



Hammond Cedar

IN 1914 DOAN MORONI HARTNELL began making enquiries into the Baily Lumber Company in Port Hammond. Ignoring advice from his realtor, who saw the planer mill as a losing proposition, he went ahead and bought the small enterprise and renamed it the Port Hammond Lumber Company. The 33-year old entrepreneur realized that the mill's major assets were its proximity to the Canadian Pacific Railway's trans-Canada line that provided easy access to eastern markets and the Fraser River for overseas shipments. The mill comprised 10 acres of land with 400 feet of river frontage and stood on the site of the old CPR roundhouse. After a tough start the newly named company began to prosper under the new ownership.

Richard and Doan came from a Mormon family of lumbering barons from Flint, Michigan, who had moved to Abbotsford in 1906 due to a depletion of lumber in their home state and because Doan's wife Eleanor was suffering from tuberculosis and her doctor recommended a west coast climate. This had resulted in Richard making enquiries and somehow managing to secure a 17,000-acre timber lease that yielded 50,000 board feet of lumber to the acre. As a result of this windfall Richard and his two brothers, William and John, along with their wives and children, rented an entire rail car to make the trip to British Columbia. Unfortunately the extended family of over 30 men, women, children, and workers did not realize that the "Promised Land" to the west and north was a wet climate, and Doan's wife died, leaving her grieving husband with a young daughter. Their first mill, called the Maple Grove

Lumber Company at Clayburn, initially shipped lumber by rail all the way back to long established clients in Michigan, but later all the lumber that the mill could produce was sold to the CPR and the British Columbia Electric Railway, which was under construction on the south side of the Fraser River through the Fraser Valley. This mill was successful until destroyed by fire in 1910.

In 1916 Doan's father Richard invested additional capital into the mill, and the father-son owners purchased new Allis-Chalmers equipment capable of sawing the giant cedar logs into boards. That same year the mill was renamed the Hammond Cedar Company. By this time Richard was also a director of the Mainland Lumber and Shingle Company with mills in both Abbotsford and Coquitlam. An unfortunate rift developed between father and son in 1920 when Richard, after being diagnosed with cancer, sold his assets in the mill to outside interests without consulting Doan.

In April 1922 Doan M. Hartnell, "as owner of the largest local enterprise and a worthy citizen," drove down to California on a business trip and came back with good news. He had managed to secure contracts to not only ship cedar logs to their ports but to the Orient as well. He told the *Coquitlam News* that cedar log shipments to Japan had taken a sudden jump forward and that during the past few weeks over 30,000,000 board feet had been booked on various steamers bound for that country. The demand for cedar in Japan was increasing, and British Columbia was being challenged in supplying the demand.

The Hammond Cedar Mill made Hammond into a mill town, but its importance dwindled with the building of the Lougheed Highway in 1931, which bypassed the tiny community.

During the Second War War, Edward Plunkett Taylor, the President of Argus Corporation, the largest financial institution in Canada, purchased the mill, and for a time it was the largest producing sawmill in the British Empire.

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