MATHEMATICS UNBOUND:
The Evolution of an International Mathematical Research Community, 1800–1945

Karen Hunger Parshall
Adrian C. Rice
Editors

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Acknowledgments

The present volume evolved from a three-day, international symposium, entitled “Mathematics Unbound: The Evolution of an International Mathematical Community, 1800–1945,” and held at the University of Virginia 27-29 May, 1999 as part of the Mathematics Department’s “Emphasis Year” in the history of mathematics. The conference, which brought together scholars from eleven different countries, received generous support from the National Science Foundation in the form of grant number SBR-9817933 as well as from the University of Virginia’s Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Corcoran Department of History, and Department of Mathematics. This financial support notwithstanding, the conference would not have been a success without the tireless and ever-cheerful practical assistance of the Mathematics Department’s administrative staff, Connie Abell, Mary Cline, Julie Riddleberger, and Joyce Stevens.

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Our work on this project has been stimulating, both professionally and intellectually. We hope that the end-product will not only prove illuminating to our readers but also provide an impetus for future investigations into the fascinating historical question of the internationalization of research-level mathematics.

Charlottesville, Virginia
10 August, 2001

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MATHEMATICS UNBOUND:
The Evolution of an International Mathematical Research Community, 1800–1945
Karen Hunger Parshall and Adrian C. Rice, Editors

Although today's mathematical research community takes its international character very much for granted, this "global nature" is relatively recent, having evolved over a period of roughly 150 years—from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the middle of the twentieth century. During this time, the practice of mathematics changed from being centered on a collection of disparate national communities to being characterized by an international group of scholars for whom the goal of mathematical research and cooperation transcended national boundaries. Yet, the development of an international community was far from smooth and involved obstacles such as war, political upheaval, and national rivalries. Until now, this evolution has been largely overlooked by historians and mathematicians alike.

This book addresses the issue by bringing together essays by twenty experts in the history of mathematics who have investigated the genesis of today's international mathematical community. This includes not only developments within component national mathematical communities, such as the growth of societies and journals, but also more wide-ranging political, philosophical, linguistic, and pedagogical issues.

The resulting volume is essential reading for anyone interested in the history of modern mathematics. It will be of interest to mathematicians, historians of mathematics, and historians of science in general.