

**Meeting:** 1007, Santa Barbara, California, SS 2A, Special Session on History of Mathematics

1007-01-121      **Janet L. Beery\*** ([janet\\_beery@redlands.edu](mailto:janet_beery@redlands.edu)), Department of Mathematics, University of Redlands, 1200 E. Colton Ave., Redlands, CA 92373. *Thomas Harriot's communication of mathematics via symbols, tables, and page layout.*

Thomas Harriot (1560?-1621) may be best known as the navigator and scientist for Sir Walter Raleigh's 1585-1586 expedition to the Virginia Colony, but he also was the leading English mathematician of his day. Harriot made important discoveries in a wide range of mathematical sciences, including algebra, geometry, navigation, astronomy, and optics. He published only one work during his lifetime, *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (1588), but, at his death, left thousands of manuscript pages of mathematics. Harriot's mathematical work is striking both in its content—he obtained many results generally credited to later mathematicians—and in its highly visual and symbolic presentation. We examine some of Harriot's work on algebra (polynomial equations and their roots), finite difference interpolation, Pythagorean triples, and combinatorics, focusing on his very clear and visual presentation of his work and offering, when available, his contemporaries' reactions to his style of presentation. (Received February 14, 2005)