

Math 181

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EJ Edmunds Cont.

1. École polytechnique
2. 1875 Back in New Orleans

No real info
His personal letters
and notes are not
available

Super Weird, New Orleans just came out of Martial Law and is a massive mess.
Not to mention that if he stayed in France he would have been set up for life.
Lots of violence both racist and political.
For an educated well off black man, he is in a good position to take political leadership. Most freed slaves could not read and had little to no experience with politics.
Quickly manages to get a good position in education. The Republican Party at the time was investing highly into education.

Edmund first gets a job at Sumor School which was a new, all black school.

Next Edmund ends up at Boys Central H.S. which was an established elite white school.
First day he comes to teach the students leave in protest.

3. 1877 Edmund is removed from his teaching position.

Massive election scandal, both parties were engaging in voter fraud and intimidation. Both parties disputed the election and armed paramilitary groups attempt to start their own government. The President sends in federal forces to quell the peace, before getting cold feet and pulling out.
The Conservative Democrats had a bigger paramilitary force and so seized power. They removed Republican and Black officials from office.

Teaches at Colord H.S.
Peabody Normal School for Coloreds

Schools ended up being segregated. Normal schools was like a trade school for teachers. It was less prestigious than a college but was still higher education.

4. 1878 Edmunds Develops serious health problems (Yellow Fever).

Serious Epidemic which starts in port cities like New Orleans. Yellow Fever was rampant but it is unclear what Edmunds' health problem is.

5. 1880 Edmunds returns to Paris

Even before he returns to Paris he is very prolific and outputs a significant amount of mathematics.

6. 1881 Returns to New Orleans

Teaches at Southern University, which is a historically black university. Modern name is Southern A&M.

7. 1882 Moves to town of St. Joseph

Small town in Louisiana. On the border of Louisiana and Mississippi.

Gets hospitalized, and is bedridden for the rest of his life.

8. 1887 Edmunds Passes on.

Takeaways

- Both Edmunds and Euler focused on mathematics but their lives were also shaped by political forces.
- Euler and Edmunds could only do mathematics because of their favorable situations. Euler had a better situation than Edmunds but both required specific circumstances.

Remnants

Not only is Euler more important to the field of mathematics, but also after Republicans lose political power in the South much was done to undo and prevent them from ever regaining power.

Birth of a Nation, super racist, super confederate, famous for being a landmark film unfortunate. An example of Conservatives in the South trying to create a narrative which serves them politically. And one of those things they did was erase the contributions of figures like Edmunds.

Past events are immutable, but history is always being rewritten, with better methodology, and more research.

Derek J. Struik was a mathematician who contributed to differential geometry. He also gained an interest in history and made great contributions there as well. He was also a communist and was criminally charged for trying to overthrow the state.

How do we know what Euler did?

His work was preserved since he worked at a major university. His work was disseminated widely and is now in many European University libraries.

This made it easy to study his work, however, it is also hard because he produced so much mathematical material that it is impossible to fully trace his influence. It is also difficult to contribute because Euler is so well studied, so new contributions to Euler's history are few and far between.

EJ Edmunds Work