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William Fogg Osgood and the Transformation of the Harvard Mathematics

Department. Preliminary report.

The American mathematician William Fogg Osgood played a central role in the movement of the mathematics department at Harvard from being primarily concerned with teaching towards being research oriented. Entering Harvard as an undergraduate in 1882, getting his doctorate in Germany, he then taught at Harvard from 1890 up to his forced retirement in 1933 (under somewhat scandalous circumstances). In this talk we look at the life and work of Osgood and how he impacted the tremendous growth in the mathematics department. (Received September 03, 2016)