RICHARD D. BRAUER

BY WALTER FEIT[1]

Richard Dagobert Brauer died on April 17, 1977 in Boston, Massachusetts at the age of 76. His death, after a short illness, was unexpected and came as a shock to his friends. During the past decade he had had several serious ailments but he had always recovered satisfactorily. There was no reason to believe that he would not recover from this final illness. He was mentally alert and mathematically active to the end, and this has made it all the more difficult to realize that he is now gone.

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Brauer was born in Berlin on February 10, 1901. He was the youngest of three children of Max and Lilly Caroline Brauer. He showed an early interest in science and mathematics which was stimulated by his brother Alfred, who was older by seven years.

He graduated from high school in September, 1918. After graduation he and his classmates were drafted for civilian service in Berlin. As the first World War ended two months later, his war time service was brief and did not seriously interrupt his education. In contrast, his older brother Alfred spent four years in the German Army during the war and was seriously wounded.

In February 1919 he began his college education at the Technical University of Berlin. He soon realized that his interests were more theoretical than practical, and after one term he transferred to the University of Berlin. With the exception of a term at the University of Freiburg, he stayed at the University of Berlin until he was awarded his Ph.D. summa cum laude on March 16, 1926.

It was a custom at that time for students at one German University to spend some time at another. Brauer decided to spend a term at Freiburg. During that term he took a course on invariant theory with O. Bolza. He also met Alfred Loewy, who was one of the professors at Freiburg, and with whom he was to continue a correspondence for many years.

During the time that Brauer was a student at Berlin, the University had a brilliant faculty in both mathematics and physics. He attended lectures by

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