



# **The Lumber Boom of Coastal South Carolina:: Nineteenth-Century Shipbuilding and the Devastation of Lowcountry Virgin Forests**

*Robert McAlister*

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The virgin forests of longleaf pine, bald cypress and oak that covered much of the South Carolina Lowcountry presented seemingly limitless opportunity for lumbermen. Henry Buck of Maine moved to the South Carolina coast and began shipping lumber back to the Northeast for shipbuilding. He and his family are responsible for building the Henrietta," the largest wooden ship ever built in the Palmetto State. Buck was followed by lumber barons of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who forever changed the landscape, clearing vast tracts to supply lumber to the Northeast. The devastating environmental legacy of this shipbuilding boom wasn't addressed until 1937, when the International Paper Company opened the largest single paper mill in the world in Georgetown and began replanting hundreds of thousands of acres of trees. Local historian Robert McAlister presents this epic story of the ebb and flow of coastal South Carolina's lumber industry."

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