

Ernest Braunton

In Memoriam

August 21, 1867-March 22, 1945



ERNEST BRAUNTON

Ernest Braunton was born in London, England. When four years old he removed with his parents, William and Emma (Haslett) Braunton to Rockford, Iowa, where he spent his boyhood. He came to Los Angeles in 1887 where he married Addie M. Kirkpatrick in 1899.

About that time Braunton became Superintendent of landscaping at Singleton Court, one of the first elaborate estates in Los Angeles (grounds now occupied by the Los Angeles Orthopaedic Hospital). Encouraged by his success in this undertaking he soon achieved a reputation as Consultant in Horticulture and Landscape Design. He planned the layout of the Bryant Botanical Garden and designed the lily ponds at the Huntington

Library at San Marino. During succeeding years he designed the ornamental grounds for more than one hundred homes in Southern California.

Positions held at various times include: Lecturer for the University of California Farmers' Institutes; Professor of Landscape Design, University of Southern California; Associate Editor of the California Cultivator 1901-32; Editor Garden Department, Los Angeles Times 1903-36; Garden Doctor, Los Angeles Times 1942-45; Author, "Garden Beautiful in California"; Southern California section in Bailey's Cyclopaedia of Horticulture; Fellow, Royal Botanical Society of England.

For several years Braunton was a member of the Los Angeles County Board of Forestry, and also of the City Park Commission. He was in great demand as judge at county fairs and flower shows throughout Southern California. Beginning with the first one, he acted as judge at all the great flower shows at Pasadena.

Braunton's knowledge of native and exotic ornamental plants of Southern California was phenomenal, and persons who sent him specimens for identification were seldom disappointed.

Ernest Braunton is survived by five children: Bertram A.; Stanley E., Helen M. Rickabaugh, Marion C. Milliken, and Ernestine E. Petersen.

At the very beginning of the interest in avocado growing in Southern California, Braunton, by his activity and enthusiasm, did much to direct the budding industry along sound lines. He worked with J. C. Harvey, one of the original pioneers. He was an ardent advocate of better varieties, and encouraged the California Avocado Association from its beginning in 1915. By many addresses at meetings and articles in the local press he did much to publicize and popularize avocado culture for both home gardens and commercial orchards.

In recognition of his outstanding services to the avocado industry, particularly in its early days, the California Avocado Society, in 1942, awarded Ernest Braunton its Emblem of Honor.