

EUNGELLA TIMBER INDUSTRY

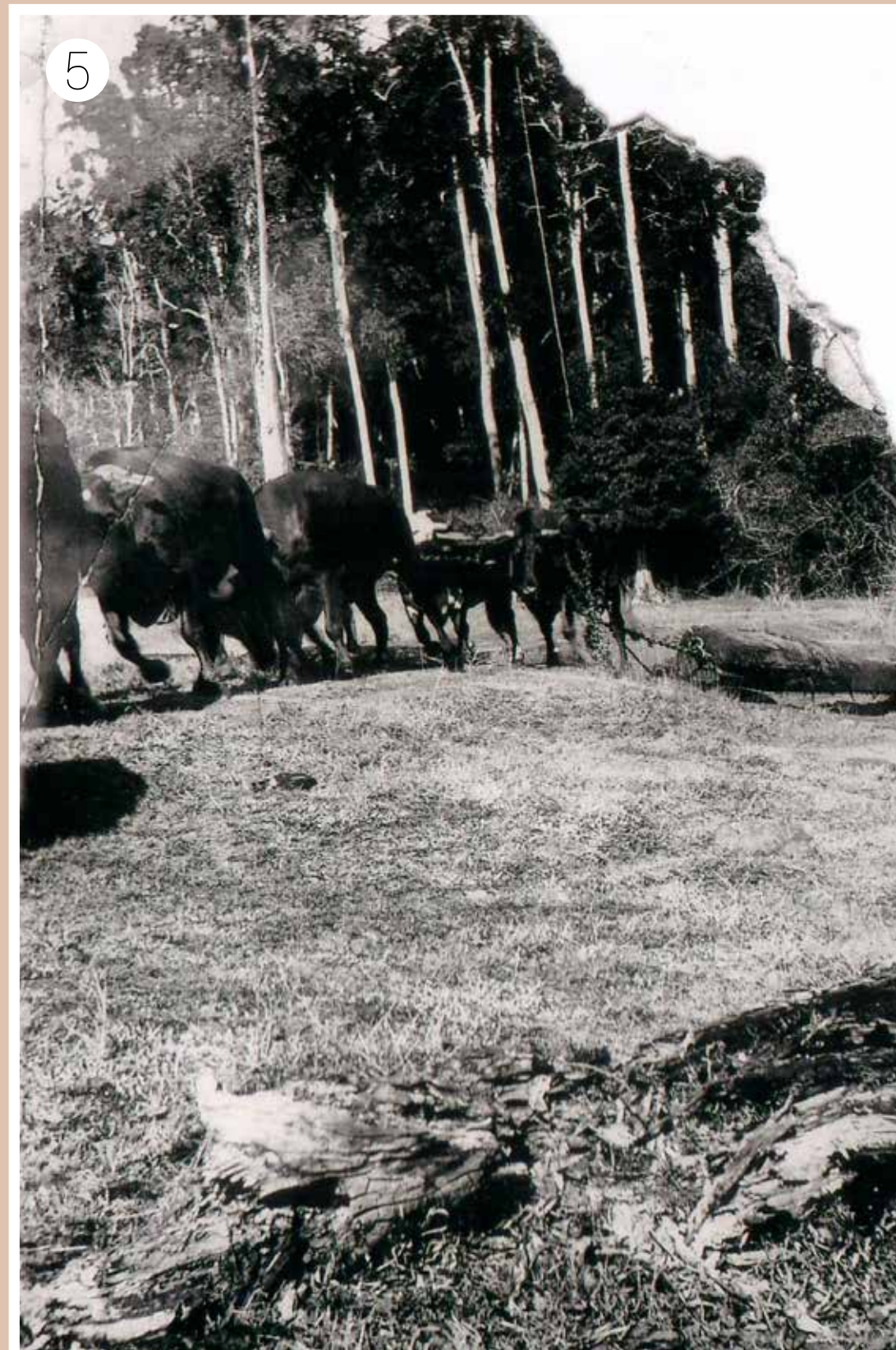
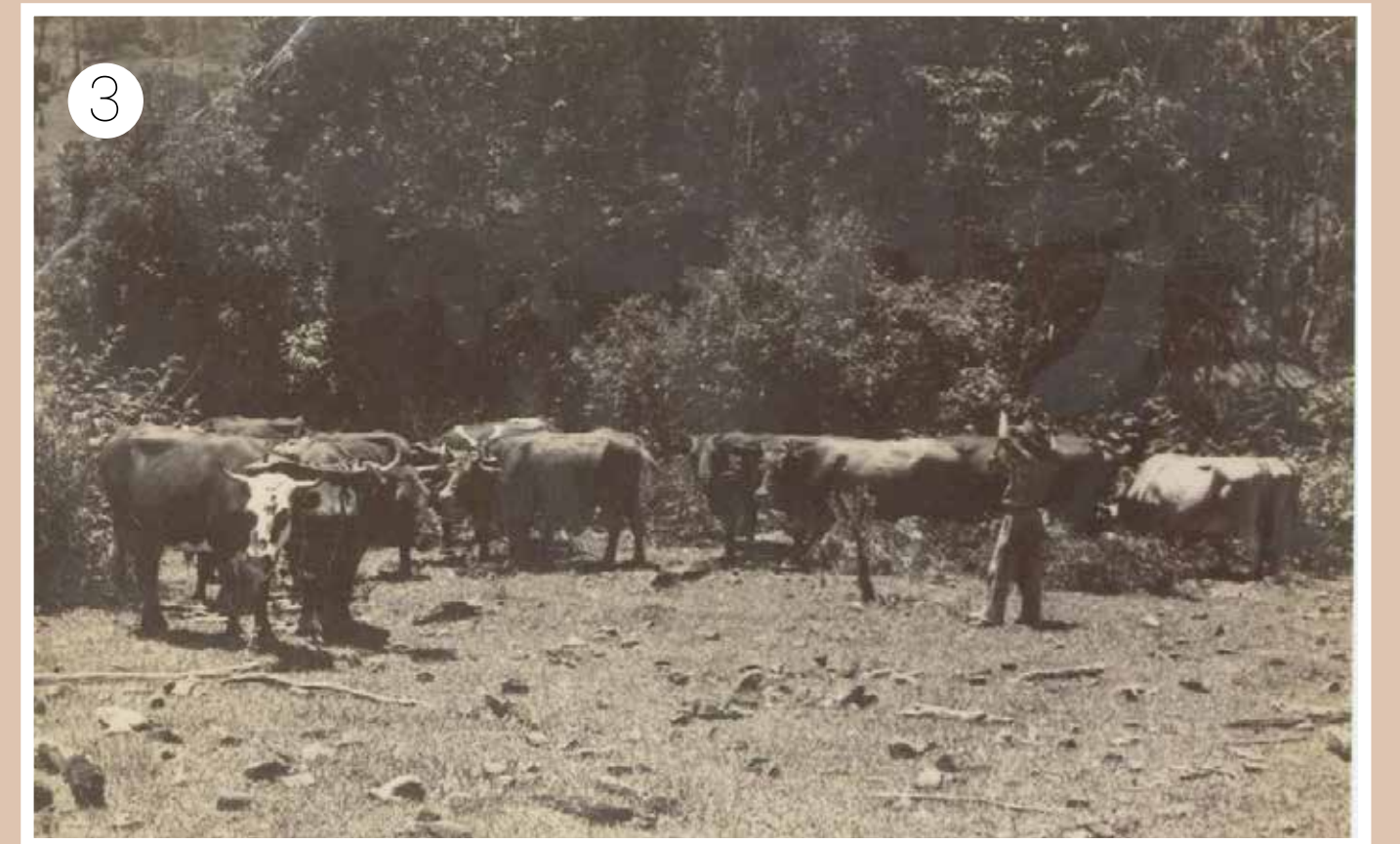


IMAGE DESCRIPTIONS:

1. Bert and Olga Willett, Howard Aspinall with bullock team c.1938
2. Dobson's Sawmill c.1914
3. Jim Clews with his bullock team
4. Jack Cunningham's timber truck
5. Bullock team pulling a log
6. Jim Clew's bullock team
7. Loading timber in the 1970s

Eungella's timber industry began in 1913, when Jack Dobson was offered the opportunity to cut and sell 100,000 super feet (equivalent to 236 cubic meters) of red cedar free of royalties by the Forestry Department. Consequently, Jack assembled a steam driven mill on the block south of where the Eungella Memorial Hall now stands.

In order to move such a vast number of logs, the Forestry Department contracted John Cunningham and his bullock team. After trees were felled with cross cut saw and axe, they were cut into billets and dragged to the saw mill. Once cut into boards, the timber was transported to

Netherdale to meet the train, ultimately to be shipped back to England.

Gone are the days when the tree fellers and bullock teams lived 'on the job' with animals being the transport of the time. The introduction of crawler tractors and timber jinkers saw bullock teams being phased out by the early 1950s, with the last working team being owned by Jim Clews Snr.

The introduction of 'state-of-the-art' chainsaws and the advancement of the combustion engine, made timber getting much easier. Mills became larger and more efficient and by the late 1950s, there were 7 mills in the area.

The focus had moved from Red Cedar to hardwood timbers, but the introduction of further Government regulations protecting state forests in the late 1980s brought the rapid decline of timber operations in Eungella. Today, there remains only one, Smith's Sawmill on Freegard's Road.

Step Back in Time

gathering Eungella's past

Images were contributed to the "Step Back in Time - Gathering Eungella's past" project by past and present residents.
Visit www.history.eungella.com.au for more information.