

## CHARLES JORDAN, 1871–1959

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Charles Jordan was born on December 16, 1871 in Budapest, Hungary. His father owned a leather factory and his family was well-to-do. Jordan went to school in Budapest and graduated in 1889. Subsequently he studied at the *École Préparatoire Monge* in Paris and at the *École Polytechnique* in Zürich, where he received the degree of “Diplomingenieur in Chemie” in 1893. After spending a year at Owen’s College of Victoria University, Manchester, he accepted an appointment at the University of Geneva in 1894, where he remained until 1899. In 1895, at the University of Geneva, he obtained his degree of “Docteur ès Sciences Physiques” by his thesis [1] and subsequently he became “Privat Dozent” in physical chemistry. In 1895 in Geneva he married Marie Blumauer. He returned to Budapest in 1899, and, in the same year, after the birth of their third child, his wife died. During the following years Charles Jordan studied mathematics, astronomy and geophysics at the P. Pázmány University, Budapest. He married Marthe Lavallée in 1900. Of this marriage three more children were born. From 1906 to 1913 he was director of the Institute of Seismology at Budapest. During the First World War he taught mathematics, physics and meteorology at a military academy. From 1920 to 1950 he lectured at the University of Technical and Economic Sciences, Budapest, where, in 1923, he became “Privat Dozent” and, in 1933, professor.

In 1928 he was awarded the J. König prize<sup>1</sup> by the L. Eötvös Mathematical and Physical Society, Budapest. This prize was awarded every two years. In 1947 the Hungarian Academy of Sciences elected him corresponding member. In 1956 he won the Kossuth Prize for his achievement in the field of mathematics. After 59 years of marriage he lost his second wife in July 1959. A few days after his 88th birthday, on December 24, 1959, Professor Charles Jordan died.

He was a Corresponding Member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Honorary President of the J. Bolyai Mathematical Society, Budapest, Honorary Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society, Fellow of the Institute of Mathematical Statistics, Member of the Institut International de Statistique and of the American Statistical Association, Honorary Member of the Society of Hungarian Geophysicists and the Hungarian Meteorological Society. He was also a member of many other mathematical and scientific societies.

Charles Jordan’s industrious and fruitful mathematical activity began in the years following 1910. The theories of probability and mathematical statistics

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<sup>1</sup> Cf., A. Szücs, “Jelentés az 1928 évi König Gyula jutalomról” (Report on the Julius König prize of 1928), *Matematikai és Fizikai Lapok*, Vol. 35 (1928), pp. 61–69.