Bernt Michael Holmboe

Bernt Michael Holmboe (23 March 1795 ? 28 March 1850) was a Norwegian mathematician . He was home @-@ tutored from an early age , and was not enrolled in school until 1810 . Following a short period at the Royal Frederick University , which included a stint as assistant to Christopher Hansteen , Holmboe was hired as a mathematics teacher at the Christiania Cathedral School in 1818 , where he met the future renowned mathematician Niels Henrik Abel . Holmboe 's lasting impact on mathematics worldwide has been said to be his tutoring of Abel , both in school and privately . The two became friends and remained so until Abel 's early death . Holmboe moved to the Royal Frederick University in 1826 , where he worked until his own death in 1850 .

Holmboe 's significant impact on mathematics in the fledgling Norway was his textbook in two volumes for secondary schools . It was widely used , but faced competition from Christopher Hansteen 's alternative offering , sparking what may have been Norway 's first debate about school textbooks .

Early life and career

Bernt Michael Holmboe was born in Vang in 1795 , the son of vicar Jens Holmboe (1746 ? 1823) and his wife Cathrine Holst (1763 ? 1823) . He grew up in Eidsberg with his nine siblings , and was the elder brother of noted philologist Christopher Andreas Holmboe . Holmboe was homeschooled from an early age , but was sent to the Christiania Cathedral School in 1810 to complete his secondary education . There he undertook extracurricular studies in mathematics . He enrolled as a student at the Royal Frederick University in 1814 , a turbulent year in Norwegian history . Norway had been a province of Denmark since 1397 , but had come under Swedish control in the January 1814 Treaty of Kiel . Following Norway 's declaration of independence in the Constitution of 17 May , Sweden responded by waging a military campaign against Norway during the summer of 1814 . Holmboe was a spokesperson for the student group opposed to the presence of Swedish troops in the country . Any outspokenness from the student community was highly visible at the time , as the university had only seventeen students as of 1813 , its year of establishment .

As well as his private studies , Holmboe attended lectures given by Søren Rasmusen . In 1815 he was appointed to the position of scientific assistant under Christopher Hansteen , a lecturer at the university , and delivered some lectures himself . In early 1818 , Holmboe became a mathematics teacher at the Christiania Cathedral School , a position that had become vacant in 1817 . The school principal , Jacob Rosted , had invited Holmboe 's brother , Christopher Andreas , who had also studied mathematics , to take up the position , but he had decided instead to concentrate on philology ; Christopher went on to research the Sanskrit language among others . In his teaching , Holmboe drew inspiration from Joseph @-@ Louis Lagrange .

Niels Henrik Abel

At the Christiania Cathedral School , Holmboe met Niels Henrik Abel , then a pupil there . Holmboe quickly discovered Abel 's talent , and proclaimed him as a " splendid genius " in his report card . The school 's primary focus was on classical education and Latin , and so Holmboe tutored Abel privately . His personal support for Abel has been called " [Holmboe 's] most important contribution to mathematics " .

Holmboe and Abel became close friends . Two of Holmboe 's younger brothers studied with Abel , and the three were also on friendly terms . Abel was invited to the Holmboe family residence in Eidsberg on several occasions , including to celebrate Christmas .

Abel died from tuberculosis in 1829 , at the age of twenty @-@ six . Ten years after Abel 's death Holmboe edited and published his complete works in two volumes ? Oeuvres complètes de N.H. Abel (' Complete Works of N.H. Abel ') . He was the first to do so .

Later life and career

Holmboe published his first textbook in mathematics in 1825 . The 274 @-@ page book was named Lærebog i Mathematiken . Første Deel (Textbook in Mathematics . Part One) . In 1827 he followed with the second volume , Lærebog i Mathematiken . Anden Deel (Textbook in Mathematics . Part Two) , consisting of a further 155 pages . He used his own teaching experience as the background for his writing ; mainly abstract , the purpose of the books was to instill logical thinking . For instance , in the field geometry , it enticed readers to envisage a figure instead of putting it to paper . The books became widely used , and were reprinted in four and five volumes respectively .

In 1826 , Holmboe was appointed a lecturer at the Royal Frederick University . Some claimed that he owed his appointment to Abel 's absence , as the latter was travelling around in Europe at that time . Holmboe also taught mathematics at a military college , from 1826 until his death , and was promoted to professor at the Royal Frederick University in 1834 . His later publications include Stereometrie (Stereometry) (1833) , Plan- og sfærisk Trigonometrie (Plan and Spherical Trigonometry) (1834) , and Lærebog i den høiere Mathematik (Textbook of Advanced Mathematics) (1849) . Holmboe was an influence on other mathematicians as well as Abel , including Ole Jacob Broch (born 1818) .

At the university , Holmboe again met Christopher Hansteen , who had become a professor there in 1816 . In 1835 , Hansteen published his own mathematics textbook for secondary schools . A reaction to Holmboe 's books and method of teaching , it was more practically oriented . Holmboe wrote a review of the book for the newspaper Morgenbladet , in which he advised schools not to use it . A public debate followed , with contributions from other mathematicians . It has been claimed that this was the first debate on the subject of school textbooks in Norway . Hansteen 's textbook was not reprinted .

Holmboe also became involved in the field of insurance . From 1832 to 1848 he was a member of Tilsynskomiteen for private forsørgelses- og understøttelsesselskaper , the country 's first public committee for the supervision of insurance companies . On the other side of the table , from 1847 Holmboe was a member of the board of directors of the insurance company Gjensidige , founded by his former student Ole Jacob Broch .

= = Legacy = =

A Bernt Michael Holmboe Memorial Prize for teachers of mathematics was established in 2005 , and is awarded annually . The prize money , NOK 50 @,@ 000 , is taken from the Abel Found , which also cover the Abel Prize . The prize is administered by the board of the Norwegian Mathematical Society . The current board chairman is Tom Lindstrøm , professor at the University of Oslo .

A street at Majorstuen in Oslo , Holmboes gate , has been named after Bernt Michael Holmboe . Before 1879 it was named Hansteens gate , after Christopher Hansteen .

= = Marriage and children = =

Holmboe married twice . His first wife , Nikoline Antonie Finkenhagen , born 1804 in Toten , died in 1839 after five years of marriage . They had three daughters , two of whom (Fredrikke and Nikoline , Jr .) reached adulthood , and one stillborn son . He married his second wife , Ingeborg Thorp in 1842 . She was born in 1812 in Voss . This marriage produced two sons , Christopher and Jens , and two daughters , Cathrine and Olava . Only Jens and Cathrine reached adulthood .

Bernt Michael Holmboe died in 1850 , and his second wife outlived him by thirty @-@ three years .