



James Alexander Lyons

1904-1953

James A. Lyons began his productive career at age 18 when he joined the C. McC. Johnson Lumber Co. at Reedsport, Oregon. Working his way upward in the lumbering industry, Mr. Lyons demonstrated keen business ability and was able to construct, along with C. McC. Johnson, the Sitka Spruce Pulp and Paper Company, in 1927. Located in Empire (now Coos Bay), the company was sold to Scott Paper Company during the depression year of 1933.

Mr. Lyons then joined with Howard W. Irwin in the operation of the Empire Lumber Company. This mill was operated until 1937 when Mr. Lyons and Mr. Irwin purchased the W.T. Cullver Co., along with timberlands on the South Fork of the Coos River. This mill operated under the name Irwin and Lyons Lumber Company until 1955 and produced a remarkable 100 million board feet of lumber each year.

Mr. Lyons also owned the I & L Logging Co. and the Coos River Boom Co. that operated Oregon's last "splash" dams to move logs downstream.

The business ability of Mr. Lyons was evident in the diversity of his activities. Between the years 1938 and 1953 he operated a shipping company that owned four ocean going ships, the Quinalt, North Bend, Rolando and Coos Bay. While shipping great volumes of lumber to California, Mr. Lyons perfected the use of packaged lumber, bundled for ocean transportation. This system, devised in 1948, is used throughout the lumbering industry today for shipment of lumber products.

The J.E. Peggs Company and the Rolando Lumber Company of San Francisco were also ventures of Mr. Lyons, formed as sales outlets for Irwin and Lyons Lumber Company products throughout the world.

Mr. Lyons was married to Jane Sullivan in 1936 and they had three children, J. Stewart, Susan Jane and Sally Atha.

Among the several hobbies Mr. Lyons enjoyed were fishing and hunting. His favorite activity, however, was horseracing. During the early 1950s, he owned sixty racehorses that he raced primarily in California.

Mr. Lyons maintained his home in Coos Bay until his death in February 1953.