

South Burnett and part of the Mary Valley

This section provides an overview of sawmilling in the South Burnett, the Kilkivan, Tiaro and Mungar areas and west to Gayndah.

Kilkivan and South Burnett

The railway from Theebine to Kilkivan, later extended to Goomeri, Wondai, Kingaroy and Nanango was the means of exploiting large amounts of forest.

John and James Rattray operated a mill at Brooyar, 11 miles north east of Kilkivan in the 1890s. From the 1920s there were mills in the Woolooga area. Spencer Brothers purchased a portable mill and operated it at Oakview Siding from 1935. The mill was electrified in 1954. The Spencers bought a quota of Hoop pine plantation timber, enlarged the mill, survived the 1961 housing slump and in 1963 purchased the Kilkivan Mill. After Forestry permitted mergers, George Spencer took this step and joined with North Coast Sawmill of Cooroy in hardwood and pine, and Wilson Hart with the thinning quotas.¹

Timber getting in the Kilkivan area dates from the 1870s, on a small scale until the railway reached Kilkivan in 1886. Substantial stands remained until the 1900s.² Hyne and Sons operated at Kilkivan in the 1940s, possibly taking over H.D. Denyer's operation.

C.C. Jones built the Kilkivan sawmill close to the railway yard in the 1920s, later sold to Alf Pearson and later to Spencers.³ The Kilkivan Timber Company operated at Collins Creek, south of Kilkivan in the Black Snake Range area. H.R. and C.H. Pearson were partners in the company in the 1940s.⁴ The Black Snake Mill was established by Raspus and Coop, subsequently owned by T.H. Spencer of Goomeri, Hayden Shire, Allen and Company, and Strakers. The mill was electrified when power became available.⁵

T.H. Spencer milled at Gayndah and Biggenden before acquiring a mill at Sefton near Daddamarine which he moved to Scrubby Paddock, Elgin Vale about 1927 where he established a settlement including a school.⁶

Abraham Boldery erected a sawmill near Kabunga Creek south of Kinbombi in the early 1900s. In 1922 the enterprise was incorporated as the Kabunga Sawmilling Company with the Perrett family, local graziers, the mill manager W.H. Day, and mill employees Giles and W.R.

Boldery being shareholders. The company was voluntarily wound up only a year later, possibly because the mill had burnt down although Logan dates the fire as 1925.⁷

The mill was rebuilt at Kinbombi, apparently by Skydings Limited. Logan states that H.A. Skyring had taken over the Kabunga Creek mill. Kinbombi siding was also the outlet for timber from Manumbar area.⁸ The Skyring Mill is recorded in the 1929-30 *Post Office Directory* at Goomeri, the nearest large town.

Goomeri

Timber getters quickly followed the railway. The first sawmill was established by Ross and Company at Elgin Vale on Moonda Waamba Creek in Water Reserve 81 in 1908. Ross and Company shifted to Goomeri, and enlarged the mill, and rebuilt it after it burnt down. Ross operated the mill until he died in 1940. The mill still operated as Ross and Company and closed in 1958.⁹ Fraser Wright (1916-29), Brett Limited (1923-41, possibly the Manumbar Mill) and Thomas H. Spencer (1941-45) are also listed at Goomeri.

As well as William Ross, noted at Elgin Vale in 1914, Fraser Wright was recorded as Elgin Vale 1914-15. T.H. Spencer transferred a mill to Elgin Vale about 1927, at Scrubby Paddock.¹⁰ Although closed for some years in the depression, it reopened and supported a small township with cottages, boarding house and school. The engine came from T. Robinson and Son, England with a smaller engine for planing.

The mill burnt down in 1943 and was rebuilt in 1945 with one boiler. It was sold to Wilson Hart of Maryborough in 1946. They appointed Roy Veritz as manager, other managers being G. Risk, R. Davies and Dick Collard. In later years the managers also acted as foremen and benchmen.

Frank Coleman of Goomeri was one of the carriers taking sawn timber by truck to Goomeri Railway Station, usually railed to Maryborough. After one bad fire at Maryborough, Wilson Hart relocated its staff to Elgin Vale, augmenting the 20 men normally at work, and the mill worked three shifts a day.

Electricity did not reach Elgin Vale until 1965 and steam operation continued with electricity only used for lighting. Steam operation continued until the April 1987 close down, the result of a building downturn and depletion of local supplies. The school, closed in 1977, is now a QCWA rest room. Bob Mercer managed the mill in the latter years. It was handed over jointly to Kilkivan Shire Councils as a National Trust building and tourist attraction. The last known firing of the boiler was in 1991 for a demonstration run.¹¹

Elgin Vale was in 1950 one of the states largest sawmills.¹² [The appellation as Coffee Pot Mill is not historically sound.]

Fred Hoskins set up a mill near Toomcul Creek on the Manumbar-Kinbombi Road, powered by portable steam boiler, and later moved it to near Tankallaman Creek and sold it to D.G. Brims and Sons.¹³

The Manumbar State Forest was a major resource and in 1914-15 preliminary work began on a survey from Goomeri, followed by survey from Goomeri to Coothing in 1918-1920. A deputation in 1923 sought construction of a 32 mile line from Goomeri to Manumbar.¹⁴ Given the large capital outlay and impossibility of the line operating profitably, the Manumbar Forest was developed based on motor transport of sawn timber.¹⁵

The Manumbar Timber Company had started a sawmill managed by H. Thomsett in 1917, with sawn timber hauled by bullock team to Kinbombi siding. The workforce dropped from 23 to 15 in the depression. The mill was later acquired by Brett and Company, possibly by 1923. The mill operated until 1967, Dick O'Brien being the last manager.¹⁶ Kinbombi Plywood operated at Manumbar beside the timber mill, using large straight cylindrical hoop pine logs to make the 3/16 inch thick sheets needed for three ply. The three sheets after drying and gluing were forced together under pressure and allowed to dry, cut to size and marketed. R.B. Nutting managed the plywood mill.¹⁷

There was also a steam-driven sawmill at nearby Gallangowan, known as Brims Mill. Fred Hoskins was the manager in the 1930s. A diesel engine later replaced steam.¹⁸ This may be the mill referred to as D.G. Brims & Sons Pty Ltd Manumbar Mill in 1949, or alternatively they acquired Brett's Manumbar mill about this time. Brim's Mill was on Portion 3 (or 31) and the

Manumbar Mill on Portion 16, Gallangowan Parish.

Murgon and Kingaroy

Murgon did not appear to exist before the railway was built and timber was its early mainstay. Edward Thomas and Robert W. Nutt from 1911 and the Murgon Saw Milling Company from 1913 were the early listed sawmillers. Fred A. Carter and Cobb Brothers were listed from 1921 and A. Rickert from 1923. Carter's sawmill was located on his selection at Boat Mountain Tableland using a portable steam engine which he later abandoned near Kinbombi. Many teams were hauling logs from the slopes of Boat Mountain. Murphy and Easton state that signs of depletion of the pine were visible as early as 1906.¹⁹ Nevertheless Murgon continued to have several mills. By 1950 Rose and Sons were perhaps the only remaining millers with P.J. Woodrow at Woodall and G.H. Rickert at Mount Kent nearby.

West of Murgon there were mills at Bye, Hivesville and Kinleymore and particularly Proston. In 1949 a railway siding was provided opposite Proston School to serve the new Railway Department sleeper mill which began cutting on 27 June 1950 and operated for about 20 years.²⁰

West of Proston, Hyne and Sons began milling at Brovinia from around 1943. Strakers and Crook formed a partnership to mill at Allies Creek after World War II, buying a sawmill at Kingaroy to get a licence. The mill at Allies Creek known as Queensland Sawmills, was completed by Frank Straker in 1945, burnt down in 1952 and rebuilt with second hand equipment. Strakers withdrew to concentrate on the Eidsvold area in 1964 with John Croke continuing and 60 people at the Allies Creek settlement dependent on the mill.²¹ Hayden Shire & Co. and K.C. and N.M. Mearns were milling at Boondooma from around 1949.

South of Murgon, Edwin Fletcher was milling at Wondai from 1904, a mill which appeared to have been operated from 1907 by John Howarth, then Thomson and Thomson, and from the 1930s by F.H. Jones Pty Ltd.

There were mills near Tingoora, at Cushnie and Memerambi, plus Logboy and Booie.

As the railway brought about the clearing of the Coolabunia Scrub for agriculture, timber became the major industry for some years, with 100 teams hauling logs from the area around Kingaroy.²²

Once the railway opened teams made a regular procession up to the Kingaroy railway yards. The Western Australian Jarrah company was largely in charge of operations. The company also introduced traction engine haulage. Hyne and Son, B. Appel and Wilson Hart were also involved in the trade. By 1914 "the tree treasure was exhausted".²³

George Mullen was listed as milling at Kingaroy from 1906 and the Jarrah Millar's Karri and Jarrah Co. (1902) Limited in 1908, and from 1909 its offshoot Queensland Pine Company Limited. Pook and Preston milled from around 1910, possibly the mill originally Mullen's. Hayden and Shire moved to Kingaroy around 1934 and were still operating in 1950. They also had a mill at Ironpot after the war.²⁴

Nanango

Nanango was a timber town from its early years but had only small local markets until completion of the railway via Kilkivan in November 1911. Licences were issued for timber cutters in 1864. Murphy and Easton credit John Heiner as owning the first sawmill in Nanango, entirely hand operated, and comment that it started in 1901 in Fitzroy Street.²⁵

There was, however, a steam sawmill as early as 1878, the Queensland Times recording that R. Hendall's steam sawmill had resumed work in March 1878 after having been out of use for some time. A sawmill plant passed through Nanango in 1891, hauled up the range by 16 bullocks with T. Smith in charge; its destination was not stated.²⁶ Pugh records James Miller at Nanango from 1887 to 1891 and John Heiner as proprietor from 1892. H. Parson is listed in the Queensland Post Office Directory from 1900 and I. Fletcher from 1902 to 1905.

Watt, Muller and Company, later The Timber Corporation started its mill in 1908, managed by George Gordon Watt, experienced in timber, having managed sawmills at Palen Creek, Fernvale and Dundas. The mill, on a hill on the south-eastern side of the town, initially used steam traction engines to take sawn timber to the Kingaroy railhead. After the extension of the railway to Nanango, the mill was moved to the flat beside Horse creek just beyond the railway station. It was served by a siding built off the forklift in 1912. The mill was a large one, employing a maximum of 150 men.²⁷

After Muller sold his share in Watt, Muller and Company to local interests, the Timber

Corporation was formed with headquarters in Brisbane. T.F. Moxton and later R.D. Frew were managing directors. Watt sold out in 1912, managing mills at Targinnie, Bunya Mountains and then joined Hancock and Gore in 1917.

The Nanango mill was burnt down in 1925 and rebuilt, with G.G. Watt supervising the installation of Robinson bandsaw and 'mule driver'. Timber Corporation sold the mill to Hancock and Gore in 1928 and Watt returned to Nanango as manager and later retired. His son George Alexander Watt continued in his father's trade, managing at Simsville near Stroud, NSW and at Louisavale, Monsildale and then Nanango for 27 years where he too retired. He had wanted to study medicine and in caring for his workmen gained a reputation as first-aid expert and for professional splints. He was prominent in Nanango affairs. Both Watts descended from Alexander Watt whose sons were sawmillers on the Coomera River.²⁸ The mill was a major enterprise and operated until around 1970.

To the south and south west of Kingaroy, there were mills at Taabinga, Barker's Creek, Brooklands, Tarong, Glencliff and Kumbia. Samuel Johnston was operating the mill at Taabinga Village by 1907 (the railway to Taabinga and Tarong opened in late 1915). The mill was established about 1901 by George Muller.²⁹ The site has been recorded as part of the survey of historic sites in the Kingaroy Shire, Portion 36v, Parish of Boonenne.

Millar's Karri and Jarrah Company (1902) Ltd were listed at Barker's Creek 1908-11 and at Tarong 1943-46.

George Preston brought a travelling sawmill to Kumbia in late 1913 and in 1915 Don Preston established a mill at the Alice Creek water reserve, south-west of Kumbia.³⁰

Tiaro, Biggenden, Monto &c

The railway from Maryborough to Gympie was specially diverted to the west of the Mary River to serve the Mungar Sawmill and the Yengarie Sugar Refinery. Both enterprises lasted a comparatively short time but gave Maryborough the permanent legacy of a dead end railway and consequently it is not served by through trains on the North Coast Line. Plans to rectify the mistake never came to fruition.

Although the Mungar mill, and its tramway, were established a decade before the railway opened, many other mills were stimulated by the line,

which also enabled large quantities of logs to be railed to Maryborough and Gympie and as at Bundaberg, the timber industry made the line more profitable than expected.

The Dalkeith Sawmill at Gootchie started operation on 1 August 1883 but the original proprietors were unable to pay their debts only two years later.³¹ The mill was listed under Gundiah in Pugh's Almanac and Post Office Directory until 1893. Dowser Brothers were milling at Gootchie in the 1910s. Ferguson and Company of Gympie bought the mill at Gundiah in 1896 and operated there to 1907. J and P. Lewis and R. Sim were listed as milling at Gundiah in 1918.

Bauple was principally a small township around the sugar mill. The sugar mill had its own saw mill but the Bates family, covering at least two generations, operated there from around 1913 until at least the 1950s, by which time the sugar mill had closed. This was the larger of the two mills at Bauple.³² The other appears to have been A.C. Pearson's; he also milled at Kilkivan.

Tiaro

The township of Tiaro predated the railway, being for some years the head of navigation on the Mary. The Wide Bay Sawmill Company Limited was registered on 14 July 1882, a year after the railway opened. The company was unusual as it had many local shareholders including about twenty timber getters and sawyers. The company was not successful and was wound up in 1884. The Wide Bay sawmill continued to operate for another decade.

Norm Armstrong was listed in 1941-43 as milling at Tinana Creek, Tiaro and in 1947 and 1949 as N. and N.K. Armstrong, Magnolia Saw Mills. The sawmill was operating in and presumably before 1936 judging by its registration number (50), later 1269 and now 2749. N. and N.K. Armstrong were listed as proprietors in 1947 and 1949, and the trading name was altered to Magnolia Saw and Planing Mills, presumably when planing facilities were added. The original site of Portion 55, Parish of Bidwell gave rise to the name Magnolia which appears to have been retained with the move to Tiaro (Parish Gundiah Section 7 (as 1269) or Section 2B, Town of Tiaro (2749). The ownership changed to Hedera Pty Ltd trading as Tiaro Sawmills, and by 1997 it was Vetal Pty Ltd trading as Tiaro Timbers with Mr G. Starkey, Receiver and Manager, the mill having closed.³³ It seems to have been unable to serve the debt resulting from the extensive modernisation and rebuilding.

Just north of Tiaro is the new woodchip plant at Owanyilla with its product railed to Gladstone for export.³⁴

Mungar Sawmill and Tramway

Hyne and Son bought the Mungar mill in 1889 and from about 1894 to 1897 also milled at Mungar.

Percy and John Ramsay came to Maryborough from Sydney in 1870 to take over the Lindah sugar plantation and built the Mungar sawmill. Both ventures failed financially. Henry Armitage who came to Queensland in 1861, was later joined by his brother Edward who had experience pit-sawing on the Herbert River before coming to Mungar to manage Mungar for the Ramsays.³⁵

Ramsays chose a site closer a site for the sawmill well away from the river. Consequently they decided to lay a tramway nearly two miles from the river bank to the site.³⁶ Both mill and tramway were completed by the end of 1873, although the river wharf was still under construction and sawn timber had to be manhandled from the tramway on the bank down to the river craft. The tramway was built with wooden rails and wooden sleepers, kept firm by wedges in the squared notches cut in the sleepers at three feet intervals and without nails. Spotted gum 3 x 5 inches standing on the narrow edge provided a fair margin for wear. Horses hauled the sawn timber to the river. Henry Armitage, as first manager, had a mill beside the creek with cottages and humpies for 40 men and timber supplies close by. With 47 employees it was labour intensive.³⁷

As the timber close by was exhausted, Ramsays decided to build a tramway, same gauge as the government line then about to be built from Maryborough to Gympie, to tap timber to the west, an area now known as Yerra. The initial plan was for a line four miles long worked by locomotive. At the same time the mill was enlarged with two new boilers 32 feet long, brick furnaces to burn waste timber and sawdust, and a brick chimney 65 feet high.³⁸

The first section was reported as complete in August 1878 and awaiting the engine. The official opening was on 22 November when the engine named the *Dragon* was ready, made by John Walker and Co. of Maryborough. The mayor and Mr Walker sat on the buffers on the opening run up the line (so the newspaper report claimed) and others were seated on the log trucks. The locomotive reportedly ran at about 10 miles

per hour, climbed inclines of 1 in 40, and went through cuttings and along embankments four feet high. The major structure on the line was the bridge over 18-Mile creek, 26 feet high, 255 feet long and 19 spans with two hardwood piles for each span, diagonal braces and hardwood sills. The locomotive was reversed on a turntable. The original terminus was named Kingston in honour of parliamentarian W.E. King. Walker referred to the Dragon contemptuously as a mere piccaninny as his firm wanted to build much larger locomotives for the government railway instead of their being imported.³⁹

The Dragon was rebuilt in 1881 and hauled loads up to 30 tons, usually 20 tons, the steepest grade being 1 in 30; on the government line the engine was able to haul 84 tons and run as fast as 25 miles per hour on a test run. By this time, 1883, the Ramsays were in financial difficulty, but when creditors agreed to accept 10 shillings in the pound, work resumed in November.⁴⁰

The sawmills were auctioned in 1885 including 2813 acres of freehold but there were no bids. The mortgagees, the South Australian Land and Mortgage Company, took possession but the mill and its 6 miles of tramway remained closed. The river line had presumably been abandoned with the opening of the railway when sidings were provided for the sawmill, linking with its bush tramway.⁴¹ It appears the mill remained closed until after its sale to Hyne and Son in 1889 and subsequent use in the 1890s after Hyne's mill was damaged in floods.

Inspection in 1969 found nothing of the sawmill but the tramline formation basically intact from the sawmill to near Yerra (an extension of the line opened in 1878 making it 6 miles long.⁴²

Brooweena and Biggenden

The railway west from Mungar encouraged the development of sawmills, particularly at Brooweena and Biggenden. Brooweena is perhaps the place which most closely remains in Queensland a sawmill village. Besides the major mill at Brooweena, there was Baldwin's mill at Calgoa, and a mill still operating at North Aramara.

Ted Lahey built the present mill at Brooweena, officially opened in June 1924. A planing mill was added in 1932, steam drying kilns in 1940 and it was converted from steam to electricity in 1957.⁴³

Max Lahey joined his father Talbot Calude Lahey in the partnership in 1947 and later became managing director of T.C. Lahey and Son Pty Ltd. By 1988 there were 28 men employed, the township and formerly the shire offices being focussed around the mill.

Possibly the first sawmill near Biggenden was reputed to be at Page's Lagoon, a mile from Woowoonga, operated by Berrie. It was moved into Biggenden in 1909 and operated by Hermann Bartsch to 1918, followed by Sefton who enlarged it, then A.W. Baulch and the Woodman family (either E.W., G. or E.N.). After a fire in 1938 it was rebuilt as the Biggenden Saw and Planing Mills Pty Ltd but the mill became non-viable and closed in 1987.⁴⁴ The Woodman family is presumably the same family which also milled at Mackay for many years.

There were other mills at Coringa on the Burnett River north of Biggenden, at Degilbo, at Mount Shamrock (Thomas Chard, 1919-1940) and George and John Ware at the gold mining town of Paradise in the 1890s.

A small surviving mill in 1988 was at Glenbar Road, Aramara, operated by Patrick Doran. E.G. (Ted) Stocks built a small case mill at North Aramara in 1937, expanded and moved to Stony Creek, operating a steam sawmill from 1943. His sons continued the operation until 1986 when G.R. Simpson bought the business and trades as North Aramara Sawmill.⁴⁵

Spencers' Sawmills operated at Wetheron in the 1920s.

Gayndah is an early town but I have no records of any sawmills earlier than H. Hamer in 1901 and George Bates 1906-12. John Chalmers was principal of the Gayndah Saw and Planing Mills which operated from 1912 to around 1923.

Lahey Brothers built a steam sawmill in Gayndah in 1920 but it was burnt down in 1923. T.C. Lahey, having seen the hoop pine logs being railed from Brooweena, decided to erect his replacement mill there.⁴⁶ The Post Office Directory has Lahey operating 1923-27. Other firms were also listed in the 1910s and 1940s.

Endnotes

1. Dulcie Logan, *Where Two Rivers Run*, pp. 190-2.
2. Logan, pp. 184-6.
3. Logan, Chapter 10.
4. AA Qld BP8/1 F1951/632.

5. Logan, p. 189
6. Logan, p. 195.
7. Company 100 of 1922, A/28578, QSA; Logan, p. 195.
8. Dulcie Logan, *A History of Education in the Goomeri District*, Goomeri, [1975], p. 58; Logan *Where Two Rivers Run*, p. 195.
9. Logan, p. 195.
10. Logan, pp. 192, 196.
11. Logan, pp. 196-7; *South Burnett Times* 11 June 1996 p. 2.
12. Murphy and Easton, p. 326.
13. Logan, *Where Two Rivers Run*, p. 200.
14. CR 1914-15 p34, 1918-19 p67, 1919-20 p57; *Capricornian*, 4 August 1923 p.22.
15. Annual Report Forestry Dept. 1925-26 p. 12.
16. Logan, *Where Two Rivers Run*, p. 202.
17. Logan, p. 200-1.
18. Logan, p. 200.
19. Murphy and Easton, p. 247; *The Big Scrub ... Durong and District 1912 to 1977*, p. 165 re Carter.
20. WN 46/49; CR 1949-50 p.30.
21. Peter Taylor, *Growing Up*, pp. 188-9.
22. J.F.F. Reid, "Land Settlement in the Southern Burnett", read 23 March 1944, *RHSQ Journal* Vol. 3, No. 4, p. 320.
23. Murphy and Easton, pp. 160-4.
24. *In the Shade of the Bunyas*, p. 23.
25. A/26772, QSA; Murphy and Easton p. 70.
26. *Queensland Times* 21 March 1878, 22 October 1891.
27. Murphy and Easton p.70, 97; R. Milne, "Rails to Nanango", *Australian Railway Historical Society Bulletin*, May 1993 pp. 116-8, 125-31.
28. David C. Jones, p. 76.
29. Murphy and Easton p. 146; Heathwood Cardillo Wilson Pty Ltd, Survey of Historic Sites, Shire of Kingaroy, December 1987.
30. Murphy and Easton p. 166.
31. MC 15 August 1883, 16 October 1883, 7 August 1885.
32. *Queensland Post Office Directory; Wide Bay Trading Post*, 28 June-11 July 1996.
33. Copy of Register of Sawmills, Department of Environment; *Queensland Post Office Directory*.
34. CR 1993-94 p. 31.
35. P.J. Mathis, pp. 7-9, 27; R.K. Morgan, "The Mill at Mungar", *Light Railways*, No. 56 pp. 17-20; J.D. Kerr, "The Mungar Timber Tramways", *Light Railways*, No. 104 (April 1989), pp. 1-10.
36. MC 28 October 1873.
37. MC 3 January 1874.
38. MC 29 September 1877, 11 May 1878.
39. MC 26 November 1878.
40. Queensland Parliament, *Votes & Proceedings*, 1883-84 p. 1675; MC 23 October, 13 November 1883.
41. *Queensland Parliamentary Debates* 50, 1512-4.
42. D.G. Bailey, *Sunshine Express* April 1969 p. 22, July 1969 p. 71.
43. Len Harvey, p. 186.
44. *The Biggenden Story*, p. 74.
45. Len Harvey, p. 186.
46. Len Harvey, p. 184.

Maryborough, Isis and Fraser Island

This section provides an overview of sawmilling in and around Maryborough, Fraser Island and the Isis District.

Maryborough Timber

With more than 135 years of continuous sawmilling, the Maryborough district is the state's most consistent timber district. The district was rich in red and white cedar, various pine timbers especially Hoop and Kauri, and a wide range of hardwood timbers.¹

Union and Urara Sawmills

Timber was cut by hand for more than a decade before Gladwell and Greathead established the first sawmill, in 1861. Gladwell and Greathead had just arrived in Maryborough in 1861. When the steam sawmill machinery arrived in July 1861 the *Chronicle* did not even know who it was for. The partners had thought of abandoning their plans for lack of orders but after Henry Palmer offered to take their whole output, they went ahead and erected what became the Union Saw Mills. The first timber was shipped in December 1861.²

A small township soon sprang up near the sawmill. They had a monopoly for less than 12 months; Steadman started sawing hardwood about 3 1/2 miles from town and Uhr, proprietor of the local boiling down works, decided to convert his plant into a sawmill during the off season. In December 1862 Gladwell and Greathead bought the schooner *Pacific* for the timber business, an acquisition followed by other major millers at Maryborough.³

Gladwell and Greathead decided to enter the newly established sugar industry. They erected the second sugar mill in the district and the first Central Mill, dependant on the surrounding farmers to supply cane. The venture took more capital than the sawmill but was to prove a much more risky enterprise. In October 1867 Greathead proposed splitting the partnership, one partner to take the saw mill and the other the sugar mill treating both businesses, with their assets and debts, as of equal value. After Gladwell opted for the saw mill, Greathead realised his mistake and tried to repudiate his offer. In an Equity Case, the issue was decided in favour of Gladwell. The mill itself was leased to Cooper and Jones for two years in a document signed in September 1867.⁴

After Cooper and Jones ceased work, J. Meiklejohn acquired the enterprise in 1870. It was located at the corner of Kent and Guava Streets. He leased it to Pettigrew and Sim who operated the Union Sawmills for many years. Seven men died as a result of a massive boiler explosion in August 1872 which demolished the chimney and furnaces and uprooted the larger boiler which did not explode. The Union sawmills were badly damaged in the 1875 flood and again in 1893.⁵ This appeared to mark the end of the Union Sawmills, but by then the mill was substantially different from that erected in 1861.

Pettigrew and Sim built their own sawmill, named the Urara Sawmill, on the opposite corner in 1888, an investment which helped stimulate the extension of the Maryborough Wharf branch railway from Hyne's National Mill to the site above Guava Street. After Pettigrew's insolvency, Sim and Company, or Sims Limited from around 1913, operated the Urara Sawmills until they were burnt down by fire in 1930.⁶ Lambert Hyne used the disaster to finally convince his father to have sprinklers erected in his nearby mill, quickly saving the cost in reduced insurance premiums.

There were no visible remains of the Union or Urara sawmills in 1997. Archaeology investigation could reveal foundations hidden under the surface.

Woodlands Sawmills

E.B. Uhr established the first major industry at Maryborough, the Woodlands Boiling Down works in 1851, which of necessity for a noxious operation, were located outside the main town area. In September 1862 he imported an 8 horsepower engine to operate his works as a small sawmill during the off-season when the plant was normally idle. For the sawmill plant, he bought the Phoenix Saw Mills, which would appear to be Steadman's mill since I have no further reference to it. By December Uhr and Tagg were advertising for logs.⁷

Woodlands suffered what was perhaps the first of what become a series of sawmill boiler explosions. The sawmill works halted but the boiling down season began without delay.⁸

Wilson Hart

Andrew Heron Wilson, born in Ayr, Scotland in 1844, emigrated to Maryborough in 1864, and a year later met with Robert Hart and James Bartholomew to form the partnership of Wilson, Bartholomew & Co., to exploit opportunities in the profitable timber trade. Bartholomew came from Stirlingshire, worked in the large Martin and Company's Dublin sawmills and in 1862 was appointed manager of the Union Sawmills. Glasgow born Robert Hart emigrated to Brisbane in 1863 and worked as a carpenter and joiner, coming to Maryborough in 1864. Wilson and Hart went to Britain to order a modern plant. The machinery arrived in October 1866 and was erected at Granville or East Maryborough, nearly opposite the residence of A.W. Melville.⁹

The mill was in full operation by 1867 but was covered in the 1875 flood which took Bartholomew's life, and the firm became known as Wilson Hart and Company. On 14 January 1890 Wilson Hart and Company Limited was incorporated (Company 49, Book 6). The mill was burnt down in 1881. The partners took the opportunity to build on the town side of the river where they were able to have an 11 chain (220 metre) siding connecting with the Maryborough Wharf branch, opened as part of the Maryborough-Gympie railway, completed in 1882.¹⁰

The new mill received logs from rail and by river, especially from Fraser Island, and the firm established branches throughout Queensland and had its own ships. It was regarded as the leading sawmilling company in Queensland. The firm built the first hot air drying kiln in Queensland in 1890. The mill had a steam traveller for handling logs in 1897 and a wide range of breaking down frames, rack benches, and self-feed or hand benches plus planing and moulding machines, lathes, grooving and tenoning equipment and appliances for tool sharpening. The mill was again destroyed by fire on 4 November 1934 and this time rebuilt on the same site, officially opened by the Governor on 5 October 1936.¹¹ The new mill operated for some 50 years on the new site before it was closed. The site has been cleared and is to be the site of an entertainment centre, with nothing in evidence of its former role.

Other Sawmills

The fourth mill near Maryborough and fifth on the river was built for E. and S. Scott and christened on 16 October 1873. Known as the Albion it was owned by Anton Christensen by 1900, and

located at the end of Ann Street. The Albion Sawmills, described as the corner of Queen and Zante Streets were also known as Taylor Brothers mill, an enterprise started in 1881. It was burnt down in 1903.¹²

James Fairlie

James Fairlie settled in Maryborough in 1862 and entered business as a joiner, involving his sons in the growing business. The enterprise developed into a sawmill cutting cedar, pine and hardwoods after P.D. Fairlie went overseas in 1890 to purchase machinery. The firm specialised in doors and window manufacture and occupied a large site bounded by Richmond, Alice and Bazaar Streets and continued operating until recent years (registered as sawmill No. 1001).¹³

Hyne and Son

Richard Matthew Hyne was born in Devon in 1839, marrying Elizabeth Lambert in London in 1863 and emigrating along with his brother William the next year. He joined the Gympie gold rush, became a hotel licensee, and bought the Royal Hotel in Maryborough. After the death of his wife in child birth in 1879 his life changed. He went north, saw the demand for timber, ordered boilers from Walkers, went to England to order sawmilling equipment from T. Robinson and Company of Rochdale, a well-known sawmill engineering firm, and with his manager, Bromiley and consulting engineer, John Murray, erected his sawmill by the Mary between Walkers' shipyards and the Union sawmill. It began operation in 1883.¹⁴ He also bought ships like the other major Maryborough millers. He took his son Henry James into the firm as a partner in 1888 as Hyne and Son.

Hyne entered parliament in 1888, serving a single five-year term, and is remembered especially for his 1889 motion seeking the implementation of timber conservation policies to ensure the proper exploitation of the colony's resources.

The mill, with a floor seven feet above ground to reduce the risk of flooding, had a breaking up saw, travelling bench to handle logs 40 feet long, 72 inch circular saw and perpendicular, cross-cut and scroll-cutting saws as well as machines to tongue, groove and plane.¹⁵

The Hyne family have simply been good sawmillers. They established a tradition of good business judgement and the prudent adoption of new technology to ensure that the business remained efficient, thus avoiding the pitfalls which swal-

lowed up most of the family businesses. In 1889 Hyne purchased the closed Mungar Mill. This proved timely. While the 1890 flood damaged the Maryborough mill and damaged the timber stocks, the bigger 1893 flood caused serious loss and Hyne was able to use the Mungar mill to maintain the business.

Hyne continued to invest in shipping, commissioning the SS *Hopewell* in 1898 from a Scottish shipyard. He also put his weight behind the railway issues which resulted in the railway to the Kingaroy-Nanango area being built via Kilkivan (to Maryborough's benefit) rather than via the Brisbane Valley which would have suited Brisbane and local interests far better. Likewise the line to Biggenden was extended to Gayndah and via Mundubbera to Monto, bringing another large timber area into the Maryborough ambit rather than extending the railway from Bundaberg to Mount Perry into this territory.¹⁶

R.M. Hyne died in 1902. His son Henry (known as Harry) continued the business, and in 1903 went to the United States. He saw the modern band mills but cost was a deterrent. The failure of a company at Purgatory north of Newcastle, New South Wales, which bought a band mill to cut hardwood, provided the opportunity to buy a Canadian built band mill cheaply. [*Hynesight* p. 51]

H.J. Hyne bought Coolreagh station in 1906 and offered to sell his timber interested to the Western Australian timber combines. [p. 55]

Hyne also put his weight behind the push by the Brisbane Timber Merchants Association for sawmill registration to prevent small mills competing unfairly in the depression years by paying very low wages. There were at the time some 400 sawmills but only 268 supplying statistical returns. [p. 47]

J.R.L. [Lambert] Hyne, born in 1903 and the son of H.J. Hyne, developed the enterprise to the point where it had operating mills at Innisfail, Dingo, Gladstone, Mundubbera, Melawondi, Chinchilla (hardwood & cypress), Maryborough; joint venture mills at Boondoola, Biggenden, Gayndah and Hervey Bay; and yards and roof-truss plants at Townsville, Rockhampton, Bundaberg and Brisbane. [p. 63]

Lambert Hyne began his expansion with the purchase of Bradshaw's mill at Mundubbera. He rebuilt the mill into an efficient unit in war-time by economical purchases of sound second-hand equipment. The Burnett had flooded Bradshaw

Brothers' mill in the Mundubbera railway yard. By a circuitous route, Hyne got there as flood going down and bought the licence on the spot. [p. 62]

Hyne and Son had a yard in Rockhampton from 1888 but in 1953 they bought Carrick's mill there, formerly Skyring's and "hopelessly out of date". Lambert Hyne electrified it but in 1967 it was burnt down, the result of an explosion of air and sawdust during welding, the first time Hynes lost a mill to fire.

Although Hyne made the Wengenville operation, acquired from Lars Anderson, more efficient, Forestry policy acted against off-rail mills. One of the most effective expansions was into the Mary Valley. In 1949 Lambert Hyne bought a quota at auction, building a mill at Imbil on the site of the old State Sawmill and later acquiring Lutton's mill. Having built up a substantial milling quota, the two mills were too small and Lambert Hyne with his sons Warren and Richard went to Canada and Scandinavia and established the new Melawondi mill, opened by the Premier on 24 September 1976, the first modern mill in the area. [p. 66]

When large areas of pine plantation timber in the Tuan area became available, Hyne was the only bidder. He bought 50 acres at Granville, erecting a mill using much of the old Amamoor mill equipment in 1974 and rebuilding it in 1978.

Lambert Hyne purchased mills at Dingo and Duinga from the Wetherly family, gaining access to Blackdown Tableland hardwood. He amalgamated the mills and built a new electric mill at Dingo, supplying timber for housing on the coalfields.

When Forestry auctioned timber at Byfield, Hyne and Tapiolas bought it and jointly built a mill at Bondoola. [p. 67-8]

Hyne and Son opened a yard in Townsville. As Rooneys controlled Sims Ltd, after Urara mill burnt down, H.J. Hyne agreed to withdraw from Townsville when his yard was resumed if Rooney did not rebuilt the Urara mill. Hyne in fact helped Rooney through the depression until the bank appointed a liquidator and Hyne reopened in Townsville in 1935. [p68]

Lambert Hyne later leased Gino Paris' mill near Innisfail, saving it from closure, but as a fair sale price could not be negotiated, bought Day's mill. [p. 68]

Hyne and Son tried using their band saw on hardwood but with little success until the 1950s. Then, using lower speeds and with a log carriage designed to turn the log in sequence between turns, they became successful. It was almost like peeling for plywood. Hynes worked with CSIRO perfecting the system. [p.70]

Hyne also bought Lehrs and Schluter's mill at Monto and Don Smith's mill near Bauple. [p.74]

The 150 mile limit on road hauling timber made a Brisbane mill essential, and Hyne after some effort, acquired Hutton's former ham factory at Zillmere.¹⁷

There has been a sawmill at Tinana since Stephenson and Hansen's Mill, apparently erected in the mid 1880s. The boiler from the now closed Dollin's mill at Tinana has been donated to power the replica *Mary Ann* locomotive of Cooloola Tramway fame, now under construction. (Hyne and Wilson Hart jointly bought Dollin's mill for its quota.)

In the mid 1980s Hyne invested \$6.5 million in a modern sawmilling complex with computer control at Tuan to treat the large amount of plantation softwood now being harvested from the Tuan-Toolara plantations.¹⁸

Dundathu Mill

After William Pettigrew examined the Mary River valley for its timber, he purchased a farm near the Walliebum cotton plantation as a sawmill site in August 1862. He landed at what he named Dundathu and walked around the lagoon on 29 October 1862. Having decided on the best site, marked it out on 4 November.¹⁹

Pettigrew had already advertised for 50,000 bricks and soon had men at work at this rather isolated outpost; only three weeks after the site was marked out, his workmen were attacked and robbed by the Aborigines.²⁰

The boilers were landed on 30 June 1863, the travelling crane in July and the saws were set to work on 22 August. The frame saw was started in late October and within a month the plant was breaking down 40 logs a day. Pettigrew advertised for contractors to supply the pine he required, some 450,000 super feet per month.²¹

William Sim, who emigrated from Scotland to Brisbane in 1854, was the son of a timber man and had worked in Pettigrew's first sawmill. He

bought a quarter share in the Dundathu venture in 1871.²²

Dundathu, being about eight miles from Maryborough, developed as a separate village. In mid 1864 there were a dozen cottages and sawn timber was being regularly shipped to Brisbane and to North Queensland. Until the Saltwater Creek bridge was completed in January 1865, Dundathu was difficult to access by road. A church (used as school house during the week) and residence for the teacher were provided by Pettigrew and Sims in early 1866. A telegraph line was erected in 1876, the contract for its erection let to Pettigrew.²³

Dundathu, treating 120,000 feet of pine per week, was a busy port. Schooners taking timber to markets throughout Australasia each carried a load often less than one of today's semi-trailers. The forty mill workers supported a population of 300.

The machinery, mostly English and Scottish, included three boilers (two flue boilers and one, more modern, with Galloway tubes). There were two vertical saws (one four-bladed), and overhead travelling crane running on transverse beams with two iron claws to move large timber to the travelling benches. The planing machines smoothed the pine, and cut tongue and groove as required. The steamer *Hercules* towed rafts of pine timber to Dundathu from Fraser Island and Tin Can Bay.²⁴

Virtually all sawmills used rails for moving timber and holding it in position for sawing. Pettigrew refers to a railway into the planing machine in 1865 and in 1870 to the heavy wear of wooden rails, apparently referring to Dundathu. Pettigrew in a paper to the Queensland Philosophical Society on 6 October 1871 told of his experience with wooden rails which had then been in use at Dundathu for seven years. Pettigrew recorded that there were two turntables at Dundathu, the one next to the lagoon measuring 4 feet 10 inches in diameter and the other 5 feet 1 inch.²⁵

A new chimney was built at Dundathu in 1875.²⁶ However, Dundathu appears not to have been modernised and in 1882 was said to be far behind the rebuilt Wilson Hart mill. The demise of Dundathu came on Christmas Day in 1893. The fire was first noticed in the mill itself at 4pm. Nothing was left of the mill but a mass of twisted machinery under heaps of ashes and a few charred posts. Pettigrew inspected the site on 29 December and noted that the rail trucks were

destroyed and the wheels cracked or broken by the heat. Another fire in 1895 burnt some of the vacant houses.²⁷ The site is now owned by E.A. (Eddie) and E.B. Hansen.

Dundathu was specifically designed for timber brought up the river but several mills were erected in the Pialba area, sawing local timber. There were mills as Takura, Nikenbah, Dundowran, Pialba, Scarness, Torquay and Urangan, most of these dating from the 1940s. Henry Jorgensen was milling at Pialba in the late 1890s when the promise of a railway helped stimulate building activity.

Fraser Island

There has only been one sawmill on Fraser Island, not particularly successful, but tramlines played an important part in logging the island prior to the adoption of motor trucks, as the sandy environment was a difficult one for bullock and horse teams, particularly the lack of feed.

There were three main tramlines built on the island, all running to the west coast which not only suited the Maryborough sawmills, it was a practical necessity as the sharp descent from the high dunes to the eastern coastline made the west coast the only practical destination for logging operations. The northern tramline ran to a log dump near Bogumbah Creek and was eight miles long with two branch lines each about three miles long. The central tramline ran to McKenzie's sawmill and wharf at White Cliffs, and was about 6 miles long with a terminus near Lake McKenzie and had two short branches. The third line roughly followed Woongoolver Creek, also ending at a log dump. There is some doubt whether an early horse-hauled wooden-railed tramline to a loading ramp near Deep Creek was actually built. The main three tramlines were steel-railed and operated by locomotives of three foot six inch gauge.

Timber getting on Fraser Island lasted for more than a century from the late 1860s. Three parties of timber getters were at work in the Aboriginal Protection Areas of the island in 1869 "with the full approval of the Lands Department".²⁸

Wilson Hart and Co. had timber getters on Fraser Island by 1877.²⁹

After the success of the Cooloola tramway, the *Maryborough Chronicle* reported in 1876 that Pettigrew and Company intended to lay a tramway across Fraser Island to the rafting ground in Hervey Bay to tap the stands of Kauri pine near

the eastern side of the island.³⁰ Apparently the idea was dropped, possibly because Pettigrew could not secure tenure over sufficient resources to justify construction.

Considerable effort was put into establishing pine plantations on the island for regeneration but without much success.³¹

Wilson Hart and Hyne had seven miles of steel tramway and steam locomotive by mid 1906 and were proposing another mile and a half extension.³²

The first tramway was built about 1906 from the beach at Yerang Creek using grade of 1 in 16 and a 28 tonne ex-Queensland Railways tank engine. It tapped the Poyungan and Bogimbah Creek area. By 1909 the tramway was reported as 10 miles long. The rails were moved to Woongoolba Creek about 1915 and closed around 1928.³³

The new line had been laid by 1921 when visitors were reported as being taken on the company's "engine and tender" four miles to the forest station [Central Station]. A survey had been made in 1920 of both road and tramway five miles to Ungowa but the road option was built in 1922 despite the lack of herbage for teams.³⁴ In time motor lorries overcame the feed problem. Postan's logging camp, which operated from 1935 to the close of logging in 1991, was the base for logging contractors. Initially Neville Smith and A.R. Postan used a variety of equipment. Postan, the former employee, bought out Smith in 1940. Much of the equipment remained on the island until it was superseded. Improvisation and adaptation were key elements.³⁵

After the original railway was put out of use, 8 1/2 miles of tramway was sold by Hyne and Sons to Moreton Mill in 1922.³⁶ Note, however, that if the second line operated until 1928, the 1922 sale of rails means that Wilson Hart and Hyne laid the second line before the first was lifted.

Forestry purchased McKenzie's tramline and wharf in 1925/26 for £5000.³⁷ The Department sold the rails from McKenzie's tramway in 1935 and the locomotive in 1941.³⁸

In 1918 Hepburn McKenzie, a large New South Wales timber merchant, contracted to buy the timber off 10,000 acres of Fraser Island harvesting 100,000 super feet per month from 1 April 1919 for ten years, building a sawmill at the Quarantine Reserve, White Cliffs and a tramline system.³⁹

The venture was not particularly successful and in 1921 H. McKenzie (Queensland) Limited was registered to acquire the rights under the 28 March 1918 agreement with the state Director of Forests. It was registered in Brisbane on 24 June 1921. Most of the shares were held by H. McKenzie Limited, the parent company, and the company's unprofitability presumably made sale to the public impracticable. In 1925 the shares were written down to one third of their face value. In 1926, after auction of the mill and sale of the tramway and wharf to the Forestry Board, it was resolved to wind up the company voluntarily.⁴⁰

The company found it difficult to sell the timber in Queensland, with local prejudice against using turpentine and brush box as commercial timbers and had to sell its output in Sydney, necessitating expensive added transport costs. With the cost of using watersiders from Maryborough for loading, it lost around £100,000 on the whole venture.⁴¹

Philadelphia Hanley applied to the Under Secretary for Lands in June 1906 to lease timber land so he could enter a contract to export 250,000 sleepers from Fraser Islands. Essentially he wanted a concession which he could then offer to an investor. McMahon, Director of Forests, wanted proof that Hanley held a contract already. An area of 14 square miles was put aside, to the west and south west of the area already set aside to the Wilson Hart-Hyne joint venture. Wilson Hart and Company wrote on 12 July to the Minister pointing out that the timber on the island was nearly all suitable for milling, needed to supply the Maryborough mills, and should not be sacrificed for railway sleepers. They pointed out that species such as turpentine, box and others should not be so used until proved unsuitable for milling.

Gilbert Burnett, the Forest Ranger, accompanied Hanley to the area near the heads of Urang, Boyungan, Bun Bun and Doondonga Creeks, an area with large amounts of Blackbutt and Turpentine and some tallowwood, and added that most of the old trees were "piped" and only suitable for sleepers. Hanley planned to load into punts at the mouth of Boyungan Creek.

Hyne and Son wrote on 16 July 1906 to state that the tramway was now in operation and would, when complete, be eight miles long, longer and more expensive than they and Wilson Hart had expected. They applied for another block to help them recover the cost.

McMahon went to Fraser before agreeing to auction the timber Hanley wanted. The conditions required the removal of half a million super feet in the first year and a million feet per year subsequently, conditions that Hyne and Son, writing on 29 August, considered too severe for them to meet, although they wanted to bid, having had to build 8 1/2 rather than the 5 miles of tramline they had expected.

Hanley offered one shilling per hundred super feet, double the upset price, he and Thomas Griffiths being the only bidders. Hanley took four months to put up the required £250 bond, and failed to start work. Because of the way the terms were written, the Department could not even recover the bond and the surety admitted he had no assets. Hanley was not to be found.⁴²

Isis Timber

Robert Miller was reported to have been setting up a sawmill on the banks of the Burrum River in late 1863 but this seems not to have been completed. In 1883 three partners, Williams, Burgess and Pizzey established a new sawmill at Howard, filling a "long felt want there". It had a boiler 30 feet long and five feet diameter, vertical frame and two hand benches and was commissioned in January.⁴³ W. Williams and Company were listed as having a mill at Howard in the 1880s. In the 1890s S. Ward was at Howard. From the mid 1890s Henry Markson and Queensland Collieries were also listed as sawmillers.

The timber resources of the Isis Scrub were known from the 1860s and initially were logged, hauled and floated, usually to Maryborough mills. One of the Howard partners, John F. Pizzey, established a sawmill at Isis Junction in May 1886 when the railway reached there and the Isis Investment Company tried to establish a township there. Isis Junction quickly faded after construction of the branch railway, opened to Childers in 1887 and within five years Pizzey had moved to Childers, occupying a site now partly occupied by the State High School.⁴⁴ It was the most important of a number of sawmills established in the district which had large pine timber stands which were cleared for cane growing. J.C.A. Pizzey, Premier of Queensland came from the same family. The sawmill had its own railway siding after the line was extended to Cordalba and operated by Pizzey until about 1920, and until around 1933 by Albert Gorrie.

Eureka Sawmilling Company

Other sawmillers at Childers included C. Anderson (1897-1899), F. Eales (1911) and George H. Skillington (1914 and 1915). In the 1940s, L.A. Prossen, the Eureka Sawmilling Company and later J.T. Cox, G. & E. Slack and F.C. Heaton had sawmills. The were also sawmills at Cordalba (Ware Brothers from 1896), Booyal (William Day and also Benjamin Worklamn from 1914), and Dallarnil (W. Elliott and G.W. Elliott from the 1920s).

Although the Eureka Sawmill site is now occupied by the Panda Motel, this was its second site. The original site was about 10 kilometres south west of Childers in the direction of Eureka station, and is still marked by a 3 kilometre spur road off the Childers-Biggenden Road bearing the name Old Eureka Sawmill Road.⁴⁵

When the mill was moved into Childers, it would appear that all the equipment and buildings were dismantled. What remains, however, are the posts embedded in the ground and the brickwork. These are sufficient to delineate the layout of the principal structures, including the main sawmill shed, and there are also the timber pieces which held the axles for the main belt drive attached to the posts in a line. The brickwork indicates the site of the boiler. The site includes office, houses and stacks for sawn timber.

Endnotes

1. George E Loyau, p. 60.
2. MC 18 July, 1 August, 5, 19 & 26 December 1861.
3. MC 24 July, 4 September, 25 December 1862.
4. Equity Case 105, SCT/U15, QSA.
5. *Mackay Mercury* 24 August 1872; MC 2 March 1875, 10 February 1893.
6. MC 14 July 1888, 14 February 1889 p.2; J.R.L. Hyne, *Hyne-sight*, p. 68.
7. MC 27 November 1862, 2 April, 10 December 1863.
8. MC 10, 13 May 1865.
9. George E. Loyau, p.14, John Dargavel, pp. 132-7.; MC 3 October 1866; description MC 11 May 1867.
10. MC 22 October 1881 p.2; CR 1882 p. 119.
11. Loyau, p. 350; *River of Dreams* * p360; Dargavel pp. 132-7.
12. MC 16 October 1873; Loyau, p. 355; MC 14 August 1903 p. 3.
13. Loyau, p. 352; Queensland 1900, pp. 139, 191.
14. MC 15 June 1883 p.2; J.R.L. Hyne, pp. 1-19.
15. Hyne, p. 19.
16. Hyne, pp. 35-41.
17. Hyne, p. 74.
18. MC 28 January 1983 quoted by Hyne; *Gympie Times* 24 August 1996 p. 2.
19. MC 28 August 1862; William Pettigrew Diary 1862.
20. BC 10 October 1862; MC 27 November 1862.
21. Pettigrew Diary; MC 3 December 1863.
22. * *River of Dreams* pp. 353-6; Pettigrew Diary 1871.
23. MC 19 May 1864 and shipping entries in MC; MC 31 December 1864, 17 January 1866, 20 July 1876.
24. Loyau, p. 347.
25. Pettigrew Diary 4 August 1870; Tramway Select Committee, Queensland Parliament, *Votes and Proceedings* 1874 Vol. 2 p. 787; Pettigrew Diary 19 July 1875.
26. MC 30 October 1875.
27. *Mackay Mercury* 12 July 1882; MC 27 December 1893; Pettigrew Diary; MC 26, 27 August 1895.
28. MC 5 October 1869 p. 2.
29. MC 16 October 1877.
30. MC 23 September 1876.
31. *Mackay Mercury* 10 May 1882, MC 1 August 1884 p. 2, 7 September 1887 p. 2, 6 July 1897 p. 2.
32. MC 14 July 1906 p. 2.
33. Letter Jules Tarden to G. Bond, collection held by D.J. Mewes; Dargavel, pp. 132-7; *Pilot* October 1909 (AUSN Co.).
34. *Australian Forest Journal* 15 July 1921 p. 211; PP 1921,1,971, 973 and PP 1923,1,121.
35. Karen Townrow, *Postan's Logging Camp*.
36. *Australian Sugar Journal* 14,533.
37. Annual Report Forestry Dept. 1925-26 p. 5.
38. Letter Forestry Department to George Bond.
39. BC 4 July 1918 p.8; Ian McNeil, *Light Railways* No. 104 (April 1989) pp. 11-3.
40. Company 50 of 1921, A/28529, QSA; Q 3 July 1926 p. 29, 33.
41. * *River of Dreams*, pp. 367-8.
42. Correspondence, Batch 113, LAN/AK40, QSA.
43. MC 13 January 1883 p. 2.
44. J.D. Kerr, *Only Room For One*, Isis Central Sugar Mill, Childers, 1996, pp. 16, 30; MC 2 December 1892 p.3.
45. Personal Communication, John Bunn, Childers.

Bundaberg, Gladstone and Boyne Valley

This section provides an overview of sawmilling in the Bundaberg and Gladstone districts and including the Boyne Valley.

The Bundaberg District

John and Gavin Steuart pioneered the timber industry at Bundaberg when they came to the mouth of the Burnett, assisted by Aborigines. They were looking for timber for barrels for the Baffle Creek boiling-down works but quickly appreciated the immense resources of the district. Most of the early sugar lands, as elsewhere in Queensland, were originally rain forest. The first timber getters were busy and in 1867 the *Elizabeth* took the first load of cedar to Maryborough. The Burnett and Kolan Rivers were used for rafting.¹

Sam Johnston established the first sawmill in the district, the Waterview mill at North Bundaberg, operating in 1868. Maunsell & Co's new sawmill, and Bundaberg's second, opened in 1871, located by the river above the main town area. Only a year later Maunsell was insolvent and the enterprise collapsed.²

Manchester, Scott and Rattray erected the Burnett Sawmills a mile below the town centre in 1876, using machinery that had been used for a few years previously at Eurimbula in the Bustard Bay area between Bundaberg and Gladstone.³

Rattray withdrew from the partnership which then operated at Manchester and Scott until the formers death from typhoid in 1887.⁴ By 1888 the Burnett River Sawmills employed 25 men directly plus about 50 felling and hauling log timber, and also owned two small ships for marketing sawn timber. The surviving partner, David Scott, had arrived in Brisbane from Scotland in 1863 and worked for Pettigrew in Brisbane for five years.⁵ From the 1890s the sawmill was served by a siding off the Millaquin branch railway.

Skyring

Henry Skyring established a sawmill in Bundaberg, firstly on Quay Street near Bundaberg Creek and in 1889 opened the Kennedy Bridge yards. He traded as H.A. Skyring and Sons, the business later run by his son Henry Stark Skyring.⁶

In the 1890s the business was known as T.D. Skyring and from 1896 H.A. Skyring and Sons,

with branches at Rockhampton and a mill near the Boyne River south of Gladstone. By then Skyrings had railway sidings to each of their mills.⁷ In 1944 the business was acquired by Carricks. The business at the original site, acquired in 1920 by F.C. Brown and Company, was taken over in 1946 by the Bundaberg Timber Company.

The Burnett Sawmill continued to flourish at East Bundaberg, in 1964 providing hardwood parquetry flooring for the Australian Embassy in Djakarta. It was incorporated as Burnett Sawmilling Pty Ltd. The chairman of directors, Walter Burnett McLachlan, died in 1968 after 45 years with the firm, having established his own sawmill on the north bank of the Burnett in 1933, destroyed by fire in 1944 and later rebuilt. In 1950 Burnett sawmills bought the Central Sawmill and in 1953 took over Carrick's mill, the original H.A. Skyring mill at East Bundaberg. The mill at Perry Street, North Bundaberg closed about 1959. McLachlan also acquired Broidy's Mill at East Bundaberg and in 1964 expanded into hardware. Logs by 1991 came from a 240 kilometre radius. Despite fears of closure in 1996, the mill is still operating.⁸

Petersen Brothers established a major sawmill in Bundaberg as the logical progression to purchasing a series of small mills G.B. Ruhl and Son's mill at Rosedale in 1972 and Albert Rieck and Sons' Gin Gin mill the next year and one at Gooburru in 1974. The mill was built in Telegraph Road between 1975 and 1978 by which time there were separate hardwood, pine and planing mills. After being taken over and trading as Wyper-Petersen, a division of the Sellers Atkins Group, the mill closed at the end of July 1992 as log supplies were not sufficient for the complex to be economical where small family mills could survive.⁹

Waterview Mill

The Steuarts moved into cane growing and it was Sam Johnston who established the Waterview sawmills in 1868, having previous experience at Rockhampton on the Fitzroy River with his brother John.¹⁰

The mill was severely damaged in the 1875 flood but was rebuilt. By 1888 it was substantially

expanded with 70 horsepower engine, two storeys, and planing room and 50 employees and supplied Rockhampton as well as local needs.¹¹ The importance of the mill was sufficient for the government to extend the railway linking North Bundaberg with Mount Perry, eastward to the Waterview Mill. Log timber generated more traffic on the line than the copper mine at Mount Perry which was expected to have been the line's mainstay.¹²

Waterview also operated as one of the more important sugar mills in the Bundaberg district for many years. The sawmill closed around 1903. Little remains of either enterprise but with its pioneering role in the establishment of Bundaberg makes it an important site which may repay archaeological investigation.¹³

By 1892, Scott and Walters were milling at Albionville in the Goondoon area, between Bundaberg and Gin Gin. It was augmented to become a sugar mill in 1894 which led to financial ruin, and George Noakes who bought the property was only interested in the sawmill. He milled at Burnett Heads early this century.¹⁴

McKay and Company's Albany Sawmills at Gin Gin were christened in late 1883. This may have succumbed in a few years for in 1896 Alfred McCreedy was proprietor of the only mill listed at Gin Gin. McCreedy first managed Johnston's sawmill at Bundaberg. By 1878 he managed the Waterview Saw and Planing Works in Townsville but was unsuccessful at the Bloomfield River south of Cooktown.¹⁵

A.F. Rieck, who reputedly organised the influx of farmers from Laidley to Watawa near Gin Gin, had by 1906, with his sons, established or taken over the Gin Gin Sawmill.¹⁶

The Riecks established a mill at Drinan in 1921 where they had selected land for cane growing and A.F. Rieck became known as the father of Drinan. The mill was sold to Petersen Brothers in 1973 and the licence transferred to Bundaberg in 1976.¹⁷

Adolph Ferdinand Rieck emigrated to Queensland in 1870 aged 17, working for Hancock at his sawmill in today's Walloon-Marburg area and for cotton growers before selecting land and storekeeping. He brought 15 farmers to Watawa, establishing the "New Laidley", a sugar growing area for Bingera Sugar Mill. He bought what was Hunters sawmill on the eastern side of Gin Gin township, closing it about 1923 and milling at Drinan.¹⁸

W. Phillips established a sawmill nearby in the Pine Creek area in 1922. It was moved to become the Burnett Sawmilling East Bundaberg mill after World War II but was burnt down.¹⁹

The stimulus of mining had Martin and Sons operating a sawmill at Mount Perry by 1875.²⁰ Much of the area was denuded for firewood. Luscombe Brothers established a steam sawmill on Ady Creek.²¹

The extension of the railway from Bundaberg to Gladstone in the 1890s made Mullett Creek, Rosedale, Murray's Creek, Lowmead, Miriam Vale and Bororen natural centres for sawmills that previously had no suitable transport.

Thomas D. Skyring operated a mill at Baffle Creek at least from 1892, an area which later supported other mills (and briefly, a sugar mill). Water transport provided the chief access, even after construction of the Bundaberg-Gladstone railway which was some miles further inland. The local ferry was too small for log trucks and logs were floated across to the sawmill. Sleeper mills also operated in the middle of the century and until the 1980s, with sleepers trucked to rail at Rosedale and Berajondo.²²

Wilson Hart of Maryborough established a mill on House Creek near Colosseum Rail Siding. Tom Pershouse started an early sawmill on Owens Lagoon at Wadeleigh. This may be the same mill described as William Pershouse's Charlotte Sawmill on the Boyne River. The first sawmill at Miriam Vale was reportedly burnt down in 1904.²³

Boyle Martin, who was unsuccessful in sugar milling as the first settler at Pialba, became the first butcher at Bororen and opened the first sawmill at Bororen. He was succeeded by George B. Martin.²⁴

Tom Skyring took over Taunton in 1881; this may be the same mill described at Baffle Creek (to the south-east) in the 1890s or it may have been at the coast north of Taunton cattle station and near Agnes Waters.²⁵

The major timber resources of the Gladstone area lie in the coastal ranges. "Scott and Manchester had the first contract on the tableland between Cabbage Tree Creek and Bariviloe and it was called the Tramline. The pine logs were railed to the partners sawmill in Bundaberg." The railway made the Bulburin area within a dozen or so miles of rail and "There was a shoot down the

mountain slope and the pine logs were hauled by the teamsters to the rafting ground on Oyster Creek where they were rafted downstream to Skyrings sawmill at Taunton."²⁶ This is the chute is reported as built by Tom Skyring in 1902 from the bottom of which horses hauled the logs to the railway for milling at Bundaberg or Gladstone. This same sources refers to a wooden tramline built from these forests to the Bundaberg-Gladstone railway but I doubt this. There may have been an incline tramway as well as or rather than a chute, and Mr Charles Summers in 1997 remembers seeing its remains but without any suggestion that it extended some miles further to the railway.²⁷

The first sawmill in the Gladstone region was the Eurimbula Sawmill established on Eurimbula Creek near where it empties into Bustard Bay. The sawmill may not have been commissioned until 1870 if the load of sawn timber on the schooner *Dawn* reaching Brisbane on 27 June 1870 was the mill's first output. Two boilers were taken to Eurimbula on its return journey.²⁸ In any case it was short-lived as in 1871 Captain Millar was reported as towing the old Bustard Bay sawmill plant to Calliope at the beginning of 1871 when part broke adrift. Thomas Manchester who worked at the Eurimbula Sawmills was a joint founder of the Burnett River Sawmills at Bundaberg.²⁹

Skyring's Toolooa sawmill had twin advantages. It was close to the sea, enabling logs to be floated down the Calliope River to it, and it was adjacent to the Toolooa Rail siding. Until 1904 it was known simply as Skyring's Siding although the post office was officially named Toolooa in 1899. H.A. Skyring and Sons also mills at Bundaberg and Rockhampton and also a mill at the lower end of Bramston Street, Gladstone, possibly from 1900 (when the Toolooa mill was completed) or possibly not until 1915.³⁰ The Toolooa mill closed about 1930.

Wills and Company were credited as operating a sawmill at Gladstone from 1874; the same listing included Robert Miller, presumably for his Eurimbula Mill, neither listing appeared after the 1877 issue (1876 information). In the 1890s Ibbotson's mill was listed under Gladstone as was William Pershouse's mill, making it difficult to ascertain what was in Gladstone itself. The Golding family operated the Valley Sawmill in Gladstone 1938-66, and 1903-08 A.J. Raymond and Company listed a Gladstone sawmill. Woolworths now stands on the site of Skyring's Gladstone sawmill (which had its own railway siding).³¹

The Calliope Sawmills came into prominence in 1872 with a boiler explosion in 1872. One of the boilers, which came from Eurimbula, went adrift on the way but was recovered.³² The mills were established by Robert and John Miller at a site described as upstream from the Calliope River Railway Bridge. Large amounts of timber were lost in the 1875 floods suggesting a site that was below flood level. The sawmill and wharf were rebuilt and by 1883 produced 50,000 super feet per month from two steam driven circular saws using a steam winch to draw logs brought by punts up the river bank to the mill. Munro obtained a new boiler in 1873.³³ A site near Beecher and Clyde Creek with a lagoon (for fresh not salt water) suggests a possible site but the site of the mill or any remains have not been located.

The Calliope Sawmills were still operating in 1875 and there is a reference in 1878 to Ibbotson's mill, which may be the same mill. Clyde Creek Sawmills, appeared to have been run by John Ibbotson and David Cairncross from around 1892 which Herbert S. Oubridge also listed in the 1892 QPOD only. From 1894 Ibbotson was listed as sole proprietors. The mill was listed in the Post Office Directory until 1920. Ibbotson died in 1933 aged 92. Other mills operated at Calliope, one in the railway yard, William Carmichael erected it practically when the railway opened. This site has now been cleared for rail maintenance use. By 1972 the Calliope Sawmill, then reported at last worked by the late Clarry Meyers and his sons, was sold and idle.³⁴

Boyne Valley

The construction of the railway to Many Peaks, opened in 1910, provided the means of tapping the timber resources. Builyan (originally known as Nevertire), lies across the ridge from the former mining town of Many Peaks, and is still a major timber centre. Bullock and horse teams and later trucks hauled large amounts of logs to the mills at Builyan, and to other mills further down the Boyne Valley at Littlemore, Ubobo and Nagoorin. Builyan now has one major mill and one specialist mill.

There are many stories of the efforts of bringing logs down to sawmills in the Boyne Valley, a week by team. The first trucks were used by A.P. Brown and Bob Thompson. Harold Mossman was still driving horse teams in the 1950s.³⁵

The sawmills which gave life to the settlements along the Boyne Valley Railway have closed, except for those at Builyan. Harry and Jack

Mossman, who erected a steam sawmill at Littlemore near the Boyne River, moved it within a few years to Builyan.³⁶

In 1914 Dave and Albert McLachlan, William Fitzhenry and Frederick and Richard Walker (and possibly others) combined to form a syndicate to purchase the Mossman sawmill and operate it as the Boyne Valley Sawmilling Company which was listed at Builyan from 1917.³⁷ Summers and Zwisler established their mill from about 1943 having been a decade in the hauling business.

The Central Queensland Timber and Plywood Company was formed in 1920 and purchased a sawmill at Calliope, possibly Ibbotson's which appeared to close at this time, and moved it to Builyan. J.M. Stewart of Brisbane was the promoter and managing director and the board included D.A. McLachlan. The venture soon failed and the Boyne Valley Sawmilling Company bought it and used it as a pine mill, operating on the same site for fifty and more years.³⁸ In 1972 the company amalgamated with Builyan Sawmills, which may mean Summers and Zwisler. The old mills closed and a modern mill was built on the site of the old plywood mill. It was variously owned since then by Wilson Hart and Company, Carricks Limited and now by Parkside (Tapiolas of Ayr).

Lewis Summers, a stockman born at Aramac in 1909, became involved in the timber industry around Goomeri in the depression years and joined his brother Charles who began working in the timber industry at Goomeri when it offered work during the depression. When his employer offered work at Builyan he didn't refuse. They joined with Percy Zwisler who, with two brothers had been cutting and carting timber at Imbil. In 1937 they moved to Builyan, and joined the Summers to form Summers and Zwisler in logging and carting. In 1940 they purchased a sawmill at Kalonga and moved it to Builyan where erected it and operated as Builyan Sawmills until the amalgamation with the Boyne Valley Sawmilling Company. There were about 12 to 15 men employed at the Builyan mill, more like 20 after amalgamation.

Summers and Zwisler's mill originally cut pine, later hardwood, and the firm railed its sawn timber and logs until the 1990s. Logs were also loaded at Golembil, Nagoorin and Wietalaba.

The firm retained its logging business, and saw the opportunity and need to mechanise, obtaining motor winches, tractor, Republic truck and trailer to haul pine logs. With bulldozers available after

World War II, the amount of timber accessible was greatly increased, extending the ten year life thought then to have been the limit to the Builyan sawmills. The early roads on Bulburin had grades steeper than 1 in 4 and a brake boy was employed to operate the back brake on the truck. The Public Estate Improvement branch later improved the roads. In later years the firm hauled many logs to Miriam Vale.³⁹

The Summers and Zwisler mill buildings remain intact but with most of the machinery removed. The shed is used as a workshop for the logging and trucking equipment. It still has features of its former use and includes some of the old equipment. It is now owned by Charles Summers son-in-law, John Hopf, proprietor of the hotel at Many Peaks.

The sawmill was originally powered by suction gas plant, bought from Peters Ice Cream and reassembled locally. The cement block some six deep feet remains inside the mill building. It provided cheap reliable power. A Model A Ford and belt were used to start it, more reliable than a compressor to start. The partners bought an alternator set from the old Ayr Powerhouse intending to electrify but power came and it was not used. It and the suction gas plant were later sold for scrap.

Horse teams were used on top of mountain area. Logs were rolled over the side, then pulled up on both sides of creek and hauled in to the mill. Horses came down the road before trucks were used but had finished by the time the Summers arrived. Teams continued to work up top, also the Mount Jacob road (which was awful).⁴⁰

Hunting Brothers had a mill at Many Peaks about 1910 but around 1926 moved it to Mount Cannindah near Barrimoon as railway construction advanced towards Monto. In 1930 it was damaged by fire, moved to Kalonga at Bancroft and in 1940 sold to Summers and Zwisler. The three Hunting Brothers later operated a sawmill near Monto.⁴¹

Kalpowar

The sawmill as Kalpowar was an important part of the Kalpowar community for about three decades. The other main component was the Forestry Department. The proprietor was listed in 1949 as C.A. Purlds, and it had closed by 1982. It largely cut plantation pine thinnings for case timber. The mill was apparently powered by portable steam engine and was not modernised

which led to its demise. The land on which it stood is now owned by Mrs Joan Price.

North-west of Gladstone, there were sawmills at Yarwun and Targinnie. Fred G. Morgan was listed in 1901 as having the Targinnie sawmills at Calliope River, Gladstone, not necessarily the same site as today's Targinnie. Other mills were at Mount Larcom, Ambrose and Raglan (where a small sawmill was operating in 1884). Hardwood from the Raglan area supplied mine props for Mount Morgan mine and timber for Rockhampton sawmills once the railway was completed in 1903.⁴²

Endnotes

1. Nev Rackemann, *Bundaberg: from Pioneers to Prosperity*, p. 39; J.D. Kerr, *Southern Sugar Saga*, p. *?; Janette Nolan, *Bundaberg*, p. 34, 55.
2. MC 19 October 1871, 17 October 1872 p. 2.
3. February 1876 entry, Chronological Table, Bundaberg Mail.
4. George E Loyau, pp. 234-5.
5. W.F. Morrison, Volume 2, unpagued.
6. Nev Rackemann, *Bundaberg: from Pioneers to Prosperity*, pp. 418, 439.
7. WN 619, WN 31/46.
8. Cutting *Bundaberg News Mail* 3 December 1968, 4 September 1991, 19 January 1996, Bundaberg & District Historical Society Sawmill file; Weekly Notices 16/38, 8/59 re North Bundaberg.
9. *Bundaberg News Mail* 22 June 1973, 4 March 1975, 2 May 1980 and letter E.K. Petersen 13 July 1979; *Guardian*, 20 December 1995, Bundaberg & District Historical Society Sawmills File.
10. Nev Rackemann, *Bundaberg*, p. 57.
11. W.F. Morrison, Volume 2, unpagued.
12. *Queensland Parliamentary Debates* 36,143-4.
13. Waterview Mill closed early 20th century - Bundaberg & District Historical Society Sawmill File.
14. J.D. Kerr, *Southern Sugar Saga*, p. 33.
15. *Bundaberg and Mount Perry Mail* 13 November 1883; Queensland 1900, p. 119.
16. Joy W. Mullett, *Centenary Shire of Kolan* states that Gin Gin Sawmill closed in 1912 for lack of orders and was in 1921 established at Drinan.
17. Mullett, p. 37.
18. Cutting copies *Bundaberg News Mail* 22 June 1929 and 4 March 1975, Bundaberg & District Historical Society Sawmills File.
19. Neville Rackemann, *A Century of Progress Woongarra Shire*, p. 51.
20. Pugh 1874-77, 1883-85; only listed as timber merchants in 1874.
21. Mervyn Royle, *Perry's Past* p.7 indicates that E. Martin's was a later sawmill.
22. Diane Graham & Christeen Jodvaskis comp., Parish of Baffle Gosen "The Promised Land", Baffle Creek, St Pauls Lutheran Church 1996 p.32.
23. Growcott and Taylor, p. 96; A.J. Jeffery, pp. 53-5, 69; Lorna McDonald, p. 154.

24. A.J. Jeffery, p. 95.
25. A.J. Jeffery, p. 46; Growcott and Taylor, p. 95.
26. A.J. Jeffery, pp. 51, 59.
27. *Calliope Shire Council Centenary*, pp. 117, 119 and (later) Jim Threadingham, p.98; Mr Charles Summers interview.
28. MC 12 May 1868 quoting *Northern Argus*; Growcott and Taylor, pp. 65, 94.
29. A.J. Jeffery, p. 37; MC 17 January 1871 p. 3 quoting *Gladstone Observer*.
30. Lorna McDonald, p. 155; see *Bundaberg Mail* 22 March 1897 quoting Gladstone Observer for description.
31. *Calliope Shire Council Centenary*; Lorna McDonald, p. 155.
32. MC 28 September 1872 p. 2, 17 January 1871.
33. Lorna McDonald, p. 154.
34. Lorna McDonald, p.155; Gladstone Observer 15 July 1933; Jim Threadingham, p. 96; *Centenary 1872 1972 Calliope State School*, p. 106.
35. Lorna McDonald, p. 283; *Calliope Shire Council Centenary*, p. 121.
36. Lorna McDonald, p. 283.
37. *Calliope Shire Council Centenary*, pp. 121-2. The *Post Office Directory* lists all the partners as if owning separate sawmills, a fact which causes confusion here and elsewhere.
38. *Calliope Shire Council Centenary*, p. 122; Jim Threadingham, p. 97.
39. Jim Threadingham, pp. 99, 100.
40. Interview Mr Charles Summers, 21 July 1997.
41. John Joseph Bright, "Many Peaks - the history of a Central Queensland Mining Town", Architecture Thesis, QUT January 1989; W. Ross Johnston, *A New Province*, pp. 68-9; *Calliope Shire Council Centenary*, p. 121.
42. Lorna McDonald, p. 154; *Raglan State School Centenary 1879-1979*, pp. 18-9.

Outside the Study Area

The study area includes the major timber resources of the state but there are important areas in the rest of the state, principally the wet tropical areas near Mackay and between Ingham and the Daintree, and the low density but extensive dry forests of the west, with a large yield of cypress pine.

South Western Queensland

West of the study area lies the cypress pine belt, supporting a number of sawmills. In the south-west, west of Warwick, Inglewood was a centre for many sawmills, from Thomas Dwyer around 1897. The Railway Department had a sleeper mill from about 1912 until 1973 and there were several other sawmills, especially from the 1940s. Yelarbon was a sawmilling centre, with the Girle family operating since around 1917. Whetstone had a sawmill while further west, Goondiwindi had several sawmills from the 1890s. The sawmills further west - Gooray, Talwood, Thallon and Dirranbandi - date from the 1910s or later i.e. after the railway. Henry Fenn had a sawmill at Mungindi by 1896. Hebel in 1913-14 and Bollon from 1947 also had sawmills.

South-west of Toowoomba, Evans Brothers were sawmilling at Millmerran (earlier known as Domville) from 1895 and others included Adam Stirling from 1920, F. & L. Blinco from 1934 and others postwar when housing boomed and cypress was used locally and in Sydney for floors. West of Millmerran there were mills at Canning Creek, Bringallily, Turallin, Koorongarra and Western Creek.

The Western Timber Company established or acquired mills in several centres including Dalby, Cecil Plains, Ducklo, Jandowae, Fairyland, Kogan and Millmerran in the 1940s, most of them in the cypress pine area and most west of the study area.

Dalby is just west of the region but had sawmills, partly supplied with logs from the Bunya Mountains inside the region. Cecil Plains south of Dalby had several mills after the extension of the railway there. Jandowae had mills from 1913 onwards. So did nearby Darr Creek. West from Dalby to Tara, Ducklo, Kubarilla, Weranga and Goramba had mills. Tara had a government sawmill 1928-1933.

Further west Meandarra and Surat had mills. St George was an early sawmilling centre from 1883, with Jim Yen & Co. in the 1890s apparently Chinese owned.

West from Dalby along the railway and nearby were mills at Warra, Braemar, Kogan, Kogan North and Brigalow. Chinchilla was a major centre with Norm and Percy Emmerson owning and moving a series of mills at opportunities arose. Among the sawmilling sites around Chinchilla were Condamine, Pinedale, Morsby, Pelican and Fairyland.

In 1902 the Railway Department tried a traction engine to bring timber without great success. Because of the huge need for sleepers and bridge timbers for railway construction especially for the Great Western Railway intended to link Charleville and Camooweal, Queensland Railways in 1911 constructed a 26 mile railway (termed a tramway because it was not officially authorised as a railway) from Chinchilla to Barakula, the longest timber tramway in the state although there were none of the construction difficulties encountered by Laheys or Pettigrew. It operated until 1971 and served a railway sawmill at Barakula.

West of Chinchilla, there were sawmills at Baking Board, Goombi, Columboola (a sleeper mill), Miles, Christianberg, Gurulmundi, Wandoan, Roche Creek and Taroom on the upper Dawson (Christopher Deeholm from 1889).

West from Miles, there were mills at Drillham, Dulacca, Dulacca North, Jackson, Kora and Channing. At Yuleba, W. Barnes and Company were listed by Pugh from around 1886 and Hunter's sawmill from the 1900s. There were mills at Strathmere, Wagoo, Wallumbilla and Pickenjennie. Roma was listed with H. Mac-lachlan's from about 1879, and to the north later sawmills at Eumina, Injune (which had a state sawmill) and Westgrove. Mitchell had a sawmill in the 1880s as did Morven, and in between, at Mungallala from 1912.

Charleville also had a sawmill in the 1880s, and Cobb & Co's mill in the 1890s, associated with their coach building factory. To the south H. & J. Albion was listed at Cunnamulla from 1885 and Coongoola was listed in 1943. North of Charleville, there were mills at Augathella and Tambo. The Tambo mills, dating from around 1891, tended to be located some distance from the town and moved as supplies dictated, a common

feature of the western mills. Nive Downs was mentioned as having a mill in the 1880s or even 1870s.

Central Queensland

The Upper Burnett above Gayndah lies outside the study area, the main centres of Mundubbera, Eidsvold and Monto all having mills, predominantly hardwood, especially spotted gum and also ironbark. The Hoop Pine plantations around Kalpowar are inside the study area.

Henrick Meyer and later the Timber Corporation and Hyne had mills at Mundubbera, Hyne having acquired an old and rebuilt it. J.B. Shepherdson was milling at Eidsvold from the late 1880s and from 1916 Henry and John Blundell were listed, by 1948 operating as G.J. and H.M. Blundell. The Hunting Brothers, milling at Mount Cannindah, established a sawmill near Monto when the town was established there. Hyne and Son milled at Monto from 1945.

Sawmilling in Central Queensland dates from John and Sam Johnston's establishment of a sawmill at Rockhampton in the early 1860s. The venture came in the wake of the Canoona gold rush and did not last long as Sam Johnston established himself in Bundaberg in 1868. Rockhampton having little local timber resource, became an outlet for the timber districts with the main firms maintaining distribution yards in Rockhampton. These firms included Manchester and Scott of Bundaberg, Ferguson and Company of Gympie, A.J. Raymond and Company of Brisbane, Wilson Hart and Hyne of Maryborough, Skyrings and Carricks. The Rockhampton Railway Workshops had their own sawmill. At North Rockhampton a sawmill was established in the railway yard by 1892, the railway from there to Emu Park being isolated from the main system. There were a number of mills at or near Cawarral, Emu Park and Yeppoon, there still being a major sawmill at Bondoola near Yeppoon.

There were sawmills at many towns throughout Central Queensland, including the Callide and Dawson Valleys, at Dingo and Daringa, tapping the Blackdown Tableland area, as well as mills at and near Emerald, Springsure, Clermont and Blair Athol. The Railway Department established a mill at Birimgan in the Blair Athol State forest, chiefly to supply sleepers for railway extension and maintenance in the central west, building a light railway or tramway of the usual 3 foot 6 inch gauge some 13 kilometres to it. The Forest

Service operated the sawmill at Birimgan for a number of years.

West of Emerald there were sawmills at Withersfield, Sapphire, Anakie and Rubyvale, with mining creating a local demand, and west of the main dividing range at Alpha, Jericho and Tambo, operating on the cypress pine forests.

Mackay and Cairns were the main sources of timber, particularly of rain forest species, outside the study region. There were mills throughout the Mackay district, including ones adjacent to some of the sugar mills for their own purposes. Woodman (Mackay) Pty Ltd operated mills and Mackay and Dalrymple Heights in the Eungella rain forest area.

The timber of the Eungella Range was difficult to access, even when the railway extend to within a few miles of the base of the range in 1905. The Eungella Range Timber Company, registered in October 1907 and largely comprised of Finch Hatton interests, lasted only a year, but not for lack of timber. The range road has for ninety years been precarious and subject to severe slippage, but in the last fifty years the area became a major supply to both local and Mackay sawmills. In 1922 the timber chute was regarded as a hazard as the logs moving down the chute brought down rocks and debris, strewing some on the road, and occasionally whole logs lodged on the road. As the road and motor trucks improved, the logs came down by jinker.

North Queensland Sawmilling

The first sawmill at Bowen was erected by the beach at Bowen in 1865, Brown & Sherry's steam sawmill designed to mill pine logs brought from the islands. It was originally erected on Whitsunday Island but did not have an adequate water supply. Withnall subsequently erected a mill in the 1880s on the same island. Particularly from the 1890s as land was cleared for cane in the Proserpine district, substantial stands of timber there were milled. Sawmills continue to operate in and near Proserpine. There were sawmills at Home Hill and Ayr on the lower Burdekin, the first mill in the area being on Inkerman Station in 1883, cutting what was then a quite substantial resource.

Townsville is similar to Rockhampton in largely having a number of timber yards rather than sawmills. Many of the same firms operated in Townsville. The major sawmiller was Rooney and Company whose Townsville sawmill dated from 1879 and lasted until the early 1930s.

There were, to the west, sawmills at Mingela, Ravenswood and Charters Towers, including a timber tramway which was used to bring firewood to the pumping station on the Burdekin River for the Charters Towers water supply. There were many yards at Charters Towers supplying the needs of the gold mines. To the west, mills at Homestead (including a Railway Department sleeper mill), Pentland, Torrens Creek and Hughenden operated on local supplies. Even Boulia in 1895 and the 1920s had a sawmill. Richmond had a sawmill - at Charcoal Creek 20 or 27 miles north of the town - in the 1880s. So did Cloncurry in 1886, and later the mining town of Croydon had a sawmill.

The Wet Tropics of the Far North

North of Townsville, the Herbert River district had areas of rain forest, although for many years Ingham had sawyers but its first sawmill dated from the late 1890s. From the 1940s the Mount Fox area has been substantially exploited.

One of the earliest sawmill ventures in the north was the Cardwell Saw Mill Company Limited, registered on 15 May 1883. This local company lasted only a few years. A mill also operated on Hinchinbrook Island in the 1886. George Barnett this century operated mills at Cardwell, Corduroy and Lower Tully. Lahey's Mill at Canungra was reportedly relocated near Cardwell after its sale in 1935. Certainly the Brown and Broad Limited and the Standply Timber Company both operated mills at Kennedy and the former also at Carruchan from the 1940s. Sawmilling at Tully River began in the 1900s, twenty years before the sugar mill was established. Lawson and Son of Mareeba had a branch mill at Tully from the 1940s. Meyer Brothers of the Mary Valley near Gympie also established at El Arish in the mid 1930s. Closer to Innisfail, the Silkwood State Sawmill was established in 1918 but was not the success anticipated.

Sawmilling at Innisfail, then known as Geraldton, began in the 1880s, with local mills later erected at Japoon, Wangan, Mourilyan and East Palmerston. From 1900 the two foot gauge tramway network extended the availability of log timber. North towards Cairns, there were mills at Babinda and Gordonvale. An area near Edmonton had the name Sawmill Pocket but by 1923 it was a cane growing district.

The huge timber resources of the Cairns district were quickly exploited with Melbourne capitalists sending timber getters to the Daintree in the

1870s. Cedar was plundered first, the logs generally being floated down the Daintree and other coastal streams and taken to southern sawmills. The Barron River provided an uncertain means of bringing tableland timber to the coast. Besides the wastage, possibly exaggerated, possibly not, in timber cascading down a hundred metres at the Barron Falls, many other logs rotted in the bush where they had been felled waiting for transport.

The first sawmill in the region was Barclay and Hayes sawmill erected near the mouth of the Daintree River, apparently operating by 1875, but not particularly successful as there was no local market closer than Cooktown for sawn timber. W.B. Ingham erected a steam sawmill at Cairns by 1877. Herberton became an important tin mining town by 1880 and in 1882 a sawmilling plant was landed at Port Douglas and hauled to Herberton for C.G. Hurrey. He erected a sawmill at Evelyn later in the 1880s. A sawmill was erected by the lower Barron in 1885. John Robb, contractor to build the Cairns Range railway, erected his own sawmill at Kamerunga. Deykin Peberdy, manager of the sawmill in 1888 and his descendants were involved in sawmilling throughout Queensland. James Lyons established at Cairns by the 1890s.

At the end of 1884 Edward Myers reported on the huge amount of timber felled awaiting for building of the railway. Although already promised, it took another quarter century to reach Herberton. When it reached Atherton in 1903, substantial areas of tableland timber could be reached and the extension to Herberton, Ravenshoe, Yungaburra, Malanda and Millaa Millaa over the next two decades made the railway a major artery for both logs and sawn timber and the Cairns region became the main sawmilling district outside the south-east Queensland biogeographic region. The mining magnate John Moffat established the first sawmill at Cedar Creek, now Ravenshoe, in 1899 nearly two decades before the railway arrived. It became a major milling centre and in 1990, notorious for the huge loss of Federal Government funds.

Major sawmilling enterprises developed from the far northern region, drawing in outside capital, including Cairns Timber Limited from 1910 (its headquarters in Brisbane). J.M. Johnston of the Stratford Sawmills near Cairns had a major branch mill at Mount Molloy and other mills from Innisfail to Cooktown. Lawson and Sons based at Mareeba had branch mills at Tolga and Tully. More recently the Foxwood group combined the major sawmills in the region.

A timber tramway was established at Peeramon in 1912 following one built at Tumoulin in 1911. However, most of the plans for tramways did not eventuate and the advertisement showing a geared Climax locomotive did not represent reality. Lakes Tramway Limited was a combined venture of local sawmillers.

There was comparatively little of Queensland which did not see a sawmill in operation.

List of Photographs of Sawmills in the Queenslander

This is a partial list of known sawmill photographs provided for information. It is not exhaustive.

- Q 16.3.1895 p499- Several on Townsville; p508 Rooney & Co's sawmill.
- Q 23.10.1897 p801 7. Pizzey's sawmill, Childers;
- Q 19.3.1898 p553 Sawpit; deserted timber getters hut (where?)
- Q 2.6.1900 p1039 Filshie & Broadfoot sawmill Toowoomba; Enterprise mill, Ravensbourne.
- Q 16.6.1900 p1132 Tambourine 4. Old sawmill and water wheel.
- Q 13.7.1901 p77 Nambour feature; p80 Nambour St. Sch; sawmill.
- Q 2.11.1901 p851 14. Landsborough Sawmill with siding.
- Q 16.8.1902 p358 Lahey Bros Sawmill, Beaudesert;
- Q 4.7.1903 p29 loading pine logs Crow's Nest; Pechey's Sawmill, Pechey (no railway).
- Q 18.2.1905 p24 Lahey Bros & Nicklin's sawmill Canungra; "Climax" loco coming out of tunnel; p25 5. loading logs, Canungra (shows loco); 4. Coomera Valley (loco & logs on bridge);
- Q 1.4.1905 p17 Provisional school Blackbutt; Anderson's sawmill, Blackbutt
- Q 15.4.1905 p29 "The First Steam timber tramway in Qld" (opening Munro Perserverance tramway loco and train on bridge.
- Q 8.7.1905 p28 Skyring's sawmill, Bundaberg (shows siding)
- Q 12.8.1905 p? Crow's Nest line, Pechey Estate (no train); Pechey Sawmill (no railway)
- Q 11.11.1905 p24-25 Photos McGhie Luya & CO old sawmill, Cootharaba; Rafting Ground Kin Kin Ck etc.
- Q 25.8.1906 p21 Timber getters camp under shadow of pine spur, Sebastopol Range (super) p24 Nambour.
- Q 6.10.1906 p24 timber getters camp Pine Cliff, Beengweh, Upper Cressbrok Ck (below cliff, medium size, clear) p26 6.Kingaroy Railway terminus with pine logs to truck (v. small,clear).
- Q 30.3.1907 p28 Sketches at Cooroy 4 A Teamster's house. (p29 Article (SM being cut up, regret closed so long, large influx last 18 months, settlement unable to get closer than a mile from Railway Stn due all land being held by Messrs Dath Henderson & Co Ltd who took it up timber. Govt negotiating for its purchase.
- Q 18.1.1908 p23 Chinchilla 9. Traction engine used to draw sawn timber to railway (v. small)
- Q 27.2.1909 p25 Lahey's 4. Train approaching tunnel; 5. stop by wayside for more logs; 6. photo train at Canungra sawmill (atom medium size, clear, loco)
- Q 28.5.1910 p22 Ministerial party re Texas line; 90,000 sleepers Inglewood. p25 Building Blackbutt extension - camp, cutting, timber getting.
- Q 18.11.1911 p28 Baffle Ck sawmill.
- Q 25.11.1911 p22 Canungra; Lahey's mill; two of locos on tramway; one tramway,no train
- Q 15.3.1913 p22 Blair Athol; Newcastle shaft; Govt. sawmill.
- Q 17.5.1913 p22 Yarraman opening - Minister opens, shows crowd and loco; two of Qld. Pine Co mill.
- Q 14.11.1914 p27 First car at Eungella Range; and Dobson's sawmill on Range (portable steam engine)
- Q 26.2.1916 p25 Loading logs, timber into French barque Versailles at South Brisbane (near Victoria Bridge?) - good (loco, not clear)
- Q 7.6.1919 p28 Lahey Bros sawmill, Beaudesert, recently burnt down (photo after fire)
- Q 15.11.1919 p28 Kin Kin - photo of town and 2 of timber (cut)
- Q 10.1.1920 p19 Fraser Is - McKenzie - 1.jetty, 2 tramway, 3 sawmill, 4 cutting on tram.
- Q 24.1.1920 p22 Rathdowney - sawmill after storm, short tramway visible.
- Q 9.12.1922 p28 Part of Enoggera Railway yard (mainly timber yard)
- Q 28.7.1923 p26 Timber wagons (not tramway)
- Q 22.9.1923 p22 Sawmill Mt Archer near Woodford
- Q 13.10.1923 p26 Page of photos, sawmill at Pentland (has suction gas plant)
- Q 24.11.1923 p28 Bullock team hauling timber to Brooloo
- Q 15.12.1923 p27 Destruction (& before) Dath Henderson's sawmill chimney, Bulimba (making way for more wharves)
- Q 5.7.1924 p24 Inglewood sleeper mill & depot
- Q 9.1.1926 p26 Ruins Lawson's Sawmill, Mareeba (fire)
- Q 27.3.1926 p26 Bunya Mts - team at bottom of incline; log dump at bottom of tramway (single line) for hauling to top; winding plant to haul logs up; horse tramway in Saddle Tree Ck gorge; loaded logs ready to descend incline tramway (Kobbi photos) (p11 sketcher text)

Q 24.4.1926 p26 Fire ruin, Hancock & Gore sawmill, Ipswich Rd, Brisbane.