Woodford Historical Society 2025

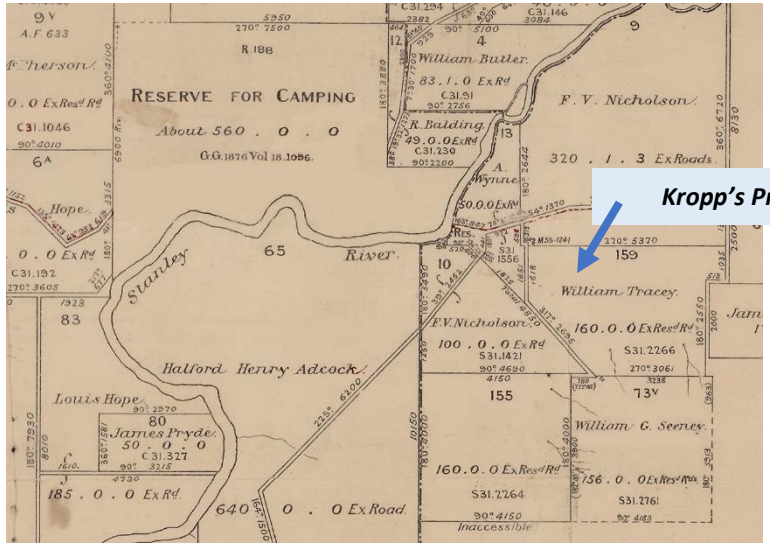
Compiled using information from:-

QSA, Trove Newspapers, Pioneers of the Kilcoy District

Fact Sheet – V7

Sawmills of Durundur . . .

Kropp's Sawmill (c1926 – 1936)



Brothers, William George and Stanley Sampford Kropp erected and operated a sawmill on their property at Villeneuve at the foot of Mt Archer.

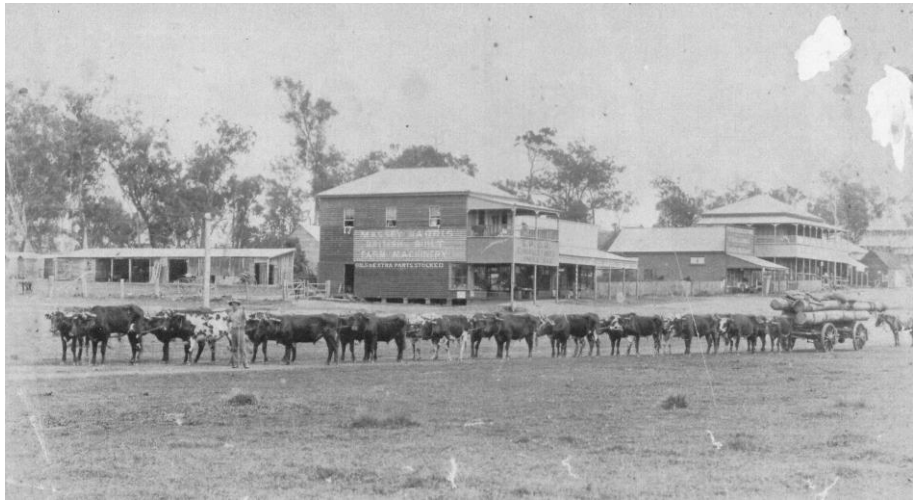
William George Kropp (Bill) (1887-1970)

Villeneuve Sawmills

Kropp's Sawmill *continued*

Kropp Property at the foot of Mt Archer

Bill and Stan were living on Portion 159v in the parish of Byron, a 160 acre homestead property at Villeneuve and working as teamsters.



Early 1900s: Bill Kropp's team at Kilcoy

Sometime in the early 1900s, possibly in 1926, William and Stan established and operated a sawmill on their Villeneuve property. Those employed at one time included five local men and two teamsters. Timber was hauled by bullock teams to Villeneuve Station and sent to Brisbane. Marsdens were one of the chief buyers of the timber.

Lionel Kropp's recollections:

'My Uncles, Stanley and Billy Kropp, had a little sawmill at the foot of Mt Archer. They brought the timber down – had a big property on top of Mt Acher. So I went over and asked if I could get a job at the mill and they put me on.

I was there for a long while. I learnt to run the (kero) engine. I learnt to do the saws and I learnt to look after the mill. They said I'd better take the mill over, which I did.

My grandfather came to my aid – he helped me buy the mill so I could run it. We got the timber off the mountain with bullock teams – 22 bullocks sometimes. I drove the bullocks on the top of Mt Archer. Once the timber was milled, we took it to Villeneuve Station, put it on a railway truck and it was sent to Brisbane.'

SAWMILL BURNT

KILCOY. Thursday.—Messrs. Kropp Bros.' sawmill at Villeneuve was destroyed by fire, but about £200 worth of timber was saved. The damage is estimated at £500.

From TROVE: ***The Courier Mail*** *23 October 1936*

The Fire

'One Saturday afternoon (we used to work till dinner time on Saturdays), I went over to clean all the mill up – put the sawdust in the elevator and ran it out to where we piled it and burned it. Anyhow, I went home and I could see smoke coming up from the mill. I had a bicycle back then so I rode back to the mill. The elevator belt had caught fire and had carried it right down into the mill. Billy Kropp saved the motor and some of the benches by putting water on it from the tank. He cut a hole in the tank and and he used the water there and saved some of the machinery. There was no fire brigade in those days, so it burnt right down.'