



Louis Turner House and Stagecoach Inn



By Brenda Lincke Fisseler

The Louis Turner House and Stagecoach Inn was a two story inn built in 1872 and located on the Northwest corner of Block #1 in Hallettsville (Lavaca County) Texas.

Turner, a gunsmith, moved to Hallettsville in 1856 from New Orleans. In the 1860 census, Turner was living in the home of Valentine Reimenschneider, a local cabinet maker.

On September 30, 1861, Turner married Josephine Brogger Dubois, the widow of John Dubois.

Turner worked as a gun smith until his enlistment in Col. Whitfield's Legion as a bugler. On July 27, 1863 he was severely wounded near Fort Smith, Arkansas. While thought to be dead, Turner survived a long recovery and in July of 1857 returned to Hallettsville and was reunited with his wife who was mourning the supposed death of her husband.

Turner returned to his occupation as a gun smith and in 1866 purchased the lots 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 of Block 1 from Dr. M.B. Bennett for \$600.00 It was on this property in 1872 that Turner built the Turner House and Stagecoach Inn.



“Great minds are related to the brief span of time during which they live as great buildings are to a little square in which they stand...”

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The Inn was a stage stop coaches transporting mail and passengers from Columbus Texas to San Antonio, Texas.

According to his obituary, in 1884 Turner retired from the hotel business.

In 1891, when the Hallettsville Volunteer Fire Department was in its infancy, Turner offered to the City of Hallettsville the bell, that hung on his hotel, for fire alarm purposes. The Fire Department immediately refused the offer stating the bell was too small for the purpose intended.

When Josephine (Mrs. Louis) Turner died in April 1911, her obituary stated that the hotel building was still standing and one of the land marks of the town.

In 1947, the property was purchased by J. Weingarten, Inc. from the Nolen Produce Co. and a poultry process plant was built on the property. The Weingarten building was literally built around the Turner Inn obscuring the old building from sight and memory.

On Wednesday, February 12, 1997, a fire consumed the Weingarten building and as a result that which was lost was found! Portions of the massive stone and brick walls were exposed after the fire. This glimpse of the past was fleeting however, when the remains of the fire were later removed and the space leveled for a parking lot.



Photograph from the collection of the late Margaret Dornak

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The
Harrell
House



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