Hertha Marks Ayrton Encyclopedia Article

Hertha Marks Ayrton

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Hertha Marks Ayrton

1854-1923

British electrical engineer who analyzed and improved the electric arc, which was used to produce bright light. Arc lamps were widely used for indoor illumination, as well as in searchlights and movie projectors. Ayrton patented some of her improvements and published a comprehensive book, *The Electric Arc* (1902). She also did research in hydrodynamics. Ayrton was the first woman elected to the Institution of Electrical Engineers (1899) and the first woman permitted to read her paper in person before the Royal Society of London (1904).