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Perfect for either undergraduate mathematics or science history courses, this account presents a fresh and detailed reconstruction of the development of two mathematical fundamentals: numbers and infinity. One of the rare texts that offers a friendly and conversational tone, it avoids tedium and controversy while maintaining historical accuracy in defining its concepts' profound mathematical significance.

The authors begin by discussing the representation of numbers, integers and types of numbers, and cubic equations. Additional topics include complex numbers, quaternions, and vectors; Greek notions of infinity; the 17th-century development of the calculus; the concept of functions; and transfinite numbers. The text concludes with an appendix on essay topics, a bibliography, and an index.