

# Edward N. Murphy

1870-1949

Producing timber was Murphy's profession. He was log-minded, and liked his business best when sawmilling was the secondary part of his operations. His eye for marketable timber led him into many newsworthy forestland acquisitions. His purchase in 1923 of the Foss timber was a particularly strategic and successful move. It made headlines in the *Sunday Oregonian* and this forestland became the main source of timber for his Deer Island Logging Company.

Born in Toronto, he grew up there and graduated from Toronto University in 1890 with an engineering degree. His father was a contractor, and at the time of Murphy's graduation was building the Canadian Pacific Railroad. The younger Murphy went West with his father to work with him completing the railroad job. Afterwards, back in Toronto, his father sent him to the best tailor in town for a suit of clothes as payment. Murphy didn't want clothes as payment. He thought his father should have paid him in money, so he picked up his hat and went West on his own.

At first he freighted ore to Trail, B.C., the shipping point located near the headwater of the Columbia River. Then in 1901 he came to the United States, worked for Weyerhaeuser in Yacolt for a few years where he and his family lived on the edge of the second (1907) burn. In 1909 he quit working for Weyerhaeuser and started the Murphy Logging Company near Yacolt in that same year. In 1910 he built a sawmill at Yacolt to extend his operation. Then in 1917, he moved to Portland and started the Deer Island Logging Company just south of St. Helens. It was during the

operation of Deer Island that he bought the Foss timber. Murphy purchased this timber from the East Coast landholders at six dollars a thousand, which at that time was considered an extremely high price. Another substantial purchase he made for Deer Island was the purchase of the Lamb Timber Company from the Detroit Trust. The Deer Island Logging Company was in operation until 1928. During these years World War I had made its demands on the United States, including the forest products industry. In 1917, Murphy accepted a contract to log spruce for airplane stock. He set up a logging operation for this at Skamokawa, Washington. In 1923 he bought the North Pacific Lumber Company in Linnton (now part of Portland). In 1925 he set up a logging operation at Hamilton Creek, Washington. Then he bought two more sawmills in Portland: in 1927, the Peninsula Lumber Company and in 1928, the Monarch Lumber Company. All these mills, and the companies they were the mainstays of, ceased in the Depression.

In 1934, the year after the Tillamook Burn he went into Carleton and logged the burned timber. He was there until the second fire went through in 1939. This fire burned up his railroad, and burned the logs so badly that they couldn't be salvaged, so the Carleton operation of the Murphy Logging Company came to an end.

Murphy had acquired tremendous holdings for the Murphy Logging Company and experience as a leader in logging operations. Over the years, he had been educating four of his sons, Harry, Ed, Peter and John in the

forest products industry. In addition, after the Carleton operation ended, he devoted all of his talents to guiding his sons in the industry. He had had an office in Portland ever since he began building his holdings in the Portland area, and the sons became based in Portland. They lost John when he was killed in an airplane accident in 1947, and the three surviving sons have continued to combine their talents as The Murphy Company.

Edward N. Murphy was married in 1896 to Margaret Connacher and they had nine children. Murphy was a family man who was an honest hard worker and teaching his children his ideals was top priority for him. He was not interested in public acclaim. His greatest joys were at home and with his family. At Toronto University, he had played hockey, lacrosse and baseball, and later became an enthusiastic spectator of these sports, especially of baseball.

He always considered himself primarily a producer of timber, and it was with great satisfaction that he watched the marketing of the timber he had chosen to log. He was an active member of the Pacific Coast Logging Congress from its beginning until his death in 1949.