



## Pauline Morton Smith Sabin Davis

### 1887-1955



Portrait of Pauline Sabin by Philip Lazlo. Courtesy of Pauline Smith Willis.

Born in Chicago, Pauline Morton was the younger of 2 daughters of Paul and Charlotte Goodrich Morton. She grew up in a socially established and strongly political family. Through out her life, Pauline would stress her familys' Nebraska roots and the influence of her grandfather, Julius Sterling Morton, who had a successful political career first as a Democratic Senator and later as Nebraska's governor and U. S. Secretary of Agriculture under President Cleveland (1893-1897). J. Sterling Morton also created "Arbor Day," reflecting his belief in the beauty and necessity of trees. Today we celebrate Arbor Day on J. Sterling Morton's birthday, April 22. Paul Morton, Pauline's father, was a railroad executive, Secretary of the Navy under Roosevelt (1904-5), and President of the Equity Life Assurance Co. Her uncle, Joy Morton, founded the Morton Salt Company.

Pauline was married to J. Hopkins Smith Jr. in 1907 in a high-society wedding with a guest list that included President and Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, Mrs. Astor, and Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Carnegie. They had two sons: Paul Morton Smith and J. Hopkins Smith III. They divorced in 1914. Two years later, Pauline married Charles Hamilton Sabin, President of J. P. Morgan's Guaranty Trust Co.



Mrs. Charles H. Sabin and her two sons, P. Morton Smith and James H. Smith, 1922. Underwood & Underwood, N.Y. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

The new Mrs. Sabin gained national prominence with her political activities beginning in 1919 with her election to the Suffolk County Republican Committee. The next year she joined the New York State Republican Committee, and in the following year she founded the New York-based Women's National Republican Club, serving as its president from 1921 to 1926. Pauline Morton Sabin was the first woman representative to the Republican National Committee and a member from 1924-1928, during which time she served as delegate to two Republican National Conventions.

In 1929, believing that prohibition was corrupting public officials and the nation's youth, she resigned from the Republican National Committee and formed the Women's Organization for National Prohibition Reform (WONPR). She is best known for this, since she was featured on the cover of Time magazine on July 18, 1932.

In 1933 Pauline served as co-chair of Fiorello LaGuardia's successful New York mayoral campaign. That same year, her husband Charles H. Sabin died.

In 1936, Pauline Sabin married Dwight F. Davis (1879-1945), the former Secretary of War (1925-29), Governor General of the Philippines (1929-32), and donor of the international tennis trophy, the Davis Cup. The couple continued to

occupy Bayberry Land until 1942 when Dwight Davis was named Director General of the Army Specialist Corps and they moved to Washington, D.C. Pauline Sabin Davis, now the National Director of the Volunteer Forces for the American Red Cross, offered the organization the use of her estate to store supplies.

When Dwight Davis died in November of 1945, Pauline Sabin Davis decided to stay in Washington D.C. She raised funds for her "retirement" by selling her South Carolina Plantation, The Oaks, for \$35,000.00. She hoped to sell at least part of Bayberry Land to Herman Harjes, former head of the Morgan-Harjes Bank of Paris, to no avail. Ultimately, on December 28, 1949, the IBEW Local No.3 purchased Bayberry Land for \$131,250.00.

Pauline Davis continued an active social and political life in Washington. Among her other activities, Pauline Sabin Davis was a founding member of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. She died in 1955, and her body was returned to Southampton to lie next to Charles Sabin.



Al Smith Addressing the Liberty League, 1936