



## *A.L. Raught*

1888-1975

Famous for his sense of humor and terrific dry wit, 'Al' Raught was also "very, very approachable." Assistant manager for Weyerhaeuser with most of his forestry expertise in logging and production, company employees from all fields sought his unspoken honesty and excellent judgment on their toughest problems. He was so easy to talk to that many of his colleagues and employees sought him out with their personal problems as well. In the latter part of his career his sense of human nature grew into an ability to keep an even keel, which, coupled with his knowledge of forestry, made him a vital member of heated meetings for negotiations between labor and industry.

Born in Spokane Falls in Washington Territory, he moved with his family when he was very young to Winlock, a little town in Lewis County in southwest Washington. After graduating from high school there, he worked for a year for the J.A. Veness Lumber Company of Winlock. It was his first job in the industry which was to guide him almost inevitably into his profession. His family had been in the lumber business for several

generations, originally in Pennsylvania. On December 12, 1906, he started as 'bullcook' with Clarke County Timber Company, a subsidiary of Weyerhaeuser. 'Bullcook' was a position he defined as "doing anything and everything no one else wants to do." In time he became manager of Clarke County Timber Company and stayed until 1925 when that company finished its work in Lewis County and disbanded.

In May, 1925, George S. Long sent Raught to Longview, an area Weyerhaeuser was just beginning to develop. Long reportedly handed Raught a chunk of railroad that "started nowhere and ended nowhere. When he asked what to do with it, Long said, "That's what you are down there [Longview] to figure out." Starting as resident agent in Longview, the detailing of woods plans and the selection of a permanent organization became Raught's responsibility. His leadership in developing both the logging operation and the sawmills was outstanding. He was manager of the Longview branch until December, 1938, when he went to Tacoma to be assistant manager for Charles

H. Ingram, general manager of Weyerhaeuser at that time. It was as assistant manager that he became primarily involved in labor relations. He was familiar firsthand with many jobs, and became one of the best labor relations men in the field. Representatives of industry and those of labor both felt he was working in their best interests. He had the ability to stay relaxed in difficult situations, and as a result he was one of the few managers, when the company began to deal with organized labor, who could maintain order and communications in labor negotiations. The development of the first union contract with the loggers and sawmill employees after the 1935 strike was his accomplishment. He was Weyerhaeuser's representative in the Lumbermen's Industrial Relations Committee, a fact-finding and negotiating body set up to deal with the unions.

Not only was he one of the best-liked men in Weyerhaeuser, he was also one of the best-liked in the industry. He retired in 1949 after forty-two years of service with Weyerhaeuser, and is remembered as "one of the nicest people to deal with that you could possibly imagine."