Robert Wilhelm Bunsen Encyclopedia Article

Robert Wilhelm Bunsen

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Robert Wilhelm Bunsen

1811-1899

German chemist who popularized and improved the bunsen burner, a small tabletop torch whose high-temperature, nonluminous flame was perfect for his pioneering spectroscopy experiments. It has since become standard laboratory equipment. Bunsen was the codiscoverer of two elements, cesium and rubidium. His other accomplishments included the development of an antidote to arsenic poisoning, an explanation for the action of geysers, and invention of the carbon-electrode battery, used for arc lights and electroplating.