Presidents

The office of president has two aspects. First, it is a high honor that the Society bestows on one of its members. The president is an embodiment of mathematical virtue to be emulated and admired. The office has always been uncontested. Thus it is filled by the nominee of the Council, which is in turn confirming the selection of the nominating committee. One does not "campaign" for nomination. The writer has discovered no instance in which the name proposed was not instantly approved. This is not astonishing in that the pool of worthy candidates is large. There was a bit of muttering in the background when the first Jewish president was selected. At least one person who was the clear choice of the nominating committee declined to have his name presented to the Council.

In the year that E. J. McShane was the candidate, the Nominating Committee brought forward two names with the intent that the Council choose between them. The secretary at the time was John W. Green. He persuaded the committee that the proposed choice by the Council was a bad idea and the committee finally selected McShane. It was fourteen years before the name of the other candidate came to the Council for nomination.

The nature of the position of president as an honor is attested by the eminence of the holders as research mathematicians. There have been 49 presidents in the one hundred years of the Society. (One served for four years and each of the others for two.) Of these, 41 have been members of the National Academy of Sciences, including the last 21. Although it has never been a requirement, it is a qualification of which nominating committees have been aware.

Other than the duties that adhere to the title of president by common practice, there is one duty prescribed in the bylaws. That is to give a retiring presidential address within one year after completion of the term. However, the annual meeting was moved from December to January in 1958. The bylaw was not amended to allow for the resulting anomaly, but the address has most usually been given in the thirteenth month. It has been understood by some that the purpose of the bylaw is to assure that the office remain in

the hands of persons who are primarily research mathematicians and capable of the required duty.

Second, the office is a working position. The burden has grown with time. It extends over the year as president-elect, two years as president, and a year as ex-president. The president is a member of the Executive Committee during all four years. During the second and third he is a member of the Board of Trustees and he sits with the Trustees in the first and fourth as well. These two bodies meet jointly for several days, usually in May and November, and occasionally at other times. The president is chairman of the Liaison Committee, which has continuing sporadic duties, including oversight of the work of the executive director. He is a member of the Agenda and Budget Committee, which has two planning sessions each year in preparation for the meetings of the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees. The president is a member of the Committee on Committees, which advises on presidential appointments as a source of ideas. He represents the Society in the Council of Scientific Society Presidents, a "club" of such individuals from many disciplines, and on the Conference Board of the Mathematical Sciences, an umbrella organization.

The president is the representative of the Society to the outside world in matters of moment. Although a great deal of the business of the Society is conducted by the executive director, the treasurer, or the secretary, in matters where the prestige of the Society or the dignity of the profession is in question, it is the president who speaks for the Society.

There are clearly more people who are worthy of the office, would grace it, and would perform effectively than the Society can use at the rate of one every two years. The proposal has been advanced casually that a partial remedy is to reduce the term to one year. The counter argument has prevailed that were this the case the entire term would be spent learning the job.

Some presidents have not had much continuing experience with the business of the Society, having perhaps served on the Council as a journal editor, been a member of a few committees, and been an elected vice-president, none of this in the recent past. On the other hand the wisdom and sophistication of presidents in the context of the general mathematical community is substantial.

In the days before the prevalence of airplane travel, the geographic location of the president could present problems. Presidents came from no further west nor less convenient location than Chicago up until E. R. Hedrick from UCLA in 1929–1930, R. L. Moore from the University of Texas in 1937–1938, and G. C. Evans from the University of California at Berkeley in 1940. The Trustees voted to pay for one round trip transcontinental rail fare per year for Evans.

Until 1948 the president remained on the Council for six years beyond the term of office, so that the number of such Council members was usually three. Then there was a change in the bylaws setting that term of continued service at one year. The president is eligible for other office, say editor or member-at-large after his term is over. In fact, since the change in bylaws, it appears that no president has served as member-at-large or journal editor.

In the following pages there is a picture of each president and a brief curriculum vitae.

Griffith C. Evans

GRIFFITH CONRAD EVANS
PRESIDENT 1939–1940

G. C. Evans was born in Boston on 11 May 1887. He took his A.B. in 1907, his M.A. in 1908, and his Ph.D. in 1910, all at Harvard. His thesis adviser was W. F. Osgood. His principal academic appointments were at Rice from 1912 to 1934 and at the University of California, Berkeley from 1934 to 1954. He gave Colloquium Lectures in 1916. He was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Science and of the National Academy of Sciences. He died on 8 December 1973.

Marston Moore.

# HAROLD CALVIN MARSTON MORSE
PRESIDENT 1941–1942

Marston Morse was born on 24 March 1892 in Waterville, ME. His B.A. was from Colby College in 1914. He received the M.A. in 1915 and the Ph.D. in 1917, both from Harvard. His thesis adviser was G. D. Birkhoff. His principal academic appointments were at Harvard from 1926 to 1935 and at the Institute for Advanced Study from 1935 until retirement in 1975. He gave the Colloquium Lectures of 1931 and the Gibbs Lecture of 1952. He received the Bôcher Prize in 1933. He was chairman of the Division of Mathematics of the National Research Council in 1950–1952, a member of the National Science Board in 1950–1954, and chairman of the U.S. National Commission for Mathematics in 1959–1963. He received the President's Certificate of Merit in 1947, the National Medal of Science in 1965, and the Croix de Guerre and was a Chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur. He was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a corresponding member of the Italian National Academy of Lincei, an associate member of the French Academy of Sciences, and a member of the National Academy of Sciences. He died on 22 June 1977.

Marshall H. Stone

MARSHALL HARVEY STONE
PRESIDENT 1943–1944

Marshall Stone was born in New York, NY on 8 April 1903. He received his A.B. from Harvard in 1922 and his Ph.D. in 1926. His thesis adviser was G. D. Birkhoff. His principal academic appointments have been at Harvard, 1927–1931 and 1933–1946, at Chicago from 1947 to 1968, and at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst from 1968. He gave Colloquium Lectures in 1939 and the Gibbs Lecture of 1956. He held many visiting academic appointments and served on many international commissions. He was president of the International Mathematical Union in 1952–1954 and president of the International Committee on Mathematics Instruction, 1959–1962. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences.
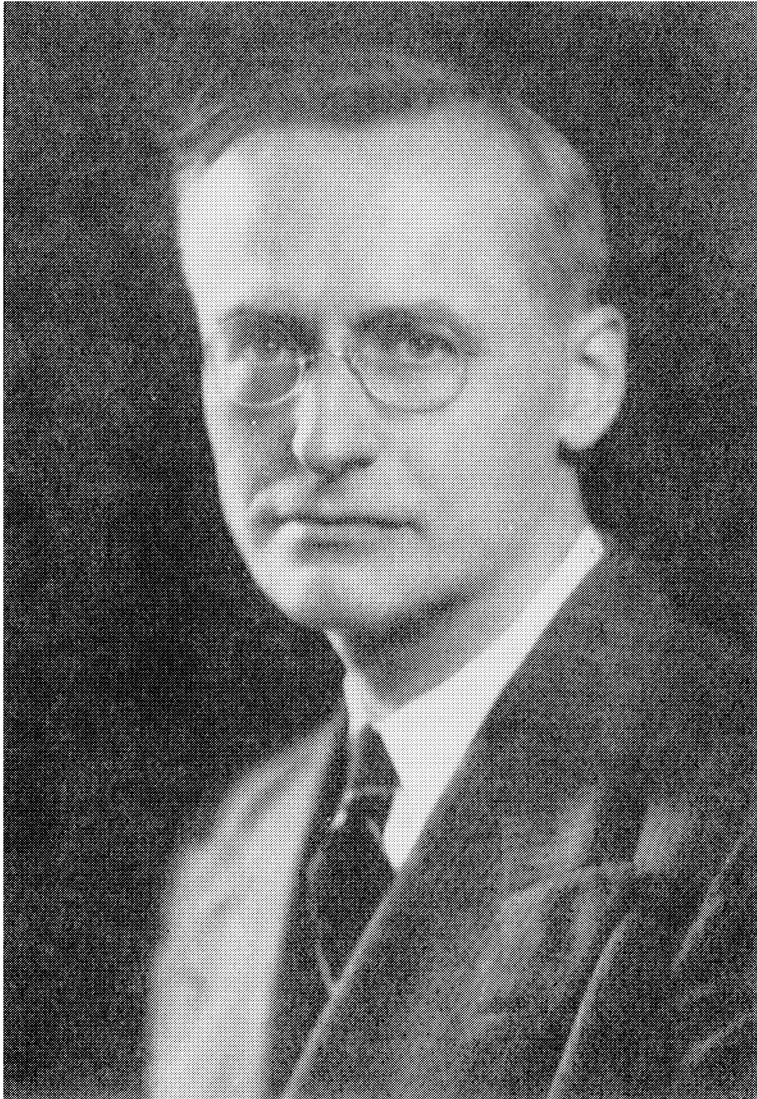
THEOPHIL HENRY HILDEBRANDT
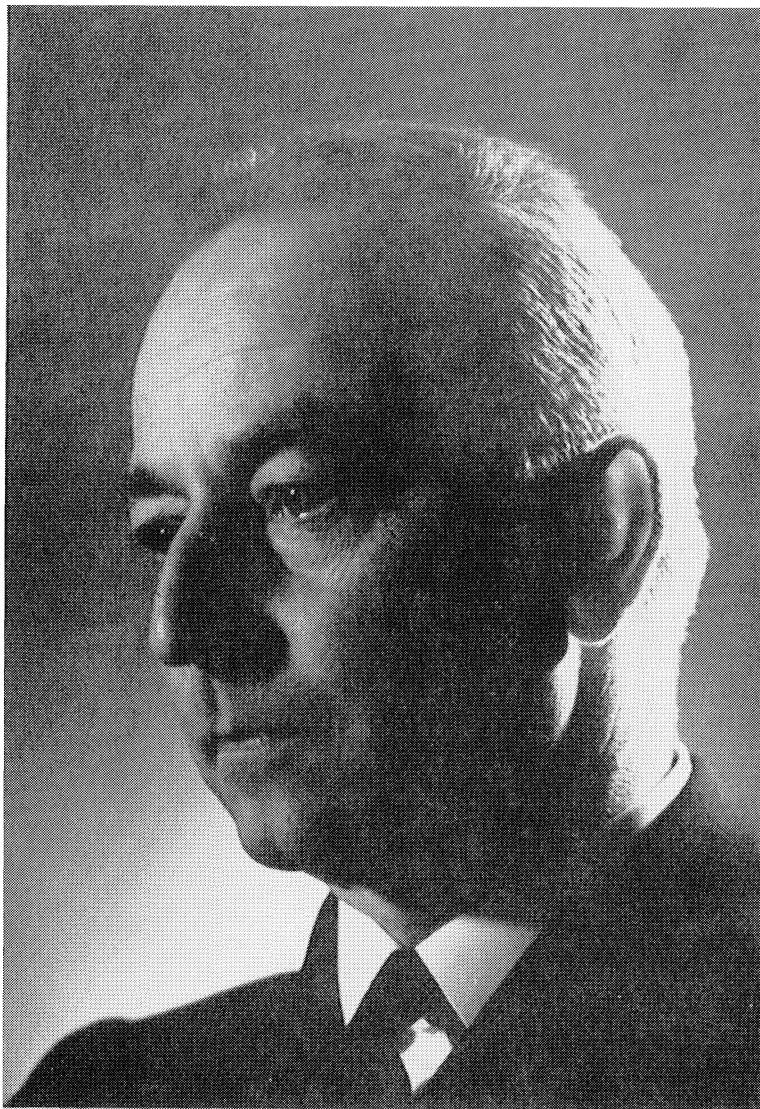## PRESIDENT 1945–1946

T. H. Hildebrandt was born in Dover, OH on 24 July 1888. He received his A.B. from the University of Illinois in 1905, his S.M. from the University of Chicago in 1906 and his Ph.D. from the same institution in 1910 under E. H. Moore. He spent the major portion of his professional career at the University of Michigan, where he went as an instructor of mathematics in 1909. He served as chairman of the department from 1934 until his retirement in 1957. Professor Hildebrandt received the Chauvenet Prize of the Mathematical Association of America in 1929. He died on 9 October 1980.

EINAR HILLE
PRESIDENT 1947–1948

Einar Hille was born on 28 June 1894 in Stockholm. He received the A.B. in 1913 from the University of Stockholm, the M.Ph. in 1914, the Lic. Ph. in 1916, and the Ph.D. in 1918. His principal academic appointments were at Princeton from 1922 to 1933 and at Yale from 1933 until his retirement in 1962. He gave the Colloquium Lectures of 1944. His dissertation won a Mittag-Leffler Prize. He was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Swedish Academy, and the National Academy of Sciences. He died on 12 February 1980.

J. L. Walsh

Joseph Leonard Walsh
President 1949–1950

Joseph L. Walsh was born on 21 September 1895 in Washington, D.C. He received the degrees of S.B. in 1916 and the Ph.D. in 1920 from Harvard. His thesis adviser was Maxime Bôcher. His principal academic appointment was at Harvard from 1921 to his retirement in 1966. He then took an appointment at the University of Maryland. He was chairman of the organizing committee of the International Congress of Mathematicians in 1950. He was a member of the National Academy of Sciences. He died on 10 December 1973.

John von Neumann

JOHN VON NEUMANN
PRESIDENT 1951–1952

John von Neumann was born in Budapest on 28 December 1903. He received an undergraduate degree in chemical engineering from the Eidgenössische Techniche Hochschule and a Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Budapest both in 1926. His principal academic appointment was as professor at the Institute for Advanced Study from 1933 until his death on 8 February 1957. He was a member of the Atomic Energy Commission. He received the Bôcher Prize in 1937, the Medal for Merit in 1947, and the Medal of Freedom, the Albert Einstein Commemorative Award, and the Eurico Fermi Award all in 1956. He was a member of the National Academy of Sciences.
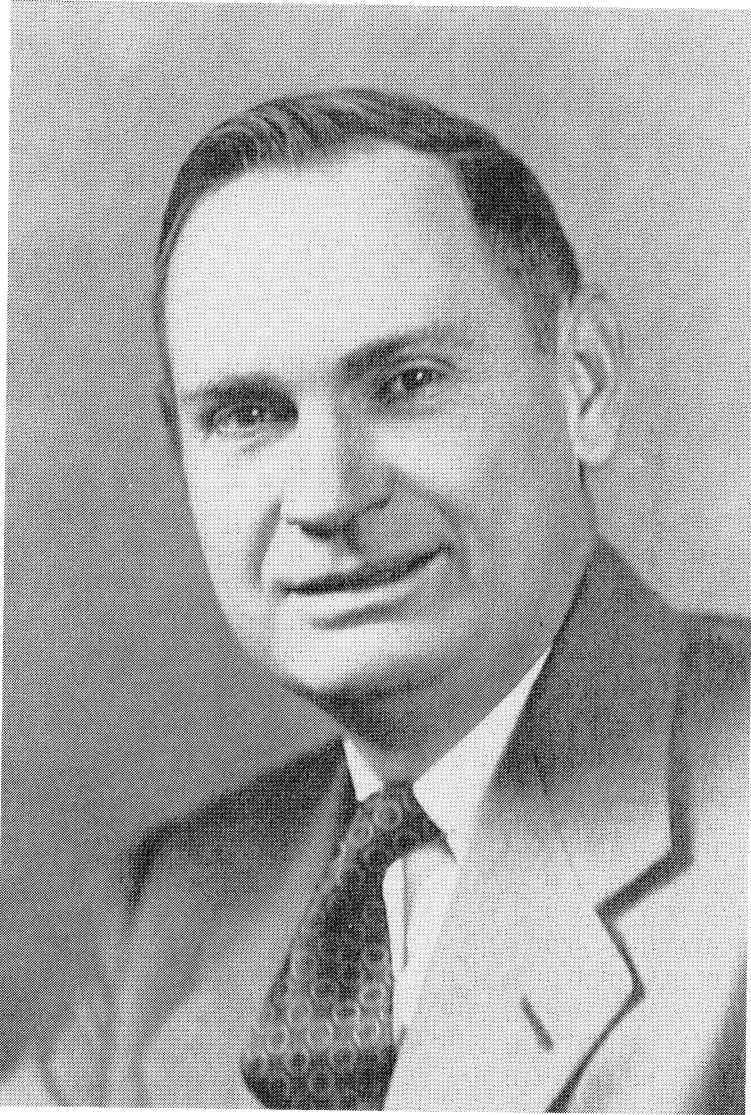
G. T. Whyburn

GORDON THOMAS WHYBURN
PRESIDENT 1953–1954

G. T. Whyburn was born on 7 January 1904 in Lewisville, TX. He received the A.B. in 1925, the M.A. in chemistry in 1926, and the Ph.D. in mathematics in 1927, all from the University of Texas. His thesis adviser was R. L. Moore. His principal academic appointment was at the University of Virginia, where he went as chairman in 1934, serving until 1966, and where he remained until his death on 8 September 1969. He was the Colloquium Lecturer of 1940. He received the Chauvenet Prize of the Mathematical Association of America. He was a member of the National Academy of Sciences.
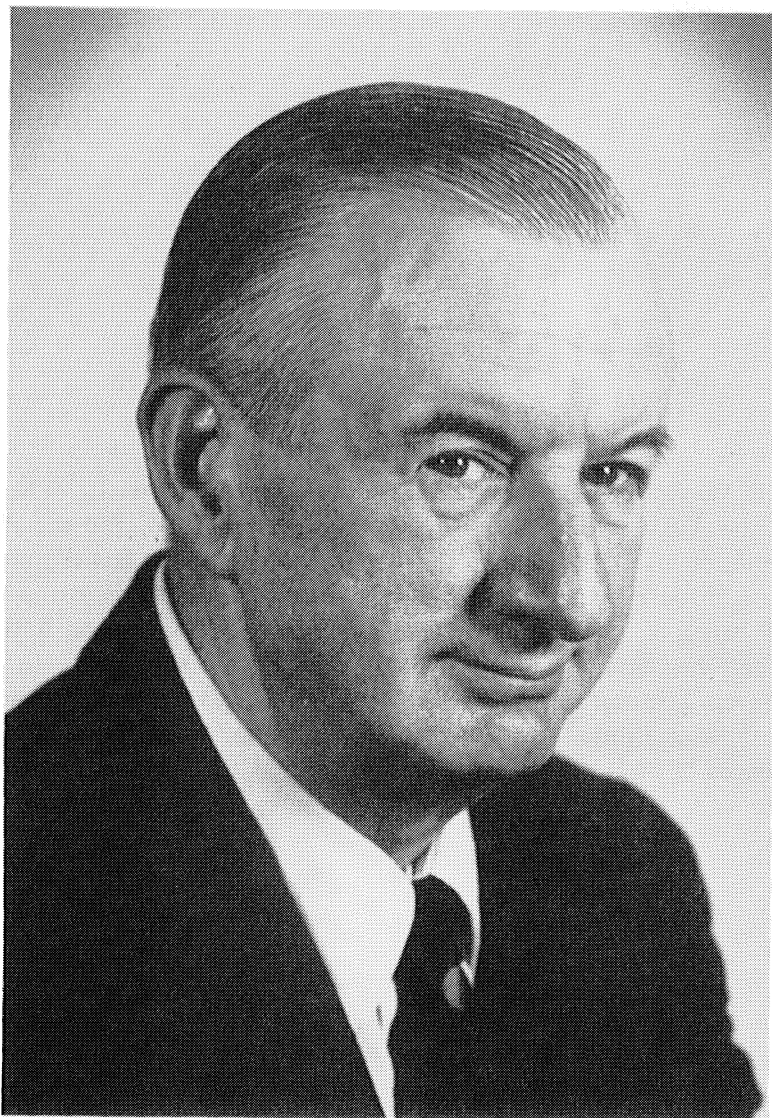
R. L. Wilder

Raymond Louis Wilder
President 1955–1956

Raymond L. Wilder was born on 3 November 1896 in Palmer, MA. He received a B.Phil. from Brown in 1920 and an M.Sc. in actuarial mathematics in 1921. He received his Ph.D. at the University of Texas. His thesis adviser was R. L. Moore. His principal academic appointment was at the University of Michigan where he served from 1926 to 1967 and where he was research professor from 1947. Following this he became a research associate at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He gave the Colloquium Lectures of 1943 and the Gibbs Lecture of 1969. He was president of the Mathematical Association of America in 1965–1966. He received the Lester R. Ford Award and the Distinguished Service Award of the MAA in 1973. He was a member of the National Academy of Sciences. He died on 7 July 1982.

Richard Brauer

RICHARD DAGOBERT BRAUER
PRESIDENT 1957–1958

Richard D. Brauer was born on 10 February 1901 in Berlin. He received the Ph.D. from the University of Berlin in 1925. His principal academic appointments were at the University of Toronto from 1935 to 1948, at the University of Michigan from 1948 to 1951, and at Harvard from 1951 until 1971. He received the Cole Prize in algebra in 1949. He gave the Colloquium Lectures of 1948. He received the National Medal for Scientific Merit in 1970. He was a member of the National Academy of Sciences. He died on 17 April 1977.

E. J. McShane

## EDWARD JAMES MCSHANE
PRESIDENT 1959–1960

E. J. McShane was born on 10 May 1904 in New Orleans. He received B.E. and B.S. degrees from Tulane in 1925 and the M.S. in 1927. He received the Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1930. His thesis adviser was L. M. Graves. His principal academic position was at the University of Virginia from 1935 to 1974. He gave the Colloquium Lectures of 1943. He was president of the Mathematical Association of America in 1953–1954. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences.

DEANE MONTGOMERY
PRESIDENT 1961–1962

Deane Montgomery was born on 2 September 1909 in Weaver, MN. He received his B.A. from Hamline in 1929, his M.S. from the University of Iowa in 1930 and then his Ph.D. in 1933. His thesis adviser was E. W. Chittenden. His principal appointments were at Smith College from 1935 to 1946 and at the Institute for Advanced Study, where he became permanent member in 1948 and professor in 1951 until his retirement in 1980. He gave the Colloquium Lectures of 1951. He was president of the International Mathematical Union in 1974–1978. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences.
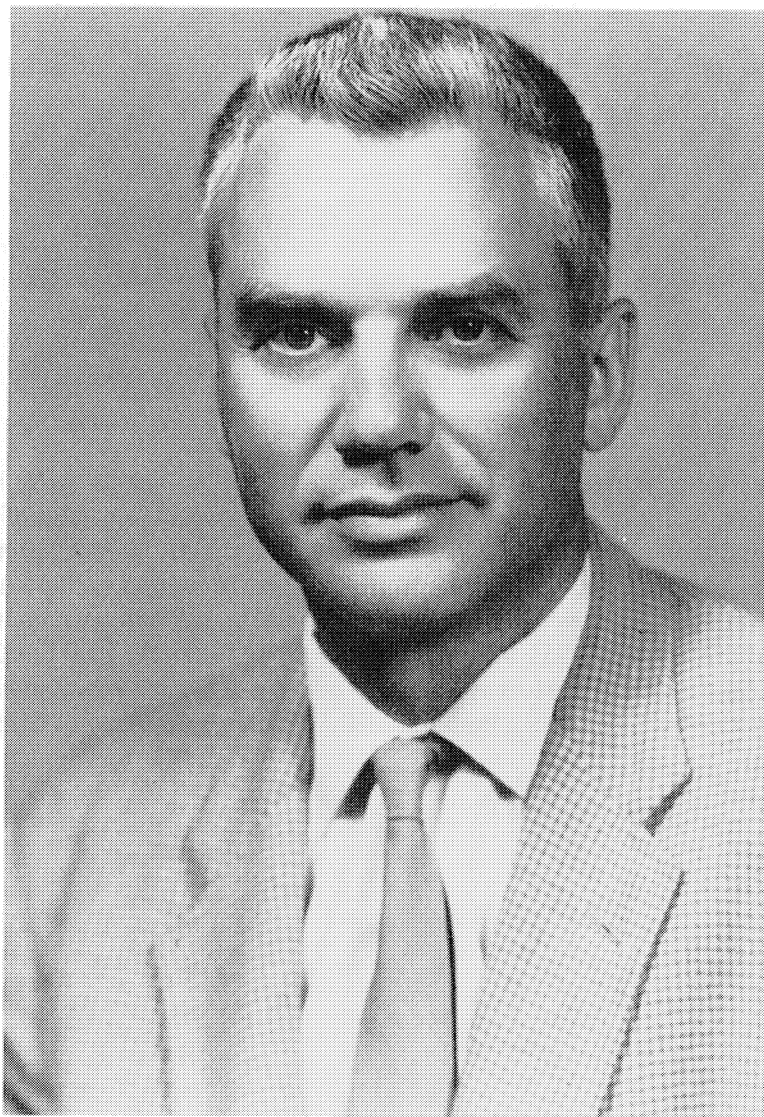
JOSEPH LEO DOOB
PRESIDENT 1963–1964

Joseph L. Doob was born in Cincinnati on 27 February 1910. He received his A.B. in 1930, his A.M. in 1931, and his Ph.D. in 1932, all from Harvard. His thesis adviser was Joseph L. Walsh. His principal academic appointment was at the University of Illinois from 1935 until his retirement in 1977. He gave the Colloquium Lectures of 1959. He was president of the Institute of Mathematical Statistics in 1950. He received the National Medal of Science in 1980. He is a foreign associate of the Academy of Sciences, Paris and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Science and the National Academy of Sciences.

A. Adrian Albert

Abraham Adrian Albert
President 1965–1966

A. A. Albert was born on 9 November 1905 in Chicago, IL. He received the B.S. in 1926, the M.S. in 1927, and the Ph.D. in 1928, all from the University of Chicago. His thesis adviser was Leonard Eugene Dickson. His principal academic appointment was at the University of Chicago, where he served from 1931 until his death on 6 June 1972. He was dean of the Division of Physical Sciences from 1962 to 1971. He was awarded a Cole Prize in algebra in 1939 and gave a set of Colloquium Lectures in 1939 as well. He was chairman of the Committee to Prepare a Budget for Mathematics for the National Science Foundation in 1950, chairman of the Committee on a Survey of Training and Research Potential in the Mathematical Sciences (the Albert Survey), 1955–1957. He was associated with the Institute for Defense Analyses as trustee and as director for a year. He was chairman of the Consultative Committee of the International Congress in Nice and vice-president of the International Mathematical Union. He was a member of the National Academy of Sciences. He died on 6 June 1972.

Charles B. Morrey, Jr.

## CHARLES BRADFORD MORREY, JR.
PRESIDENT 1967–1968

C. B. Morrey was born in Columbus on 23 July 1907. He received his A.B. from Ohio State in 1927. His M.A. in 1928 and his Ph.D. in 1931 were both from Harvard. His thesis adviser was G. D. Birkhoff. His principal academic appointment was at the University of California, Berkeley from 1933 until his retirement in 1977. He gave the Colloquium Lectures of 1964. He was a member of the National Academy of Sciences. He died on 29 April 1984.

*Oscar Zariski*

OSCAR ZARISKI
PRESIDENT 1969–1970

   Oscar Zariski was born on 24 April 1899 in Kobrin, USSR. He received
the degree of Doctor of Mathematics from the University of Rome in 1924.
His thesis adviser was Guido Castel nuovo. His principal academic appoint-
ments were at Johns Hopkins, 1927–1945 and at Harvard from 1947 until his
retirement in 1969. He gave the Colloquium Lectures of 1947. He received
the Cole Prize in 1944 and the Steele Prize in 1981. He was awarded the
National Medal of Science in 1965 and the Wolf Prize in 1982. He was a
member of the National Academy of Sciences. He died on 4 July 1986.
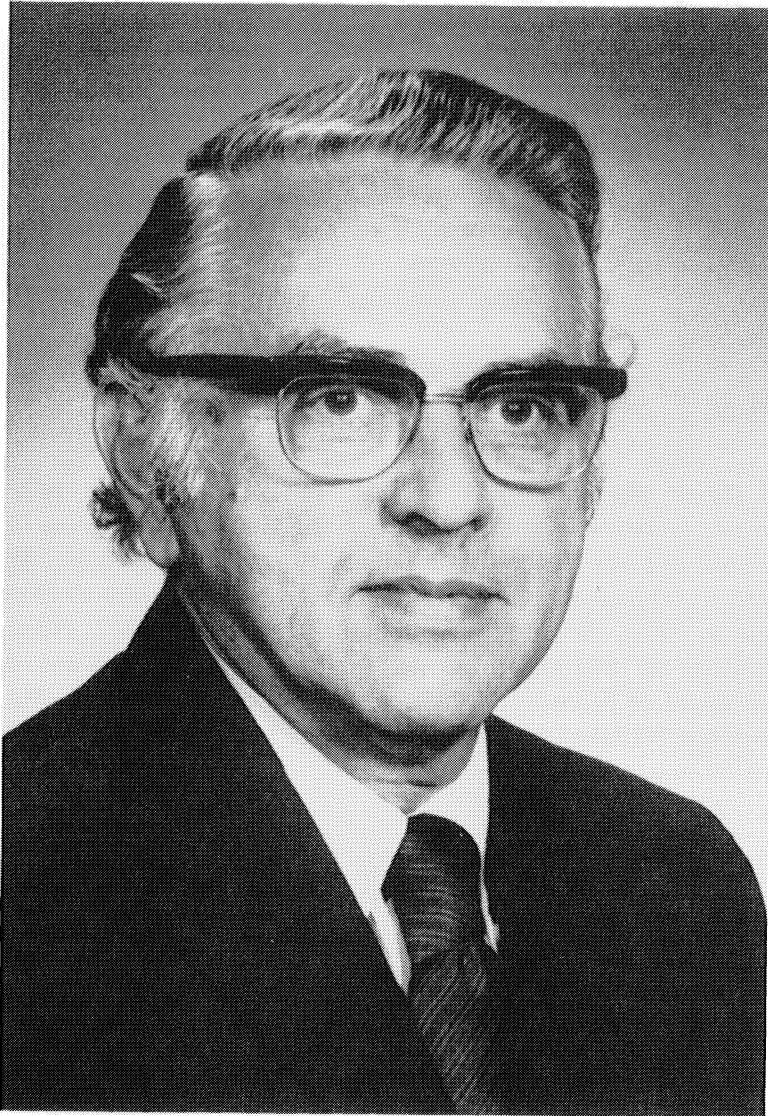
*Nathan Jacobson*

NATHAN JACOBSON
PRESIDENT 1971–1972

Nathan Jacobson was born in Warsaw on 8 September 1910. He received his A.B. from the University of Alabama in 1930 and his Ph.D. from Princeton in 1934. His thesis adviser was J. H. M. Wedderburn. His principal academic appointment has been at Yale from 1947 until his retirement in 1981. He gave the Colloquium Lectures of 1955. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the National Academy of Sciences.
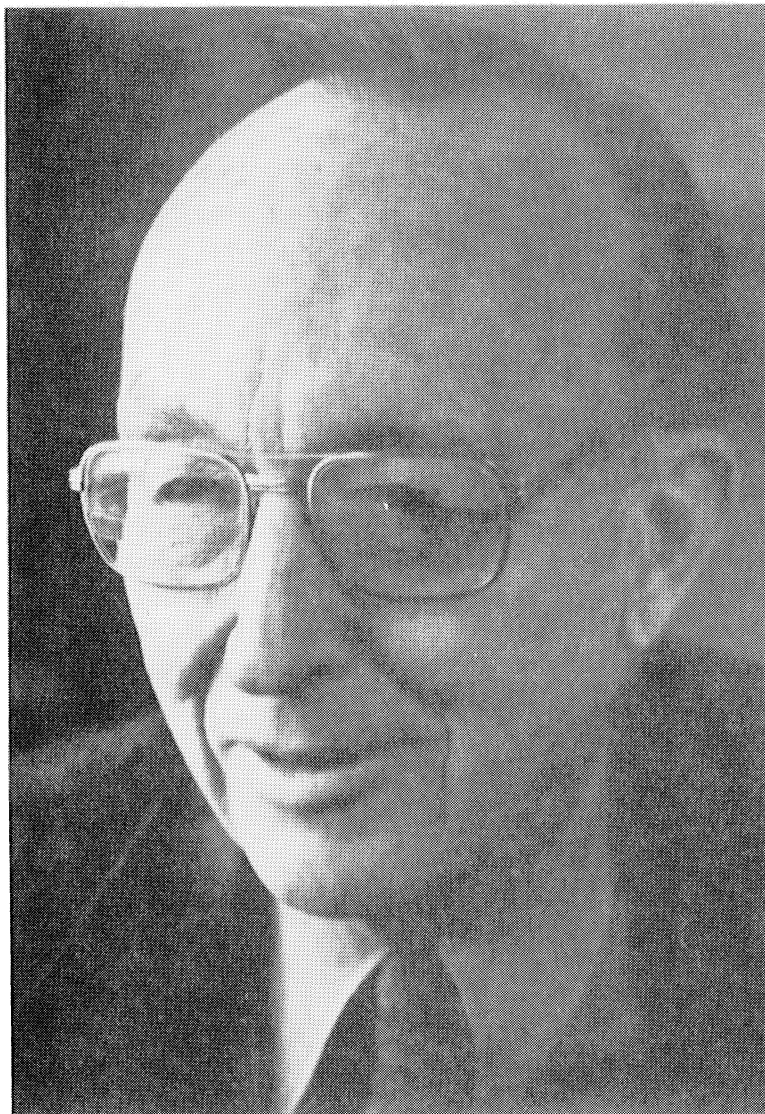
Saunders Mac Lane

SAUNDERS MAC LANE
PRESIDENT 1973–1974

Saunders Mac Lane was born on 4 August 1909 in Norwich, CT. He received a Ph.B. from Yale in 1930, an M.A. in mathematics from Chicago in 1931, and a D. Phil. from the Mathematisches Institut, Göttingen in 1934. His thesis was written under the direction of Paul Bernays. His principal academic appointments were at Harvard from 1938 to 1947 and at Chicago from 1947 until his retirement in 1982. He gave the Colloquium Lectures of 1963. He was president of the Mathematical Association of America in 1951–1953; vice-president of the American Philosophical Society, 1973–1974; vice-president of the National Academy of Sciences, 1973–1981; and member of the National Science Board, 1974–1980. He received the Chauvenet Prize in 1941 and the Distinguished Service Award in 1975, both from the Mathematical Association of America, and the Steele Prize in 1986.
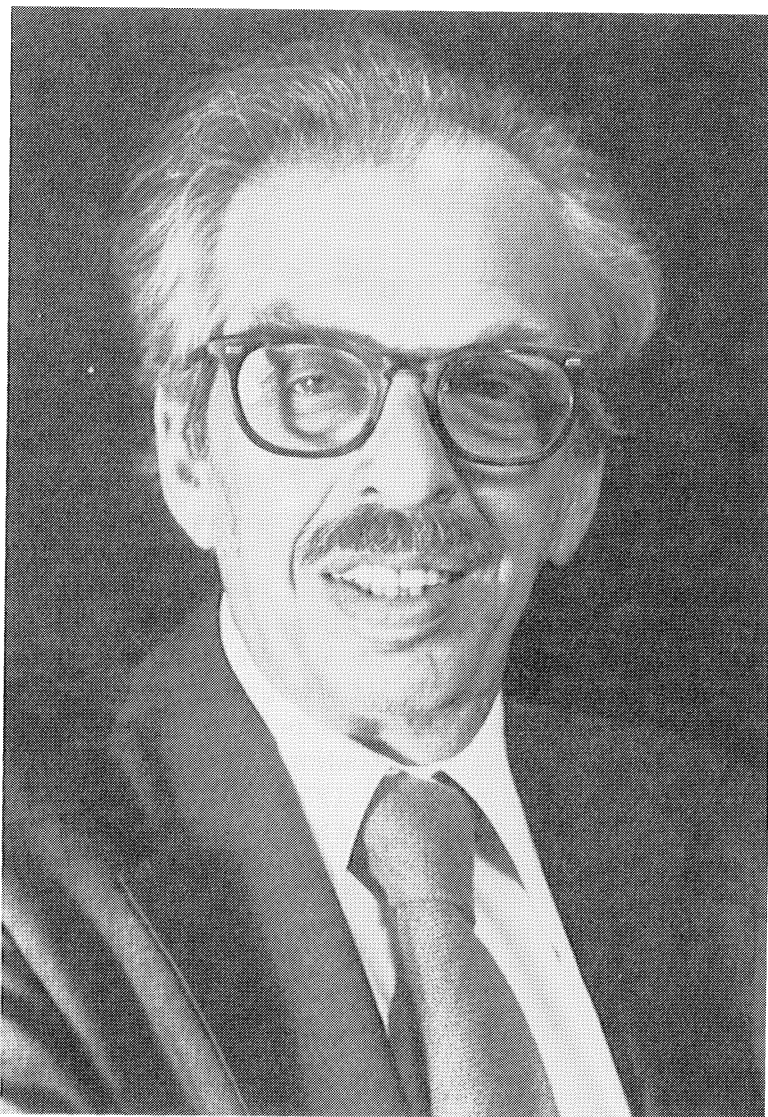
Lipman Bers

LIPMAN BERS
PRESIDENT 1975–1976

Lipman Bers was born in Riga on 22 May 1914. He was awarded the degree of Doctor of Natural Sciences at the University of Prague in 1938. His thesis adviser was Charles Loewner. His principal academic appointments were at Syracuse, 1945–1951, New York University, 1951–1964, and Columbia from 1964 until his retirement in 1982. He gave a set of Colloquium Lectures in 1971. He received the Steele Prize in 1975. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the National Academy of Sciences.

R H Bing

R H BING
PRESIDENT 1977–1978

R H Bing was born on 20 October 1914 in Oakwood, TX. He took his B.S. from Southwest State Teachers College in 1935. His M.Ed. in 1938 and his Ph.D. in 1945 were both from the University of Texas. His thesis adviser was R. L. Moore. His principal academic appointments were at the University of Wisconsin from 1943 to 1973 and at the University of Texas from 1973. He gave the Colloquium Lectures of 1970. He was a member of the National Science Board in 1968–1975. He was a member of the National Academy of Sciences. He died on 27 April 1986.
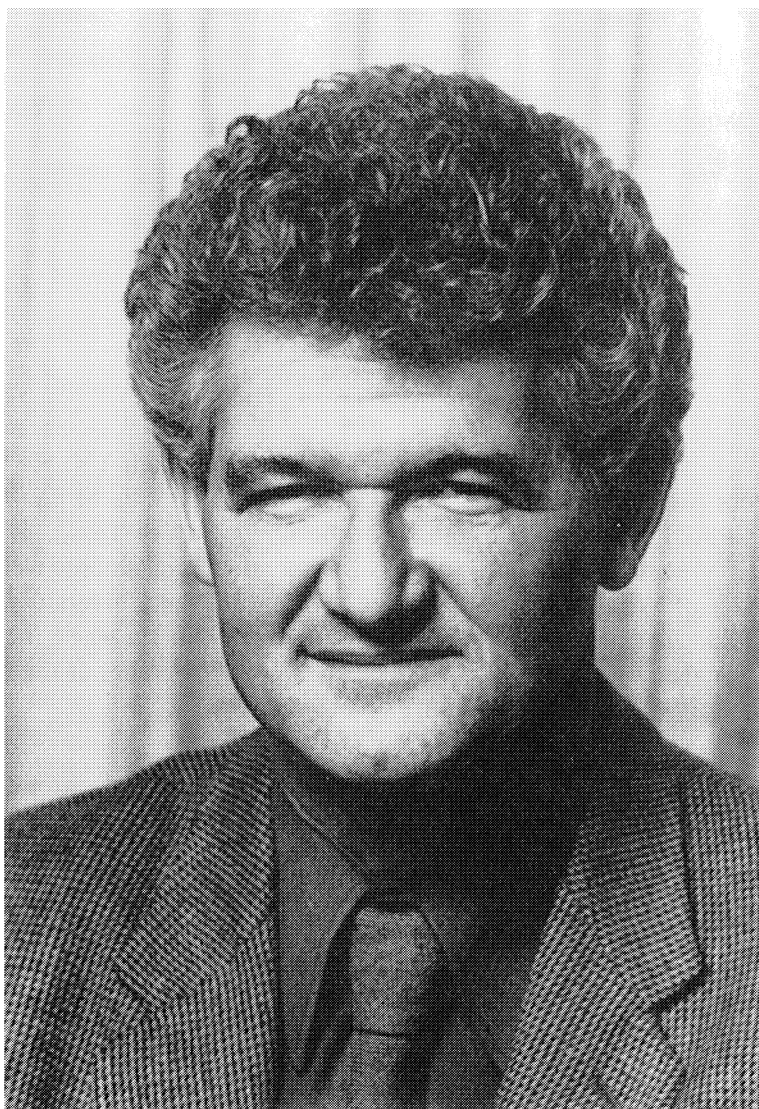
Peter David Lax
President 1979–1980

Peter Lax was born on 1 May 1926 in Hungary. He received his A.B. in 1947 and his Ph.D. in 1949 from New York University. His thesis adviser was K. O. Friedrichs. His principal academic appointment has been at the Courant Institute beginning in 1949. He gave the von Neumann Lecture for the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics in 1968 and the Hedrick Lectures for the Mathematical Association of America in 1973. He gave the Colloquium Lectures in 1987. He received the Wiener Prize in 1975. He was a member of the National Science Board in 1980–1986. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences.

Andrew M. Gleason

ANDREW MATTEL GLEASON
PRESIDENT 1981–1982

Andrew Gleason was born on 4 November 1921 in Fresno, California. He received the B.S. degree from Yale in 1942. He was a Junior Prize Fellow at Harvard. His principal academic appointment was at Harvard since 1950. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the National Academy of Sciences.
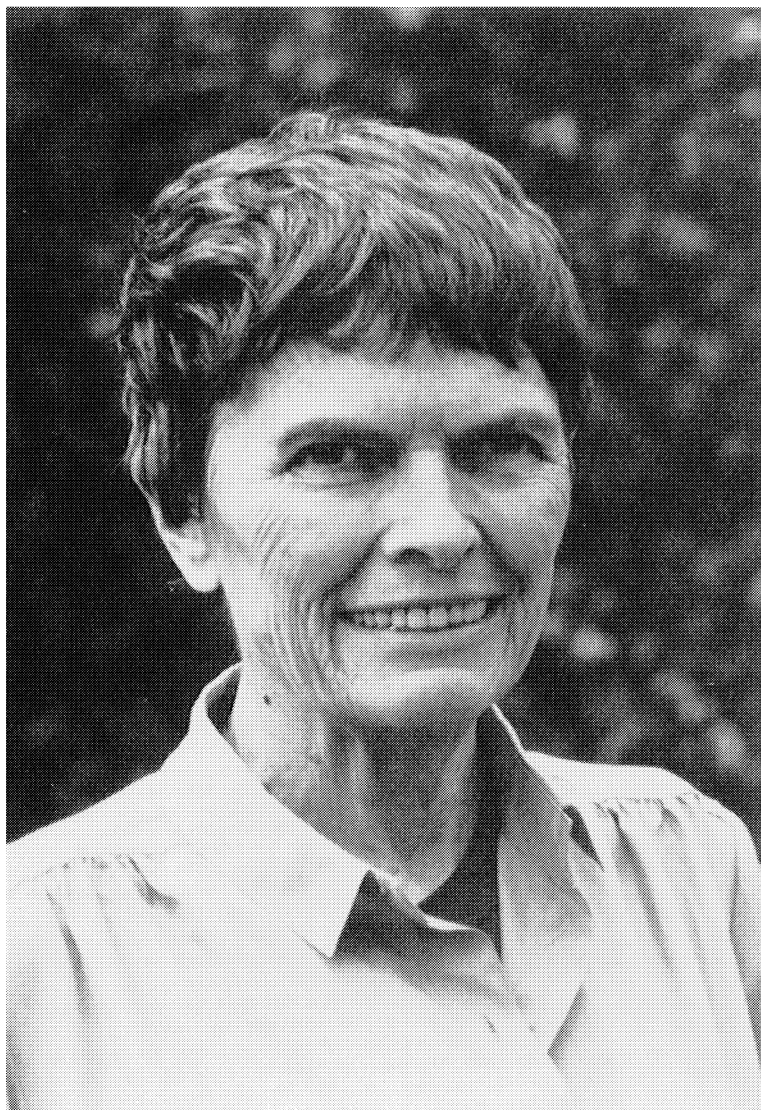
Julia B. Robinson

JULIA BOWMAN ROBINSON
PRESIDENT 1983–1984

Julia Robinson was born on 8 December 1919 in St. Louis, MO. She received the A.B. in 1940, the M.A. in 1941, and the Ph.D. in 1948, all from the University of California, Berkeley. Her thesis adviser was Alfred Tarski. Her major appointment, received belatedly because of nepotism rules, was as professor at the University of California, Berkeley. She held a MacArthur Prize Fellowship. She gave Colloquium Lectures in 1980. She was a member of the National Academy of Sciences. She died on 30 July 1985.

Irving Kaplansky

IRVING KAPLANSKY
PRESIDENT 1985–1986

Irving Kaplansky was born on 22 March 1917 in Toronto, Ontario. He received a B.A. in 1938 and an M.A. in 1939, both from Toronto, and a Ph.D. from Harvard in 1941. His thesis was written under the direction of Saunders Mac Lane. He served on the faculty of the University of Chicago from 1945 until 1984, when he became the second director of the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute in Berkeley. He was the highest ranking candidate on the first Putnam examination. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences.

G. D. Mostow

GEORGE DANIEL MOSTOW
PRESIDENT 1987–1988

G. D. Mostow was born on 4 July 1923 in Boston. He received the B.A. in 1943, the M.A. in 1946, and the Ph.D. in 1948, all from Harvard. His thesis adviser was Garrett Birkhoff. His principal academic appointments have been at Johns Hopkins from 1952 to 1961 and at Yale since 1961. He gave Colloquium Lectures in 1979. He served as chairman of the U.S. National Committee for Mathematics in 1972–1973, as chairman of the Office of Mathematical Sciences for the National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council, as a member of the Executive Commitee of the International Mathematical Union, 1983–1987, and on the Board of Trustees of the Institute for Advanced Study. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences.