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978-1-107-12413-4 — From Servant to Queen: A Journey through Victorian Mathematics
John Heard
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From Servant to Queen

A Journey through Victorian Mathematics

With a few exceptions, pure mathematics in Britain at the beginning of the nineteenth century was a recreation for amateurs. Drawing on primary sources, John Heard provides an engaging account of the process by which it rose to become an academic discipline of repute which by the First World War was led by G H Hardy, and supported by the internationally respected London Mathematical Society. In chronicling that rise, this book describes key contributions and the social environment in which mathematicians operated, uses contemporary commentary where appropriate, and provides full references to help any researchers who want to dig deeper into the original sources. No mathematical knowledge is required, and readers with a wide range of interests and backgrounds will find much to enjoy in this unique insight into the world of Victorian mathematics and science.

John Heard is an independent researcher with a doctorate in the history of science from Imperial College London. He is also a member of the British Society for the History of Science, the British Society for the History of Mathematics, and a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

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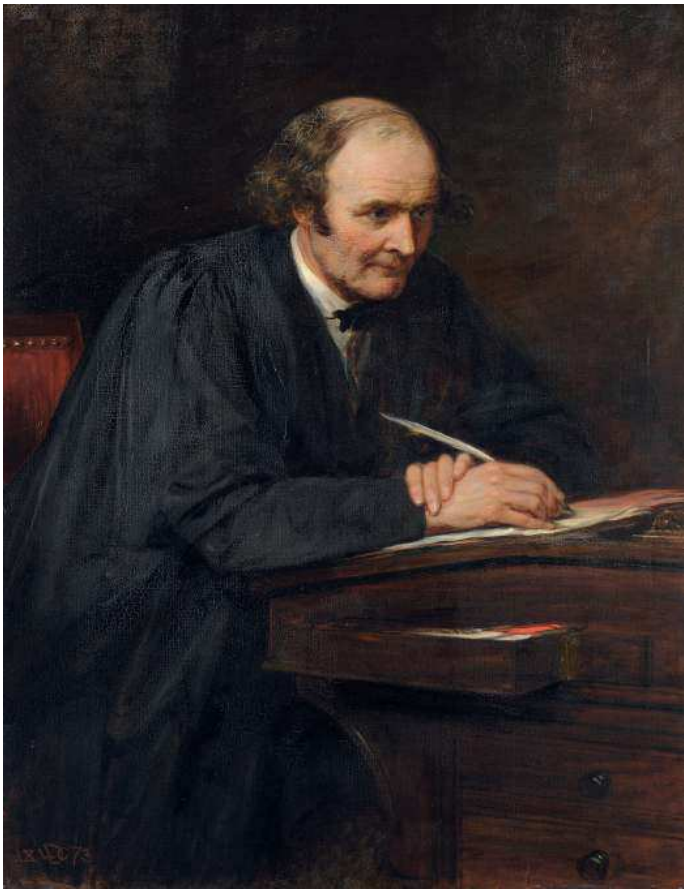

Arthur Cayley, painted by Lowes Cato Dickinson in 1872; a satirical verse by James Clerk Maxwell concludes with the lines:

> . . . by Dickinson depicted
> In two dimensions, we the form may trace
> Of him whose mind, too large for vulgar space,
> In *n* dimensions flourished unrestricted.

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This book is dedicated to the memory of my dear parents, Nancy and Percy.

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NOTES FOR THE READER

Two forms of referencing are used in this book. An alphabetic superscript refers to a short note at the bottom of the page; such notes give additional information or explanations that do not fit easily in the main text. Much more numerous are numerical superscripts, which refer to the 'Notes and References' section at the end of each chapter. The information here concerns sources, and nothing else; so if the reader is not concerned about these, then *all numerical superscript references can safely be ignored*. In each 'Notes and References' section, full bibliographic details are given for the first mention of a publication, with an abbreviated reference being given for subsequent mentions.

For convenience and conciseness, the term 'Britain' is used to signify Great Britain and the island of Ireland; while 'the Continent' signifies that part of Europe on the other side of the English Channel.

In the index, if the title of a book or journal begins with a definite or indefinite article, then the article is omitted; thus *A Budget of Paradoxes* in indexed under 'B', and 'The Purloined Letter' under 'P'.

In quotations, any italicised stress is in the original.

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