

Review of  
**PHILIP E.B. JOURDAIN, *SELECTED ESSAYS ON  
THE HISTORY OF SET THEORY AND LOGICS*  
(1906–1918)**

Edited by Ivor Grattan-Guinness  
(Instrumenta Rationis, Volume VI [1989])

Bologna, Italy: Editrice, 1991

xlii+352 pp.

JOHN C. SIMMS

Philip Edward Bertrand Jourdain was born in 1879 in Ashbourne in Derbyshire, England. He may be most familiar to us now for the Dover reprint [Cantor 1955] of his translations [Cantor 1915] of Cantor's "Beiträge" [Cantor 1895, Cantor 1897], but this constitutes a rude reduction of his life's work to a cultural triviality. His scholarly publications included writings on set theory and its history, on the history of the calculus and logic, on the foundations and history of mechanics, and on the nature of mathematics. He also contributed abstracts and reviews to a number of periodicals. He was the English editor and later the general editor of the journal *The Monist*. He produced editions of classic papers in analysis and mechanics for the German book series *Ostwalds Klassiker der exakten Wissenschaften*. For the Open Court publishing company, he worked on the journal *Open Court* and on a series of books of works and translations in the history of science and commissioned papers and books. He even published poetry.

Jourdain died in 1919 at the age of 39. His accomplishments are all the more admirable and poignant when one discovers he suffered throughout his life from Friedreich's ataxia, a degenerative disorder of the nervous system—in particular, of the spinal cord, medulla, and cerebellum—resulting in muscular incoördination and involuntary twitching.

This book reprints three of Jourdain's works: "The Development of the Theory of Transfinite Numbers" [Jourdain 1906, Jourdain 1909, Jourdain 1910a, Jourdain 1914], "The Development of Theories of Mathematical Logic and the Principles of Mathematics" [Jourdain 1910b, Jourdain 1912, Jourdain 1913], and *The Philosophy*