



## *John Howard Markham*

1892-1980

John Howard Markham, Timber and Forestry Consultant, acquired his vast expert knowledge of the forest through hard work, independence and excellent judgment. A main source of his learning was early experience timber cruising and land surveying; skills he was perfecting with each new forest challenge throughout his life. Born in Wisconsin in 1892, he moved to Washington at an early age with his parents and from that time on adventure was a great part of his life. As a boy, he showed such interest in timber cruising that the Weyerhaeuser Timber Company hired him to cruise for them estimating the volume of merchantable timber on a tract, the cost of logging it, and the quality of lumber there. It was with Weyerhaeuser also that he began land surveying, while studying at this time in alternate years at the University of Washington. He received his degree in Civil Engineering and in 1919 was certified by the Oregon State Engineer Examining Board as a professional Civil Engineer and Land Surveyor and was the only registered

professional during the full period 1919 through the present (and in Washington from the early 1930's – when that state enacted licensing – to the present).

By 1921, he had enough experience to start his own independent business, as civil and forest engineer, timber cruiser and map and forestry consultant. At a time when every lumber company had to have its own railroad to transport logs from the tree to the mill, as there was no truck logging until 1932, he located an impressive 600 miles of logging railroads.

Being on his own, he had tremendous energy and dedication to forestry. He formed the Markham and Callow Logging Company in 1926, which soon took over the Independence Logging Company. The Stomar Lumber Company was his also. Fourteen-hour workdays were not unusual for him. Over the years, he personally cruised, acquired and owned almost 30,000 acres of forestland.

His work required that he learn how to live in the forest under any conditions. Often he was in forests where there were no trails, only steep rocky cliffs, dense underbrush, rivers to cross, snow, wild animals...and trees. On these rugged adventures sometimes he had to camp out and backpack for weeks on end. Sometimes food would be lost from a raft or boat overturning in rapid water, or would simply run out and so Markham and his cruising and survey party companions would live on venison and trout. Markham became an excellent hunter and fisherman and always carried his thirty-eight caliber Smith and Wesson revolver in a shoulder holster on camp-out trips. On one eventful trip in July, 1916, into what is now the Olympic National Forest, Markham and his companions brought along very little food, planning to live mainly on trout. But their fishing was jinxed that trip, and days deep in the forest they found their food situation critical. Markham discovered some unripened blackberries and would have given them up as inedible, but noticed some nearby bark piled up in a teepee fashion against a cedar tree. Underneath was a five gallon can almost full of honey. Markham's party cooked the unripe berries and honey together, and found it delicious. Feeling strong again and out of danger, they continued their trip and left about half of the honey where they found it with a ten-dollar bill attached to the can. Several years later, Markham discovered that he knew the man who had first found the hive on a hunting trip and left the honey there.

Not only was he resourceful, he was responsible as well. During Markham and Callow's Independence operation in northwest Washington, he made it a practice to go out to the 150 man logging camp high in the hills at the head of Lincoln Creek every

Monday morning. This meant leaving home at 4:00 a.m. and driving the twenty-five mile crooked Lincoln Creek road, and then hiking - jogging part of the way - three miles with a vertical rise of 900 feet to the camp, arriving for 5:45 a.m. crew breakfast. He was there to check the logging operation, the railroad, and to fill in for the inevitable few crewmembers who didn't make it up Monday morning: he had the energy and skill to complete the work force. Markham broadened his travel experience to include most of the countries of the world. An enthusiastic hunter and fisherman all of his life, he brought home trophies from many countries. He owned a large acreage of potential timber growing land in South Africa. Starting in 1954, he planted more than 1,000 acres of Monterey pine, a type of pine that was proved successful in semi-tropical climates.

In World War II he was Commanding Officer of the 1887<sup>th</sup> Aviation Engineer Battalion with enlisted strength of 950 men and sixty officers. He was overseas eighteen months in the European Theatre of Operations, and ended his wartime career as a Lt. Colonel.

He had two sons, John H. Markham and William E. Markham, and a daughter, Mrs. Donald (Jane) Abel, and many grandchildren. In his later years, he devoted great time and energy to constructing and maintaining the Mayfield Lake Youth Camp near Centralia, Washington. This energetic, independent, and knowledgeable man died in Centralia, Washington, in April, 1980, at the age of 88.