

Louis Bernard Schmidt

During the past half century Iowa State College at Ames has enlisted on its staff scores of outstanding men in the fields of agriculture and engineering. In their research as well as in their teaching these men have had national and not infrequently international reputations. Fortunately for Iowans, these top men were not restricted to the scientific fields. History has also been very strong at Iowa State, and this strength in no small degree can be attributed to the leadership of Louis Bernard Schmidt.

Born at Belle Plaine, Iowa, on September 8, 1879, Louis B. Schmidt graduated from Cornell College in 1901. His first teaching experience was gained at Webster City; his graduate work was at the universities of Chicago, Wisconsin, and Iowa. In 1906 Schmidt came to Iowa State College as an assistant professor and by 1919 he had become professor and head of the department of history and government. During the next thirty years this able scholar and teacher forged his department into one of the strongest of its kind in the United States.

From the start Schmidt was interested in the history of American agriculture. He made solid

contributions to the early volumes of the *Iowa Journal of History and Politics* on this subject, often serving as a Research Associate of the State Historical Society of Iowa while performing this work. In 1925 he was joint author of a book entitled *Readings in the Economic History of American Agriculture*. In 1933 he was elected president of the Agricultural History Society, delivering his presidential address in Washington on the subject, "The Agricultural Revolution in the Prairies and the Great Plains of the United States."

The present issue of THE PALIMPSEST comes from the pen of a man who was reared in a rural community, worked on an Iowa farm, and has devoted many years to the study and teaching of the economic, political, and social history of American agriculture, and to the history of farm organizations in the United States.

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