Bee Creek Rd

The last couple of issues have shown bullock teams operating in the timber industry in the Eungella region. This week we will start looking at the sawmills.

The first record of timber being sawn in the Mackay region was a saw pit established in 1880, south of the present Eungella township, for building at "The Diggings", an early gold mining town. .

Excerpt from: A project researched by Leigh Cunningham (Strack) when she was at High School

Two men were employed, the more important being the "topsawyer" and the other the "bottomsawyer". They worked at a rectangular pit, dug to a depth of five or six feet, and generally lined with bricks to make it more permanent. The tree butt, neatly trimmed of branches and cross-cut at either end, was laid on top of the pit and secured on cross-pieces. It was then the business of the sawyers to saw the butt into planks of the requisite size, using a long twohandled saw in an up-and-down movement. The top-sawyer's responsibility was to see that the saw didn't deviate from the given line; all the time he would take the main pull of the upward thrust.

Photo from: Google Images Inserted here to show the Saw Pit process NOT FROM EUNGELLA

Saving a tree bets planks at the per

Dam Rd Diggings Rd . **Broken River** Map sketch drawn by: Glenda Parish Gully (The marked roads were not in existance then)

The first timber that was sawn was on Saw Pit Creek to build the township of Eungella Diggings.

Excerpts from: A project researched by Leigh Cunningham (Strack)



In these early days, sawn cedar planks were used to build a water wheel which drove an ore crusher and to construct a trout

hatchery on Saw Pit Creek. Released fingerlings from the hatchery



'The Lady Norman' mine (name of Queensland's Governor's wife) was on the left bank of Broken River.

The 'Gracie Norman' (name of daughter of Lady Norman) mine syndicate erected a five head battery stamper driven by a water wheel 24 ft in diameter (made from cedar pit sawn there) on the south side.

Eungella's Story 5 Decades by J.H. Williams in Mackay Daily Mercury 1 Aug 1972

At that time "The Diggings" township was labeled 'Crediton Township' on a map ca1890 (long before what we now call the Crediton area was opened up in the 1930s). The first post office at the Diggings named Eungalla opened in 1890 closed 1905. There was nothing established where Eungella township is today. In 1930 the Post Office was reopened as Eungella in what is now our township.

Info researchedby: Glenda Parish

2 000 men worked on the Gold fields. They had two crushing plants, one five head and a ten head. The five head was powered by a water wheel (the 'Gracie Norman' mine), the ten head was powered by steam (on 'The Bobby Dazzler' claim which became the principal 'Orchid P.C. mine). There were five hotels, the main hotel was the Golden Orchard, which was on the north side of the River. All the hotels were pit sawn out of red cedar. All the mail and goods was packed on horse from Finch Hatton, up a spur in the mountain called the Carl Flohr Track. There was another track a bit further on called Charley Armstrong Track. Charley Armstrong was the husband of Dame Nellie Melba who was one of the World's greatest opera singers. When the gold rush was at Charters Towers, they all left the Diggings at Eungella.. (Most were gone by 1901) There was 1 500 lb of gold mined at the Diggings in its run.

The road up Eungella Range was surveyed in 1904 and built to be usable by drays by 1907.

Excerpts from: A project researched by Leigh Cunningham (Strack), with some additional Info researchedby: Glenda