Hertha Marks Ayrton Encyclopedia Article

Hertha Marks Ayrton

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Hertha Marks Ayrton

1854-1923

British engineer-physicist who was awarded the 1906 Royal Society Hughes Medal for work on the electric arc and sand ripples. Ayrton's 1902 volume *The Electric Arc* became the standard text on the subject. She provided searchlight carbon specifications for the British admiralty and, during World War I, invented the Ayrton Fan for dissipating poison gases. She was the first female member of the Institution of Electrical Engineers (1899) and first woman to read one of her papers before the Royal Society (1904).