

Caspar Wessel Encyclopedia Article

Caspar Wessel

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Contents

Caspar Wessel Encyclopedia Article.....	1
Contents.....	2
Caspar Wessel.....	3

Caspar Wessel

1745-1818

Norwegian surveyor and mathematician whose experience with cartography led him to interesting insights concerning relationships that exist among algebra, trigonometry, and geometry. Wessel's sole published paper, on the geometrical interpretation of complex numbers, was to prove exceptionally influential. His knowledge of surveying and mathematics also led him to construct one of the first accurate maps of Denmark, which, at the time, was united with Norway.