

George Ellery Hale Encyclopedia Article

George Ellery Hale

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George Ellery Hale

1868-1938

American astronomer who was a pioneer in astrophysics. A Massachusetts Institute of Technology graduate, Hale designed and built scientific instruments. Hale's spectroheliograph took the first photographs of solar gas clouds. As director of the Mount Wilson Observatory, Hale procured large telescopes. His research revealed that sunspots are cooler than the surface around them and that solar magnetic fields exist. He discovered that the polarity of sunspots reverses every eleven years. A prolific author, Hale founded and edited the *Astrophysical Journal*