Augustin Jean Fresnel Encyclopedia Article

Augustin Jean Fresnel

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Augustin Jean Fresnel

1788-1827

French engineer, mathematician, and physicist. Though trained as a civil engineer, his interest was in physical optics. He studied the nature of light and became convinced that light was composed of undulations, or waves, rather than emissions, or particles. His mathematical papers arguing for this view convinced many other scientists and made him one of the founders of the wave theory of light. He was awarded a medal by London's Royal Society for his work.