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# Tidings

The Newsletter of the Friends of Perdido Bay

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Jackie Lane - Editor

[www.friendsofperdidobay.com](http://www.friendsofperdidobay.com)

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## A Little Bit of Perspective

While doing some library research at the University of West Florida, I came across an article which was printed in Harper's New Monthly Magazine, Vol. 48 in 1874. The article is entitled "The New South" and is written by Edwin DeLeon pp. 406-422. The article is available on the internet at

<http://digital.library.cornell.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=harp;idno=harp0048-3>. The article is very interesting because it describes the lumber business on Perdido Bay and the little railroad which took the lumber to the port of Pensacola. I am going to copy a part of this article for the newsletter. Also notice that the style of writing is different than today's style.

Page 414 "Next in importance (*cotton and wool spinning in the South was first*) is the lumber business, which, as before stated, is being rapidly transferred to the South - the pine region of Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida furnishing immense supplies for a universal and increasing want. Years ago the hardy Maine lumbermen were in the habit of making annual winter raids on the Southern Atlantic coast in Georgia, penetrating sometimes into the interior; but since the war, Northern energy and capital have poured into Alabama and Florida, and great mills, with all the modern improved machinery, have been erected, and the somewhat harsh music of the saw now sends its echoes through the sylvan solitudes which but recently resounded only to the cries of wild beasts. Florida has become one of the greatest centers of this new development, and both in her eastern portion, bordering on the Atlantic, and in her western, on the Gulf, sends forth annually immense quantities of hewn and sawed timber to the North and to Europe. A brief statement of what is doing at one point only, in the vicinity of Pensacola and Perdido Bay, and on the Black Water River, in the same neighborhood, will give a faint idea of the rapid growth and great proportions this industry is attaining.

During the war the few saw-mills in this neighborhood were either burned down, or the owners so impoverished as to be unable to work them. The city of Pensacola was itself deserted, after having been partially burned down. Its inhabitants fled away to Alabama, where they settled, and the place was absolutely deserted: so much so that the weeds grew up densely in the streets, and became the haunts of the foxes and the wild turkeys. The state of things continued for two years after the war. Then the scattered fugitives began to return, bringing back new recruits with them, and strove manfully to recuperate their shattered fortunes. Some of the more energetic among them turned