
Obituary

Carl Louis August Schmidt 1885-1946

Carl Louis August Schmidt, professor of biochemistry and chairman of the Division of Biochemistry of the University of California for 22 years, died in Berkeley on 23 February 1946.

Dr. Schmidt was born on 7 March 1885 in Brown County, South Dakota, the only child of Gustav and Friderike Schmidt. By the time of his graduation with the B.S. degree from the University of California, in 1908, he had already published four articles and had been elected to full membership in Sigma Xi.

Between 1909 and 1912 he worked under the direction of Prof. A. E. Taylor, of the Referee Board of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, on the possible toxicity of sulfite, aluminum, and copper in food preservation.

Returning to the University of California in 1912, he spent a term in the study of bacteriology, and in 1913 he was appointed chemist, bacteriologist, and food inspector for the City of Berkeley, where he assisted in organizing the municipal laboratory.

On 11 April 1914 he married Esther May Skolfield, a graduate of Stanford and bacteriologist at the State Board of Health in Berkeley. For a number of years they worked and published jointly on problems of bacteriology and immunology.

Again returning to the University on a research grant from the Hooper Foundation for Medical Research, he completed the requirements for the Ph.D. degree, which he was awarded in 1916. The thesis problem, carried out under the guidance of Profs. Gay and Robertson, was concerned with a study of the immunological properties of proteins.

After serving for two years as research assistant under Prof. Gay, he was appointed to an assistant professorship in the Department of Biochemistry and Pharmacology. In 1921 he was advanced to the rank of associate professor, and in 1924 he became professor and chairman of the Department of Biochemistry, a post which he held with distinction until the time of his death.

His administrative ability and scholarly attainment brought him many responsibilities and honors inside and outside the University. Between 1937 and 1944 he held the post of dean of the College of Pharmacy. In 1938 he served for a brief period as acting dean of the Medical School. He was also a member of the Advisory Board of the College of Dentistry and of numerous University committees, and had an important voice in determining University policy. He was

elected a member of the Committee on Revision of the *United States Pharmacopoeia* in 1940 and was a member of the National Committee on Aviation Medicine during the period of the war.

Dr. Schmidt served as consulting biochemist for the University of California and Southern Pacific Hospitals, and Frederick Stearns and Company, and as a collaborator of the Western Regional Laboratory of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. He was president of Annual Reviews, Inc., between 1936 and 1946 and served on the editorial committee of *Annual Reviews of Biochemistry*. At various times he was secretary and president of the Pacific Coast Section of the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine and during the last three years was an editor of its Proceedings. He was a member of the editorial and nominating committees of the American Society of Biological Chemists.

The research work of Dr. Schmidt was varied in character, showing the breadth of his interest. His two most lasting interests were the biochemistry of bile and the chemistry of the amino acids and proteins. In the first field he provided the explanation for the cause of the bleeding tendency in obstructive jaundice by the important discovery that the bile was a necessary vehicle for the absorption of the fat-soluble vitamins, while his work on the physical chemistry of the amino acids and proteins laid part of the foundation for the very important recent developments of their medical applications.

Dr. Schmidt did much to further biochemistry. One of his outstanding characteristics was the almost boundless energy which he devoted to any enterprise he considered worthy of his attention. He took an active part in the establishment of the important *Annual Reviews of Biochemistry and Physiology*. He had supreme faith in the value of research and did much to foster it in both the Medical School and the College of Pharmacy. He pioneered in developing new courses in the Division of Biochemistry. He was the moving spirit in organizing and in keeping active the Biochemical Conference, which did much to foster friendly scientific good-fellowship and interest in biochemical research on the Pacific Coast.

In addition to his many other activities, Dr. Schmidt was editor of *The chemistry of the amino acids and proteins*; with Frank W. Allen, wrote *Fundamentals of biochemistry*; and published a total of 184 journal articles.

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