

Baron Augustin Louis Cauchy
French Mathematician.

Born: Paris, August 21, 1789. Died: Sceaux, Seine, May 23, 1857

In 1805, Cauchy entered the Ecole Polytechnique, intending to be a civil engineer. However, his health failed and his friends Lagrange and Laplace persuaded him to take up the less physically demanding pursuit of pure mathematics.

Cauchy did a lot of work on the mathematics of the properties of ether. It took a century of work before Einstein set it to rest. Cauchy was an ardent supporter of the Bourbons, and when the Bourbons went into exile, Cauchy moved to Italy to avoid having to swear allegiance to the new king, Louis Philippe. He later returned to France in 1838 and eventually received a professional appointment at the College de France.

Cauchy married money around 1810-1817, when he married Aloise de Bure, daughter of the owner of a publishing company. Cauchy and Aloise had two daughters, Marie Francoise Alicia born in 1819 and Marie Mathilde, born in 1823. They would each marry into the nobility.

Cauchy set about to reorganize the curriculum at the Ecole Polytechnique, emphasizing pure mathematics and calculus. Cauchy was the first to develop the theory of the integral. Cauchy also seems to have developed a definition of differentiating that is very similar to what we now learn in Calculus textbooks. By defining a theory of the integral, Cauchy was then able to demonstrate the intimate relationship between the derivative and the integral as a theorem that has come to be known as The Fundamental Theorem of Calculus. Cauchy had a teaching problem, in that he taught to his advanced students and the ordinary student in his classes were left floundering. For the rest of the decade the Ecole's administration continually monitored Cauchy's lectures to guarantee their suitability for engineering students.

When Cauchy returned to France he eventually succeeded old teacher, Prony, at the Academie de Sciences. When Prony died. He became Professor of Geometry at Bureau of Longitudes. He had no teaching post from 1838 to 1848 and his only avenue for presenting his work was at the Academie de Sciences. During this ten year period, he presented 240 notes and studies to the Academie.

When the revolution of 1848 overthrew Louis-Phillipe. Under the second Republic he won election to a chair at the Universite de Paris. Cauchy continued to work at a furious pace for his whole life , publishing 789 mathematical and scientific articles. His prodigious output only came to an end with his death on May 23, 1857, following a short bout with rheumatism.