

Arthur William Christie

In Appreciation



ARTHUR WILLIAM CHRISTIE

Arthur W. Christie was born January 2, 1892, in San Francisco, of Norwegian parents. He grew up in Berkeley, California, where he attended grammar and high school and the University of California from which he graduated (B.S. in 1915 and M.S. in 1916).

On July 1, 1916, he joined the staff of the College of Agriculture at Berkeley as Assistant in Agricultural Chemistry. In June 1915 he was married to Jean R. Witcher, a 1915 graduate of the University of California at Berkeley. Having been made Instructor in Agricultural Chemistry in 1917, Christie enlisted in the Army in August 1918, and as First Lieutenant in the Sanitary Corps served at several camps in the United States until

February 1919, when he returned to Berkeley as Instructor in Fruit Products. He became Assistant Professor in Fruit Products in 1921 and Associate Chemist in Fruit Products in 1925. During this period Christie was co-author of U.C. Bul. 322, "Evaporation of Grapes," and U.C. Bul. 376, "Dehydration of Walnuts." He also published U.C. Bul. 388, "Principles and Practice of Sun Drying Fruit," and U. C. Bul. 404, "Dehydration of Prunes." In addition, he published numerous technical papers as well as a great many popular articles covering the preservation of fruits, construction of evaporators, etc.

In 1923 Christie and Gauthier investigated the possibilities of preserving avocados by drying, the negative results of which were published in our Yearbook of 1923. In 1926, at the request of George B. Hodgkin, Manager of Calavo Growers, Christie developed the refractometer method of testing avocados for maturity, which method of measuring the oil content was of great and immediate benefit to the avocado industry. This new, quick, and easy method made it practicable not only to regulate picking according to maturity, but made possible much better enforcement of the State standardization law, which is based on oil content. The details of this new method were published by B. E. Lesley and A. W. Christie in the Journal of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry in January 1929, and later summarized by Christie in our Yearbook for 1937, page 86.

In 1927 Christie resigned from the faculty of the University to become Field Manager for the California Walnut Growers Association, and his many subsequent achievements for the walnut growers we will pass over. After he moved his family to Los Angeles County and settled in East Whittier he acquired an avocado orchard, joined this Society in 1933, was elected Director, and has served on the Board continuously to date. He was President in 1934 and 1935, and again in 1939. He was awarded the **Emblem of Honor** for outstanding meritorious service in 1939. For several years Christie served as Chairman of the Avocado Department of the Los Angeles County Farm Bureau. He was elected Director-at-Large by Calavo Growers in 1943.

The Christies have three children, Lee S. (now in the U.S. Navy), Kathleen Louise, and Grahame W. (now in the U.S. Army). Christie is a member of Alpha Gamma Rho and Alpha Chi Sigma fraternities, as well as Sigma Xi and Alpha Zeta honor societies.

Art Christie has been untiring in his very effective service to fruit growers generally. To avocado growers in particular he has been a tower of strength. They tender their felicitation and deep appreciation.