

THE PALIMPSEST

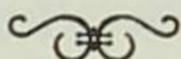
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J. Brownlee Davidson

In 1905 J. Brownlee Davidson came to Iowa State College to head up the department of agricultural engineering. Born on a Nebraska farm in 1880, Davidson had graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1904 and had served one year as instructor at that school before coming to Ames. During the next forty-five years Davidson was almost continuously associated with Iowa State College, gaining an international reputation during that time. In 1907 he sent out the call for the organization meeting of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers. He served as its first president and helped start its technical journal. His special courses and high professional reputation attracted graduate students from all over the world to Ames. His students head the departments of agricultural engineering in seventeen states and three Canadian provinces.

The Nebraska farm boy who had migrated to the richest agricultural state in the Union was ever mindful of keeping in close touch with the

practical, while teaching and writing textbooks and numerous articles at Iowa State College. As a young man he held summer positions at both the John Deere and the International Harvester plants. In 1933 he was awarded the Cyrus Hall McCormick medal for distinguished service in agricultural engineering. In 1942 he won "Estranger" membership in the Swedish Royal Agricultural Society.

Prof. Davidson's contributions to national and world improvement in agricultural engineering are numerous and significant. He served on an American commission to Russia to study and report on colonization in the Far East in 1929. He was consultant on the War Production Board in 1943 and acted as consultant to the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration in 1944. He was chairman of the committee on agricultural engineering for China, which was appointed by the Republic of China and sponsored by twenty-five American farm implement firms.

Food production played a major part in winning the war and food surpluses for distressed nations may play an equally important part in present world unrest. Iowa's preeminent role as a food producer, and as a market for agricultural machinery as well as a manufacturer of farm implements, makes Prof. Davidson's contribution to THE PALIMPSEST a particularly timely one.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN