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## Old Chimney to be Preserved, circa 1960s

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# Photouring Florida

By HAMPTON DUNN



## THE OLD CHIMNEY TO BE PRESERVED

PENSACOLA --- An old chimney dating back to the Spanish times is being preserved as a historical landmark by the Pensacola Historic Preservation and Restoration Commission.

The tall, weather-beaten, vine-clad structure holds a commanding view of the bay from atop a bluff on Scenic Highway (U.S. 90). The Old Chimney is all that remains of a once prosperous planing mill which operated as the Hyer-Knowles Planing Mill. Logs to feed the plant were floated down the Escambia River to Escambia Bay, there to dry on the beach before being run through the mill.

It was operating full blast at the time the Civil War broke out. As Federal military occupation threatened in 1862, the owners decided to dismantle the mill machinery and placed it on a raft, hoping to ferry it across the bay to Garcon Point for hiding. The scheme was thwarted, however, when a violent storm stirred up, flipped over the raft and sent the equipment to the bottom.

But the Old Chimney stood erect and strong. At one time a Pensacola brick mason and contractor, L. C. Bennet, bought the chimney expecting to salvage the brick, which had been made in the Abercrombie Brickyard and the Bonifay Brickyard. He was in for a surprise. The extremely durable character of the ground oyster shell mortar kept them from being recovered without breaking. M. F. Gonzalez, then owner, refunded Mr. Bennet his \$300 purchase price. The Old Chimney once was struck by lightning, but withstood the attack.

