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This graceful two-story house in Ebenezer is well over a century old and has sheltered four consecutive generations of the Fewell family.—Herald Staff Photo.

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Four Generations Have Lived In Century-Old Fewell Family Home

Main Portion Of Original House Built Of Logs

By Elizabeth Reed

Four generations of the Fewell family have lived in the Fewell home in Ebenezer and members of the fifth generation are frequent visitors to it.

The old Alexander Faulkner Fewell home, now occupied by Miss Marie Fewell, was purchased by him in 1852 from Thomas C. Neal who acquired it from Dr. John Johnson in 1849.

Old records at the courthouse in York show that Dr. Johnson's real estate possessions date as far back as 1819, but the exact date of the building of the old house is unknown. However it was built by Dr. Johnson sometime between 1819 and 1849.

As originally built, the house had five rooms. The kitchen and Dr. Johnson's office stood in the back yard.

In all likelihood Alexander Faulkner Fewell was born in the old Mickle house just up the road a short distance. When he married he brought his wife Martha May Fewell to live in the newly purchased home.

A little later he did some extensive remodeling. He added a kitchen which was reached by a floored passage way but was

nearer to the main house than the old kitchen in the yard.

Of the children of the late A. F. and Martha May Fewell only Edward Fewell of Oakland avenue now survives. Mrs. Minnie Fewell Milling, beloved daughter of the couple, died a few years ago.

In 1891 the lovely house and the surrounding land were purchased from the A. F. Fewell heirs by Samuel Alexander Fewell, one of the sons and the father of Miss Marie Fewell and R. T. Fewell.

Many human interest stories are connected with the home. One of the first telephones any where in this section was the private line that connected the house with Ivey and Company (where Melville's now stands). B. M. and R. T. Fewell worked with Ivey and Company and the telephone was a modern convenience available to them in the days before an exchange existed.

The old home also afforded one of the first sewing machines in this section. The machine was cranked by hand and purchased by A. F. Fewell, for Miss Fannie Fewell. Later it was passed on to faithful old black Rhody, who made numerous garments with it. At her death it became the property of Miss Margaret Fewell, home demonstration agent in Kershaw county.

A. F. Fewell served in the War Between the States. Of his children John William was the only one old enough to serve in the war—and he was barely old enough to get in by elaborating on his age. He was affectionately known as John Bill and was the only one of the A. F. Fewell children not born in the old house.

Toward the end of the war John Bill contracted typhoid fever and was sent home. About that time a body of Sherman's army was sent on a reconnoitering visit into this area. When "Mother" Fewell heard that the troops were headed toward Ebenezer she had the silver and other valu-

able packed in a chest and had the slaves take all the horses and other livestock, with the exception of her riding horse Molly, into the woods and hide them.

When the troops arrived she pleaded with them not to disturb her sick son, but the troops scared the Negroes into telling that young John Bill was a lieutenant in the Confederate army and also into disclosing where the family valuables were secluded.

So they went to the woods and took the valuables and animals away. An officer then stood over the bed where John Bill lay and

tried to make him sign a parole. He declared "I'll die before I sign a parole." The mother began to cry but the Yankee officer said "Don't worry Madam, the war is practically over."

The old chest where the valuables were placed is still in the "pack" room of the house with the dried mud clinging to it. Luckily the hams were removed from the smoke house in the yard and were put in the attic which had access only through a trap door. These were saved but the other valuables were lost.

Although S. A. Fewell, was too young to fight in the war, he took an active part in the effort to restore a sane government in the stirring days after the war was over. In those days when the Ku Klux Klan had a far different meaning than today, he took an active part in its activities. In one of the barns on the farm, regalia were stored. At one time the then prevailing government had him jailed in York. Along with him in the same room of the jail was Henry Toole, respected Negro of the section. Toole was as active as any white in the effort to restore good government in this section.

The House

The original house was built of logs with plaster that was more than six inches in thickness. The original stair with its graceful scroll design ascends from a corner of the hall.

In the living room can still be seen the gold leaf paper and the gold leaf molding placed there more than 50 years ago by Miss Fewell's father. Much of the furnishing of the old home was placed there 100 years ago. Included among the rare pieces are a sideboard and corner cupboard.

In the dining room is a unique leather closet where leather was stored for the many shoes required for the "hands" on the place.

The front door is outlined on the sides and at the top with graceful oblong glass panels. The door itself is in two sections.

The house is traditional for its hospitality. Its Christmas dinners have long been famous and Miss Marie keeps up the tradition. When Christmas approaches members of the clan gather from far and wide to spend the holiday at the lovely old home.

Until his death in 1945 "Uncle Ben" Fewell was the moving spirit of the holiday celebration. After a morning spent in the renewal of family love, and after a bountiful dinner, Uncle Ben would call members of the clan to the front yard by groups. Then from his capacious pockets he would shower coins on young and later older members of the family.

* House not built by Dr. John Johnson, but probably was built by Dr. John Lucas Miller, who may have built the house about 1818 - 1820. Dr. Miller had a grant of land from the Catawba Indians.