

Bernoulli, Johann (Jean) III | Encyclopedia.com

Complete Dictionary of Scientific Biography
2–3 minutes

Bernoulli, Johann (Jean) III

(*b.* Basel, Switzerland, 4 November 1744; *d.* Berlin, Germany, 13 July 1807)

mathematics, astronomy.

The most successful of the sons of Johann II—although his mathematical achievements were insignificant—Johann was a universally knowledgeable child prodigy. At fourteen he obtained the degree of master of of jurisprudence, and at twenty he was by Frederick II to reorganize the astronomical observatory at the Berlin Academy. His frail health and his encyclopedic inclinations hampered him in his practical scientific activities, however, His treatises are of no particular interest. On the other hand, his travel accounts (1772–1776; 1777–1779; 1781) had a great cultural and historical impact. With Hindenburg he published the *Leipziger Magazin für reine & angewandte Mathematik* from 1776–1789.

Johann was entrusted with the administration of the mathematical estate of the Bernoulli family. The major part of the correspondence was sold to the Stockholm Academy; and its existence there was overlooked until his letters were rediscovered by Gylden at the Stockholm Observatory in 1877. His correspondence, comprising about 2,800 items, exceeded that of Johann I.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Johann's writings include various essays in *Mém. Acad. Berlin* (1766–1775), as well as astronomical observations and computations, 1767–1807, in *Neue Berliner Ephemeriden* and *Bodes astronomisches Jahrbuch*. Other works are *Recueil pour les astronomes*, 3 vols. (Berlin, 1772–1776); *Liste des astronomes connus actuellement* (Berlin, 1776); *Lettres écrites pendant la cours d'un voyage par l'Allemagne 1774/75*, 3 vols. (Berlin, 1777–1779); “Essai d'une nouvelle méthode de déterminer la diminution séculaire de l'obliquité de l'écliptique,” in *Mém. Acad. Berlin* (1779), pp. 211–242; and *Lettres astronomiques* (Berlin, 1781).

J. O. Fleckenstein