Joseph Whitworth Encyclopedia Article

Joseph Whitworth

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Joseph Whitworth

1803-1887

British mechanical engineer and inventor whose attention to quality and precision gained him a worldwide reputation for superior machine tools. Whitworth developed and perfected tools for many industries; in 1835 alone, his patents included a knitting machine, several planing machines, a vertical drill, a gear-cutting machine, and a screw-cutting lathe. Perhaps his most important innovation was the creation of a machine tool capable of measuring to an accuracy of one hundredth-thousandth of an inch.