

6. *An interesting diary entry*

Apparently Lewis Carroll was unaware of the identity (1), and Davenport mentioned in [4] that L. J. Mordell [6] noted that the famous children's author, in a diary entry of 1890, had expressed frustration in not being able to show that twice a sum of two squares is itself expressible as a sum of two squares. A week later, he recorded that he was able to do it.

References

1. P. G. L. Dirichlet, Über die Zerlegbarkeit der Zahlen in drei Quadrate, *J. Reine Angew. Math.* **40** (1850) pp. 228–232.
2. H. E. Rose, *A course in number theory*, Oxford University Press (1988).
3. André Weil, *Number theory: an approach through history from Hammurapi to Legendre*, Burkhäuser (1983).
4. H. Davenport, The geometry of numbers, *Math. Gaz.*, **31** (October 1947) pp. 206–210.
5. N. C. Ankeny, Sums of three squares, *Proc. Amer. Math. Soc.*, **8** (1957) pp. 316–319.
6. L. J. Mordell, Note on an entry in Lewis Carroll's diary, *Math. Gaz.*, **26** (1942) p. 52.

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The answers to the *Nemo* page from March 2020 on hyperbolas were:

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| 1. Oliver Wendell Holmes | The Professor at the Breakfast Table |
| 2. Edward Everett Hale | Christmas Eve and Christmas Day:
The survivor's story |
| 3. H G Wells | The First Men in the Moon Chapter 20 |
| 4. Edith Wharton | The Last Asset |
| 5. F Scott Fitzgerald | O Russet Witch (Tales of the Jazz Age) |
| 6. Jonathan Swift | Directions for a Birthday Song |

Congratulations to **Martin Lukarewski** on tracking all of these down. This month our theme is counting and calculation. The quotations are to be identified by reference to author and work. Solutions are invited to the Editor by 23rd September 2020.

The questions for this issue are on page 254.