

so when written. For example, how many books which use bold type for vectors give any *practicable* suggestion of how to *write* vectors?

*College of Technology,
Kingston-on-Thames.*

Yours faithfully,
F. GERRISH

[1] Chaundy, Barrett and Batey, *The printing of mathematics* (Oxford, 1954), pp. 67–8.

NOTICES

It is sometimes difficult to find people willing to serve on Subject Panels for C.S.E. and G.C.E. Members of the N.U.T. who are subject specialists and interested in work at either O-level or A-level are invited to send their names, together with details of experience, to

The Secretary,
Education Department, N.U.T.,
Hamilton House,
Mabledon Place, W.C.1,

quoting the reference “EF”.

EUREKA

The Journal of the Archimedeans (Cambridge University Mathematical Society) has just published No. 31, for October 1968. The price is 2s. 6d., and correspondence should be addressed to

Eureka, The Arts School, Bene't Street, Cambridge, England.

(This particular number includes some fascinatingly irritating diagrams of Impossible Objects!)

OBITUARIES

Prof. H. T. H. Piaggio, M.A., D.Sc., 1884–1967

Henry Thomas Herbert Piaggio was born in London on 2 June, 1884. He had one brother and one sister, and the family were happy and devoted to one another. His father, Francis, had a dancing academy at Margate. Piaggio was educated at the City of London School and at St. John's College, Cambridge. After receiving his degree of M.A. at Cambridge, his subsequent research earned him the D.Sc. in 1914.

In 1908 he was appointed Lecturer in Mathematics at the University of Nottingham. At that time there was no separate department of mathematics, and Piaggio worked under W. H. Heaton, Professor of Physics and Mathematics. In 1919 a separate chair of

mathematics was created, and Piaggio was appointed as the first Professor of Mathematics at the College. He held this position until 1950. From 1944 to 1947 he was also Dean of the Faculty of Pure Science. He helped in the administration which led to the establishment of the University of Nottingham in 1948. For some years he was a member of the Council of the Mathematical Association; he joined in 1912, and was a life member. He evolved various original ideas on the organisation of chess tournaments, and with the help of his sister he ably promoted such activities as tennis for his staff and students. He was made Professor Emeritus in 1951 and settled down happily at his home in the Park, where he was faithfully looked after by his sister, who was a woman of considerable intellectual ability, and after her death in 1957 he engaged a housekeeper. After a short illness he died at the Cedars Home on 26 June, 1967.

These are the main facts of Piaggio's life. To appreciate his work we must return to the early years of the century. He was then making a profound study of differential equations and invariants. This fitted him admirably to master relativity, and by about 1920 he was considered one of the very few men in the world who really understood Einstein's ideas. Einstein himself came to Nottingham in 1929 to lecture. The blackboard on which he wrote was subsequently varnished and preserved for all to see. Naturally he and Piaggio had much in common, and Piaggio fortunately had a good knowledge of German as well as French.

Turning back again, we have Piaggio's one and only book, on differential equations, first published in 1920, but revised and enlarged in 1928. This work alone would be sufficient to establish his reputation. It has been reprinted many times and translated into many languages.

Apart from this, Piaggio wrote many articles for *The Mathematical Gazette*, the *Journal of the London Mathematical Society*, *Nature* and other scientific journals. The wide range of these articles is very remarkable. They deal, among many other topics, with the application of mathematics to psychology (one of his special interests), optics, air navigation, indeterminism, relativity, probability, and of course differential equations. He also reviewed a large number of books in English, French and German, including some by such eminent men as N. Bohr. In addition to all this, he carried on an extensive correspondence with a number of his former students.

So much for Piaggio's erudition, capability and external activities. His teaching was a model of clarity, and he was ready at any time to take over the teaching of any of the many subjects needed by his students, and he corrected their work with meticulous care. His writing was very neat and legible: it never degenerated into a scribble.

As to his character, I think his sister-in-law's words are an admirable summary: "He was such a kind, gentle, man and sincere in all that he did." He always gave full credit to others for original ideas. Although full of energy which suggested the nickname High Tension Henry, yet he was shy and retiring and avoided social engagements. He never married. Most of his friends belonged to the scientific world or were keen on chess, which game was his major hobby. He was small in stature, with a pleasant, smiling face. Weak eyesight, which afflicted him from youth, prevented him from taking much active part in games such as tennis and cricket, which he enjoyed watching. After he retired he made a habit of taking a long walk most days. He had a vast fund of anecdotes which he used effectively in and out of class. After retirement he suffered from a period of depression, from which fortunately he soon recovered.

I feel that his life, sustained throughout by so many interests, was essentially happy, even though he was obliged for long years to work hard at Latin and Greek, in which he had no real interest, and to the study of which he attributed his weakness of sight. He was undoubtedly a great mathematician, teacher and sincere friend to all with whom he came in contact.

*Grindlow, Tideswell,
Buxton, Derbys.*

D. A. YOUNG

[*Note:* I intend to expand the above into a short biography and I should be very grateful for any information and impressions, including letters written by Piaggio, which would help me in this work.

Correction: In my letter to the *Gazette* of October 1967 (p. 245) there was a misprint in my address—Brixton should read Buxton.]

G. C. Paradine

C. G. Paradine gave much service to the association ever since he joined it in 1924. After being at Christ's Hospital he won a major scholarship to Clare College, Cambridge, and then obtained first class honours in both parts of the mathematical Tripos. He started his career by teaching at Christ's Hospital from 1921–1924; then he went to the Grammar School at Perth in Western Australia. After returning to England in 1927 he taught for two years at the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth and he then joined the mathematics staff of Battersea Polytechnic where he taught for thirty years, becoming first a senior lecturer and then deputy head of department.

Since the war he has collaborated with C. Thomas in writing Vols.

3, 4 and 5 of a course of General School Mathematics and then with Dr H. A. Hayden and R. N. Giles in writing *Intermediate Pure Mathematics*; but probably his most interesting book is *Statistics for Technologists*, written with B. H. P. Rivett—a book that hits the happy mean between the type of statistics book that throws formulae at one with no proofs and just shows how to use them and the book which gives very advanced proofs of the formulae with little application. I feel sure that many must wish that this book had covered a little more ground.

I have mentioned first his activities outside the Association but now I come to the great help he gave to the Association in many spheres of its work.

He was a member of the committee of the London branch from 1956, and in 1957 became the branch's representative in the Council. He held this position for some time, and on the committee of the branch he was particularly noted for his readiness with ideas for subjects to be discussed at meetings and for the ease with which he could find something interesting to talk about himself.

In connection with the Association reports he was a co-opted member of the sub-committee which produced the report on the "Teaching of Mathematics in Technical Colleges" in 1954. He was a member of the Teaching Committee from 1950–1966 and while on this committee was a member of the compendium and statistics sub-committees. In the former he did a great deal towards putting the contributions from other members of the association and from industry into a suitable order for publication. He did this both for the Compendium of Applications of Elementary Mathematics and for the Compendium of Applications of Sixth Form Mathematics and he was very careful and meticulous in doing it. He also wrote a good part of the chapters on integration and differential equations in the latter report.

He was a member of the Statistics committee when it was formed in 1956 and continued to serve when it was re-formed later under a new chairman; his contribution under both chairmen was invaluable. In the draft report, now being edited, he produced the entire chapter on Probability and the mathematical appendix but even more valuable was his scholarly knowledge of the theory of statistics and his flair for practical applications in such varied fields as sport and meteorology.

The Association has lost one who devoted much time to its work and the Association has gained much from his knowledge and experience.

*Timberley, Carlton Road,
Sidcup, Kent.*

H. V. LOWRY