

# *Charles H. Ingram*

1892-1979

Charles H. Ingram was born in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, on September 4, 1892, the son of Charles H. Ingram and Grace Blystone Ingram. Thirty-five years before, his grandfather had come to Eau Claire to build his own sawmill on the banks of the Chippewa River.

Charles H., O.H. Ingram's eldest son, followed in his father's footsteps and managed sawmills in Wisconsin and Minnesota. Representing the Ingram family, he and Frederick Weyerhaeuser founded Weyerhaeuser Timber Company in 1900 in the Pacific Northwest. It was only natural for his son to have an interest in timber, logging, milling and marketing. He was a third generation woods and mill man.

Growing up in the pineries of Wisconsin and close to sawmills, Charlie, as he was known to friends, benefited from the wisdom and knowledge of his father and grandfather. Educated in local schools, he went to Dartmouth in 1911 and received his degree in arts in 1915.

On returning home from college, he went to work for the Edward Hines Lumber Company at Winton in Northern Minnesota. The warm months were spent in the sawmill, but during the rigorous winter, he was outdoors in the woods logging. The cold weather turned his mind to the South. Ingram left the Minnesota woods to work in Lyman, Mississippi, for the Ingram-Day Lumber Company. Close to the Gulf of Mexico, he found the hot and often swampy woods, disagreeable.

With the United States' entry into World War I imminent, he joined the Tenth (Forestry) Division of the Army Corps of Engineers. He soon put his knowledge and skills to work in France, producing the lumber needed at the front. After the war, he returned to Eau Claire in 1919. Both his father and grandfather had passed away and he sought advice about his future. It was suggested that he look to the Pacific Northwest.

June of 1919 found Ingram in Everett, Washington, employed in Mill B of Weyerhaeuser Timber Company on the night shift as supervisor of the shipping shed. He found the people, the climate, the company, and the challenges attractive, and made fast friends at work and in the town.

Two short years later, with a full understanding of efficient mill operations, he accepted the position of assistant general manager of Snoqualmie Falls Lumber Company, reporting to F.R. (Rod) Titcomb, the general manager. There Ingram learned Pacific Northwest woods operations, logging and timber management. As always, he approached his work with industry and enthusiasm. After being there only six months, he returned to Everett to marry Aida Hulbert and brought her back to Snoqualmie to their first home.

Rod Titcomb and George S. Long were impressed with Ingram and on December 1, 1925, he was promoted to general manager when Titcomb moved to Tacoma to become assistant general manager of Weyerhaeuser Timber Company. In a letter to Ingram

announcing his promotion, Long wrote"...it affords us pleasure to feel that you have merited this appointment by your industry and capability..."

Ingram loved Snoqualmie and they both prospered, as did the Ingram family. He was proud to say that his three children, Suzanne, Marion, and C. Erskine were all born in the mill town hospital. He was later blessed with six grandchildren.

In April of 1929, he was promoted to assistant general manager of Weyerhaeuser Company. Long, in a letter accepting Ingram's resignation from his Snoqualmie post, stated, "The successful management of a plant like Snoqualmie Falls calls for a great many qualities, among which is to be a good lumber man, a good executive, and a thoughtful and considerate manager, to meet all of the business and personal relations that develop in an isolated plant where the welfare and interest and the loyal support of the employees has to be reckoned with as a very important factor. I feel that you have measured up well to the demands of such a position since you have been filling it."

The Ingrams moved to Tacoma at the time Weyerhaeuser Company was about to start up sawmills at Longview, Washington, and Klamath Falls, Oregon; open the Vail, Washington logging operation; acquire a substantial interest in White River Lumber Company, and consider building a pulp mill. The fall of that year saw the start of the Depression. There was much to do and substantially more with the sudden death the next year of Long, who had successfully managed Weyerhaeuser for over 30 years. Titcomb and Charlie labored long hours, the headquarters staff was small, and management decentralized. Despite this, in 1931, the

company built its first pulp mill at Longview and substantial interest was acquired in the newly-formed Willapa Harbor Lumber Mills at Raymond, Washington.

In 1933, John Philip Weyerhaeuser, Jr., joined Weyerhaeuser as executive vice president. When Rod Titcomb retired in 1936, Ingram became general manager and chief operating officer.

The next 22 years saw a period of building up from the Depression, meeting the military demands of World War II, and the postwar expansion.

Ingram had complete knowledge of the forest products industry as well as detailed information on the equipment in the mills and woods. More importantly, he knew how to select managers, develop their potential, and delegate responsibility.

Weyerhaeuser and Ingram were close friends and had the deepest respect and regard for each other. Together they implemented new forestry policies and expanded the company's operations. Increased and better utilization of the lands and harvest were their goals. Sustained yield, hand planting of seedlings and forestry research all led to the adoption in 1941 of the Tree Farm concept, which was first put in place of Clemons, Washington.

Ingram built eight more pulp mills at Everett, Longview and Cosmopolis, Washington and Springfield, Oregon. The magnesium oxide recovery process was developed and introduced to reduce pollution, recover pulping chemicals, and produce power from the residue. The hydraulic log barker was also developed to improve sawmill efficiency and to provide bark-free waste as raw material for the pulp mills.

The wood-waste burners disappeared as further utilization was pushed through the construction of plywood mills, ply veneer, bark, fiber, hardboard, particleboard and presto-log plants. Older mills and plants were modernized and expanded.

Meanwhile, a substantial increase in timberland acquisitions continued in the Northwest and southern states. Some of the plant additions were constructed to open up the Oregon fir timberlands around Springfield and Coos Bay. Logging was not neglected; new machinery was purchased for yarding and loading; diesels for the railroads and; to increase efficiency, thousands of miles of logging roads were built.

Transportation and distribution of finished products were not neglected. New wholesale yards were started in Boston, Louisville and Los Angeles. The marine fleet was added to and replaced after World War II. During this time, Ingram was responsible for the efficient operations of the company.

While fully occupied with these accomplishments, he would be the last to take credit. It was a team effort with Phil Weyerhaeuser giving support and guidance while his branch, service and staff managers carried out their responsibilities under his watchful eye. Both Weyerhaeuser and Ingram shied away from publicity but encouraged others in management to represent the company in community and industry affairs and to receive recognition for progressive developments of the company.

In December 1956, Weyerhaeuser died after a short illness and Ingram felt the loss of a great friend. With a little over a year until retirement, he carried on his work with long-time friend, F.K. Weyerhaeuser. Early in

1957, he headed a team negotiating a merger with the Kieckhefer-Eddy group. On April 30, 1957, the merger was completed and the company had timberlands and mills in North Carolina and was into the paperboard container and milk carton business across the country.

On January 1, 1958, Ingram retired from his position as executive vice president and active management. The president's message in the 1957 annual report of the company noted the retirement after 39 years of service. "His outstanding management talents have been a major factor in the success and growth of the company. We are fortunate that he will continue to have an active part in guiding the company in the future since he continues as a member of the executive committee of the board of directors."

Charlie Ingram had served on the board of directors and as a member of the executive committee since early 1947. The company continued to benefit from his knowledge and experience until the middle of 1963 when he retired. For the following two years he served as a senior counselor to the board. His interest in the company never flagged.

Because Ingram worked efficiently, he had time to enjoy his family. For recreation, hunting, fishing, golf and photography were his favorites but, especially, playing dominoes. He was a member of the Tacoma Club, the Tacoma Country and Golf Club in Tacoma and the Rainier Club in Seattle.

He served as an officer and director of many of the Weyerhaeuser subsidiaries, such as president of the Weyerhaeuser Steamship Company, but he limited his outside business activities to being a director of the Seattle-First National Bank.

Charlie Ingram was a shy, gracious, charming, enthusiastic and humorous man who enjoyed his work and life. He generously supported educational and charitable organizations, but anonymously. He had many friends and a lifetime of achievement behind him when he died on June 30, 1979.