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## Percy C. Everett (1902-1973)

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*Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden*

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Percy Charles Everett was born in Sierra Madre, Los Angeles County, on December 9, 1902, and died at Santa Monica on August 5, 1973, following heart surgery. After attending local schools in southern California, he enrolled at the University of Illinois but was later forced to withdraw because of illness. Following an extended period of hospitalization he accepted a position with the United States Forest Service as a lookout on Santiago Peak in the Santa Ana Mountains, a position that he held for several years. While studying the vegetation of the Santa Ana Range, Dr. Carl Wolf, botanist at the then youthful Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, became acquainted with Percy and in late 1934 he persuaded him to come to the botanic garden. His first title was Corresponding Secretary and in the botanic garden's semiannual report published in April 1937, he is also listed as Keeper of the Herbarium Collections as well as Corresponding Secretary. In late 1939, Mrs. Susanna Bixby Bryant, the founder of the garden, announced certain changes in the garden staff. Percy was appointed as Superintendent, a position he held until his retirement in 1967, at which time he was accorded the title of Superintendent Emeritus. Volume six of the garden's journal *Aliso* was dedicated to him at that time in appreciation of his many years of devoted service to the garden.

Percy wrote numerous articles for horticultural and gardening journals but his most important publication was *A Summary of the Culture of California Plants at the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, 1927-1950*. This publication summarized the work which had been carried out at the botanic garden at its original site in Orange County. At the time of his death, he was working on the manuscript for a book that would have summarized the results of growing natives at Claremont, site of the botanic garden since 1951.

Percy was a member of numerous professional and service organizations. As a member of the International Plant Propagators Society, he was instrumental in the establishment in 1961 of the Western Region and he served on its first board of directors. In 1962 he was elected president of the Western Region and in 1964 he served as president of the combined regions. He was a member of the American Association of Botanic Gardens and Arboreta and served as a member of the board of directors between 1962 and 1964. At the time of his death he was a horticultural consultant to the Wrigley Foundation in connection with their plans for the development of a botanic garden on Catalina Island.

Following his retirement, Percy and his wife Genevieve, who predeceased him by five months, made numerous trips to many parts of the United States and Canada. Their last trip was an extended visit to Australia and New Zealand. Percy was an avid photographer and amassed a large collection of slides of California native plants. These are now a part of the botanic garden's permanent slide collection. A friendly, modest man, Percy was always ready to share his experiences or to offer advice to all who sought it, be they graduate students, professional botanists, public officials, or gardeners.

Through a generous contribution to the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden from the Inland Chapter of the California Nurserymen's Association, a memorial fern garden is being established in his memory.

—Lee W. Lenz