; Hartley and Hartley, “Hidden Town Narrative and Maps.”

142 Annette Fuller, “Belews Street Community ‘Sacrificed’ for Highway Construction” *Winston-Salem Journal*, May 15, 2011. In 2014, a city of Winston-Salem historic marker was installed in the developing Innovation Quarter in downtown in the vicinity of the former “Belews Street Neighborhood.” St. Philips Moravian Barbara Chisholm Morris was a key proponent, as she had personally experienced the trauma of displacement from her home on Belews Street, where she lived with her grandmother, personal communication.

fabric as the landscape was brutalized and people were displaced. The damage remains.<sup>143</sup>

In 1967, St. Philips moved to Bon Air Avenue, four miles to the north, and in 1968, the Rev. Dr. Cedric Rodney, a Moravian from Guyana, was installed as the first ordained minister of African descent for St. Philips.<sup>144</sup> The church thrived under his leadership with a successful daycare program and various church activities. Dr. Rodney retired in 2003, and to date (2022), the church has been without full-time clergy.

The old church on South Church Street in Old Salem remained vacant until a tornado damaged the building on the St. Philips anniversary day, May 5, 1989. This event stimulated recovery, and the Ad Hoc Committee for St. Philips was formed.<sup>145</sup> Research was pursued, architectural and engineering work restored the Brick Church, and archaeological examination revealed the graveyards. The Log Church was reconstructed, and at the rear of St. Philips, a visual connection “across the creek” was made at the Happy Hill Overlook. The St. Philips Complex opened as part of the Old Salem visitor experience in 2003. In 2009, St. Philips Moravians trained as docents, served as volunteers for museum events, and the congregation began holding quarterly services in

143 Martha Hartley, “Update on the Hidden Town Project at Old Salem,” *Magnolia* 33, no. 3, (2021): 16–17, accessed Feb. 13, 2022, <https://southerngardenhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Magnolia-Proof-5.pdf#page=16>. Winston-Salem’s 1937 Residential Security Map (“redlining”) graded African American neighborhoods with the lowest grade for quality and desirability. This formal means of racial discrimination in the United States had severe implications. Residents were denied loans or fair loans, and homes were undervalued, all depriving African Americans of wealth-buildings. Municipal infrastructure was withheld from Black neighborhoods and led to disrepair, which often resulted in bulldozing. Public policy also targeted these communities for highways and urban renewal, resulting in neighborhood destruction and displacement.

144 Crews, *Neither Slave Nor Free*, 48–56.

145 “Preserving St. Philip’s,” Report of the Ad Hoc Committee for St. Philip’s Moravian Church, June 1992, 5. The Ad Hoc Committee for St. Philips was created in 1989 and led by Home Moravian Church member Robert Hanes Hoffman with the Rev. Dr. Cedric Rodney, and comprised of other Moravian Church officials, Old Salem staff, scholars, architects, and community members. Continued research in the Moravian Archives by Jon Sensbach was pivotal, and Scott Rohrer developed the history of St. Philips Moravian Church. Old Salem staff Gene Capps and Mel White worked with exhibit designer Warren Parker to prepare the Log Church interpretation. John Larson and David Bergstone worked with architects and engineers to restore the Brick Church and to reconstruct the Log Church. Archaeology was extensive from 1994–2012, led by Leland Ferguson and Michael Hartley. Artist Fred Wilson’s 1994 installation at St. Philips, *Insight: In Site: In Sight: Incite: MEMORY* immediately pushed the narrative. The effort to restore the St. Philips Complex was a \$3 million capital campaign project for Old Salem and opened to the public in 2003 as part of the museum experience.

their historic home, as well as a December Lovefeast to honor the consecration of the church<sup>146</sup> (see Figure 14.12, St. Philips Moravian Church).



FIGURE 14.12 St. Philips Moravian Church, S. Church Street, Winston-Salem, NC. St. Philips is the only historic Black Moravian church in the United States and one of the oldest African American congregations of any denomination. Their building (1861) is the oldest standing African American church in North Carolina.

146 Michael O. Hartley and Martha B. Hartley, "St. Philips African Moravian Church," *Old Salem Museums & Gardens Magazine*, (Fall/Winter 2009): 8–11. MO and Martha Hartley served as facilitators for Old Salem's St. Philips Initiative 2009–2010, and Cheryl Harry was hired as Director of African American Programming in July 2010. St. Philips members Conrad Mitchell (from Guyana) and Lethia Coleman (who attended the Brick Church as a child) assisted with museum interpretation to the public; Brenda Peoples (who lived in Happy Hill, where her family began attending St. Philips), Barbara Morris (who grew up on Beaws Street), and Heather Knox (from Antigua) were regular volunteers for museum events.

The Moravian Church, Southern Province, formally apologized for slavery in 2006, as did the Northern Province. In 2010, St. Philips Moravian Church was formally admitted into membership of the Salem Congregation, the group of Moravian churches inside the Winston-Salem city limits.<sup>147</sup> Membership in the Salem Congregation provides eligibility for burial in Salem God's Acre. Before then, St. Philips Moravians had been buried elsewhere when burials ended at the St. Philips Second Graveyard adjacent to Salem Cemetery in the 1960s,<sup>148</sup> and many members purchased burial plots in public cemeteries, such as Evergreen Cemetery in East Winston. In 2019, the St. Philips congregation vacated their Bon Air home and returned to the historic Brick Church in Old Salem. In July 2020, St. Philips oldest member Myrtle LeEsther Dillard Curry died. She was ninety-five years old and had known well the life and history of the Black Moravian church. As a young person, Mrs. Curry had attended St. Philips in the brick church on South Church Street. She moved with the congregation to Happy Hill in 1952, and she moved again with the congregation to Bon Air in 1967. She moved a third time with the congregation in 2019 back to the Brick Church in Old Salem. Mrs. Curry died on July 2, 2020. On July 11, she was the first St. Philips member to be buried in Salem God's Acre.<sup>149</sup> On her gravestone, Mrs. Curry's epitaph reads: "And Still I Rise."<sup>150</sup>

## 9 Conclusion

Crimes against humanity define the landscape of slavery, but the landscape of freedom is also a place of many wrongs. The legacy of slavery is persistent inequity and injustice. Winston-Salem is a vibrant city where good things

<sup>147</sup> The Salem Congregation membership occurred during the period when the Rev. Jeff Coppage was interim pastor at St. Philips. See Jeff Coppage, "Beyond Beeswax and Lovefeast Buns: The Role of History in Finding a Moravian Identity," *The Hinge: International Theological Dialogue for the Moravian Church* 17, no. 1 (Winter 2010), 18–20.

<sup>148</sup> Crews, *Neither Slave Nor Free*, 32. The Salem Congregation engaged ground penetrating radar on the St. Philips Second Graveyard in 2018, and 331 unmarked graves were located. Grave markers engraved with "Beloved" were installed in 2020 by David Bergstone, Director of Facilities, Salem Congregation, email to author January 4, 2021. On November 13, 2021, thirty-two markers with names were installed on the graveyard. Bergstone was involved in the marking of the "Negro" [sic] God's Acre and Strangers' Graveyard in 2002–2003 while on staff at Old Salem.

<sup>149</sup> Obituary for Myrtle LeEsther Dillard Curry, *Winston-Salem Journal*, July 10, 2020.

<sup>150</sup> The source for Mrs. Curry's epitaph may be traced to the poet Maya Angelou. See Maya Angelou, *And Still I Rise: A Book of Poems* (New York: Random House, 1978).

happen; however, twenty-one percent of the population lives in poverty,<sup>151</sup> which includes more than a third of the youth population.<sup>152</sup> Economic inequality, oppression, and denied opportunity are imbedded in our society. It is no surprise that profound racial disparities persist in housing, health, education, transportation, food systems, policing, and incarceration. Environmental racism has been tolerated, and voter suppression hampers democracy. Understanding truth in history is basic to the conversation. The historical record provides insight, and the resources of the Moravian Church are unparalleled. The challenge is to reveal the history, to acknowledge, and to repair past wrongs. Locally and nationally, generational damage requires structural reform to policies and reparation for hundreds of years of human rights abuses that lay on the foundation of slavery in America. The great sins of the past are appalling, but how do we respond to the sins of our own time?

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