

Dr. Simon Baruch of Camden while they were living here. Dr. and Mrs. Baruch were the parents of the world-famous financier and statesman, Bernard M. Baruch, who has now passed ninety years and will go down in history as one of the greatest men of our time. The Wolfe's youngest daughter, Sarah was noted for her beauty and horsemanship. She married a DesPortes and became the mother of the "Winnsboro DesPorts."

This property passed from Sol Wolfe to Dr. John C. Buchanan in 1901. It is still owned by his estate. Since the Buchanans left the place, it has been inhabited by a long succession of tenants. Now it has fallen into very bad repair and for some years has been deserted and vacant, a sad fate for such a dignified old home.

## FAIRFIELD COUNTY COURTHOUSE

1823

The FAIRFIELD COUNTY COURTHOUSE is one of the most stately and imposing buildings in the upcountry. It was designed by the famous architect, Robert Mills, and was built in 1823.

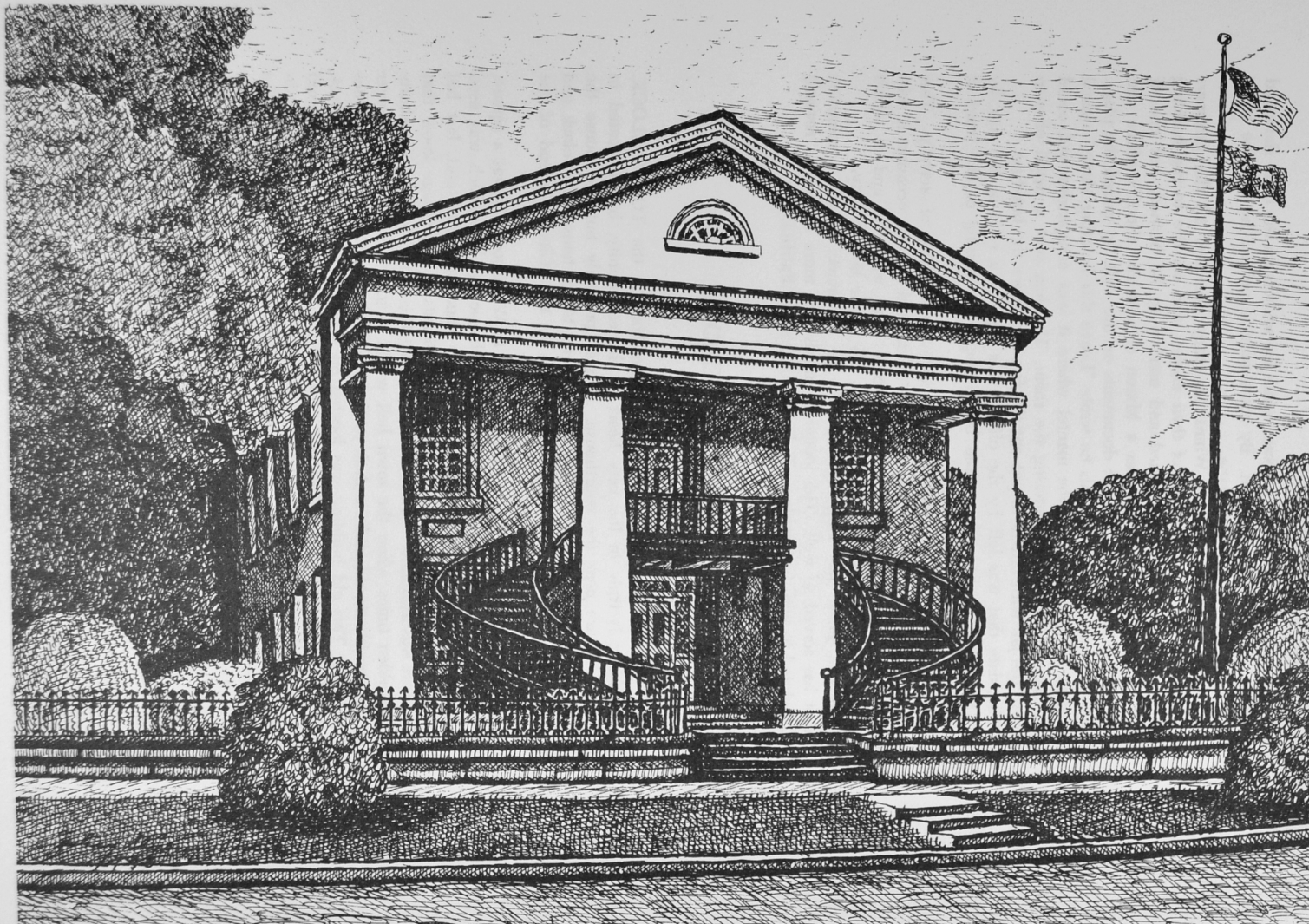
The classic building is executed in the true Mills tradition. It is a large, rectangular structure, covered with a simple but pleasing gabled roof, which extends over the building in the front and covers a broad, flagstoned portico. The four massive columns supporting the portico are well-proportioned and graceful. Originally two flights of wooden steps led up to the second floor but when the building was renovated and enlarged in 1939, the circular stairs of wrought-iron and brass and the landing balcony were added, much enhancing the original beauty of the building.

Ever since it was built, the courthouse and its "yard" have been a part of the heart of the town. Patriarchs gather here to play checkers, watch traffic, reminisce, and swap yarns in the shade of the big trees. Lawyers, business men, and citizens from all classes and walks of life exchange their views here and listen to the local philosophers and politicians.

A little-known story of interest is about the saving of the county, court, and jail records during the War Between the States. At that time Elijah Ollever, a small but stern man of French extraction, was sheriff of the county. When he was informed that the Northern army was moving towards Winnsboro, he made hasty preparations to save the valuable documents, papers, jail and court records. His home and plantations were in the Longtown section, near Ridgeway. Most of the records and books were hidden away in safety in remote places deep in the swampy, wooded areas near his home.

The most valuable of these he left at the house with his wife and sister. They sewed all one morning, making long cloth bags with draw strings and loops at the tops. When they finished, the papers were carefully packed into these sacks; belts were run through the loops and they were fastened securely around the waists of the women and girls in the household, concealed under their full skirts and petticoats.

The sheriff carried the jail records with him in his saddlebags and fled to the Wateree swamp for safety. On the way he was seen by a party of troops, who chased him to the river. To make an escape, he had to swim



FAIRFIELD COUNTY COURTHOUSE

his horse across the swollen, icy stream while the soldiers on the bank showered bullets all around and over him. By some miracle neither he nor the horse was hit and he was able to escape.

When the Yankees entered Winnsboro, they liberated all the prisoners who were in the jail, regardless of their crimes, and set fire to the building. The courthouse was also ransacked and marked to be burned, but one of the high-ranking officers who was a Mason entered the sheriff's office and when he saw the framed Masonic documents on the wall, he spared the place. A slate was on the desk. On this he wrote "Leave this building alone," signed his name, and placed it on the mantel where it was conspicuous and could easily be seen by anyone entering the room. He then sent a detail of men back to the jail with orders to put out the fire and spare the building.

The slate that was left by the officer was kept as a relic of the war by the Ollever family for a long time but through the passing of the years it has been lost.

On court days the old building is a veritable beehive of activity. This place has been the scene of many famous trials, and on one occasion it witnessed a bloody riot in which several people were wounded and in which Adam Hood, a brave young sheriff, lost his life in the line of duty.

The courthouse has long been one of the landmarks of the community that it has served so well. The longer it stands, the more it will be revered and pointed to with justifiable pride by the citizens of Fairfield.

## THE TOWN CLOCK

1833

The most familiar landmark in old Winnsboro is the TOWN CLOCK. The building is truly in the very heart of the community, being located in the town square near the courthouse. It was primarily built to house the public market, but because of the fact that its tower housed the clock and belfry, it soon became known to the citizens as the "Clock" instead of the "Market".

As early as 1785 there was a public market in Winnsboro. It was a square, wooden building with a tower at one end to house the bell which was used as an alarm for fires, danger, curfew, special announcements, and, last but not least, "butchering days" — to let the inhabitants of the village know that fresh meat was available. An old anecdote about this is still told in Winnsboro. In the olden times when the town bell would ring, the dogs from all over the countryside would make a dash to the market for their share of the bones and scraps. This old building was located on a corner of Washington Street.

During the 1820's Robert Cathcart purchased the old market building and with the deal donated his duck pond and some land in the center of Washington Street for the new market. The Town Council then petitioned the Legislature for authority to erect a new building which would house a Town Clock. The petition was granted on one condition, that being, "Provided the building be no more than thirty feet in width."

The new building was erected in 1833, and Colonel William McCreight, Intendant, ordered the works for the new clock in 1837 from Alsace, France.