1007-01-172   **Deborah A. Kent*** (`dak8x@virginia.edu`), P. O. Box 400137, Department of Mathematics, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA 22904-4137. *The National Academy of Sciences Unfit for 'Linear Associative Algebra'?* Preliminary report.

In 1863, fifty American scientists were named as incorporating members of the National Academy of Sciences. As a founding member of this new Academy, Benjamin Peirce began to present at its early meetings his investigations—inspired by Hamilton's 1843 announcement of the quaternions—of linear associative algebras. Peirce entertained high hopes of utilizing the new National Academy as a platform for promoting first-class mathematical research in America, yet his "Linear Associative Algebra" fell on impressed, but, for practical purposes, deaf ears during his lifetime. This paper will explore why Peirce's contemporaries did not share his vision for advancing pure mathematics. It will also consider what components present in, or lacking from, the nineteenth-century American scientific landscape contributed to the Academy's inability to receive Peirce's presentation of abstract mathematical theory. (Received February 20, 2005)