William Murdock Encyclopedia Article

William Murdock

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William Murdock

1754-1839

Scottish-born British engineer and inventor who pioneered the use of coal gas for lighting. In 1792 Murdock generated gas from coal and lit his Cornwall home. His work with gas lighting culminated in its commercial application. In 1802 Murdock installed an exterior lighting system at Boulton and Watt's Soho factory (interior lights were added in 1803) and in 1805 he installed lights in the Phillips and Lee spinning mill in Manchester.