

## WOLFE HOUSE

HAVIS — MILLER — McDOWELL — BAILEY — DuBOSE  
WOLFE — BUCHANAN

This delightful old house, in spite of its beauty and elegance, seems doomed to a fate of prolonged deterioration from vacancy and neglect. It could well be one of the show-places of the community if it had but half a chance.

The house was built by John Miller, "the tailor," in the early ante-bellum period. It is well-designed, beautifully proportioned, and handsomely odorned and decorated. The handcarved moldings, doorfacings, mantels, cornices, wains-coatings, and trim, both on the exterior and on the interior, rank among the most artistic work of their kind to be found in the county.

The details and designs are strikingly similar to those of the ALSTON — COOK — CHAPPELL HOUSE in the Jenkinsville community and to those of the EDRINGTON HOUSE next door. It is quite possible that they were all executed by the same artisan, for they are of the same school of design, the ante-bellum at its best.

This is a large, two-story building, covered with beaded siding. It has a graceful hipped roof with a gabled portico extending over the center section of the front of the building.

In the portico gable is an unusually handsome fanlight window. The cornices and dados are edged with finely carved dentil moldings. Both porticoes are supported by graceful, hand-turned columns. The spaces between these columns are slightly arched, giving the house a lowcountry flavor. The porches are enclosed with heavy, well-designed bannisters.

The hall doors are most attractive. Paned and panelled sidelights adorn them, and over the doors are paned fanlights, a repetition of the gable window. The interior is spacious, with high-ceilinged rooms adorned with the same fine decorations as found on the exterior.

The lot on which the house is located was originally owned by Jesse D. Havis, Sr., who deeded it in 1823 to his son, Jesse D. Havis, Jr., along with other properties. In 1830 Jesse D. Havis, Jr., sold this and another lot to John Miller, who purchased other lots from him in 1831 and in 1838.

To satisfy a claim against John Miller in 1845, Shreff J. Cockrell gave a deed to Robert Cathcart and John McDowell. In the same year Cathcart sold his part to McDowell.

The next transfer on record was in 1850, when David M. McDowell sold the place to R. S. Bailey. Bailey held it until 1852, at which time he sold it to Sarah F. DuBose of Lancaster. Samuel DuBose purchased it from Sarah DuBose in 1868, and in 1873 Sarah F. DuBose and Samuel DuBose sold the house to Sarah S. Wolfe, who at the time was occupying the residence.

Sarah S. Wolfe was the wife of Sailing Wolfe, a wealthy merchant and planter. Their home was destroyed by Sherman's troops during the Union occupation. The family took refuge with Mrs. James Henry Rion and later moved into this house. They made this their home, and it became known as and is still called the WOLFE HOUSE. One of their daughters, Belle, married



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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