

19th-Century Journals

I was very fortunate to be located in Philadelphia while carrying out research on 19th-century American mathematics journals around the turn of the present millennium. The first such publication was the *Mathematical Correspondent*, 1804-1807, and complete copies of it are shelved in the libraries of both the American Philosophical Society and the University of Pennsylvania. When *Monthly* founder B.F. Finkel carried out his research on these journals some 75 years ago, he was unaware of the copy at the APS, which served as my primary source.¹ (I hereby give thanks to retired APS librarian Roy Goodman for his help in locating the journal and allowing me unrestricted access to the *Correspondent*.) I was so impressed with being able to hold the original publication in my hands that I ended up organizing a one-day conference devoted to the bicentennial of the *Correspondent* at the APS² and subsequently publishing a brief analysis of its contents.³

Although the second journal, *The Analyst; or Mathematical Museum*, was published in Philadelphia when Robert Adrain was at the University of Pennsylvania, I have no idea why I did not consult the copies stored in the Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Penn. Instead, I relied on a microfilm version in a remote room in Paley Library on the Temple Campus. Consequently, I never held the original copy but had to wrestle with the unmanageable technology that has now been consigned to the dust heap (thankfully!)

Similarly, I had to rely on a microfilm version to see Adrain's *Analyst* (1814). Finkel commented in 1940 that a fifth issue of *The Analyst; or Mathematical Museum* was shelved in the Astor Library in New York City but should be regarded as the first issue of the *Analyst*, since it bore the date March 1, 1814.

I consulted the copy of the *Mathematical Diary* (1825-1832) shelved at the APS. One person acknowledged for solving 13 problems in the 11th issue was "John M. Wilt, Springfield, Penn." I lived in that township 1976-2012, so I was intrigued by this mathematical enthusiast but frustrated at being unable to learn anything about him.

I have never seen the only extant copy of the *Mathematical Companion* that is at Harvard. Nor did I ever lay hands on the *Mathematical Miscellany*, even though Benjamin F. Finkel listed eight sites that stored it as of 1940.⁴

I was able to consult the copy of the *Cambridge Miscellany* at the University of Pennsylvania after Gino Pagano, a student in my course "The history of mathematics in

America” during the spring 2004 semester, drew my attention to it. Gino wrote an excellent report on the journal; it can be found online at

<https://math.temple.edu/~zit/Revolution/Report/Cambridge%20Miscellany.pdf>.

I have seen original copies of neither John Runkle’s *Mathematical Monthly* nor Joel Hendricks’ *Analyst*. However, I have hopes of seeing the *Analyst* soon, especially after hearing Deborah Kent talk about it. Kent is at Drake University in Des Moines, where the archives storing the *Analyst* are located. Because I have retired to Minneapolis, the drive to the Iowa capital should be relatively easy, winter weather notwithstanding.

Footnotes:

¹ On p. 268 of Benjamin F. Finkel, A history of American mathematical journals, *National Mathematics Magazine* **14** (1940), 261-270, and on p. 320 of *idem*, pp. 317-328.

² “Bicentennial Celebration of Mathematics Journals in America,” American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, April 2004.

³ The bicentennial of American mathematics journals, *College Mathematics Journal* **36** (2005), 2-15.

⁴ On p. 177 of Benjamin F. Finkel, A history of American mathematics journals, *National Mathematics Magazine* **15** (1941), 177-190.