Before the end of its second volume, the *Annals* had published accounts of early work on computers at Bletchley (I.J. Good), Polish digital computers (R.W. Marczynski), the German computer Z4 (Konrad Zuse), the Czechoslovak automatic digital computer SAPO (N.M. Blachman), the development of the Research Institute of Mathematical Machines in Prague (J.G. Oblonsky), and a survey of important Japanese-designed computers (H. Takahasi and R.I. Tanaka). It had also published influential scholarly analyses of programming the EDSAC (at Cambridge University) and the Mark I (at Manchester University) by historian Martin Campbell-Kelly—his trilogy on the history of programming at British centers was rounded out in the third volume with an article on the Pilot ACE (National Physical Laboratory).

These international pieces, which complemented the numerous ones on developments in computing in the US in *Annals*’ first volumes, were no accident. As founding editor in chief, Bernie Galler established not only openness to international content, but also a commitment to recruit international pieces and define the *Annals* as an international publication. Each of his successors followed and built upon this important tradition.

The vast majority of international articles in *Annals* to date have been pioneer accounts. In addition to these important pieces, there have been a modest number of scholarly analyses, such as those by historians Martin Campbell-Kelly (on computing in Great Britain) and Pierre Mournier-Kuhn (on computing in France).

In the past half decade, an increasing number of scholars have focused their research on the international history of computing. While many factors are likely at play in this phenomenon, including the role of computers in globalization and the growth of history of science and technology programs worldwide, clearly pioneer accounts published in *Annals*, and newly available archival materials, have helped make this possible. For this thematic issue, “A World of Computing,” I took advantage of this opportunity and recruited five talented historians who I knew were engaged in cutting-edge research on topics in international computing. I was pleased that all five scholars signed on and submitted manuscripts for consideration. The revised versions of these articles are on the pages that follow.

The issue begins with a wide-ranging survey by James W. Cortada on how computers diffused throughout the world, followed by studies that examine developments in individual countries or the transfer of computing technology from one country to others. All five articles are major contributions not only to the international history of computing, but also to the business and industrial history of computing.

Cortada’s ambitious and insightful article examines the relatively rapid diffusion of computing around the world (compared to other technologies) and the nature of national similarities and differences in these developments. He provides a compelling framework of eight fundamental models explaining how the diffusion of computing technology occurred. He argues the link between economic globalization and the diffusion of digital technologies and explores how this has facilitated an increasingly homogeneous global mode of deployment of computing technology. He stresses that the degree of success, and speed and effectiveness of diffusion, are critically tied to broader economic performance and do not merely rest with the merits of a particular technology.

Eden Medina offers a fascinating case study of the early history of IBM Chile. She analyzes how IBM’s corporate strategy evolved and how the firm used its corporate culture to adapt to changing political and economic circumstances in this South American country. In doing so, she provides a rich model for future studies exploring how individuals, governments, and corporations acquired computers, and used computing technology within different contexts and cultures.

While much has been written about the early history of IBM and Remington Rand, few scholars have addressed the international strategies and operations of these firms. Corinna Schlombs skillfully navigates this terrain, examining how both companies encountered and responded to European markets. She details how IBM successfully set up European operations in ways that
forged partnerships with host countries and employees, while Remington Rand misread European needs, underwent a lengthy learning process, and only belatedly adapted to the European Common Market. Her rich study is indicative of the great value of early pioneer accounts in *Annals* (in this case she draws from multiple articles on the IBM Böblingen Laboratory) to future scholarly examinations.

Most of the existing scholarship on the software industry has focused on the US, which has dominated the software products trade with one major exception: German-based SAP. Timo Leimbach’s article provides an engaging, well-researched history of SAP and the German software industry. He deftly presents how SAP’s skilled leaders navigated early challenges to produce and sell highly integrated business software products and become one of the world leaders in this field.

Finally, Petri Paju provides an intriguing examination of technology transfer to a smaller Northern European country, Finland. He focuses on the role of Finland’s Committee for Mathematical Machines, and its interaction with other actors (including IBM) in shaping policies and practices of computer use. He argues that Finnish history of computing must be understood within the context of both national history and the history of international relations and technology transfer.

**Michael S. Mahoney, 1939–2008**

We were shocked and deeply saddened in late July to learn that Princeton University historian of science and *Annals* editorial board member Michael Mahoney had passed away. Mike had a profound impact on the *Annals*, and more broadly, on the history of computing, and the history of science and technology. As a longtime *Annals* board member, Mike frequently offered important insights and timely strategic advice. His commitment to excellence set the highest standard for all of us on the board and has helped the publication in countless ways. Mike’s scholarship, published in *Annals* and elsewhere, was nothing less than path-breaking—particularly his numerous historiographical articles that forced us to reassess assumptions and frameworks in computer and software history. The last of these important contributions, on the challenges and rewards of software history, was published only a few months ago in the July-September issue of the *Annals*.

As impressive as Mike’s scholarly contributions were, his dedication to educational excellence was perhaps even greater. This included not only the many undergraduate and graduate students fortunate enough to study under Mike at Princeton, but also students and scholars worldwide whose book and article manuscripts Mike generously commented upon and critiqued. He will be remembered not only for his great skill as a scholar and educator, but also for his tremendous generosity and strong sense of humor. We, at *Annals* and the Charles Babbage Institute, offer our deepest condolences to Mike’s family.

In the coming year, we plan to publish both a biographical article on Mike as well as an article analyzing his historiographical contributions to the history of computing and software.

**Errata**

In the Events and Sightings department last issue, “PC-1 Parametron Computer: 50th anniversary” news item, Hidetosi Takahasi’s name was misspelled. The correct spelling is Hidetosi Takahashi. In the third paragraph, the description of congratulatory messages should have read: “Maurice Wilkes also sent a congratulatory message acknowledging the 50th anniversary. This was printed in the memoir. Donald Knuth had also sent a congratulatory message. It was not in time for printing the memoir as it had been sent by regular mail but was just in time for the seminar and was displayed on-screen at the meeting.”

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