The Education of a Mathematician
Philip Davis

Table of Contents

Part I: In The Beginning 1
- Lend Me Your Ears 3
- Cousin H. 5
- Hitting it Big 9
- Rational Recreations 12
- Why I Didn't Go for Marxism 14
- Much Ado about Nothing 17
  Louis Lazarus Silverman
- Lawrence High School and What I learned there about Mathematics 21

Part II: Undergraduate Years 27
- Little Did I Know 29
- Freshman Logic 31
  Peter Simon
- Why I Didn't Take Philosophy A 35
- The Skies Were Limited 37
  Bart Bok
- Undergraduate Mathematical Life: Harvard 1939-1943. 39
- What Path Shall I Take in Life? 41
- Eleve de Frank Hubbard 44
- How I Was Turned Off Formalism 50
  W.V.O. Quine
- Whitehead and Russell 54
- Pulled by Pappus beyond Zariski 58
- Mathematics and Showbiz: Shall Never the Twain Meet? 67
- Philipp Frank 71
- The Lecture Room in Vienna 76
- Louis Finkelstein 80

Part III: World War II 85
- First Real Mathematical Job: The A.S.T.P. 87
- Langley Field, Virginia 89

Part IV: Graduate years 93
- The Clock Runs Again: Graduate School 95
- Ed Block and the Founding of SIAM 97
- Writing a Thesis under Ralph Boas, Jr. 99
- Modesty is not a Virtue: Norbert Weiner 103
- Opinions of the Famous: Buttonholing Buber 107
  A.J. Heschel
- Cut the Cackle, Professor 110

Part V: Mathematics in Washington 113
- What Is the Case, and How Do We Know It? 115
  Edward Condon
- Power Galore: Talking with Leland [Olds] 118

Top o' the Morning to You, Prof. Synge 122
Working on Abramowitz-Stegun 125
The Adams-Jefferson Letters 129
Thomas Jefferson: An Applied Mathematician in the White House? 135
James Joseph Sylvester 141
Emilie Haynsworth 145
Chief Justice Warren and Professor Niels Bohr 150
Communication Difficulties and Solutions 153
Anneli Lax, Hans Magnus Enzensberger

Part VI: At Brown University 159
My Problem, Dear Ann 161
Barney Keeney and the Lonesome Pine Foundation 164
Technology: A Light That's Failing 167
Left Lib, Right Lib 169
Opinions of the Famous: Otto E. Neugebauer. 172.
Warm Bodies and Cold Calipers 176
Italo Scanga
The Very Early Days of Computer Art 181
A New Esthetic 185
What I Learned from Mary Lucy Cartwright 190
Laughing among the Logarithms: Adventures of a Speaker 196

Part VII: Horizons Widen 201
An Address That Led to Friendship: Reuben Hersh
What are the Dreams? 206
Freddie Ayer 211
Consider the Body B 215
Taking Instruction with Gian-Carlo [Rota] 220
Continuing Education: Isaiah Berlin and Giambattista Vico 224

Part VIII: Copenhagen and its Aftermath 227
Bungling in Budapestg: A Second Address That Led to Friendship 229
The Copenhagen Connection 231
Bernhelm Booss-Bavnbek
Nyhavn 18 235

Part IX: Interlude: A Bit of Mathematical History 237
A Brief Review of What Mathematics Contained in 1819 239
And Today? Theorems beyond the Dreams of Euclid or Euler 250
A Fast Forward on the Adams-Jefferson Question 252

Part X: Mathematics and the French Enlightenment 255
Voltaire and Newton 257
Emilie du Chatelet: Divine Mistress 259
Diderot, d'Alembert, and Rousseau 262
Updating the Ghost of Mr. Jefferson 269

Part XI: Applied Mathematics of Jeffersonian Interest 273
What's in a Can of Peaches? or The Mathematization of Our Civilization 275
Leibniz's Dream: Mathematics and the Law 281

The Pierces Take on Hetty Green: Evidence via Statistics 285
One, Two, Three, Count it Legally 286
Tartaglia's Dilemma: Mathematics and War 291
They Shall Beat Their Swords into Fun and Games 298
Mickey Flies the Stealth 302
Personal Choices: What Can an Individual Mathematician Do? 308
Education: Constant Reformation, Constant Complaint 310

Part XII: Echoes of Rousseau 315
Making Plans 317
Wherein I Write to Mr. Jefferson 324

Part XIII: Still Carrying On 331
On the Strudenhoffgasse: Standing Room Only 333
Roger Penrose
How I Used Blackmail to Become a Professional 336
The Prospects for Mathematics in a Multi-Media Civilization 341