

*Old Homes of
South Carolina*

Drawings and Text by Joy Stagg Rust

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PELICAN PUBLISHING COMPANY
Gretna 1992

LEWIS INN

Highway 909

The town of Lewis Turnout was incorporated shortly after the War Between the States and was the county seat of Chester County for a brief period of time. There were two bar-rooms and a jail. A man by the name of McHaffey was mayor during Reconstruction, and Lewis Gill, a black man, was the policeman. There were two aldermen who were both black. During a campaign for governor, one of the aldermen was shot for cheering for her candidate. The white people of Lewis Turnout petitioned Judge Walker to withdraw the charter and that ended the town of Lewis Turnout, but it has remained a village.

Just off Highway 72 East on Highway 909 in the town of Lewis Turnout was Lewis Inn. It provided overnight accommodations for travelers. When Aaron Burr was being taken to trial, he managed to escape as they passed through the town of Chester. He pleaded for help from the people of Chester, declaring his innocence, but the guards apprehended him and took him out to Lewis Inn. There was a bench on the front porch, and they secured him to this bench where he was forced to sleep that night. This bench is now in the Chester Museum.

The Inn is now a charming country cottage. The present owners have restored the building, and colorful plants, shrubs, and a huge old oak tree frame the house. Shutters cover the front windows. The windows on the gable ends of

the house are two over two on the upper level and six over six on the lower. A porch across the front is supported by six columns. The front features stick bannisters and brick steps. This is a private residence.

