

ANDERSON & ROWE

In February 1930 E.J. Anderson and C.H. Rowe successfully tendered for cutting rights over the Wilks Creek and Mount Bismark (now known as Mount Kitchener) areas, with the mill plant being obtained from the Kitty's Creek sawmill in Toolangi. An outlet tram was constructed to the Marysville-Narbethong road at the divide between Wilks Creek and the Acheron River. The mill (No.1) began cutting in mid-1930 and Anderson and Rowe formed the Marysville Timber and Seasoning Company Limited.

A tram and associated lowering gear was installed in the Mount Bismark area in 1933. The tramway was constructed with 4 inch x 3 inch wooden rails and an average load of 7 tons was lowered 2310 feet down an incline of 1 in 3.5 average grade, with the steepest portion being 1 in 2.5. Using 2500 feet of 1 inch wire rope, the lowering gear consisted of two drums of 6 inch diameter set horizontally side by side, with sufficient space between the single rope grooves to permit the rope to pay out or enter the drums in line with the centre of the rails, with lever operated brakes applied to a 4 inch face on both the top and bottom of the drums. In March 1934 the cutting area was extended to the upper slopes of Mount Strickland and a new mill (No.2) was constructed on the Acheron River – Wilks Creek divide to serve the additional 3700 acres.

On the 10th January 1939, the No.1 mill, its associated tramway and lowering gear and the No.2 mill lowering gear were destroyed by the Black Friday bushfire. The No.1 mill, lowering gear and log trams were reconstructed, but the outlet trams were abandoned. The Mount Strickland cutting area was temporarily extended down to the Acheron River and south to Feiglin's cutting area. The No.1 mill was closed in 1942 and all cutting concentrated at the No.2 mill. The assets of the company were then absorbed by Rowe, Webb and Anderson.

Rowe, Webb and Anderson operated a tramway south-west of the mill for log haulage. The track was steel railed (about 30lb/yd) and outside wooden rails were provided in some sections. Motive power was provided by a Fordson powered 'Days' tractor (now preserved in Marysville). Immediately below the mill was an incline up which logs were hauled. 800 yards in length, this incline had a slight bend in the middle with a sideways mounted roller to ease the cable around the bend. At the foot of the incline was a loading ramp and a shed to store fuel for the tractor. This well graded tramway operated for many years until it was bought by Mr J.L. Gould, who closed the mill in 1968 and retrieved the rails with much of the tramway bulldozed in the process.

Recently the mill site itself was almost obliterated in order to provide open space for a log dump.

(Source: Notes supplied by M McCarthy)