William Hyde Wollaston Encyclopedia Article

William Hyde Wollaston

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William Hyde Wollaston

1766-1828

English scientist who made fundamental contributions to chemistry, physics, astronomy, biology, and medicine. Though trained as a physician, Wollaston's interests encompassed a wide variety of scientific fields. He discovered the elements palladium (1804) and rhodium (1805), and a technique to create malleable platinum. He also developed the industrial process for purifying transition metals, introduced the concept of equivalent weights in chemistry, pioneered the study of crystalline structure, observed the black lines in solar spectra, and invented the camera lucida.