

THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS OF THE TOHOKU MATHEMATICAL JOURNAL

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1. The beginning. According to the official record [1], the first issue of the Tōhoku Mathematical Journal (henceforth referred to as TMJ, as it is commonly called) was published in July, 1911, which was even before the College of Science of Tōhoku Imperial University (henceforth referred to as the University) started offering classes in September.

It was Professor Tsuruichi HAYASHI who founded TMJ at his own expense as the first research journal ever in Japan dedicated solely to mathematics. Its editorial work was helped by the other faculty members of the College of Science: (in early years) Matsusaburō FUJIWARA, Tadahiko KUBOTA and Kinnosuke OGURA in mathematics as well as Jun ISHIWARA in physics.

The University had been founded in September, 1907 as the third imperial university in Japan, following Tōkyō Imperial University in 1877 and Kyoto Imperial University in 1897. After the preparatory period of four years during which many faculty member designates were dispatched to Europe, the College of Science was inaugurated as its first college in April, 1911, and started offering classes on September 11, 1911.

Professor Matsusaburō FUJIWARA describes the state of mathematics at that time in Japan in his “Obituary Note. TSURUICHI HAYASHI (1873–1935)” (TMJ, First Series, 41 (1935/36), 265–289) as follows:

The most prominent achievement of him was the foundation of the Tōhoku Mathematical Journal in 1911. This was undertaken by him on his own expence [*sic*]. In those days the state of mathematics in Japan was very poor. The journal in which mathematical papers were to be published was the Proceedings of Tōkyō Mathematico-physical Society only. The number of papers on mathematics at that time did not exceed one dozen every year. To found a new journal, periodically issued, in such a time, was a very bold enterprise. His foresight and audacity only could do this. The publication of the Tōhoku Mathematical Journal marked a striking epoch in the history of mathematics in Japan. The management of the Journal was afterwards transferred to the Mathematical Institute from his own hand, he remained, however, as the Chief-Editor until his last day. The memorial volumes, published in 1933 to his honor for the anniversary of his 60th birthday, by his friends and pupils, home and abroad, will remain forever to be the undying monument for his scientific achievement.